

Housing Executive, Youth Unemployment
Spring 1980 60p (80p Outside Ireland)

Dear Comrades,

BELFAST WORKERS RESEARCH UNIT 0/0 52 Broadway Belfast 12

This is the eighth bulletin to be published by the Belfast Workers Research Unit since its formation in the summer of 1977. The unit's stated aim is "to research matters of interest to socialists and to make the results of that research freely available to all," Over the past three years we have published research bulletins around the following main topics: the Queen's Visit to Belfast; Repression; Health and Wealth in the Six Counties; Women in N. Ireland; the British Media's misreporting of N. Ireland, and Northern Irish Trade Unions. We have also done research on specific subjects at the request of individuals and groups such as shop stewards.

The format of each bulletin is to cover one area of political interest in Northern Ireland in considerable depth and to deal with a number of other subjects in single articles. The main part of this bulletin deals with the role of the churches, particularly the Catholic and Presbyterian Churches (the North's two largest denominations) since the formation of the Northern Irish state. Thus the articles on the churches and education, Republicanism and the Catholic Church, Presbyterianism and Paisleyism are necessarily more historical than is usual in our bulletins. And the introduction tries to put the later articles in an all-Ireland context, since it is virtually impossible to deal with the Catholic Church in particular purely in its

Ireland has never, unlike France or Spain, had its anti-clerical 'revolution'. This is largely because the two religions have been almost totally identified with clashing national aspirations; the Catholicism of the native Irish against the Protestantism of the Ulster settlers. It is difficult and unnerving for socialists to have to admit that the ideas of Marx, Lenin and Connolly have struck little chord among the working-class people of Ireland largely because of this, and that even the anti-imperialist struggle retains a strong flavour of old-style Catholic nationalism.

This may be the principal reason why no Irish socialist since Connolly has attempted any serious analysis of the hold that religion has over Irish people. This bulletin has no intention of undertaking such a gargantuan task. But we do hope that the information contained in the following pages will provide some basic material for serious debate on such a vital subject. Similarly we hope that our articles on corruption in the Housing Executive and the total inadequacy of government job provision schemes in Northern Ireland—both subjects which have briefly seen the light of day recently only to be re-swept under the carpet—will provoke further and closer examinations of the abuses and shortcomings revealed.

This bulletin has not been an easy one to put together. The subject is not one with which the members of unit, as socialists, are immediately familiar. The result has been that this eighth bulletin has taken longer than any previous one to prepare, Our apologies for the delay in its publication. The other problem we have come across is the perennial one of a lack of money. All costs of research and publication are covered by sales and individual contributions from the eight members of the unit itself. The price of the last two bulletins, both of them containing 56 pages, was kept down to 45p in Ireland and 65p abroad. This time we are having to ask our supporters and subcribers to pay 60p and 80p respectively for 64 pages. We hope you will agree with us that this small price increase is worth paying for the only contemporary socialist research of Ireland's oldest and least—researched oppression.

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Cover photos by Derek Spiers IFL/Report

INTRODUCTION

IRELAND, NORTH AND SOUTH, IS ONE OF THE MOST RELIGIOUS COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD - PERHAPS THE MOST - RELIGIOUS COUNTRY IN THE WESTERN CHRISTIAN WORLD. AND NOT ONLY IS IT RELIGIOUS, BUT ITS OWN PECULIAR FORMS OF CATHOLICISM AND PROTESTANTISM ARE AMONG THE MOST INSULAR, FUNDAMENTALIST AND REACTIONARY IN EXISTENCE.

There are good historical reasons for this. Irish Catholicism was persecuted for centuries by an English crown and government which saw it as a threat to their most vital strategic and economic interests, and did all in their power to wipe it out, whether it was through Cromwell's massacres in the 17th century, the vicious Penal Laws in the 18th, or secular education in the 19th century.

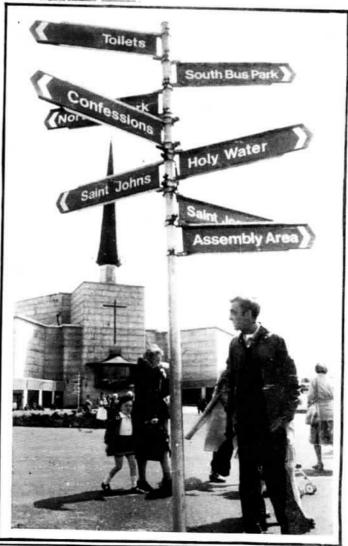
The Irish hierarchy eventually formed an alliance with the emergent forces of nationalism - the Land League and the Catholic urban bourgeoisie - in the 19th century, an alliance which is still active in the political life of the South today. The end result has been a church which identifies Catholicism and 'Irishness' as one and the same thing, which is deeply suspicious of 'modernising' trends from North America or continental Europe, and which uses every trick in the ecclesiastical book - the ancient one of miracles at Knock and the modern one of the most publicity-conscious Pope in history - to keep its flock in line.

Similarly the Protestants of the North, originally brought in by the plantations of the 16th and 17th centuries to provide pockets of loyalism and British order in a rebel Gaelic (and Catholic) countryside, have inherited the embattled colonial mentality of their ancestors. The folk memory of the massacres of the settlers in the 1640s and the seige of Derry in 1689 are as important in Northern Protestant mythology as more modern defensive victories against the encroachments of Gaelic, Catholic Ireland, like the anti-Home Rule riots of the 1880s and the Ulster Covenant of 1912. But it was the growth of a powerful new industrial bourgeoisie in Belfast in the 19th century which was to be the telling factor in ensuring that the Protestant workers and small farmers of the North came under the pernicious sway of the pro-British, anti-Catholic Orange Order and rejected the stirrings of radicalism and nationalism that had briefly attracted them in the last years of the 18th century.

The formation of an overwhelmingly Catholic and rural Irish Free State in 1922, and the legitimisation of Catholic social doctrines in its Constitution of 1937, made the republican ideal of a united Ireland even more alien to the majority of Northern Protestants. Meanwhile, their leaders were making sure of their loyalty by guaranteeing them marginal privileges over their Catholic fellow citizens in an unashamedly one-party, sectarian statelet, ruled by Craigavon's 'Protestant parliament for a Protestant people.' And always, in religion as in politics, there was the knowledge that ultimately Northern Ireland was an unviable and undemocratic anachronism in an increasingly democratic and cosmopolitan world - the result was a retreat into the sort of rigid, xenophobic fundamentalism unknown outside the pro-apartheid South African Reformed Church and the racist Baptists and evangelicals of the American South's bible belt.

The attitudes and actions of the Southern state and the Northern statelet over the past 60 years seem almost guaranteed to reinforce and cement partition along religious lines. The blatant anti-Catholicism of the Northern Unionist establishment is well-known by now, A couple of examples will serve to remind of its voraciousness. The definitive statement of this attitude was made by Sir Basil Brooke (later, as Lord Brookeborough, to become Northern Ireland's longest-serving Prime Minister) in 1933:

'There were a great number of Protestants and Orangemen who employed Roman Catholics. He felt is could speak freely on this subject as he had not a Roman Catholic about his own place. He appreciated the great difficulty experienced by some of them in procuring suitable Protestant labour, but he would point out that Roman Catholics were endeavouring to get in everywhere. He would appeal to Loyalists, therefore, wherever possible, to employ good Protestant lads and lassies.' (Reported in the Fermanagh Times.)



Nearly 40 years later, Terence O'Neill was trying to explain to Northern Protestants, and particularly those Protestant workers whose privileged position seemed to be threatened by the Civil Rights movement, that economic and political considerations necessitated mild reforms in the unionist machine. But even the words he used to do it reeked of Protestant paternalism and the arrogance of the planter class.

'It is frightfully hard to explain to Protestants that if you give Roman Catholics a good job and a good house they will live like Protestants, because they will see neighbours with cars and television sets. They will refuse to have eighteen children; but if a Roman Catholic is jobless and lives in the most ghastly hovel, he will rear eighteen children on National Assistance. If you treat Roman Catholics with due consideration and kindness, they will live like Protestants, in spite of the authoritative nature of their Church.' (5 May 1969)

The sectarianism of the Southern State was of a different and more 'democratic' kind, though not much less pernicious (and damaging to the prospects of a united Ireland) for all that. The Catholic Church had realised soon after the 1918-22 independence struggle started that it had little to fear from the majority of Sinn Fein and IRA leaders. As the Catholic Bishop of Ferns wrote in 1919: 'The Sinn Feiners are not different from the rest of the people as Catholics. They are quite good and practical Catholics. They are not anticlerical, they have many clerical adherents with us. ' The bishop of Kildare and Leighlin agreed: 'From conversations I frequently had with them here I am satisfied that they are quite willing to accept the teaching of the Church, even when it may not be quite in harmony with some of their views, for instance, the lawfulness of the Easter Rising.

So there was little problem in the Irish hierarchy changing its allegiance from the Irish Parliament-ary Party to the more moderate elements in Sinn Fein. These were clearly represented by the Cosgrave governments in the 1920s. But once again the church had little problem in switching its support to De Valera in the 30s, once he had shown that he would not dismantle, and would probably even strengthen, the position of the church vis-a-vis the state.

This he did in the 1937 Constitution, which enshrined many of the current teachings of Catholic social doctrine; it outlawed divorce, guarded the institution of marriage 'with special care;' endeavoured to ensure 'that mothers shall not be

Brish Religious Affiliations

1971 figures	6 Count	ies	26 Counties		
Catholic	No. 477.919	Z 31.4	No. 2,795,666	7 93.9	
Presbyterian	405,719	26.7	16,052	0.5	
Church of Ireland (Anglican)	334,318	22.0	97,739	3.3	
Methodist	71,235	4.7	5,646	0.2	
Brethren	16,480	1.1			
Baptist	16,563	1.1	60		
Congregationalist	10,069	0.7	63,145	2.1	
Unitarian	3,965	0.2	OE		
Others (including Free Presbyterian		2.7			
Not stated	142,511	9.4			
TOTAL	1,519,640	100	2,978,248	100	

obliged by economic necessity to engage in labour to the neglect of their duties in the home; ' acknowledged that 'the homage of public worship is due to almighty God;' and recognised 'the special position' of Roman Catholicism as the religion of the great majority of the citizens, This constitutional document (which remains unchanged apart from the clause on the 'special position' of the Catholic church, which was removed as a result of a referendum in 1972), together with the rigid censorship laws, the outlawing of artificial methods of contraception and the almost total lack of non-church-controlled schools, was the final seal on the church-state understanding that the southern Irish Republic would be a Catholic 'confessional' state.

THE 'CONFESSIONAL' STATE

The American historian Emmet Larkin defines the Irish 'confessional' state as one where the church doesn't have to overtly intervene in the affairs of the state because of an implicit agreement between politicians and churchmen on which areas of society each of them controls. Both O'Connell and Parnell believed that, since the emerging Irish state would be essentially Catholic, the church would have to be accomodated (and weaned away from its pro-British line) if that state was ever to become a functioning political reality. De Valera followed their lead by giving the church a predominant role in education and social welfare. Occasionally this informal concordat broke down -





in 1951, for example, a free medical scheme for pregnant women was thrown out after strong objections by the hierarchy. But overall there was little need for such overt intervention. For, with politicians like Brendan Corish (later leader of the Labour Party and deputy Prime Minister in a Fine Gael/Labour coalition government of the 70s) speaking for the so-called 'left' in the Dublin parliament, what was there to fear? 'I am an Irishman second, I am a Catholic first ... If the hierarchy gives me any direction with regards to Catholic social teaching or Catholic moral teaching, I accept without qualification, and in all respects, the teachings of the hierarchy to which I belong.'

SPIRITUAL HERITAGE OR UNITY?

But, despite its relative rarity these days, the Irish bishops still defend their right to intervene openly in Irish politics in order to alert their flock to 'any serious danger to the moral fabric of our society.' The words are those of the Bishop of Limerick, Dr. Newman, one of the Irish church's most intelligent right-wing ideologues, in May 1976. In the same speech he went on to warn that Catholicism might suffer if Irish unity was fought for too hard.

'I refer to the danger of losing what our ancestors achieved - because of the influence of secularism, the strident propaganda of minorities and the effort to conciliate the North. In the struggle for Irish unity, we must be quite resolute not to sacrifice our spiritual heritage. There is a deep cultural identity among the Catholic people which will continue - and rightly - to assert itself.' This is the most pernicious element in the mentality of the Southern Irish state and its Catholicminded citizens. Nearly 60 years of the 'confessional' state has left its mark, and the prospect

of changing its reactionary structures to prepare for an eventual united Ireland has become anathema to many of its pious and comfort-loving citizens, whatever lip-service they might pay to the republican ideal of a united country.

This contradiction was perhaps best summed up by the independent senator and historian, John A. Murphy, in the senate debates on the southern Contraception Bill last summer. After calling the Bill 'blatantly denominational,' he went on to emphasise that for many Irish people (and politicians) their sense of homogeneity was so instinctive that they could not see the difference between their Catholic and their Irish personalities. He went on:

'You have a Fianna Fail government here professing to hold the principles of Republicanism. They were represented a few weeks ago at Wolfe Tone's grave. They profess, too, to cherish dearly the aspiration of Irish unity, and, at the same time, act as the Catholic government of the Catholic state.'

A Catholic government for a Catholic state in the South and a Protestant government for a Protestant state in the North, despite the supposed 'moderneffects of eight years of direct rule, The irony is bitter - that 60 years after partition one of the few influences that 'unites' Ireland, North and South, is the underlying political power of the churches, whether it is expressed in the political fundamentalism of Protestantism in the North or the social dogmatism of Catholicism in the South. It is a 'unity' which works hand-inhand to block the ideal of a secular, non-sectarian united Ireland, If a new socialist society is to be built on this island, a society founded on national independence, individual liberty and social justice, then the power of the Irish churches will have to be severely weakened, if not actually destroved.

THE CHURCHES AND EDUCATION

In the N.Ireland state educational system there is one subject which every school is obliged to include in its curriculum. It is not English, or French, or Mathematics. It is religion. There are 754 state schools in Northern Ireland and the religious education they provide is dominational. It comprises the tenets of protestantism, working from a syllabus agreed upon by the three main Protestant churches. On the other side of the sectarian divide are the Catholic schools. Numbering over 650 in all, these schools do not just teach Catholicism but claim to "enact the Catholic way of life."

There are no integrated schools in N. Ireland. This is despite all the evidence which shows that a majority of the population wishes to see an end to segregation. Two surveys conducted by National Opinion Polls in 1967 and 1969 showed that 64% of adults and 65% of young people favoured integrated schools. In 1973 Fortnight magazine found 62% of people in favour. In a 1972 survey over 81% of the 2,416 people questioned agreed with the following statement:

"If a Catholic school and a Protestant school in this area decided to get together now and make a joint school for both religions I would like my children to go to it."

Why then has the segregation continued? The answer is that, whatever educational desires their lay congregations might have, the hierarchies of the churches have a steely determination to maintain their control of education. In each case the control they presently possess only came after a bitterly fought struggle. To understand the nature of church control today it is necessary to trace the history of those struggles.

THE NEW ORDER

When the N.I. State was formed in 1920 the educational system in Ireland was on the verge of collapse, a casualty of its own ramshackle organisation. Rapid industrial expansion and a lack of funds had only accentuated the inevitable chaos. The long awaited reforms were anticipated with some trepidation by the Catholic

Church who feared that in the six county state they would lose the denominational control granted them in the old system.

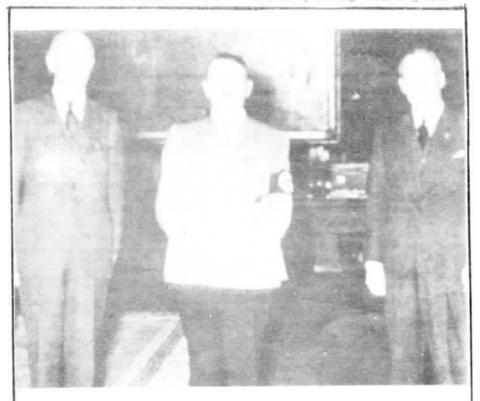
The Protestant churches however, seemed to have nothing to fear and, indeed, the constitutional settlement that had been won held for them the promise of building a new Jerusalem. They were to be bitterly disappointed. What happened their hopes is described here by the Rev. William Corkey, the man responsible for the Presbyterian Church's education policies:

"...to the amazement of most of the Ulster Protestants, lay and clergy. The first important measure... a Bill to set up a system of wheatier in W. Inches in which it was master that am Education Authority "small not provide religious instruction", and in which even the reasonable assurance that there should be Protestant teachers for Protestant children was denied by statute."

The Protestants had every right to feel shocked. The reorganisation was much more radical than anyone had expected, for not only did the Bill exclude religious education as Rev. Corkey said, it also prevented management committees selecting teachers on religious grounds. Suddenly an age-old quarrel between the Catholic and Protestant churches over educational control was interupted and both turned to face a common enemy.

LONDONDERRY

The new threat was represented in human form by the seventh Marquess of Londonderry, the Minister of Education in the new government. He came from a rich mine-owning family in Durham and dressed and behaved like an eighteenth century nobleman. In a letter to a friend he explained his politics: "If you abould ask me which form of govs semenations dictatorship." the 1930's he became an enthusiastic supporter of Nazism and was responsible for bringing Goering on a social visit to Newtownards Flying Club. For his eager espousal of fascism he was to be rewarded by having a meeting with



Londonderry with Hitler and Ribbentrop in 1937

PROTESTANT OR STATE EDUCATION

Officially the state schools in Northern Ireland are undenominational. In reality they are Protestant schools and no-one believes or pretends otherwise, not even the Education and Library Boards. When a new school is built from public funds the Protestant churches are invited by the Education and Library Board concerned to contribute nominees to its management committee. The Roman Catholic Church will not receive the same invitation. It is, of course, the case that the Catholic clergy would not wish to be consulted. That they are not, however, demonstrates an acceptance that state schools are de facto Protestant schools and acknowledged as such by the statutory bodies.

The same recognition has been granted by the Fair Employment Agency. The original committee which drafted the Fair Employment Bill in 1973, chaired by William van Straubenzee, recommended that the state schools should not be allowed to discriminate amongst applicants for a job on religious grounds. By the time the bill became law, however, the state schools had been excluded (as, of course, had the Catholic schools as well) from the considerations of the Fair Employment Agency. The recommendation to leave out the schools had come from Lord Feather's Standing Advisory Committee on Human Rights who had been tipped off not to create legal complications.

Adolf Hitler. It is one of the ironies of history that London-derry's brief career as a minister of education will be remembered for its liberalism.

Before Londonderry introduced his Act in 1923 a committee under Robert Lynn had been set up to make recomendations on the reorganisation of education. Robert Lynn was an Orangeman, the Unionist MP for West Belfast and editor of the Northern Whig, a rampantly sectarian paper. dictably enough the Catholic hierarchy refused to serve on the committee and even more predictably the Lynn report argued that Protestant schools should receive complete government financing while Catholic schools should receive a more limited form of state assistance.

In framing his education bill Londonderry eliminated the sectarian bias favoured by Lynn's committee. His deliberations coincided with a period of delicate politicking for the Prime Minister, Sir James Craig. A Boundary Commission was about to be set up to adjudicate the thorny issue of the boundary between the six county state and the rest of the country. It was not a time to alienate the Catholic hierarchy by being seen to favour the Protestant churches. In these circumstances Londonderry's proposals received the necessary backing and on June 22 were enacted into law as the 1923 Education Act (N.1.).

THE 1923 ACT

Under section 28 of the new act religious instruction was forbidden in elementary schools within the hours of compulsory attendance. Under section 26 local education authorities were not permitted to provide religious instruction in schools under their control, though they could provide opportunities outside school hours for children to be taught by persons approved by their parents. Under section 66 local education authorities were not entitled to take into account a teacher's religious denomination when making an appointment.

There was absolutely no question of the Catholic hierarchy surrendering their schools under these conditions - though it was unlikely they would have handed over the schools under any conditions. The main shock of Londonderry's act was absorbed by the Protestants. They hastily set to work to undo it.

HOW THE PROTESTANTS GOT WHAT THEY WANTED.

The man destined to lead the campaign for Protestant education was the Presbyterian minister quoted earlier, the Rev. William Corkey. In his book Education And Enmity D.K. Akenson describes Corkey as "at minimum, a zealot in matters of religious education". Corkey's campaign of agitation began with a conference held in 1924 attended by Presbyterian, Methodist and Church of Ireland representatives. From it emerged the slogan "Protestant teachers to teach Protestant children." This slogan translated into two demands: bible instruction in the schools; and the right to select teachers according to their religion. A committee was formed calling itself the United Educational Committee to pursue these demands. Its first strategy was one of passive non cooperation with the government. Resisting the blandishments of full state financing the Protestants refused to transfer their schools to the state. In 1925, out of 2,000 schools in N. Ireland, only 10 had "transferred".

The second strategy was to pursuc an offensive political campaign. The U.E.C. had formed itself at an opportune moment. An election was looming and to strengthen his position with the Dublin and London governments on the eve of the Boundary Commission's report Craig was hoping for a massive electoral victory on a notan-inch platform. He could not afford splits of any kind and the U.E.C. were prepared to use the moment to their advantage. Up to this point Craig had not understood the strength of the opposition. Both he and his cabinet, pragmatic men themselves, thought the new law could easily be by-passed to allow the Protestants de facto' control. If the law prevented them asking the religion of an applicant for a teaching job they could ask instead what school the person had attended. What the pragmatic view ignored however was of great importance: the triumphalist desire to have control written into the law

The election was to be held on April 21st. On March 5th 1925 the U.E.C. called a mass meeting in the Assembly Hall of the Presbyterian Church. By far the most significant presence at the rally was that of Sir Joseph Davidson, head of the Orange Order. The message was plain and Craig acted swiftly. The day after the rally the Protestant leaders were ushered into his office and within a week an amendment to the 1923 Act had received the Royal Assent and was written into the statute books.

STILL NOT SATISFIED

The Amending Act of 1925 deleted the sections of the original act which had offended Corkey and his supporters; henceforth schools under the authority of the Ministry of Education could adopt a programme of "simple Bible instruction" which teachers could be required to give as part of the ordinary school course. For a time it seemed as though matters might rest there.

Corkey however had one further complaint. The 1925 Amendment allowed state schools to include Bible instruction; he wanted the law to compel them. Again he chose the opportune moment to campaign.





James Craig (left), Prime Minister and Joe Devlin, leader of the Nationalist Party.

In the run-up to the 1929 election the U.E.C. once more won the support of the Orange Order for a dreary repetition of the earlier campaign. Again, the government surrendered. The 1930 Amendment Act made Bible instruction mandatory in state schools. By so doing it contravened the Act which had constituted the six county state, the 1920 Government of Ireland Act. It was a striking statement of how ten years after its creation the new state officially endorsed sectarianism. Striking also was the fact that the Westminster Government turned a blind eye to the passing of the Act.

A STING IN THE TAIL

During the major restructuring of education that took place after the second world war the legality of the 1925 and 1930 Amendments was called into question. The Attorney General J.C. MacDermott deciared that as they included provisions compelling teachers paid with public money to give Bible instruction they were in fact illegal. To the Minister of Education at the time, Lt.-Colonel Hall-Thompson, it seemed a simple matter to insert a 'conscience' clause allowing any teacher who did not wish to teach the Bible to be relieved of that duty. Unfortunately for Hall-Thompson, the Rev. Corkey was maintaining his eternal vigilence. The U.E.C. swung into action once more. Senator William Walton declared that under the conscience clause "the education authority will have to appoint a teacher without regard to his religious views. He may be a Jew - although I am not saying anything against Jews - he may be a Roman Catholic, or even a member of the IRA."

In the struggle that ensued between the forces represented by Corkey and Hall-Thompson, Corkey had been blessed with his usual advantage, a looming general election. Hall-Thompson maintained his stand, arguing on "the written law of the Government of Ireland Act and the unwritten law of decency." After a rough passage Hall-Thompson's bill became law and since its enactment teachers have the legal right not to undertake Bible instruction.

Teachers have always especially feared the clergy gaining the control they were demanding. Ulster Teachers Union in particular nad supported Londonderry's original act and condemned the actions of the U.E.C. in the 1925, 1930 and 1947 campaigns. Also the heads of the association of N.I. education committees made strong representation to Craig opposing the displacing of elected representatives on the education committees with appointed clergy-

HOW THE CATHOLICS GOT WHAT THEY

While these struggles were going on the Catholic hierarchy was far from inactive. The Londonderry Education Act of 1923 had proposed a form of education that was even more alien to the Catholic Church than it had been to the Protestant churches, but it left the Catholic hierarchy with a rather different problem to face. Unlike the Protestants the Catholics had never envisaged themselves merging into a state educational system. Under Canon Law 1374 Roman Catholic students were prohibited from attending non-Catholic schools,

including 'neutral' or 'mixed' schools. In the 1920s the Irish Bishops stressed very heavily their view that the aim of education is to contribute to the ultimate end of human existence, namely the salvation of man's immortal soul. The problem for the Catholic hierarchy in the early 1920s was how best to serve Caesar in order to have Caesar's contribution to Catholic education.

And there were two Caesars. Following partition a fierce debate took place inside the world of Catholic education over whether or not they should recognise the six county government. In areas like Strabane, Omagh and Newry, teachers passed resolutions pledging themselves not to accept salaries from the N.I. Ministry of Education and calling upon the Irish Free State to continue administering their salaries. Altogether 270 Catholic elementary schools, representing about one third of the total, refused to cooperate with the northern government. The Catholic hierarchy was very careful not to include itself publicly in the debate, unsure as yet of the stability of the new constitutional settlement. The non-cooperation campaign was dropped abruptly in October 1922 when the Dublin government announced it was stopping the payments. From that moment on the Bishops only aim was to secure the best deal possible from the Stormont parliament. Unfortunately for themselves, by absenting themselves from the Lynn committee they had no shaping influence over the restructuring of the early twenties. The settlement which they had to accept as a reality was one which allowed "voluntary" schools (that is, those outside the state system) only fifty per cent grants towards building and maintenance. D.K. Akenson summarises the situation after the 1930 amending act as follows: "In the first place one should ask, was the act equitable as between the two major religious groups? Here the answer has to be a firm no. Under the act two school systems operated, the clientele of one being Protestant, of the other either Protestant or Catholic. In the transferred and provided schools, attended almost exclusively by Protestant children, all capital and daily, operating expenses were paid by funds from local and central government sources whereas the voluntary schools (mainly Catholic) received most, but NOT all, of their resources from public sources."

The seriousness with which the Catholic hierarchy viewed the situation was evident in an advertisement placed in the Irish News by Bishop Mageean just before the 1930 Act, in which he called for special prayer to be said "in this hour of danger". The Catholic Bishops did not restrict themselves to prayers but supplemented these with threats. The greatest threat was that of blackmail. Bishop Mageean raised it astutely in April 1930. "There are means within the constitution" he said, "to prevent even those in high places from violating its principles. It is laid down in the constitution that no religion may be endowed, and we shall be forced to find in the highest court in the Empire whether the endowment of Protestant schools in harmony with that constitution. The threat was amplified by other sections of the Catholic community. Joe Devlin and the Nationalist Party dropped their abstentionist policy and went into the Stormont parliament to defend Catholic interests. In the south Sean Lemass stated that the 1930 Amendment Act would contravene the spirit of article 16 of the Anglo-Irish Treaty. Mageean, realising the strength of the opposition he had marshalled, cleverly advanced a set of compromise proposals. The Stormont government agreed. The possibility of legal action had left them with little choice.

An additional clause written into the 1930 Act provided Catholics with what was indisputably a major strategic victory. Fifty per cent grants were given for the const-ruction and expansion of voluntary schools. It was a gain that was to lead to further gains. In 1947 as part of the restructuring of educational provision the government raised the grant to 65 per cent to assist Catholic schools to join in the planned expansion. The next major boost came during the reforms of the sixties. In 1967 a White Paper Local Education Authorities and Voluntary Schools" was published. It proposed that voluntary schools which accepted one-third public representation on their management committees would be designated 'maintained' schools and would be eligible for 85 per cent building and extension grants and 100 per cent maintenance grants. The Bishops hesitated, as if unable to believe their good fortune. Grave doubts were expressed about the one-third public representation; the 'four- and-two' committees as they became known. Tentatively a few schools ventured into the new arrangment and, when the Church was finally relieved of its suspicion that the whole scheme was a plot to trick them out of their schools, they ventured more. The transference of the schools into the new system began in 1968 and within ten years practically all Catholic schools had passed into the new arrangement.

Today the spokesmen of the Church still protest against the fact that they have to raise 15 per cent of building costs but their complaints have a routine sound to them. Behind the posture of grievance contentment reigns. As Father King, the Dublin priest, wrote: "It is evident that financially the government of Northern Ireland has been generous to Catholic schools."

THE NATURE OF CONTROL

In the schools of Northern Ireland the term "religious control" means exactly what it says: that is, that the schools are controlled, not by educationalists, but by clerics. In the state schools fifty per cent of the seats on management committees are reserved for the clergy or their appointees, in the Catholic schools two thirds. It is seldom that even the head teacher is represented on the management committee in either system. A survey conducted by the New University of Ulster in 1977 showed that in the eighteen schools - both Protestant (state) and Catholic - that they visited, no principal was a full member of the management committee. Some were a llowed to attend meetings on a secretarial or consultative basis - as one principal remarked drily: "I sit

in the corner and keep my mouth shut." The strongest resentment they found came from Catholic principals, some of whom were kept waiting outside the room during meetings and only admitted for particular items on the agenda.

Still the most effective form of clerical control, however, is the more unobtrusive - the slotting of clergy into top teaching posts. While the NUU survey found that of the principals in the Protestant schools, "a high proportion are involved in formal church duties, as organists, Sunday school teachers and elders," the situation in Catholic schools is notoriously worse. John Horgan, writing in Hibernia, produced figures to show that at present in Irish Catholic schools one religious in seven is a principal. For lay teachers the ratio is roughly one principal for every 2,300.

The question of the religious affiliation of teachers is one that is perceived more keenly in a situation of educational cutbacks. The teachers' unions are arguing that if and when redundancies occur they should be ad-ministered on a "last in, first out" basis. The Catholic Church opposes this. They want the criterion to be the moral and religious character of the teachers concerned. One teacher made redundant in West Belfast last year had it explained to him that he was selected for the chop because he was having a relationship with a divorced woman.

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

One popular myth has it that what divides the schools here is that the Catholics are taught Irish

In the schools even the sports

(percentages)

are sectarian....

STATE		CATHOLIC			
GR.	Sec.	Prim.	Gr.	Sec.	Prim.
1			60.0	63.6	53.7
1		1	40.0	40.9	24.4
		1 1	40.0	50.0	7.3
36.4	36.4	19.0		22.7	1000000
36.4	45.5				
81.8	68.2	1 1		13.6	
9.1	81,8	65.5	20.0	45,5	34.1
	36.4 36.4 81.8	GR. Sec. 36.4 36.4 36.4 36.4 45.5 81.8 68.2	GR. Sec. Prim. 36.4 36.4 19.0 36.4 45.5 81.8 68.2	GR. Sec. Prim. Gr. 11 60.0 40.0 40.0 36.4 36.4 19.0 36.4 45.5 81.8 68.2	GR. Sec. Prim. Gr. Sec. 11 60.0 63.6 40.0 40.9 40.0 50.0 22.7 36.4 45.5 81.8 68.2 13.6

Source; Darby et al., Education and Community in Northern Ireland

history, and so become versed in Republicanism, while the Protestants study English history and so become little unionists. This is not so much an oversimplification as a complete distortion. While it may have been true in . general way at some point in the past, contemporary evidence suggests that there is no real distinction in curricula, Apart from the different sporting interests shown in Table I, the schools are not distinguished culturally. Desi Wilson, in an unpublished thesis, describes the situation as follows:

"Thus in Northern Ireland the (Catholic) church accepts and maintains the dominant culture, English, middle-class, academic and in religion, European, Roman; there is little evidence of Irish influence in Catholic church schools. The Catholic schools often help to transmit an attitude of grievance, but that is a different matter; the positive cultural content of what they teach owes little to Irish origins."

Both systems are equally opposed to liberal educational practices. The NUU survey found very little difference in attitudes to things such as streaming, comprehensive education and discipline. For example, they found that in 81.8% of both Protestant and Catholic secondary schools corporal punishment was used.

There are three ways, however, in which the Catholic educational system can be distinguished. One is its primary claim, that in its schools the Catholic religion is not just taught as a

subject but exists as a complete way of life. There is no empirical evidence at hand to test the reality of this claim, but what is certainly true is that in Catholic schools attention is focused on those subjects which might possibly lend themselves to a Catholic interpretation - such as history and English - and that the science subjects are underdeveloped.

Secondly, the Catholic hierarchy has maintained a consistent opposition to nursery education. believing that it undermines the role of women as mothers. The fact that it does not build many nurseries itself may or may not be a bad thing. Much more unfortunate is the way it has successfully warned the State off building nurseries in Catholic areas (see table 2). Rather than risk trouble with the Catholic Church the Department of Education has agreed to a tacit nonaggression pact whereby it undersupplies nursery provision in Catholic areas.

Related to this is the Catholic educational system's third chief characteristic - its virulent sexism. While the Protestant schools will frequently be of mixed sex, the Catholic Church has remained rigidly committed to single sex schooling. "The amalgamation of boys and girls schools has been condemned by His Holiness Pope Pius XI and by the medical profession generally" was how one Stormont nationalist MP put it in the fifties. Thomas J. Campbell, who succeeded Joseph Devlin as Nationalist Party leader, told the House of Commons on another occasion when it was discussing mixed sex education:

"I appeal to you to consider Catholic feeling on educational, moral and religious grounds, and yet cry a halt in regard to this order. Hitler would not treat the Jews of Germany in the same way as you are treating these schools! Such absurd paranoia has largely disappeared by now. In Kilkeel and Ballycastle boys and girls are going to the same schools. The principle was abandoned for economic reasons. In the same way the years from 1970 saw the Catholic Church abandoning its separate hospital, separate university hostel and separate cemetery in Belfast, all victims of financial stringency.

AND FOR THE FUTURE

There is no reason here for socialists to feel optimistic. The coincidence of the Catholic Church's economic difficulties and the government's education cuts are unlikely to result in anything very progressive. As the retrenchment begins on both the Catholic and State sides only one independent school has opened recently which poses any challenge to their control. It opened in Kilskeery, Co. Tyrone and 40 more like it are planned. And who's behind it? Ian Paisley. And the educational principles of the new independent school movement? A 'true' Protestant education based on a 'correct' reading of scripture; the exclusion of all 'obscene' books; and finally the control of children by a return to 'biblical discipline'.



CLERGY SAY NO TO NURSERY EDUCATION

While there are I,606 children in nursery schools or classes in Belfast, only 326 of these are in the Catholic sector - even though the numbers of Catholic and non-Catholic children in the city are about equal. A Belfast Education and Library Board report on nursery education in I978 said: "The level of provision is alarmingly low in the Lower Falls, Upper Falls, Andersonstown, Ballymurphy, Whiterook and Lenadoon areas." What is true of Belfast is true of the whole of the six counties. The Catholic Church will not build their own nurseries and the Education and Library Boards will not build them in Catholic areas for fear of annoying the clergy.



A TALE OF TWO SCHOOLS

South of Belfast, in the direction of Lisburn, sit two Catholic schools, St Colm's High School and Rathmore Grammar School. The differences between the two speak volumes about the Catholic Church's method of schooling. Rathmore can be described as the jewel in the Church's educational crown. It caters for the middle class, professional families of South Belfast, Malone and parts of Lisburn. To describe it in the geography of the Church, it is the parish of Derriaghy, one of Bishop Philbin's richest and one of the least affected by the 'troubles'.Or at least it was until the early 1970s when the tranquillity was shattered by the creation of Twinbrook housing estate.

Twinbrook was originally planned as a mixed housing estate. The sectarian violence of the early '70s however resulted in a massive population shift with thousands of Catholics flooding into the West of the city. In 1973/74 that same movement overspilt into Twinbrook with families squatting in barely completed houses. Twinbrook had become a Catholic housing estate, in effect a ghetto. Amongst its many deprivations was schooling. St. Colm's school which opened

in September 1974 was not adequate to cope with the sudden rush of numbers of Catholic pupils. As Twinbrook had not originally been planned as a Catholic housing estate, this inability to provide could not be considered as anyone's fault. Six years later the educational slum that is St Colm's is very much the responsibility of the Catholic Church. When the school opened in 1974 it ushered its first batch of pupils, one hundred in all, into mobile classrooms. Every year since then another 100 children have joined the school and every vear more mobile classrooms have been thrown up creating, instead of a school, an educational shanty town. The pressure on space meant that many classes had to be taught in a far off primary school or in the parochial hall, both some ten minutes walk from the school. The toilet facilities were such that pupils were forced to go home when they needed to use the toilet. Equally primitive were resources such as audiovisual aids or facilities for specialised classes like science or art/craftwork, Remedial work accounts for over 50% of the teaching load, yet had to be conducted in impossible conditions - at one time a part of one mobile classroom was divided into three by partitions and this catered for the entire need. There has never been a gymnasium in St. Colm's and even assemblies had to be conducted in the open air, Sometimes timetables were marked "no accomodation available" and classrooms allocated on an ad hoc basis with teachers even having to squabble over desks and chairs. The constant expansion of the mobile classrooms has meant building site conditions for both staff and pupils - no green sports field here, but mud, machinery and the incessant

Six years on one must ask what happened to the construction programme for St. Colm's. The first phase of permanent building was completed in the autumn of 1976 with the opening of six permanent classrooms. Despite the obvious crisis, the second phase of construction only started in January 1980. It could be up to four years before St. Colm's is finally completed, with all the facilities normally expected in a secondary

noise of building.

school. The teachers have done what they could to put pressure on the Catholic hierarchy to improve conditions. At the beginning of the teaching var 1978/9 they asked, through their union representatives in the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Wome Teachers (NAS/UWT) and the i.ish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO) for a meeting with the leader of schools' trustees. Father James Kelly. The cource was clearly unwilling to meet the unions and fobbed them off with various excuses. Some publicity in the Belfast Telegraon and the whiff of a scandal tilally brought the Bishop's men to the conference table and it was that pressure which made the church yield, to the extent of committing itself to the building programme now under way.

The church could have responded to the situation of St. Colm's in a number of different ways. For instance, given that the school existed in the extremely affluent Derriaghy parish, some of the parish's wealth could have been channelled into an emergency building programme for the school. That's not what happened. What happened was that the arrival of the Catholic working class into Twinbrook was seen as an invasion of the parish and a lowering of its social tone. The emergency programme of the church was not one desig ed to help these refugees from other parts of the city; it was designed to resist them. The Derriaghy parish was split in two, with the old parish retaining its cultural identity. A new parish, called St. Luke's, was brought into being and this comprised the whole of Twinbrook.

St. Luke's was now responsible for the building programme of St. Colm's school. As a maintained school 15% of the building cost had to be met by the parish. The people of Twinbrook are amongst the poorest in Belfast, barely able to maintain their homes let alone their schools. And so a generation of children have now passed through St. Colm's and emerged, educational cripples. Unlearned and unqualified, their future is the dole queue or the labour pool for the De Lorean factory. Meanwhile over in Rathmore Grammar school everything is just fine.

Slipping through the Sectarian Net

has produced an apartheid system which is respected by both sides but most vigorously policed by the Catholics Occasional twists of fate however allow some children to slip through the net to join with those on the other side. Methodist College in Belfast, Dalriada School in Ballymoney, the Rainey Endowed in Sallymena, Limavady Grammar School - all of these are state schools which have a significant number of Catholic children in attendance In certain situations the Catholic Church has had to face the economic facts and realise that where the Catholic population is tiny it may not be able to build a school for them and a de-1 may have to be struck with the local state school. Ballymens for instance, is an overwhei ...ngly Protestant town and there the Catholic Church won an agreement with the Rainey indowed School that if Catholic children attended the school. priests could be sent in to give them their own separate religious instruction The reasonabless of this arrangement is in stark contrast to the Catholic Church's unfeeling dogmatism when it finds itself in a stronger position. It also possesses a disciplinary mechanism which the Protestant churches don't have - it can withhold its sacraments from those whom it wants to bring into line. Faced with this threat, thousands of Catholic parents in N. Ireland nave surrendered and at the Church's bidding sent their children to schools which, however unsuitable, met the Church's only requirement ie, that they control it.

THE VERE FOSTER AFFAIR

An interesting example of this sort of conflict between the Catholic hierarchy and parents occured in the Vere Foster Primary school in the New Barnsley area of Belfast. New Barnsley was a protestant housing state near Ballymurphy but with the flare-up of sectarian violence in 1970 the Protestant families evacuated the area. The 250 houses they left behind were quickly taken by Catholics, Also left benind was the local primary school, Vere Foster, with its teachers, all of whom were Protestant, and only half its original number of students, again ! all of whom were Protestant. The new tenants of the area discovered that the only Catholic

primary schools nearby. St. Aidan's and St. Bernadette's, were full up, and so they did the obvious thing and enrolled their children at Vere Foster That's when the problems started The local priest, Father Fitzpatrick called with the parents to tell them that their children would be denied the sacraments because they were not receiving a proper Catholic education. The parents replied that the local Catholic schools were full up and that they would be too worried about their children's safety if they had to travel to schools outside the area. The Head Teacher, Mr McElwee, said he would be perfectly happy to have a Catholic priest come into the school to give religious instruction, The Church still refused to accept this. The school was not actually controlled by the Church and so they would still deny the sacraments to the child-

The parents, now distraught, presented a letter to Bishop Philbin. He would not receive them but the next day his secretary phoned with his reply. The Bishop thought there was nothing to discuss. There seemed no solution to the problem. The key sacrament, Confirmation, would not be given unless there had been proper religious instruction and the Church would not provide it. Then, suddenly, there came a stroke of luck. A Belfast man who had spent some years training for the priesthood said he would be willing to prepare the children for confirmation. The Department of Education could not pay him for this but the parents collected money around the district to help subsidise him. By this time the situation had attracted a good deal of attention and the parents committee had come to feel its strength. The battle had begin in September and when the examination was done for confirmation at Easter the battle was won. The priest who examined the children found that their religious education had been satisfactory and shortly afterwards appointed a Catholic religious education

The experience was an unusual one for the Church. Normally they do not meet a united and militant parents committee with a helpful ex-seminarian to hand. And normally they win.



The Making of a Catholic Teacher

St. Mary's College of Education was founded in 1898 for the education and training of Catholic women teachers for primary, secondary and special schools. It is the twin of St. Joseph's. All Catholic students if they want to teach in Catholic schools have to go to either of these. The colleges are an extension of the sectarian religious split in education in this community, and they do their best to nurture that split by their existence and teaching. The Church has been very effective in maintaining its control - not only by owning property, but in the ideological hold it has on the minds and psyches of all who pass through the Catholic education system. It has maintained this control, not by open coercion, but

by students themselves internalizing the aims and values of the system. They reproduce that system by first going through it, accepting it, then returning to teach in the same kind of school, often their own school, in which they so recently occupied a subordinate pupil position. Not only do the nuns continue to see them and indeed treat them as subordinates, but they themselves are trapped in the position of being intimidated by authority. They also learn to imitate the roles of their superiors, and intimidate and indoctrinate in their turn. The next lot of students suffer at all levels. The system was/is self-perpetuating.

I spent 4 years at St. Mary's, 3 of which were the most boring of my life. For some women, this

boredom became screaming frustration. A few rebelled but the majority knew what side their bread was buttered on. They kept quiet.

We all felt blackmailed into acceptance. The nuns kept silent, ghostly, suffocating control in the way they are renowned for. Antonia White in Frost in May describes the "gentle twists and signs, the slow breaking of the spirit." Only the nuns had the sense not to boast about it like the Jesuits. Cleanliness, low voices, reproving attitudes and looks, continual admonishment. There was a strong feeling of "Big Brother" about the whole place. If your personal life did not measure up to the morals set for a good Catholic teacher', you were out, possibly without references, or quietly blacklisted in the schools, thus barring you from emplayment. On the other hand, if you were assiduous in the practice of your religion you were treated and viewed most favourably. You were assured of a good chance of jobs whether you were up to the academic standard or not. This surveillance applied to the lecturing staff as well, as did the favouritism in the allocation of jobs within the college. Relations of the clergy often entered the college as students, and indeeu, lecturers, without adequate qualifications.

No debate or contact was encouraged with the university, nor with the other training colleges: Stranmillis, that other bastion of religious/state bigotry. A debate was once held on "Integrated Education". The student hall was crammed with dignitaries of all levels and persuasions whom none of us had ever seen before. With so many of the college authorities present few students professed themselves as having any progressive views in case it would be held against them. That's the kind of self-imposed fear we lived in. The clerics of all 3 colleges were in agreement for once: "No Integrated Education":

In relation to the cirriculum it was difficult at 18 or 19, having just left school, to see through the maze of subjects, to pin-point the bias in the selection and presentation of material. You were confronted with so many apparently new areas of study, you were confused and unsure. Only



years later and after much more reading, did I realise how deliberately biased and selective the courses were. Whole areas and schools of thought within a particular discipline were left out. We did Marxism in a one page handout. The Behaviourist school of psychology was dealt with in great detail, few other schools were mentioned - except for the Freudian. Freud was tricky; he talked about sex, but it was nicely mixed up with neurosis. We women were all suffering from penis envy and men were secre aly in love with their mothers. All this reinforced the patriarshy.

Few women ever did chemistry, biology, physics, computer science, wordwork, metal work, electronics. All did religious education. The curriculum today has charged very little " meet the needs of women. It still offers:

"art, or tie, commercial subjects, trama, education, english, french to other foreign language), geomraphy, history, home economics, withs, music, needlecraft, p.ed., religious studies, science (tasic), marsery/infart education and (a new addition) youth and community work."

in depth. As teachers are taught in depth. As teachers are not given a thorough foundation in their subjects, they feel extremuly threatened and vulnerable when applying for a particular job - which helps when jobs are allocated by patronage - people feel grateful, toe the line quicker.

Nothing in the curriculum ever conflicted with the religious doctrines: if it did, or was in danger of doing so, it was quietly given its proper place, or left out altogether. This was simply a continuation of what it had been like at school. There was no encouragement to analyse or question: lectures were expected to be transcribed word for word. Only the idle (or subversive) sat listening instead of writing.

I did comparative religions in my first year, a subject I entered with great interest. We pretended to look objectively at world religions, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam etc. But we always care back to the Catholic interpretation. "Well they were interesting but real faith, real salvation, real truth lay with US." We whisked through world religions in the first year and the other three were devoted to Catholicism. In

studying this we covered the history of the Bible, read the gospels but mostly concentrated or the doctrine and dogma. All this without any reference to some of the more enlightened Christian thinkers, like Thomas Merton, Bonhoeffer, or Teilhard de Chardin.

The nuns who taught religious education on the level of the baby Jesus coming down from heaven at Christmas, the nuns who had wonderful ideas for visual aids about the mass or family rosary, stumbled, meandered, were uneasy and inadequate when it came to discussing deeper philosophical questions. They too had been inadequately trained not to think too much and ultimately to fall back on faith.

Acceptance, faith were the continual messages. You always submitted to an authority greater than your own. We grew up lacking strength and confidence in our own ideas and insights. Most of us had come straight from school and had no confidence in our own judgment. The system's main purpose is not to educate in any real meaning of that word, but to maintain and extend the power of the Catholic Church. The female religious orders proved thorough. dedicated, self-effacing servants of this hierarchy of male power. The impulse to question was recognised but snuffed out by set answers, prescribed texts, which reduced human existence to a static, death-obsessed hierarchy with a male god at the top.

As women this affected us on so many levels of our most intimate being. We had the example of the frgin constantly before us. Our sexuality was repressed as non-existent. Our womanhood could only be under stood in terms of

marriage and procreation, of sel-sacrifice, motherhood or perpetual virginity and obedience to the patriarchy. All this was required of a good catholic teacher. Without your Certificate of Religious Education, you were told, you would not be employed in any Catholic school If your personal life did not conform, you were out. That meant if you had a boy friend, you had to be careful not to be an occasion of sin to him; if you married, you forfeited your career; if you had a child outside of marriage, you were a fallen woman; lesbianism was never mentioned and being gay obviously would have meant dismissal. If you asked questions in a lecture, you were a radical; if you didn't you were the apathetic younger generation. Some of the more interesting and stimulating lecturers either left or were moved to somewhere else, like Fr. Brian Brady and Fr. Murphy. So our whole education and that which we were meant to pass on emphasised and reinforced our eventual roles as subservient, becoming agents of this oppression of ourselves as women.

During those years at St. Mary's we were in the heart of one of the most economically depressed areas of N. Ireland. Civil rights demonstrators were on the streets, police were terrorising the people of the Falls, followed by the Brits. St. Marys' doors remained closed. No mention was ever made of the lives of the population who lived outside the gates. We had a few bomb scares, and oddly enough no army raids; the college held serene, firm, unmoved.



THE HOLY FAMILY

One of the areas which is immediately associated with organised religion's impact on our daily lives is the attitude of the churches to the whole area of sexuality and reproduction. There are few other questions of doctrine on which the churches speak with such a united voice as on the question of the family, although dissension may emerge in the finer print on questions like contraception and homosexuality. In this article we examine what the churches say about these questions.

Just as many socialists will baulk at the thought of challenging individuals who profess belief in a deity, so do political organisations baulk at the prospect of challenging the collective authority of the churches on questions of morality and personal life. Defining the moral way to reproduce and to express sexuality is still seen by most Irish people to be the special responsibility of the churches. It is perhaps the area where the churches in general are most invincible (and in the case of the Catholic hierarchy, the least qualified). They are to be consulted on issues of morality, it is part of their function to give moral, direction to the state and to their flocks, as if morality was some impartial divine standard which the churches can translate for the secular state.

It is interesting to note, however, that moral standards can and do change; they can be reversed to suit the needs of the state at particular time.

Given that the churches are vested with this moral function, and the right to define morality, it is rarely that this right is challenged. With increasing secularisation the state may differ from one or all of the churches on a given question at a given time, but the right of the churches to define that issue for their flocks clearly overrides that of the state to formulate a legal code for its citizens.

Therefore, to challenge the right of the churches to define morality is to declare yourself opposed to morality itself, and therefore immoral. To attack church teaching on sexual morality, in particular the family, is to declare yourself to be an enemy of all



that is good, upright and wholesome in society as we know it. You are the most unspeakable of creatures - a sexual terrorist you are pushing the revolution too far.

Perhaps one of the reasons why the churches have for so long maintained such power and influence in this field is that for so long "personal life" has been seen to be quite separate and irrelevant to "proper politics". The main challenge to this view has come with the changing role of women both within existing political movements and separately with the growth of an autonomous women's movement. Questions such as the role of the family in society, the role of women in the family, contraception, abortion, nomosexuality, became contentious issues, almost political issues.

However this separation - this division of politics into the 'real political issues' (jobs, houses, international affairs etc) and the 'irrelevancies' (do you still beat your wife?) still persists. It is interesting to note that the only time in the House of Commons when MPs are consistently allowed to vote irrespective of party line (or perhaps in the absence of party line) is on issues such as abortion, which is regarded as a matter of individual conscience, and, in Ireland in particular, it is the role of the churches, not of political parties, to inform the individual conscience on such matters.

One of the other main factors in the maintenance of church influence in this field has been the strong influence exerted by the

churches on the education of child-(see article on the churches and education). The Catholic Church controls its own schools, and therefore maintains a powerful control over the 'moral education' of the children in its flock. The Protestant Churches' control in the schools is less direct, but they do play a prominant role in religious and therefore moral education. Outside the schools, youth organisations such as the Boys Brigade and the Girls Brigade supplement the diet of moral righteousness. In spite of - or increasingly, because of - changes in society, all the churches remain champions of the family. It is sacred in all catechisms. However within the general principle a certain degree of variation can and does exist between the churches.

THE POPE LAYS DOWN THE LINE

The Catholic Church's position on the family and sexuality has remained virtually unchanged since the Council of Trent, the rule-making assembly which spearheaded the counterreformation against Luther. Canon 1013 of the Catholic Church's teachings holds, among other things, that sex can only take place within marriage. Successive popes have reiterated the special place of the family within the Church, and the importance of the Christian family. John Paul II on his recent visit to Ireland trotted out the time-honoured message to the young people at Galway:

"Yes, dear young people, do not close your eyes to the moral sickness that stalks your socety today, and from which your youth alone will not protect you. How many young people have already warped their consciences and have substituted the true joy of life with drugs, sex, alcompl, vandalism and the empty purtuit of mere material possessions."

And to the crowds at Limerick:

"The Christian family has been in the past Ireland's greatest spiritual resource. Modern conditions and social changes have created new patterns and new difficulties for family life and for Christian marriage. I want to sa to you do not be discouraged, do not follow the trends where a close-knit family is seen as outdated; the Christian family is more important for the Church and for society today than ever before."

The role of women within the family is as central as ever to this do trine. Thus, it could have been John Paul II at Galway who sai.

retolerable and at all costs to be abolished is the abuse whereby others of families are forced to engage in gainful occupation outside the domes is balls, to the region of their own proper cares and duties, particularly the upbringing of their children."

In fact it wasn't John Paul II in 1979 but Pius XI in 1931 in an encyclical entitled Quadragissimo Anno.

But the maintenance of the Catholic Church's position on the family and marriage and the position of women has not been limited to the issuing of the odd encyclical, or even the odd speech by a visiting pope. The Church has set up organisations such as Marriage Encounter (see box) which employs new, glossy techniques in staving off attacks on the sacred family.

THE PROTESTANT CHURCHES

Similarly, puritanism and resistance to change are almost as evident in grass-roots Irish Protestant attitudes towards the family, sexuality and women as they are in Irish Catholicism. But there is one important difference: the relatively democratic structures of the Irish Presbyterian Church and the Church of Ireland make them much more responsive to pressures for change imported from less religious societies like Britain and the United States than does the strict authoritarianism of the Irish Catholic Church. Some Protestant attitudes towards such things as



Would they oppose legal abortions if they got pregnant?

birth control, the ordination of women and homosexuality have been changing over the past half-century as a result. The overwhelming majority of Protestants in Ireland belong to the above two churches. The smaller churches and sects like the Methodists, Baptists and Brethren usually take a much more rigid line on issues of the family. The attitudes of Free Presbyterianism are inevitably the most unbendingly 'scriptural of them all, taking their inspiration largely from the teachings of the apostle Paul, with his emphasis on the 'holy family' and his deep distrust of women.

The main Irish Protestant churches still see the family as the essential fulcrum of Christian civilisation, and are deeply suspicious of modern ideas of sexual freedom, womens liberation, rights for sexual minorities, and alternative structures to the nuclear family. But unlike the Catholic Church, they have adapted more rapidly to the fact that they are on the defensive in a world of rapidly changing social and sexual mores. This both gives them less control over and allows more personal freedoms to the decreasing numbers of their adherents.

But deep down the old reaction ry ideas - especially on the position of women - still die hard. A recent example came from a woman columnist in the Presbterian Herald. In fairness these comments by 'Abigail' in October 1976 were roundly attacked by a number of letters in the following month's issue. But they are

worth recording if only to show how many conservative Irish Protestants still feel about the position of women in the family:

"Women are inclined to forget or may have never realised their position in the home. 'Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord' (Paul's epistle to the Ephesians chapter 6, verse 22) is a clear command from God. Your husband may be extravagant, he may be mean, he may have faults. Nevertheless you are to live in submission to him....You may even have fewer frowns and feel much younger as you submit to your husband's authority and life will become more relaxed, naturally."

Its perhaps not coincidental to mention that Paul also had an ultra-reactionary line on a related subject. One of his instructions to a group of foreign Christians was "Slave, go backto your position as a slave to your master."

DIVORCE

On the question of divorce, there are major differences between the Catholic Church and the Protestant churches. Divorce is generally accepted among Protestants, even though hard-line fundamentalists still consider it a sin, referring back to such sayings of Jesus Christ as: "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for formication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery." But the general attitude of both the Church of Ireland and the Presbyterians can be summed up in the 1976 report of the former on the remarriage of divorced persons:

"Noone wishes to encourage divorce; but we do believe that in certain cases, where attempts at reconciliation have failed, official separation or divorce may be the proper course, and one to be accepted by the Church."

Nevertheless the report puts any breakdown of marriage in the context of the basic teaching that marriage is intended by God to be monogamous and life-long and emphasises that "sin is not a ground for nullity, but it is behind marrial breakdown."

On the question of divorce, the Catholic Church maintains its historic position, that divorce is immoral and illegal in church law. This has always been its position and will continue to be its position if John Paul II's "not an inch" speech at Galway is any indication:

"The very possibility of divorce in the sphere of civil law makes stable and permanent marriages more difficult for everyone. May Ireland always continue to give witness before the modern world to her traditional commitment, corresponding to the true dignity of man, to the sanctity and the indissolubility of the marriage bond. May the Irish always support marriage."

MIXED MARRIAGES

A similar division of opinion between the Catholic Church and the Protestant Churches exists in relation to mixed marriages between a Catholic and a person of another denomination. In Ireland, particularly in the Belfast and Cork dioceses, the Catholic Church takes a very intransigent stand on this issue, demanding that the Catholic partner get a dispensation from the bishop to marry a non-Catholic. Under Pope Paul's Matrimonia Mixta of 1970, they must promise to "do all in their power" to have all children of the marriage brought up as Catholics. The non-Catholic partner must be informed of this promise "at an opportune time ... so that it is clear that he (sic) is coanisant of the promise and obligation on the part of the Catholic." In Cork Bishop Lucey still demands a written

agreement from the non-Catholic partner that he/she will allow the children to be brought up as Catholics.



The Protestant churches tend to have a much more liberal view of mixed marriage, although almost anything would look liberal beside the Catholic church's view. The Protestant churches appear to be more conscious that the whole institution of Christian marriage and upbringing is under attack from secularism and believe that all the Irish churches should work together to defend it.

CONTRACEPTION

On the question of contraception, the Catholic church once again makes the other churches appear reasonable and liberal. The position of the Catholic church on contraception dates from the Counter- Reformation in the 17th century. Under Article 1013 of Canon Law contraception is forbidden because "the primary end of marriage is procreation." In 1930 Pius XI agained condemned artificial birth control in his encyclical Casti Conubii. Pope John XXIII, however, opened the door slightly in his encyclical Mater et Magistra in 1964, and the second Vatican Council called into question many of the old teachings when it announced: 'Marriage to be sure is not instituted solely for procreation. Statements

"Sone of the Church (what about the daughters?) may not undertake methods of regulating procreation which are found blameworthy by the teaching authority of the Church."

To remove the vagueness and clarify what the church was actually teaching, John XXIII set up a Commission. The problem was that by the time the Commission reported, John was dead.

The Commission issued two reports. The majority report argued that previous church teaching on sexuality had merely represented the attitudes of the times and that the times had changed. Even the church had changed, now allowing birth control through the use of natural cycles (the rhythm method). Unfortunately, only 60% of women have regular cycles, and therefore, argued the liberal majority, there was need for artificial contraception. They concluded that the primary purpose of marriage was mutual love, and that might mean on some a occasions forgoing parenthood.

None of this was particularly revolutionary or feminist, but it was certainly radical by official Catholic standards and far too radical for a small group in the Commission who issued a minority report. In it they began emphatically: "Contraception is always wrong." Every sexual act in marriage must be open to procreation, they said. In effect they argued that there could be no change in the traditional three propositions of Catholic moral theology: namely, that sex can only take place within marriage, that contraception is forbidden and that abortion is never justified. Any change, they said, would create a "contraceptive mentality," the consequence of which would be "anarchy" - extramarital sex, unnatural sex acts in marriage, masturbation, sterilisation, homosexuality and abortion.

The two reports were sent on June 28, 1968, to the new Pope, Paul VI. There are many things that one could say about Paul, but the most crucial is that he was no John XXIII. One month after receiving the reports, he issued his encyclical on contraception, Humanae Vitae. He began by pointing out that "the conclusions at which the Commission arrived could not be considered by us as definitive." What he meant was that he was going to

by the church on

contraception be-

came more vague:

ignore the liberal report of the vast majority. Humanae Vitae was modelled on the minority report. The liberal challenge had been quashed. It was business-as-usual in the Vatican as far as sexuality was concerned.

The Protestant churches' position, like their position on most other such issues, places a strong emphasis on the primacy of the individual conscience; this has meant that Protestantism has traditionally been markedly more liberal on certain personal and sexual matters than Catholicism. Th.3, as long ago as 1951, a report of the National and International Affairs Committee of the Irish Presbyterian Church came out strongly in favour of Christians being allowed to make up their own minds about how they practiced birth control. This was despite an unsuccessful amendment which stated that "for mer and comen who have entered age state to refuse to the mar have children, except for some very sufficient reasons, is a sin against God."

In 1959 the same committee stated that:

"Prohitition by a civil government of the use of contraceptives is an infringement of the right of individuals, and an unwarranted interference by the state in the affairs of the family which is the basic unit of society."

Other Protestant churches have a similarly liberal position, even though their grass-roots are not always in accord. As far back as 1930 the Lambeth Conference of the Anglican Church (the rule-making body for the World Anglican churches, including the Church of Ireland) gave limited approval to the use of contraceptives. But the Church of Ireland has never stated explicitly that the use of contraceptives is justified.

In 1972 President Nixon wrote to New York's Cardinal Cooke assuring the Church of the President's co-operation in the battle against abortion rights. Nixon was proclaiming his belief in the 'sanctity of life' at the very time when, as commander-inchief of the U.S. forces in Vietnam, he was ordering the napalming of thousands of women and children.



ABORTION

When one comes to examine the Catholic position on abortion, it becomes apparent that the Catholic church has not only failed to liberalise its attitude, but in fact has become even more conservative in recent years.

Its attitude towards abortion has changed considerably over the centuries, despite what various Popes may claim. As late as 1591 Pope Gregory XVI declared that abortion was only a sin if it took place after "ensoulment" - deemed to take place 40 days after conception for males and 80 days for females. The Holy Fathers were undeterred by the impossibility of determining any distinction in the sex of a foetus. It was only in the 18th century that Pius IX el-

iminated this distinction between souled and unsouled foetuses and outlawed all abortions.

Since that time the church has become steadily more draconian in its pronouncements on the issue, and now invokes the theological principle of "double effect", invented initially by Thomas Aquinas. This can be elastic when it comes to questions like capital punishment, or killing in self defence - where the (good) intent to save your life outweighs the (bad, but unintended) consequence of your assailant's death - but it is utterly inflexible when it comes to abortion, no matter the circumstance. Take, for example,

"The Church and its hierarchy that today brings us SPUC (Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child) and the foetus fetishists is the same one that gave us the Spanish Inquisition, the execution of five willion women as witches and which even today, as reiterated by Pope Paul, holds that women are unfit for the priesthood ... The Church has always upheld the existing social order. It defended feudalism and even slavery as divinely ordained, so is it any wonder that it upholds the slavery of women to biology?"

Dr. Barbara Roberts, speech at Abortion Rights Tribunal London, January 1977 a woman with an ectopic pregnancy, where a fertilised egg has lodged in her Fallopian tube rather than the uterus. If the egg is not removed the woman will die from a ruptured tube, and there is no question of the egg ever developing into a baby. Only in 1947 did the church permit an operation to be performed to save the woman's life - but by Canon Law surgeons cannot simply remove the foetus from the tube (which is standard surgical procedure) allowing the woman to conceive normally in the future they have to remove the entire tube, permanently affecting a woman's capacity to bear children, because the church does not allow the foetus to be directly tampered with. Small wonder Dr Roberts has bitterly termed them "foetus fetishists." The double effect principle can only be invoked in three circumstances: if a woman's life is threatened by uterine cancer, appendicitis, or tubal pregnancy. No other contingency is allowed for - kidney disease, for example - because it is not one of the categories that have been considered by the hierarchy.

The Catholic church declares that a woman has no right to abortion, even to save her life (Pope Paul, 1972); to justify this rigid dictate, it uses blatant emotionalism, like showing enlarged colour photos of six month foetuses and claiming them to be example of a 12 week abortion. The heavy hand of the Church can be seen behind the wave of hysteria fomented in Britain over the issue of abortion. Although Catholics are a small percentage of the population it has been MPs in predominately Catholic constituencies who have

been pressurised into proposing Private Members bills to curtail the 1967 Act through the threat of loss of support at election time. While the Benyon, White and Corrie bills were under discussion in the House of Commons, services were held in all major Catholic churches. Catholics provided the majority of support at regional and national anti-abortion demonstrations. Catholic children are continually subjected to anti-abortion propaganda, in the guise of 'sex education' and they form a large nucleus of support for the "Right to Life" protests - their attendance 'helped' by the Catholic Church to the extent of buses being laid on by the local parishes. Saints Days are set aside to remember unborn babies and church door collections provide vast amounts of money for the anti-abortion campaign. All this amounts to a formidable operation, a battle that the Catholic Church is channelling its considerable resources into and one that it is determined to win. Concern over the social consequences for women if there was a return to back street abortion has been notably absent.

The Catholic Church regulations are hypocritical in the extreme on the one hand they justify beforehand any policeman who kills in self-defence, any soldier who kills in time of war, or any government which executes those considered criminals - while on the other they condemn beforehand any woman who has an abortion - for her, there are no extenuating circumstances. But whatever the contradictions in the Catholic Church's position on abortion throughout the centuries, one factor remains consistent: a group of men, who constitute the hierarchy, has taken upon itself all power to determine what a woman can do with her own body.

In countries throughout the world, including traditionally Catholic countries such as Italy and Ireland, the Catholic church is losing ground as more and more women demand the right to contraception, regardless of church doctrine. The abortion battle has been lost in Italy, with the passing of the abortion law in 1978 despite huge church opposition and the threat of wholesale excommunication. A similar relaxation of attitude is evident in Britain with the discovery by the Woman's Own survey that the majority of Catholics support the 1967 abortion law. As society becomes increasingly secular, this position will obviously become more common. It would appear, from a survey carried out by the British Pregnancy Advisory Service in 1976, that catholics have had more abortions than their numbers in relation to the population would warrant. (Sunday Times, 28 November, 1976) And of the 843 women from Northern Ireland who had abortions via the Ulster Pregnancy Advisory Association, one in five were catholic, a considerable increase over previous years.

AN AGENCY FOR PREVENTING ABORTIONS

The change in attitude is one which the Catholic church is only too well aware of and, with its usual facility for coping with changing circumstances, it has now established CURA as an organisation to help pregnant women.











for centuries men like these have controlled women's bodies

Its advertising is curiously similar to that of the Ulster Pregnancy Advisory Association, which, because of the illegality of abortion in Northern Ireland, is forced to discreetly advertise its function thus: "Pregnant? Distressed? Contact UPAA ... ' CURA employs the same method to reach pregnant, desperate women. But whereas the UPAA counsels women on all the options open to them - adoption, abortion, how to cope as a single parent, etc. -CURA is explicitly an agency to prevent abortion. The pregnant women who appear on their doorstep - and in 1979 CURA's nine centres in Ireland (Dublin, Belfast, Kilkenny, Cork, Limerick, Waterford, Sligo, Galway and Derry) received 4.156 telephone queries - will have the horrors and sinfulness of abortion graphically spelled out, and counselling will consist primarily of the joys of adoption after a pregnancy sent in the shelter of a convent It is by means of such decept as that the church continues its fight for control.

But despite the fact that catholic women appear to be ignoring church regulations, at least with regard to their own particular situation, the future for any reform in the abortion law looks bleak. Even if the law was changed in the six counties, it remains doubtful whether women would get the necessary consent from doctors; areas like Birmingham, with its high proportion of catholic consultants, are areas where almost no abortions are performed on the National Health Service. Catholic nurses are forbidden, under pain of excommunication, to assist in abortions; the only action the Catholic Nurses Guild allows them to undertake in such situations is the provision of sterilised instruments, as, according to the tortuous logic of Catholic-ism, these are "morally neutral." Free abortion on demand is the only means whereby the conservatism of the medical profession can be combatted; but at the present time the demand has been deemed too revolutionary in its implications by the political and medical establishment a every country in the western world.

None of this should be taken as implying that the Protestant churches have a better position on abortion. In Northern Ireland women also have to contend with fundamentalist Protestantism which is equally repressive on the question of a woman's right to

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER

Traditional and ultra-conservative the Catholic church may be, but it has nevertheless never been slow to exploit secular and psychological experiments to strengthen its hold on its followers. Its recent incursions into group encounter psychology provide an example. The last decade has seen a proliferation of pseudo-psychological encounter organisations prompted by the "success" of Marriage Encounter in the late sixties. Although initially hostile, the church soon realised the potential usefulness of these new approaches and proceeded to take them over. Today a whole host of encounter organisations reaffirm and propagate the Catholic way of life, and represent considerable influence and finance for the church: these include Engaged Encounter Youth Encounter, Widow Encounter and encounter groups for the old. When added to other church-controlled organisations such as CURA. the charismatic movement, "We the Parish," youth clubs, etc., these provide a formidable battery in the struggle for control of the minds and bodies of the flock. Central to this is the family unit, regarded by the church as the foundation on which all its power rests. So the threats to the family thrown up by the changes of the twentieth century - urbanisation, modernisation and so on - are being countered by twentieth century psychology. This is best illustrated by Marriage

Although only introduced into Northern Ireland about six years ago, Marriage Encounter has rapidly grown in size and influence. Originally encounter weekends were held in St. Clement's, Belfast, where about twenty couples can be catered for. Within the last two years new larger premises have been acquired at Dromantine in South Armagh, There Catholic couples undergo an intense 48-hour course designed to strengthen their marriage and rejuvenate their religion. The two are seen as inseparable. The weekend begins with meditation about onself; the second stage is to introduce the partner; and finally the triangle is completed with God. The course pulls no punches; partners write out their likes and dislikes about each other; some discuss in public intimate aspects of their emotional relationships with which the rest can compare notes. The strategy aims at "softening up" the victims so that when God is introduced they are at their most vulnerable. As one person who experienced the course commented: "By the time they got round to introducing the religion bit, I was feeling so good I didn't mind."

That many people enjoy the course is without question. For some it represents their only chance to escape the normal routines of housework, childminding, etc. (The organisation provides a free service of volunteer baby-sitters.) For others the weekend together does enrich their relationship, as would a weekend away anywhere. What is reprehensible about Marriage Encounter is that the church, by presenting an improved marital relationship as conditional on a renewal of faith, is guilty of cynical abuse of its position. Many of those who take the weekend course are the victims of a confidence trick, because in reality Marriage Encounter weekends are a religious retreat for married couples. By skillfully grafting religion onto intimate emotional experiences the church is ruthlessly exploiting the situation. On the other hand, it is doing no less than its stated intentions - reinforcing the supremacy of family and religion.

control her own body. Non-Catholic churches tend to oppose abortion as a choice for women with unwanted pregnancies, but take a more liberal (sic) stand on the grounds on which abortion is justified. The Irish Presbyterian Church's National and International Problems Committee's report on sexual problems in 1959 stated:

"Only on the most serious grounds should abortion be permitted, where the life of the mother is really endangered; and every precaution should be taken to ensure that it

is not done irresponsibly and without due regard to moral standards. We cannot, however, agree with the Roman Catholic doctrine that the life of the foetus must take precedence over the life of the mother." a

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Abortion is regarded as a very emotive issue by both the churches and the state. The women's movement with its insistence that women have the right to control their own fertility poses a fundamental threat to clerical control and church influence in these matters. The churches will oppose anything which threatens the family with its hierarchical power structure and the implied subordination of women. If sex were to be divorced from procreation, if in other words it was regarded as a pleasurable activity in itself, the necessity for marriage and the family would be seriously undermined. For that reason, all the churches, but the Catholic church in particular, incline strongly to the view that sexual activity is designed for the production of children.

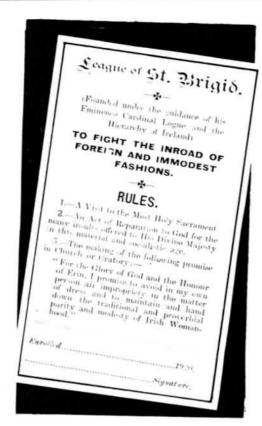
HOMOSEXUALITY

Seen in this light, therefore, homosexuality is a non-starter. The Catholic church mentions it in the same breath as all manner of heinous crimes. It is a perversion, and therefore sinful. The Protestant churches contain various strands of opinion - from the Protestants who organised the "Save Ulster from Sodomy" campaign against the introduction of the Homosexual Law Reform in Northern Ireland, to the mixed attitude adopted by, for example, the Presbyterian church.

The National and International Problems Committee of the Presbyterian church came out in favour of the Wolfenden Report (1957), which recommended the liberalisation of legislation on sexuality and prostitution in Britain. It called the report "sane and balanced," yet concluded in its report on homosexuality:

"Christian teaching declares that the divine or holy use of the human sexual relationship lies in the marriage of a man and a woman and in family life. Any other practice, whether heterosexual or homosexual, whether for persons married or unmarried, is a shortcoming or abuse."

The report goes on to say: "Homosexuals should be protected from persecution whether in public or private, while always being answerable like any other citizens for breaches of the law." But significantly it does not come down in favour of extending the 1967 law allowing homosexual acts between consenting adults in private to Northern Ireland. It sits on the fence, like so many Presbyterian statements on controversial issues that might offend its ultra-conservative grass roots.



ORDINATION OF WOMEN

It is interesting to note the attitude of the various churches to their own women members, in relation to the question of the ordination of women. Needless to say, the Vatican takes a hard line, women being excluded from receiving Holy Orders under Canon Law 968. Bishop Newman at a conference in the R.D.S. in Dublin in January 1976 announced that Christ did not include women amongst the twelve apostles, and this was obviously quite deliberate. The question is very much a non-issue as far as the Catholic church authorities are concerned. The priesthood looks like remaining an exclusively male preserve for some time to come. Moreover, it is obvious that conservative John Paul II is doing more than just make anti-women speeches. The Vatican is about to issue an order that women should read the lessons at masses only in exceptional circumstances where no layman can be found.

In contrast, both the Presbyterian church and the Church of Ireland have come out in favour of the ordination of women in the past few years. The new Church of Ireland Archbishop, Dr Armstrong, is

one of the strongest proponents of of this change. But here again there seems to be sharp divergence of opinion between the more liberal ideas of the leaderships and the fundamentalism of many ordinary congregations. A 1978 article in Evangelical Voice, the mouthpiece of the Presbyterian fundamentalist pressure group Campaign for Concerned Witness to Reformed Truth, warned of the "potential danger spot" of the "consequences of the decision of the General Assembly" to ordain women, and referred to the many who "dislike the idea and object to the practice of the ordination of women to the ministru."

CONCLUSION

It is difficult to analyse the overall trend in terms of fluence of the churches in the whole area of sexuality, reproduction and the role of women. To a certain extent some churches have adapted to accomodate the less far-reaching pressures for change. One can detect a kind of desperation and moral panic on the part of some of the Protestant churches in the face of increasing secularisation. This is evident in statements like that of the Social Problems Committee of the Presbyterian church in 1969 when it condemned the prevailing trends of intemperance, broken marriages, gamb-ling, vandalism, sexual license, bad housing and lack of hospital accomodation, and went on to state that "civic unrest undoubtedly breeds social stress and sexual license would appear to have led to an increase in venereal disease."

But the Catholic church appears to be a very different kettle of loaves and fishes. Half the population of Ireland going to see John Paul II last September illustrated only too clearly the continuing and overwhelming control the Catholic church exercises over Irish attitudes. The Pope himself summed up the confidence of the Catholic hierarchy when he said at Maynooth:

"The degree of religious practice in Ireland is high. For this we must be constantly thanking God. But will this high level of religious practice continue? Will the next generation of young Irishmen and Irish women still be as faithful as their fathers were? After my two days in Ireland, after my meeting with Ireland's youth in Galway, I am confident that they will."

CATHOLICISM AND REPUBLICANISM

The Catholic Bishop Cathal Daly began 1980 by making an attack on the Provisional IRA. The main content of his speech, reported in the British and Irish papers on January 2nd, was that the IRA is involved in a murderous campaign which is a disgrace to the Irish nationalist tradition.

"The new IRA is a radically new phenonomenon in Irish history and it is a sinister one. It is now taking a shape alien to Irish tradition and Irish values."

The implication, skillfully made, is that there is an honourable tradition of Irish Republicanism of whi... the church has always approved. In this context it is instructive to remember the past record of the Catholic Church with regard to the fight for national independence.

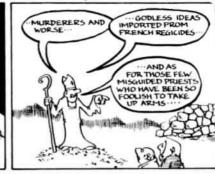
The anti-imperialist struggle in Ireland has always presented a difficulty for socialists because the majority of Republicans regard themselves as members of the Catholic Church and, by implication, followers of the Church's doctrines. Although the Church refuses to support the anti-imperialist cause and has on occasion violently opposed the IRA, Republicans appear to have little difficulty in reconciling this condemnation with their religious beliefs.

"... many Irishmen are willing to take their guidance in religious matters from Rome, but not their politics." (An Phoblacht, March 5, 1972)

Historically, the Church has had immense power in dictating on social and economic matters, but has had to exercise caution when it comes to the national question. This separation of issues - both by the Church and by Republicans has enabled a situation to exist where clerical influence continues unchallenged, so long as it remains within the confines of "faith and morals" and does not respass too overtly into the political arena. This is part of the reason why anti-clericalism has never been a feature of progressive movements in Ireland; of course, of crucial importance is the historic link between the

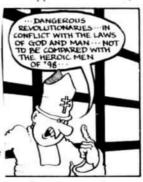






Catholic Church and the Irish people in resisting the imperial domination of Britain. The persecution of Catholics at the time of the Reformation and the implementation of the Penal Laws, designed to ensure Catholics never achieved social or economic power, forced clergy and flock into an alliance against a common oppressor. Thus, material condit-

Church in Ireland fought for the right to exist, it steadfastly refused to support violent resistance and opposed all revolutionary movements. It has always been Church teaching that it is wrong to join a secret society because, by virtue of its being secret, it is outside the jurisdiction of the Church and hence outside God's law. To counter





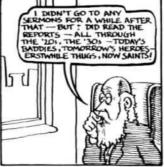


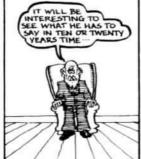
ions gave rise to a close identification with Church interests a far cry from the situation in
19th century Italy where the Pope,
ensconced within the Papal States,
became a barrier to the unification of the country, resulting in
the rapid development of an anticlericalism which continues to be
a feature of Italian political
life.

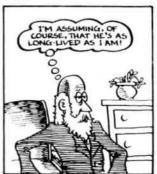
But, although the Catholic

this dictum the IRA has always gone to great pains to deny that it is a "secret society." An IRA Constitution published in 1932 stated that the organisation

"is not and never has been what is termed a 'secret society.'
Its existence, constitution and policy are openly declared. Secrecy as to its activities is only maintained to safeguard it from attack."







However, even if the organisation is not "secret," Church doctrine provides another method of attack: whether rebellion can be justified in theological terms. According to this, rebellion can only be resorted to when the evils of the regime are intolerable and can be removed in no other way; and when there is a real chance of a successful uprising. This last is a real Catch-22 because so far the Church has yet to declare conditions in Ireland favourable to any rising. Consistency is not necessarily the Church's strong point; the Irish hierarchy was not deterred on theological grounds from declaring the fascist attack upon the lawfully elected Spanish government of 1936 to be legitimate in the eyes of God, as they blessed the fascists who went off to fight and condemned the republican socialists who left Ireland to defend the Republic. But the Church's record within Ireland is unremittingly consistent as they, decade after decade, condemned all progressive movements. In 1798, at the time of the United Irishmen. the majority of bishops and clergy urged the people to submit to foreign rule rather than fight against the oppressor. Clerical reaction reached a crescendo at the time of the Fenian Brotherhood in the 1860s. Although Ireland had been devasted by famine and the Fenians received widespread support for their activities, the hierarchy condemned them in 1863 and the Pope issued a general condemnation of Fenianism in 1870. Moriarity, Bishop of Kerry, gave a sermon after the Fenian Rising in which he denoun ced the Fenians as criminals who had God's heaviest curse:

"his withering, blasting, blighting curse on them, and for those whose punishment eternity is not long enough, nor hell hot enough."

NO PRIESTS IN POLITICS

The period of Fenianism produced the strongest condemnation of an Irish revolutionary movement the Church has ever made; it is easy to see why. The Fenians were not only revolutionary nationalists, but they were determinedly anticlerical. They insisted there should be "no priests in politics" and they argued for the complete separation of Church and

State in the new Ireland. It was, above all else, this stand that the Church could not tolerate, because a successful Fenian revolt would have meant not only the ending of British rule, but the establishment of a modern democratic non-confessional state. The failure of the Fenians had important repercussions within Irish republicanism. The next generation of fighters were unwilling to incur the unequivocal enmity of the Catholic Church because to run the risk of excommunication was something few Catholics were prepared to undertake. As a result, the handful of priests sympathetic to the Republican cause were (and still are) often used by the leadership as a means of allaying the religious scruples of the rank and file. For example, at the turn of the century in County Tyrone two priests, Fathers O'Daly and Coyle, were enrolled in the IRB and both regularly gave talks to new recruits to



CHARLES J KICKHAM

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AND PRIESTS MAY BE BAD POLITIC—
IANS AND WORSE IRISHMEN,"

assure them they were not going against Church teaching. Similarly, in Dublin a missionary priest, Father Denis O'Sullivan, was persuaded to give talks to IRB men of the Dublin district when on visits home. Father Michael O'Flanagan who became Vice-President of Sinn Fein in 1917 was an invaluable ally, although he lost his parish because of his political activities.

THE EASTER RISING

The attitude of the Church towards the 1916 Rising is an interesting example of an institution forced to accept the strength of popular feeling, despite the wellknown guidelines for what constitutes 'legitimate' rebellion. Out of 31 bishops, 7 emphatically condemned the Rising, while 22 expressed no views at all - including the Archbishop of Dublin. The reason for this uncharacteristic silence is plain: although most of the hierarchy vehemently disapproved of the Rising, the military repression that had immediately followed it, in particular the executions of the leaders and the whole-scale arrests and deportations, had led to an outcry against the British government and the Catholic leaders were reluctant to say anything which might appear to condone these activities. They also lost no time in capitalising on the wave of religious fervour which followed the Rising as masses were held around the country in honour of the dead. The Catholic Bulletin was one of the few journals permitted by the censor to continue publication; each issue not only glorified the dead leaders but also assured the world of their undying devotion to the Church. One issue claimed:

"It looks as if with the Requiem Masses for the dead, there is united, as if by common consent, a general union of prayer for Ireland amounting almost to exaltation."

For this period and during the War of Independence, the Catholic Church appeared to be fully in support of the national cause. The atrocities of the Black and Tans were such that the Church could not have failed to condemn British involvement.

'Eternity is not long enough, nor hell hot enough'

THE CHURCH BACKS THE TREATY

However, the true interests of the church were quickly revealed once Britain and Ireland met in conference to discuss a proposed solution to the conflict. The hierarchy expressed its approval of the Treaty before Dail Eireann had voted upon the issue - a fact which clearly swayed some who had been undecided. The church and business interests threw all their power and influence behind the Treaty forces and from this time onwards the church was once more to occupy its familiar role of backing the most conservative forces in society. Pope Benedict XV also helped by speaking out in favour of the Treaty, paying tribute, schizophrenically enough, to both George V and the Irish people.

WITH GOD ON THEIR SIDE

As the bishops regarded the Provisional government to be the lawful government of Ireland, they declared those on the anti-Treaty side to be subversives. During the Civil War a Pastoral Letter condemned the Republicans who "in the absence of any legitimate authority" were engaged in criminal acts, "a system of murder and assassination of the National forces." Republicans were now excommunicated and refused the sacraments if they attempted to go to confession or communion. De Valera, a pious Catholic, appealed unsuccessfully to Rome against the action of the bishops. The only joy he got was an informal Papal representative sent over to report on the situation. Most Republicans appear to have taken the position of Frank Gallagher, a leading Republican polemicist, who published an open letter of refutation to the bishops in which he stated:

"National dejence becomes murder on the part of the Republican troops, but actual murder by the Free State Forces is practically abetted by the Irish hierarchy."

During the Civil War the Free State government executed 77 Republicans, which was many more than were executed by the British, while a further 153 people were killed by Free State murder gangs. With regard to these killings the Church maintained a discreet silence. The Free State could with impunity claim God to be with them - General Mulcahy, after the execution of three teenage boys, un-

blushingly demonstrated the Christian ethic that inspired him and his forces:

"We are the people who realise that man is made in the image and likeness of God and we treat men as such ... When a man is going to his death he does get a priest."



GENERAL MULCAHY, UPHOLDER OF FASCIST AND CATHOLIC PRINCIPLES, SPEAKING AT A BLUESHIRT RALLY,

It has been argued that the reactionary position taken by the Church during the Civil War did much to lessen its influence within the new Irish state. This is a view held by the renowned fighter Dan Breen, who said the Civil War saved the Irish people "from the government of Maynooth" because from the the Church "drove one half of the people against them with the result that they never regained the power they once had." The 1930s were to demonstrate that this was an overly optimistic conclusion. Although considerable anti-episcopal feeling had indeed been generated, no anticlerical factions emerged other than the miniscule communist groupings. Those who had fought against the Treaty remained in the the tradition of Republicanism many rejected the Church but were reluctant (Breen amongst them) to ever voice this rejection publicly. The vast majority of the people remained Catholic and Sinn Fein and the IRA were conscious that if their organisations were associated with antireligious sentiments, the Church and the Free State gover.ment would seize the opportunity to polemicise against them. As it was, bishops' Pastorals continued to warn against the dangers of joining secret societies.

DEFEAT OF THE 'RED MENACE'

The reaction of the Church to Saor Eire was clear evidence of what would happen to a radical group, particularly in the wave of paranoia sweeping the world after the success of the Russian Revolution. In 1931 Saor Eire, a

socialist republican movement, was formed at the instigation of radical members of the IRA. Its aim was the creation of a revolutionary leadership for the working class and working farmers towards the overthrow of British imperialism and Irish capitalism. Church and State united to crush this "red menace." Police found some notes of Peadar O'Donnell's concerning resolutions for the founding conference of Saor Eire. These were immediately rushed to Maynooth, where the bishops professed themselves horrified at its aims. A Joint Pastoral Letter was rushed to every pulpit, condemning both Saor Eire and the IRA. The bishops referred to "growing evidence of a campaign of Revolution and Communism" and they declared the two organisations to be "sinful and irreligious, and that no Catholic can lawfully be a member of them." The bishops had paved the way for the Cumann na nGaedheal government, which two days later was able to declare Saor Eire illegal, along with, for good measure, II other organisations, including the IRA, Cumann na mBan, the Workers' Revolutionary Party and various pro-Soviet groups. Saor Eire had had little time to establish itself as a political force and the Church's condemnation amounted to a death blow. By the following year it had disappeared and the IRA, its fingers having been well burned, showed a marked reluctance to become politically involved in future organisations.

DE VALERA

De Valera had been regarded by the establishment as a most dangerous rebel, due to his role in opposing the Treaty. But by 1932, when the Eucharistic Congress met in Ireland, he had made his peace with the Irish hierarchy, declaring that he believed ten years of misunderstanding between the church and republicanism had happily come to an end. Certainly, any "misunderstanding" between de Valera's party, Fianna Fail, and the Church had long ended. Fianna Fail had accepted the constitutional settlement of Ireland in as much as they were prepared to enter the Dail and work peacefully for a united Ireland. Once that decision had been made the Church had no reason to regard de Valera with hostility. He repaid their benevolence by, in 1936, declaring the IRA to be illegal and by resurrecting the

military tribunals he had so recently condemmed. De Valera and his party, because of their previously strong Republican tradition, had widespread support from the Irish people and that popularity could not be ignored by the Church which saw it as a vehicle by which the Church could be re-established.

THE BORDER CAMPAIGN

Although the IRA lost much support, in times of crisis it could still call on old nationalist allegiances. But throughout this period of decline, proscribed by governments on both sides of the border and denounced yet again by the Catholic Church, the IRA did not voice its hostility towards the Church. Some of the most famous fighters of the 1950s campaign were known to be staunch Catholics - Sean South for example, killed during the raid on the RUC barracks at Brookeborough, was a member of An Realt, the Irish-speaking branch of the Legion of Mary. When the hierarchy condemned the border raids, the IRA issued a circular informing its members that any IRA man who was refused the sacraments would be accomodated by priests sympathetic to the cause. This promise was kept.

THE PRESENT DILEMMA

The last twelve years of struggle in the North has created more than a few headaches for the Church. While the Catholic minority appeared to be facing annihilation, with rampaging loyalists marching upon the Falls and houses indiscriminately burnt to the ground, the Church could not condemn the use of force - because force was used purely for defensive purposes. In August 1969 the rector of Clonard monastery allowed the IRA to patrol the monastery grounds and to take up positions on the top floor of the building because an anonymous telephone call had warned that Clonard was to be burnt down and, in view of past events, the priests did not believe that the RUC would provide protection. For a while, the hastily revived IRA and representatives of the Catholic Church stood on the same side of the barricades; a combination of the two traditions of northern Catholics. But when the immediate need for defence had disappeared and the IRA began to attack the Stormont state, Church



denunciations of "the gunmen" were soon forthcoming.

An ambivalent relationship between the Church and republicanism will continue as long as the Six County state exists, because, while the Catholic population remain in fear of the consequences if extreme Unionism were to return to political power and civil war developed, the absolute necessity for an effective defence force continues to exist. The Church unwillingly has to concede this fact, which accounts for the different treatment meted out to the contemporary IRA. So far, no matter the extent of revulsion at some of the Provisionals' actions. excommunication does not appear to be on the cards. To cast off the IRA from the Church in this manner would create an irreparable rift while the Church is doing its utmost to maintain control over its followers. Secret societies, particularly of a military nature, threaten that control, but only an avowedly anti-clerical revolutionary movement can pose the ultimate challenge to Church authority. The contradic ions contained in being an antiimperialist fighter while remaining within an authoritarian Church may yet produce such a movement, but for the moment at least the Provisionals continue to applaud Church leaders on the rare occasions when they speak out against repression. Bishop Kevin McNamara's recent condemnation of the treatment of prisoners in H-Block (An Phoblacht/ Republican News, January 19, 1980) contains the dilemma experienced by the Church, as he condemns the use of force while at the same time conceding that resorting to arms may be the result of "long experience of

injustice." An Phoblacht's comment was that the failure of the Church to take the same stand against the British as it does against the IRA is "damaging the Catholic Church's credibility in the eyes of many of its people." There is a big difference between the advice of An Phoblacht for the Church to take a "principled stand" and the old Fenian battlecry of "no priests in politics."







POLICING THE PARISH

ALTHOUGH THE SCOPE OF ITS PATRONAGE IS RESTRICTED BY ITS POSITION WITHIN THE NORTHERN IRISH STATE, THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IS RUTHLESS AND UNCOMPROMISING WITHIN ITS OWN ORBIT OF INFLUENCE. HERE, THROUGH A NUMBER OF TYPICAL CASE STUDIES, WE DETAIL THE WAY THAT CHURCH POWER IS APPLIED DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY TO MAINTAIN ITS CONTROL. THE EXAMPLES RELATE TO EDUCATION, LEISURE AND RECREATION PROVISION, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT. AND THE OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY. THEY ARE DRAWN FROM TWO WORKING CLASS CATHOLIC GHETTOES - BALLYMURPHY AND OLDPARK - AND ARE ONLY THE MOST BLATANT EXAMPLES IN A LONG CATALOGUE OF ABUSE OF POWER. THEY CENTRE LARGELY AROUND THE ACTIVITIES OF TWO MEN: BISHOP PHILBIN AND CANON MURPHY.

Mother Theresa

In March 1972 Mother Theresa (who won the 1979 Nobel Peace Prize) visited the Ballymurphy area of West Belfast: Subsequent to her visit four of her nuns came to live and work among the people of Ballymurphy in an ordinary council house in Springhill Avenue. The

as were very popular with local people and organised a considerable number of community projects. Their lifestyle was simple, their approach being to apply their Christianity in a selfless way.

Yet on 17 September 1973 the four Asian nuns were ordered by Philbin and Murphy to leave the area within 24 hours. As Des Wilson, a radical priest working in the area, commented: "They believed it unseemly that missionary sisters should come from India or anywhere else".

All attempts to elicit an explanation from the Church authorities were met by a wall of silence, except for an allegation by Murphy that "they were quite happy to go (in the middle of numerous unfinished projects?). Mother Theresa herself simply refused to "put the blame on any one person." Cardinal Conway, in a written reply to the residents of Ballymurphy, said that he couldn't interfere. Two letters were sent to Philbin seeking an explanation for the incident, one backed with 1500 signatures from local residents. The first he ignored completely. In his reply to the second he stated that he "could not meet with a group who were bellicose in attitude" and asked for "a withdrawal of menaces and ultimata.

This was a standard Philbin tactic, subsequently to be used against Des Wilson. Completely fabricated threats were the pretext for the Church's refusal to account for its actions.

Within days of Mother Theresa's departure two more nuns, Sisters Eileen and Elizabeth of the Society of the Holy Child, were ordered to Canon Murphy's house and told to get out of the area. On 19 September Bishop Philbin's private secretary, Father Toner, 'explained' to a local woman why two religious orders were expelled from the area within 5 days. He said:

"We can't have sisters roaming around the district on their own and setting up communities."

The outcome of both incidents was that the people of Ballymurphy, against their expressed wishes were denied the services of six nuns and were unable to obtain a single word of explanation from the parish priest, Bishop or the Cardinal.



Rev. Patrick Murphy (now Canon Murphy) with Sir Arthur Young, head of the R.U.C., in the Lower Falls in 1969.

A blast from the Canon

Education is one area where the Catholic Church authorities rule supreme. Consequently every attempt by teachers, parents and members of the community to increase their participation in education planning has been fiercely resisted. The strategy followed by the church authorities has been to veto anything which they do not tightly control. That this should be severely damaging to education provision in the most deprived areas of Belfast seems to matter little to Murphy or Philbin.

On 3 November 1974 a youth and community worker met with interested local parties in Ballymurphy to try to devise schemes to assist schoolchildren in the transition from school to work/dole. It was decided to seek the cooperation of the schools, the community, welfare officers, the Department of Manpower Services and professionally competent people in the setting up of a careers guidance service.

After three months of hard enthusiastic work by all these parties the structure of the scheme had been hammered out. A programme was devised which included health education, visits to factories and training centres, talks with an occupational psychologist, talks on trade unions, citizens advice bureaux and legal aid, careers guidance and a weekend away which would allow informal discussion. The personnel and premises necessary to implement the scheme had also been acquired. On 29 January 1975 the first list of girls names for the scheme was received from St Rosa's school. Yet on 31 January Canon Murphy intervened. He ordered the scheme to be scrapped immediately. There was no consultation, discussion or explanation. The issue was never raised at any of the School Management Committee meetings. An attempt to improve educational provision for the children of Ballymurphy was seen by Murphy

as a threat to his power base and, true to form, he destroyed the whole programme.

In 1975 concern was expressed at the inadequate channels of communication between parents and teachers in the Ballymurphy area. The education sub-committee of the Ballymurphy Tenants Association sent letters to all the local schools suggesting that a Parents/ Teachers Association be set up.

One copy of the letter was sent for the school notice board, the second to the Manager of the school. None of the letters subsequently appeared on the notice boards. Nor were the letters mentioned at any School Management Committee meeting. Murphy's axe had fallen again and nothing more was heard of the matter.

The Desi Wilson affair

In 1966 Desi Wilson, a Catholic priest, was transferred from his post as spiritual director in St Malachy's College to St John's parish which includes the Ballymurphy area. The poverty and exploitation he encountered had a profound effect on him.

"I was never a patient man but what I began to see after 1966 made me much more impatient and angry....angry at the gross unemployment..."

His anger was well founded. According to a 1971 survey between 25,000 and 35,000 people exist in the 2,000 houses in Ballymurphy and district. 75% of all houses had four or more dependent children. The unemployment rate is estimated at about 60%, five times the average for the six counties. There is a chronic lack of space and no facilities of any kind. Prior to Wilson's arrival, the Church had turned a blind eye on Ballymurphy, with little or no pastoral work of any kind being attempted.



Wilson's approach to his work set him on the inevitable path towards conflict with his superior, Bishop Philbin. Rather than residing in a mansion away from the people, he set up house at 123 Springhill Avenue, in an ordinary council house. And unlike other clergy, he didn't lord over the people in an arrogant, patronising way, but believed fervently in dignity through self-help. Through example and encouragement he helped numerous community projects take shape. His house was an open community centre from which local projects were organised. The impact of Wilson's approach in the area is difficult to exaggerate. He is described as follows by the St John's Parish Council:

"We know and love him because we have encountered him as a person and as a priest. He has become a part of us and hopefully we have become a part of him. Knowledge of him forms the basis of our love and respect."

But the very things which endeared Wilson to his parishioners were a source of antagonism to Philbin and Murphy. During the early seventies Wilson was increasingly outspoken on the question of state repression. He condemned Army padres for engaging in intelligence work and the Army for widespread illegal use of violence and brutality. This was particularly embarrassing to Philbin who was widely known to be sympathetic to the British in his

assessments to the Vatican on the Belfast situation. By April 1975 the relationship between Wilson and his religious superiors had become completely unworkable. The McKeown incident was for Wilson the final straw. He requested the status of a retired priest. Philbin offered to transfer him out of Belfast. Wilson refused to give up his community work in Ballymurphy. The rift grew, compounded by Philbin's refusal to meet Wilson to discuss the matter.

(The same excuse was used as in the Mother Theresa incident. Alleged threats by Wilson against the Church, which were a pure figment of Philbin's imagination.) A wave of anger followed Philbin's acceptance of the resignation. Again local people organised protest meetings, marches, petitions, deputations, withholding of church donations etc. All this was reported in the national media. Philbin's strategy was consistent. He refused to meet

with any of these deputations, or to offer to Wilson or anybody else any explanation of his pos-

When threatened with exposure the Church authorities withdraw into a strict silence, in the expectation that when the dust settled their power base would have been damaged as little as possible. It is hardly surprising that Wilson's view is that such a course will inevitably lead to a decline in the Catholic Church in Ireland.

The McKeown incident

In 5th May 1974 the Sunday Press carried an article by Ciaran Mc Keown on the subject of shared schools. In the article reference was made to the refusal by Bishop Philbin to confirm Catholic children who had attended state schools. Eleven months later, on April 24th 1975, Ciaran Mc Keown went to St. Thomas' Secondary School on the Whiterock Road in Ballymurphy to report on the annual prizegiving. Coincidentally the school's principal, Sean McKeown, was Ciaran's father.

On his arrival in the school, Ciaran was intercepted by Canon Murphy, and in the presence of the school principal, but without any consultation with Him. Murphy ordered Ciaran off the premises. Outside in the carpark he informed him that he was persona non grata" in all Catholic institutions, the reason being the year-old article which Murphy produced from a black leather bag. That Canon Murphy should eject anyone without first consulting the person who had managed the school since 1957.

both as vice-principal and principal, was a calculated insult. But to do so to the principal's own son, who was on the premises by invitation in his capacity as a journalist, was gross ignorance. Sean McKeown was left with no alternative but to resign. This he did after failing to obtain a satisfactory explanation from his superiors. There was a unanimous and indignant reaction from both staff and students, which included a public protest march from the school to Canon Murphy's house. All protests were met, as usual, with a wall of silence.

The Godfathers: Leslie Hale

(continued from page 32)

Hale boasts a high life style. He lives in a large house in the plush part of the Antrim Road, has his suits made in Florida, employs dozens of flunkeys, drives big cars and travels abroad, mainly to the United States, incessantly. But he denies that he's in religion for the money. He claims only to receive a salary from "Leslie Hale Foundation Incorporated" and that if he died tomorrow his family would be penniless. But where does all the money go? Like Ian Paisley, Hale's "silent collections" are famous and like Ian Paisley the real nature and extent of his business empire is kept a closely guarded secret.

That Hale does make money cannot be doubted. During the fund raising campaign for the Faith Cathedral, he raised thousands of pounds. In 1975 he travelled to the Mansion House in Dublin and sold seats for his Faith Tabernacle in York Road for £500 a time. He offers free copies of his autobiography to anyone giving £100 to his new Faith Cathedral and has also cashed in on the "troubles" to make money. In 1978 he wrote to people in the United States whose addresses were provided by evangelical fund raisers in America - asking for money to help his church defeat the IRA! In February 1978 - after

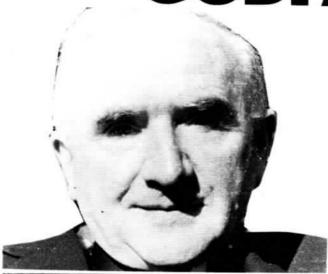
announcing a fortnight before that God had asked him to raise £50,000 - he collected the remarkable sum of £50,004 at a hysterical 1,500-strong rally in the Ulster Hall. The collection, which took twenty minutes to complete, was supervised by his bank manager, and Hale denied the whole thing had been fixed, saying: "It's got to be a miracle: God must be involved."

MILLION POUND CATHEDRAL

By 1976 Hale was so successful that he announced plans to build a one million pound 'Faith Cathedral", a seminary centre, an administrative centre for the growing Hale empire, an old people's home and a motel. He set about raising the fl million with a vigour that would have done credit to Billy Graham.

Hale has now expanded his empire to Dublin, where he operates a church on the North Circular Road, and in the North he has added a "dial a prayer" service and an evangelical recording studio to his operations. His PR men in Glengormley refuse to say how much has been collected since 1976 for the new Faith Cathedral - it must now run to hundreds of thousands of pounds - but despite all his efforts, the 32-acre site at Corr's Corner remains desolate, apart from a hoarding and the beginnings of one small building. Where indeed has all the money gone?

PROFILES OF THE GODFATHERS



William Philbin

"The nastiest little man in Ireland" - that's how one person who has had many dealings with him describes the most Reverend Dr. William Philbin, the Catholic bishop of Down and Connor. Certainly in the eighteen year span he has been bishop, Philbin has done little to court popularity amongst his flock. But then, to do him justice, Philbin has never seen it as his job to be popular. Rather, he would seem to have taken very literally the titles of two offices he has held - Professor of Dogmatic Theology, and member of the Pontifical Commission for the Discipline of the Clergy and Christian People. When it comes to dogmatism and disciplining, there are few who could equal William Philbin.

He was born 73 years ago in County Mayo, the son of a local merchant family renowned for their devotion to the faith. He received a privileged education and at the age of seventeen entered Maynooth, Ireland's Sandhurst for priests, Maynooth was then, and has remained ever since, famous as the most traditional and conservative seminary in Europe. There Philbin was cast in a mould which has never at any time shown the least sign of cracking. His fundamentalist version of Catholicism won him international headlines at the Second Vatican Council when in October 1964 he gathered around him a group of thirty of the most reactionary bishops to protest against a Council document which had come out in favour of a more liberal interpretation of the nature of divine revelation. A year later he presented a petition against another Council document, "The Church in the Modern World." Again his objection was that the Church should not attempt to go beyond the truths set out by St. Thomas Aquinas and the medieval schoolmen. Philbin's personal hobby, incidentally, is writing poetry in Latin and ancient Greek. It was a hobby picked up when he had nothing else to do as bishop of Clonfert in Galway between 1954 and 1960. The diocese was the most under-populated in Ireland, with only twenty four parishes and about fifty clergy.

Why then was he selected to rule over the political hot seat of the Down and Connor diocese? The answer is that Philbin had proved himself to be much more than a cantankerous old academic. In the earlier part of his career he had also displayed a real talent for administration, His first appointment was to the English Mission, an organisational structure of the Irish Catholic Church set up to carry the Word of Christ to the people of England, Philbin carried it to Eastbourne in 1933 and, having distinguished himself there, was given his first real position of power three years later when he was appointed Professor of Dogmatic Theology at Maynooth College. This post allowed him to display his administrative genius and also gave him influence over many young student priests. The most loyal of these were to be slotted into the key positions in the hierarchy of command that Philbin established when he became bishop of Down and Connor, He had the good fortune to inherit as his second-in-command Monsignor Mullaly, whom many believe to be the real power behind the throne, What seems more likely is that these two old schemers formed an immediate and lasting relationship based on a shared mistrust of the outside world and a mutual desire to keep the church true to the old ways.

Another of his generals, Canon Padraig Murphy, was, a true discovery of Philbin's. When Philbin was appointed Murphy, though in his fifties, was still a curate, the lowest rank in the church's hierarchy. Philbin recognised that whatever Murphy lacked in intelligence he made up for in cunning, ruthlessness and also in his detailed knowledge of the Falls Road where he had been born and reared. Murphy was promoted to Canon, became Philbin's hit man and began the persecution of anyone in the Falls Road who challenged the authority of the Church. (See article on church control in West Belfast.)

Murphy undoubtedly deserves the hatred felt for him by those who have suffered at his hands, but not the title some like to give him, "the Godfather of West Belfast." Beyond him there is Mullaly and beyond the both of them the godfathers' godfather, William Philbin. The past eighteen years has seen Philbin use his organisational structure to achieve two principal tasks: the internal reorganisation of the Church, and the creation of a peace pact with the Unionist/British establishment.

"IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE THERE ARE MANY MANSIONS"

When Philbin took office in 1962 he was succeeding the old and incompetent Bishop Mageean who had left the diocese in a shambles. The administrative spring-cleaning began with the Church's property holdings. All Church property was transferred into Philbin's name (it has been customary since Penal times, when the Church was not allowed to own property, for it to be registered in the bishop's name) and Philbin used the process to increase rent on all the property. At the same time a massive building programme was begun of churches: schools and halls. As one Catholic headmaster

told us: "At one time in the sixties it seemed that every time you blessed yourself, Bishop Philbin had opened another school."

Philbin made only one error in this period of building expansion and the error displayed an uncharacteristic lack of foresight. It concerned the parish of St. Joseph's in Belfast's dockland. The church building was old and falling down and a large sum of money was spent on its renovation. However, it was not long after Philbin had said the Mass which opened the new renovated Church that the first house in the area fell to the bulldozer. The inner-city motorway plan had almost the whole area demolished by the late sixties and the new church had to be closed up. What made the experience all the more bitter for Philbin was that St. Joseph's was what is known as a mensal parish. There are six of these in all and their particular significance lies in the fact that they are the bishop's own parishes. the ones from which he derives his own personal income.

Another mensal parish is St. Peter's in the Falls Road. It was not long after the St. Joseph's disaster that it was announced that redevelopment was to take place in the area surrounding St. Peter's Church, This time Philbin was determined not to see a congregation dispersed. When the planners asked for consultation with local community leaders, they were met by Canon Murphy and Gerry Fitt, who set forward the Philbin line, which was for multi-storey development. The Divis Flats are a Philbin success story maintaining still today the 15,000 congregation which St. Peter's held before redevelopment. Those in the area who opposed the high-rise development at the time were loudly denounced from the pulpit by Canon Murphy who branded them as "communists" and "men of evil intent."

Subsequently the Divis Flats have achieved the infamy of being possibly the worst housing in Europe. Philbin has not bothered to shed any tears about this, or indeed about any of the multiple-deprivation areas that exist inside his diocese. It is well known that Philbin believes that too much is done to help the poor and that poor people are really only people who squander their money instead of saving it.

In December 1965 he addressed the A.G.M. of the St. Vincent de Paul, the Catholic organisation for the relief of the poor, and shocked those present by suggesting they should change the nature of their mission:

"...a new advisory service to help people who, although their incomes were adequate, found themselves in distress due to mismanagement of their household budgets."

Wisely, the St Vincent de Paul society realised that the poor are not poor because of some inability to 'manage' but are people with inadequate incomes, desperately in need of relief. His right-wing Tory attitudes were to make him many enemies in the sixties. His attitude to Republicanism was to make him many more.

GIVE PLENTY TO CAESAR

One month after becoming Bishop of Down and Connor William Philbin was sitting in Belfast City Hall having dinner with the Unionist Lord Mayor, Wall-

ace, the first such visit by a Catholic prelate. There were many more in the years ahead and many masses said by Philbin to bestow the Catholic Church's blessing on civic undertaking of the Stormont government. Finally, in December 1970 he took the symbolic step of appointing Fr. Robert Murphy as Catholic chaplain to the Stormont parliament, something his predecessors had stubbornly refused to agree to. Thus ended the traditional antipathy of the Irish Catholic Church to the six county state, an antipathy which Philbin saw as a useless impediment to the material progress of the Church. The O'Neill years were a golden period for Philbin, years when the Church's coff-ers were constantly being replenished from government funds. The whole sixties period is well summed up in the photographs of O'Neill shaking nuns by the hand, the pseudo-liberalisation of Stormont meeting the pseudo-liberalisation of the Irish Catholic Church, post Vatican II. Underneath, the pressures were building up as the catholic working class realised that the smiles and the money exchanged between O'Neill and the Catholic hierarchy would gain them nothing in terms of jobs, houses or money.

When the "troubles" exploded onto the streets in 1968, Philbin was left confused and angry. The militancy inside the catholic working class threatened to upset his cosy pact with the Unionist establishment and he set his face hard against it. When the people of the Falls Road erected barricades in 1970 Philbin accompanied the British Army along to the barricades and told the people to take them down. Traditional loyalty held sway and Philbin was obeyed. Four years later, however, he made his next appearance on the Falls Road and the spontaneous anger of the crowd which gathered forced him to make a hasty retreat. It was a humiliating experience for the bishop and one which he would not normally expose himself to. He has always preferred the backstairs wheeling and dealing of hierarchical politics and has preferred to fight his political campaigns by orchestrating his instruments in the parishes, the schools and the columns of the Irish News.

"The Church is not to be governed democratically in the sense that its members, by voting or exerting pressure, exercise decisive power. Government is the responsibility of the apostles and their successors. Authority is an essential element in the religious system."

Philbin, to Catholic Truth Society, August 1975

Philbin's methods over the years have been successful in a number of respects. His secretiveness has prevented anyone finding out the details of his empire - one BBC producer told us he found it easier investigating the Mafia than the Irish Catholic hierarchy. Those who have tried to find out more about Philbin's property holding - through front companies he is one of the largest slum landlords in Belfast - have found themselves in the libel courts. Hibernia was sued for £4,000 last year for an article on him, and even the innocuous journal of the now-defunct Community Relations Commission was forced to drop a profile of him when he threatened to sue.

He has been successful also in expanding the numbers of churches, schools and halls in the diocese. He did plenty for the establishment. His epitaph will be this: he did nothing for the ordinary people of his diocese.

Martin Smyth

Martin Smyth enjoying a cosy chat with Ciaran McKeown, who was working for the <u>Irish Press</u> at the time.



"Some folks forget that the Orange Order in its initial days was basically a military structure to defend the Protestant homesteads and farms against the marauding offenders" - that's how Martin Smyth described the Orange Order in 1972 shortly before he became Grand Master of the Order in Ireland and Imperial Grand Master. He's held those positions and basically those views ever since. Apart from Ian Paisley, Martin Smyth is the most important and influential Protestant cleric involved in politics in Northern Ireland. He is also as uncompromising and fundamental in his religious and political views as Ian Paisley. But while Paisley's star has been in the ascendancy that of Martin Smyth and the Orange Order which he leads has waned steadily during the last decade.

Martin Smyth is almost a caricature of a loyal, Protestant Ulsterman. Bigoted, blinkered, unyielding - Smyth is all of those things and worse. His background is classic for a member of the Orange Order but not for its leaders. He was born in 1931 in Euterpe Street in the Donegall Road off Sandy Row. His father was a plumber, an Orangeman and a fundamentalist Christian - not the sort of background which in those days produced the leaders of the Orange establishment and the Unionist party. Orangeism and Unionism then were dominated by the landed classes and the rich industrialists, and its a measure of the changes since visited on those two rocks of Ulster's faith that a man whose background is the very antithesis of the Craigs and Brookeboroughs is now the leader of one and a prominent figure in the other.

His background was steeped in Orangeism. At the age of 6 he took to wearing clerical garb; by II he was in the junior Orange Order; and at I7 had 'a spiritual experience' that determined the rest of his life. He was educated at Methodist College and at Trinity College Dublin and after graduation entered the Presbyterian ministry. He neither drinks nor smokes, reads little outside of the Bible and religious tracts, despises liberals, distrusts Catholics and Englishmen, sees the Orange Order as a bulwark against creeping Communism and as a protection for private property, is in favour of capital punishment and hankers for the return of the 'B' Specials. On matters spiritual he is regarded as one of the most uncompromising, conservative and fundamentalist influences in the Presbyterian Church and from his pulpit at Alexandra Presbyterian Church in Duncairn, regularly denounces all the more progressive tendencies in the Church. He could have stepped straight out of the I9th century and nobody would have noticed - a Paisley without the histrionics.

Appropriately his power in Unionism is immense. The Orange Order, despite declining membership, can still muster 90,000 at Twelfth July demonstrations. As vice-president of the Official Unionist Party his is a voice heard at the highest councils of the party and by the British government. But nevertheless Unionism and Orangeism have declined in recent years. The once mighty Unionist party is now split into six squabbling factions and the political leadership of Protestant Unionism could be said to have switched from Glengall Street to the Martyrs' Memorial Church on the Ravenhill Road.

Smyth himself has travelled several political roads. Initially a Stormont-style Unionist, then in Bill Craig's Vanguard movement until it split from the party, for a time mildly in favour of independence, and now wedded to the integrationist policies of Jim Molyneaux and Enoch Powell, Smyth's political career reflects the tortuous twists of confused and disillusioned Unionism.

Similarly the Orange Order is not the power it once was. Generalised economic depression combined with the stripping of political power from the Unionist party at all levels have taken in large measure from the Order the only gift it could bestow - that of economic and political patronage.

Membership has declined and the seeming inability of the Orange Order to produce the sort of uncompromisingly confident leadership provided by Ian Paisley has reduced the Order to a secondary role in Northern Ireland politics.

That is until now. Recently Smyth threatened to resign from the leadership of the Orange Order - over a drinks licence granted to an Orange Hall - this move had the effect of strengthening his position within the Order and the Unionist Party. There is no credible alternative to Smyth and that threat re-emphasised it. He is known to be unhappy about the way in which the Official Unionist Party, under Molyneaux and Powell, seems content to allow Paisley to capture the mantle of

Unionist leadership and is preparing the Orange Order and the Official Unionist Party to regain the initiative.

This was the reasoning behind last month's Orange turn-out to demonstrate against the British government's so-called weakness on the security front. 20,000 Orangemen were in Belfast two days before St Patrick's Day to put pressure on the government to introduce stiff measures against the IRA. There is little doubt that 11 years on, Protestant Unionism is once more becoming as restless as it was in 1972. But the opposition to the Orange security demonstration from both Paisley's DUP and the Ulster Defence Association show that Orangeism, whether led by Martin Smyth or not, is no more the strong unified structure against 'marauding offenders' it once was.



William Arlow

Canon Bill Arlow is that rarest of creatures in Ireland - a liberal cleric. He is now chiefly known for his strong views on ecumenism and reconciliation between the communities - in May last year he was appointed to a specially created post as a canon in St Anne's Church of Ireland Cathedral with responsibility for promoting those ideas. But it was his role as the 'leg-man' and spokesman for the clergy who met leaders of the Provisional IRA in Feakle, Co. Clare in November 1974 that first thrust Rev. (as he was then) Bill Arlow into the headlines.

That meeting and the subsequent Craigavad contacts between the Provos, the UDA and the Northern Ireland Office resulted in the ceasefire of 1975 and pushed Bill Arlow beyond the pale in the eyes of the majority of Protestants. Outrage and condennation from Unionists and loyalists of every hue, and from other Protestant clergy, especially Paisley and Orange Order leader Martin Smyth, flowed venomously and was directed primarily at Arlow, who was merely the public front for the other liberal clergy. But while those other clergymen preferred to remain in the background, Arlow embraced his role as peacemaker and since 1974/75 has not faltered in that task.

He sees a united Ireland as inevitable and despite further Unionist denunciations has berated Protestants for not preparing themselves politically and psychologically for that inevitability. He has also attacked the Catholic Church and the southern state for not preparing themselves either by changing the constitution and dismantling the apparatus of a theocratic state. He is also one of the few activists in Northern politics who recognises the importance of involving the Provos and the UDA in any settlement and has condemned those who merely content themselves with ritual denunciations of their activities.

In fact Feakle and the Craigavad negotiations which followed it taught him that the Provisionals and the loyalist paramilitary groups were more trustworthy than the British. Statements from the Northern Ireland Office during this period were interpreted, by the sophisticated mandarins of the Foreign Office, differently for the Provos and the UDA, creating a firm impression in his mind that by hook or by crook the British were more interested in extending the ceasefire for their own devious and tactical reasons, than with creating peace. The emergence of the H-Blocks, criminalisation and Castlereagh from the 1975 ceasefire are perhaps strong indications that his suspicions were correct.

It is perhaps relevant to Bill Arlow's role as a peacemaker and a seemingly genuine liberal that his background is Church of Ireland. The Church of Ireland in recent years has had a more 'liberal' image than the Presbyterian Church with its drift towards fundamentalism and the gut anti-Romanism of its grass-roots. Bill Arlow's background and early pre-Feakle career does suggest that he share that liberal tradition.

He was born, the son of a newspaper editor, in the strongly Unionist town of Banbridge (scene of the first anti-Catholic pogrom of the I920's) and had a Catholic grandmother - a section of the family he rarely saw were all Catholic and lived in Dungannon. His first religious experience was with the Youth for Christ movement - an evangelical branch of the Church of Ireland - in the 1950's and he crossed swords then with an up-and-coming Ian Paisley in a dispute over a film, considered heretic by Paisley, of the life of Christ. That dispute with Paisley convinced him he should become a cleric. He trained in Edinburgh and took up his first ministry in Ballymacarett in East Belfast. In 1962 he moved to Newry and at the start of the Civil Rights movement was virtually the only Protestant clergyman in the North to publicly concede and argue for the justice of the Civil Rights demands. He moved back to Ballymacarett in the early seventies and was largely responsible for preventing the UDA from evicting Catholics from the Willowfield district of the area. That experience also convinced him that the only way towards peace was through the direct involvement of those working class people. Its an approach that brought him directly to Feakle and has determined his life since.

Bill Arlow can be accused of naivety but precious few other vices. The idea that a few individuals in the higher reaches of the Provos or the UDA can bring about lasting peace is of course naive. Craigavad should have taught him that. The British manipulated him then as they manipulated the Provos and the loyalists, and if anyone won the ceasefire of 1974/5 they did. Similarly with ecumenism, which largely ignores political and economic realities at the expense of elitist symbolism. But in a country bereft of liberal clerics Bill Arlow's is a welcome if lonely voice.

Tomas O'Fiach

When Monsignor Tomas O'Fiach was appointed Catholic Primate of all Ireland in August 1977, press stories concentrated entirely on the fact that he was a 'republican' prelate and that the British government faced the prospect of an onslaught from the Catholic Church on the national question. What was ignored completely was the internal reason for his appointment. The Catholic Church in Ireland was an institution in retreat, and with the death of Cardinal Conway, an opportunity was created to appoint a young, theologically sound, popular figure as successor who could stem that retreat. In the President of Maynooth College the church believed it had found such a figure.

Not that O'Fiach is in any way an avant garde figure. His training and background are rigidly conventional. And his conduct while President of the Irish Catholic Church's 'university' for the priesthood, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, was highlighted by one of those rearguard actions the church now expects him to conduct on a larger scale.

O'Fiach comes from Cullyhanna in South Armagh, an area the British press labels as 'bandit country.' While South Armagh has deservedly earned its reputation for militant republicanism, it is also a conservative, Catholic area and O'Fiach reflects those values. He studied for the priesthood in Maynooth after secondary education at St. Patrick's College, Armagh — one of Ireland's most traditional schools. After ordination in 1948, O'Fiach was appointed an assistant priest in Clongeakle parish in Fermanagh and South Tyrone. However, in 1953 he again joined Maynooth, this time as a lecturer, and up to his appointment as Primate spent the rest of his career as a Catholic academic. His special area of study was the history of the early Catholic Church in Ireland.

He rose steadily through the ranks at Maynooth: in 1959 he was made a professor of history; in 1970 he became the college's Vice- President and in 1974 was appointed President. Maynooth, like the Catholic Church, was in a state of flux in the 70s. Declining vocations combined with pressure of space on the rest of Ireland's higher education resources meant that the college was forced to admit students and recruit staff on a more secular basis.

The effects of an old established Catholic seminary of an influx of non-vocational students and staff more interested in attaining or teaching a university level education than conforming strictly with Catholic precepts were not long in being felt amongst staff and students alike. 1977 was a year of unrest in Maynooth, and O'Fiach was the man at the centre of the storm. The first dispute was over the appointment of a traditional man, Fr. Michael Olden, as Vice President of the college, against the wishes of the staff, who favoured the more liberal Dr. Enda MacDonagh. O'Fiach and Maynooth rode out that storm, but shortly afterwards another row broke out over the refusal of O'Fiach to appoint a popular liberal cleric. Fr. Vincent McNamara, to a permanent post. Two other members of staff, Fr. P.J. McGrath and Malachy O'Rourke came to the forefront in the protest campaign. A boycott of classes was organised and eventually O'Fiach was forced to give McNamara another temporary post.



rnek Spiers IFL/Report

However, O'Fiach started a witch-hunt against McGrath and O'Rourke, the two men he blamed for the unrest. When they organised a round robin calling for more democracy in the college, O'Fiach had them sacked for the ostensible reason that McGrath refused to wear clerical garb and the pair's teaching was below standard. A short strike followed, but again O'Fiach weathered the storm by the imposition of harsh measures. More sackings were threatened and a purge of student militants attempted. In the end, McGrath and O'Rourke stayed sacked and O'Fiach emerged victorious. In all probability it was his handling of a dispute that must have appeared to the church as a microcosm of all the troubles they now face in Ireland that marked O'Fiach out for his elevation.

Two other areas have distinguished themselves so far in O'Fiach's period as Primate. First, there was his energetic role in promoting and organising the Papal visit to Ireland. It is clear that the Catholic Church intended to use the visit as a rallying call to the faithful and no one could have been more fitted for the task than the conservative but charismatic John Paul 11. His calls to reject the 'modern evils of divorce, contraception, abortion and materialism and his defence of traditional Catholic values found numerous echoes in O'Fiach's own ideas.

The other important area lies north of the border. O'Fiach was immediately labelled as a republican sympathiser by the British press after his elevation. He himself makes no secret of his nationalism, and in his statements during the first year in office it seemed as if he was preparing a major offensive on the border and on repression in the North. On one occasion, five months after his appointment, O'Fiach called for a British with-

drawal, and in August 1978 he caused a storm of protest in Britain and Northern Ireland by condemning the British government's H Blocks policy and by comparing the H Blocks to the sewers of Calcutta.

Despite that initial onslaught little has been heard from O'Fiach since. Significant British dipomatic pressure was exerted to block his elevation to cardinal - unsuccessfully - and the major Protestant churches in Ireland threatened to withdraw from the ecumenical process in protest at his statements. The combined pressure has seemingly worked. There have been no more "Brits Out" speeches, and only recently, in February this year, nearly two years after his first H Block visit, has O'Fiach returned to the H Block issue. This time, however, it was not to condemn but to try to get the British government, through negotiation, off the H Block hook. Similarly, there has been a significant increase in overtures to the Protestant churches on an ecumenical basis. It looks like Tomas O'Fiach is trying to live down his earlier reputation.

Leslie Hale

A combination of hot-gospeller, evangelist, faith healer, shrewd businessman and audacious con-man, Leslie Hale is one of the more successful leaders of Northern Ireland's many fringe Protestant sects. Some 70,000 Protestants in Northern Ireland are outside of the main Protestant churches - Presbyterian, Church of Ireland, Methodist and Baptist - and most of them are attracted to the sort of religious fervour represented by Hale.



Fringe religions based on the charisma of one man and organised around mass gospel meetings have always been a common feature of Northern Ireland's history going back to the days of "Roaring" Hanna and they usually have a common thread running through them. In Hale's case, as with Ian Paisley, his popularity has risen in direct proportion to the collective Protestant psychological and political angst of the last decade.

Hanna and Paisley represent political and religious values that are rooted in an orthodoxy that provides collective comfort and a reassuring familiarity in times of crisis and social upheaval. Hale, though, is different in one important sense. Hanna and Paisley channeled fears primarily into politics. Hale, although he owes his rise to the same factors that have now made Paisley the leading political figure on the Unionist side, has concentrated on religion and has channeled these fears and doubts into making money for himself. He has tapped the reservoir of Protestant anxiety and discovered a stream of gold.

The sort of religious fervour represented by Hale is of course not unique to Northern Ireland. Virtually all his techniques, as with Ian Paisley's, have been borrowed from the United States and in particular the southern states. There are, some would say, distinct similarities between the Protestants of Northern Ireland and the whites in the Bible Belt of America. A common history of racism, sectarianism and the siege mentality of the colonist facing political and economic eclipse from the groups they once dominated have produced religious beliefs uncannily similar in their appeal.

Religious evangelism in the States, however, is also big business these days and likewise in Northern Ireland. Billy Graham and hundreds of imitators have made fortunes in America using hard and soft sell techniques borrowed from Madison Avenue.

Much about Hale's early days is shrouded in mystery. His PR men at his headquarters in Glengormley are not keen to talk about his origins - they prefer to concentrate on Hale's grandiose plans for the future. However, it seems that Hale was just one of the dozens of back street preachers in which Northern Ireland abounds until the start of the "troubles," when Paisley's meteoric rise showed him that God and Mammon made a profitable pair. Like Paisley he learned that when it comes to wowing them in the aisles (or in the tents) nothing succeeds like American know-how. Paisley learned how to fill the collection buckets in the Bob Jones University in Carolina, and Hale, following suit, learned his techniques at the Oral Roberts University of Tulsa, Oklahoma. Unlike Paisley, however, Hale does not pretend to academic qualifications; he claims to be entirely self-taught and to have contacts with the Oral Roberts University purely for spiritual guidance. Whatever the truth, it's clear that Hale got as good a grounding in business techniques in Oklahoma as in Bible reading.

The Hale bandwagon really started to roll in the mid-1970s, but his reputation as a fire-breathing preacher was growing beforehand. From his Faith Tabernacle in York Road Hale not only preached the hell-fire and damnation sermons that are a necessary prerequisite for success in his brand of religion, but offered the gimmick of faith-healing as well - a successful mix (which any advertising agency would be proud of) of strict fundamentalism and outright superstition. (cont. on page 26)

PRESBYTERIANISM

FROM RADICALISM TO REACTION

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IS THE LARGEST PROTESTANT DENOMINATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND, THE ARTICLE BELOW EXPLAINS HOW ITS EIGHTEENTH CENTURY DISSENTER TRADITION WAS SWALLOWED UP IN A DRIFT TO THE RIGHT THAT IS STILL GOING ON TODAY, BY THE LATE NINETEEN SEVENTIES THE DISSENTERS SEEMED TO HAVE FINALLY GIVEN UP THE GHOST AND CONTROL HAD PASSED INTO THE HANDS OF THE FUNDAMENTALISTS AND REACTIONARIES.

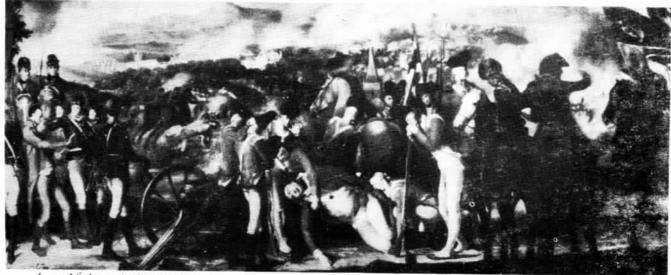
BEFORE PARTITION : A HISTORICAL OUTLINE

In Northern Ireland in the 1971 census 405,719 people declared themselves to be Presbyterians, compared to 334,318 members of the Church of Ireland. These Presbyterians are descended from the Scottish Calvinists who settled mainly in South Antrim and Down in the seventeenth century. As Protestant dissenters they, like the native Catholics, suffered from the vicious discrimination of the British government's penal laws throughout the eighteenth century. Many of them emigrated to North America and were prominent in the War of Independence in the 1770s and 1780s, which led to the formation of the United States. Back in Ireland large numbers of Presbyterian small farmers, led by their clergymen and a group of merchants from

Belfast, embraced the doctrines of republican democracy which underpinned both the American and later the French revolution. Thirty Presbyterian ministers together with thousands of their co-religionists, took part in the 1798 rebellion against British rule.

But with the Act of Union the Presbyterian radicals found themselves on the defensive. The Orange Order, formed in 1795 to fight the efforts of Catholic small farmers to buy land, was becoming an organisation dedicated to preventing the Catholics from gaining any legal and civil rights at all. Until the 1830s its members were mainly Tory landlords and their tenants who belonged to the Church of Ireland. But the rising commercial and industrial middle class of Belfast, whose new-found prosperity, based on linen, depended on the economic advantages of the Act of Union, also saw the attractions of the Tories' arg-

uments about the necessity of keeping dissenters and Catholics divided. They looked for a man who could wean Presbyterians away from their eighteenth century radicalism. They found him in Henry Cooke, a theological arch-conservative and rabble rousing preacher whose obsession was that all Presbyterians should adhere to the "Westminster Confession of Faith" with its bigoted central premise that the Pope was the anti-Christ. In 1828 every Irish presbytery (the basic element in Presbyterian organisation, made up of a grouping of congregations) voted in favour of Catholic emancipation, except, ironically, Ballymena. But the following year Cooke, backed by a Tory alliance of landlords and churchmen, succeeded in forcing a split in the Church over the Westminster Confession, and the leading spokesperson for the liberals, Henry Montgomery, broke away to found his own non-subscribing Presbyt-



A painting of the Battle of Ballynahinch in 1798, at which the largely Presbyterian rebels, under Henry Munroe, were defeated by the British Army.

erian Church. The Orange aristocrats of the Church of Ireland backed Cooke, inviting him to speak at huge Tory demonstrations against political reform and Catholic emancipation. This was the beginning of the unholy alliance between the Presbyterian Church and Tory reaction. As Professor John Barkley wrote in a Cooke centenary article in 1968:

"Throughout his political career the principles of social justice had little place. The Castlereaghs, the Rodens, the Domegalls, the Downshires, the Mountcashels, the Batesons, the Hill-Trevors, the Ernes and the Stronges were his political friends."

It will be noted just how many of these names are still prominent in the counsels of Ulster Unionism.

The arrival of Cooke on the scene also marked the beginning of Belfast's most unendearing political feature, the sectarian riot. He gathered around him disciples like "Roaring" Hugh Hanna, who preached rabid anti-Catholic sermons often ending in riots, destruction of property, bloodshed and murder.

The new sectarian theology was one reason for the rapid death of Presbyterian radicalism. The astonishing industrial growth of Belfast, with its opportunities for the thrifty, hard-working Presbyterians to become rich men, was another as was the "Ulster Custom," giving tenant farmers more security of tenure and incentive for improvement than their counterparts in other parts of Ireland. And political developments like Daniel O'Connell's often overtly sectarian campaigns for Catholic Emancipation and the Repeal of the Union also contributed. By the 1880s Belfast and its surroundings - overwhelmingly Presbyterian - were ripe for the British Tories, led by Randolph Churchill, to play the Orange Card, aimed at undermining Gladstone and Parnell's efforts to obtain a limited form of Home Rule for Ireland. But even into the 1890s remnants of the old radical republican tradition lingered on, especially among clergymen. In 1892, for example, three Presbyterian ministers were among ten people elected to the House of Commons on a Protestant Nationalist tick-

But the increasing conservatism of the Catholic Church, as reflected in new doctrines like Papal Infallibility and the "Ne

A NOTE ON CHURCH GOVERNMENT

The democratic organisation of the Irish Presbyterian Church is referred to often in the accompanying article. The following is a brief outline of that organisation. It consists of four levels - kirk session, presbytery, synod and general assembly.

 The kirk session is made up of the elders (senior members) of a congregation plus its minister.

 The presbytery is the basic decision-making organ of the church at local level and is made up of the elders and ministers from a number of congregations.

3. The synod is a grouping of presbyteries by area.

4. The annual general assembly, usually held at Church House in Belfast, groups a minister and a representative elder from each of Ireland's 550-odd Presbyterian congregations. It is the church's highest law-making body. The assembly receives reports from a variety of committees, also made up of ministers and elders, on everything from church government, through national and international problems, to gambling and temperance. These are passed to the presbyteries and kirk sessions for comment before they are "received" at the following year's general assembly. The leader, or moderator, of the church is elected for one year only by the general assembly.

Temere" decree (which forced children of mixed marriages to be brought up as Catholics) were playing totally into the hands of the hard-line sectarians in



the Presbyterian Church. Such events as the McCann case in 1910. when the Catholic father in a mixed marriage snatched his children and disappeared with the help of the parish priest, scared away most of the few liberal nationalists who were left. And there were few dissenting Presbyterian voices when the Ulster Volunteers started to mobilise against Home Rule in 1911 and the Ulster Covenant was signed in the following year. If anything, the Presbyterians, conscious that their educational and theological equality with the establishment Church of Ireland was a relatively

recent thing (Presbyterian marriages, for example, had only been made legal in 1845), were even more scared of being incorporated into a new state with a Catholic majority than were their Church of Ireland fellow-Ulstermen. They were also readier to accept the partition of Ireland, in that the vast majority of their members were within a radius of 30 miles from Belfast. Both Carson and Craig were Presbyterians and their co-religionists were all too conscious that they would play an important political role, for the first time in their history, in the six county statelet of Northern Ireland.

AFTER PARTITION : SOCIAL

AND POLITICAL ATTITUDES

In the decade after partition the Presbyterian Church as such took little interest in the political affairs of the new statelet, apart from insisting on an education system with a strong "scriptural", that is, Protestant, emphasis. (See separate article on education.) Perhaps it was confident that now it was ruled by a "Protestant parliament for a Protestant people" it could concentrate on its preferred task of saving souls. However, when it felt that Protestant souls were under threat, as it did from Lord Londonderry's non-sectarian education Act of 1923, its ministers were only too ready to join with the other Protestant churches and the Orange Order to put pressure on

the government. The leader of this particular agitation to, put the Bible back into the schools was the Presbyterian zealot, the Rev. William Corkey, described by the Canadian historian Akenson as "in educational matters the Henry Cooke of the twentieth century."

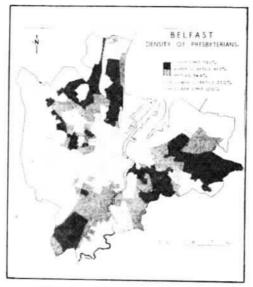
The Rev. W.E. Davison, in his thesis on the church as reflected in the reports presented to the annual General Assemblies, finds that throughout the 1920s and 30s all that Presbyterians seemed concerned about was temperance, gambling and biblical education in schools.

"The really serious questions of appalling slum conditions, grinding poverty and chronically depressed farming conditions, especially after the first World War, received only token attention in an assembly which, not surprisingly, was composed of the more fortunate and the comparatively afficient."

This reflected the class bias of the Church's attitudes - "the vehicle of middle class morality, respectability and spiritual life," according to Davison. He continues:

"We see that the Assembly was scarcely able to conceal its alliance with Capital, wringing its hands as it discerned the Marxist undertones which the Witness (the Presbyterian magazine) had identified in the course of its comment upon post-war strikes in Belfast."

A study by Dr. Ernest Jones of Queens University in the 1950s of the religious geography of Belfast bears out this impression of the middle class nature of Belfast Presbyterianism by the twentieth century. The density of Presbyterians is significantly higher than that of Church of Ireland members in such well-heeled Protestant areas as the Antrim and Malone Roads, Knock and on the slopes of the Castlereagh hills. Church of Ireland members were much more numerous in the poorer areas of the city, like the lower Shankill and Smithfield, and were generally from lower income groups. Similarly, according to the 1951 census, there were a much higher proportion of Presbyterians in residential areas outside the city boundaries, a reflection of the higher social status and higher cost of suburban living (this



The density of Presbyterians in Belfast in the 1950's.

has changed since then with the growth of working class housing estates on the edge of the city.)

For a long time the newer middle class social attitudes of Presbyterianism coexisted uneasily with what was left of the Church's old liberal and radical tradition. Thus, in a report to the 1920 General Assembly, we find the Irish mission, whose job was the the "evangelisation" of the Irish Catholic nation, thundering about "socialism of a godless type widespread among the labouring classes." In contrast, the report of the Social Services Committee that year complained about the amount of profit being shared among a small number of people while others went hungry. And at the following year's Assembly it presented a list of proposals to the new Six County government which were far in advance of the usual reactionary thinking of the early twenties. They included such things as proper legislation to make the father of a child born "out of wedlock" equally responsible: provision by the state of adequately paid jobs in time of unemployment: and a state authority to fix just wages.

The twenties and thirties was a time when there were too many ministers graduating from the Presbyterian College in Belfast for the available congregations. So any young clergyman of "advanced" ideas who wanted a church either had to keep his opinions to himself or disappear into the foreign mission field. Socialism

and nationalism were taboo subjects. Even though (according to Davison) there may have been considerable sympathy among Presbyterian students for Marxism, socialism and pacifism, it had little obvious impact once they emerged into the narrow polarities of Northern Irish society.

But it did mean the continuance of two very different schools of Presbyterian thought on social and political issues. In 1933, for example, at the depth of the depression, a year after the Outdoor Relief Riots and with an unemployment rate of 30%, the Witness was able to claim that "no government could do more than Viscount Craigavon's has done to serve the interests of all classes of the community." Four years later, on the other hand, the Social Services Committee warned about the "tendency in country congregations, where there is very little absolute poverty, of becoming congregational in outlook and failing to realise the need of the world outside." In 1939 the same committee presented a comprehensive report on the pitiful conditions of malnutrition and poverty that large sections of Belfast's working class had to live in.

During the second World War, with anti-communist and anti-Soviet campaigning suspended in order to fight fascism, the radical voice of Presbyterianism seemed momentarily in the ascendant again. This was a time when all the Christian Churches were looking for a new social philosophyto combat the attractions of both fascism and communism. In 1941 the outgoing Moderator, Dr. J.B. Woodburn, made an astonishing speech to the General Assembly:

"The Church has not been militant enough. It must get a little more iron into its blood and mete out more justice. We have got to see that there is more than talk of justice ... we have got to see it enacted. I want the Church to find out all about big business and counteract any jump or kind of grab the financiers are going to make after this war is over. We will meet with opposition, but the reward of seeing our poorer fellowcitizens brought to a higher plane of life will be well worth it."

The incoming Moderator made a similarly outspoken statement

and both were roundly attacked by the Northern Whig. William Grant, the Stormont government's health minister, commented that as a Presbyterian he wasn't "very thrilled" by Woodburn's address and accused him of trying to say something sensational so that he would be remembered.

Three years later the then Moderator, W.M. Kennedy, went even further when he told an audience at Ballymena:

"Christian Communism (not to be confused with Marxist Communism) which had the virtues of voluntary sharing, was an illustration of the way in which industry ought to be run. Capitalism as a system was thoroughly condemned; it way totally anti-Christian, and had no idea of sharing."

There is no record of what the reaction of the audience was. But the Causer of War Committee, reporting to the General Assembly in the same year, urged that even Soviet-style Marxist Communism be given a "careful and sympathetic examination."



DR. J.B. WOODBURN

Such enlightened attitudes died a rapid death with the onset of the Cold War and the onslaughts of McCarthyism. Once again the Northern Irish version of the prevailing paranoia, a sort of of Bolshevik-Papist conspiracy to overthrow Protestantism in Ireland, was spelt out by the Irish Mission. According to the Mission's 1949 report there were "cracks discernible in the Roman edifice" due to the spread of communist ideas in the 26 counties, and the aggressive door-to-door evangelism of the Irish Mission might be able to take advantage of the situation.

When it came to tackling social injustices, the new decade of the 1950s was a barren period for the Presbyterian Church. According to the State of Religion Committee in 1950 the most prevalent social evils in Northern Ireland society were such things as gambling and drinking, followed some way behind by sexual immorality, smuggling, sponging off the social services, "the mad craze for dancing," a growing contempt for the law. deficiency in civic spirit, and organised Sunday sport. No mention of exploitation, unemployment, discrimination anywhere.

One recurring theme close to the hard-working Presbyterian heart in the fifties was the abuse of the new welfare state. One 1954 report expressed this concern for Protestant souls threatened by the new philosophy of "welfarism."

"A whole class of professional privilege-mongers has sprouted up and industrious men find themselves i: the degrading position of being able to earn more by idling than by working ... Shirkers grow sleek and fat ... The Welfare State has created no new class of sins, but it has, in some cases, made more patent the latent sinfulness of the human heart; it has shown us what a bad lot we are."

Given such attitudes it is hardly surprising that consideration of the role of trade unions in Northern Ireland crops up rarely in the deliberations of General Assemblies. But with the fifties trend towards non-political, purely economistic unions, even apolitical Presbyterians could, for the first time be encouraged to play a part in their affairs. In 1959 one report quotes a

"Christian trade union official as criticising Christians for their unwillingness to shoulder responsibility in the unions. The result is that control of these unions is largely in the hands of careerists, communists and Roman Catholics." However, Presbyterians did play a role in the Churches' Industrial Council, made up of representatives of all the Protestant churches, which was partly responsible for pressuring the Stormont government into recognising the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

The reports of the Committee on

National and International Problems - obviously the haven of the few remaining liberal intellectuals in the church are the only ones from which the prevailing reactionary attitudes are notably absent. Throughout the fifties and early sixties this committee published a remarkable series of discussion documents on such thorny issues as capital punishment, human rights, communism, religious and political differences in Ireland, education, race, freedom of speech, unemployment and sexual ethics. But there is very little evidence that there was any proper attempt to explain or make comprehensible the often contentious points raised when they were sent to the presbyteries and congregations for discussion. The worthy (and wordy) liberalism they espoused went totally over the heads of ordinary god and pope-fearing Ulster Presbyterians.

GRASPING THE NETTLE

The early sixties, with their slight relaxation of hard-line Unionist attitudes, saw a momentary resurgence of the old tolerant elements in Presbyterianism. Intelligent and progressive proposals were put forward to ease Northern Ireland's chronic unemployment problem by the National and International Problems Committee. The committee wrote that basic human freedoms were "often denied by economic pressure and the restrictions of poverty and hunger, and not only by political dictatorship as we are apt to think." One presbytery wrote in reply to these ideas to express concern about "the danger of discrimination on religious grounds in times of serious unemployment." And a resolution was passed strongly criticising the Stormont government for trying to pass a law removing family benefits after the third child, an overtly anti-Catholic measure.

In 1966 the National and International Problems Committee finally grasped the nettle that was to lead to the birth of the Civil Rights movement in the following year. It presented the General Assembly with a major study of religious discrimination in Ireland, north and south. Though the extent of discrimination against Protestants in the south was given a disproportionate amount of space, this was a brave thing to do at the time. Fr. Desmond

Wilson was one of the few from the Catholic side who realised just how brave, given the reactionary nature of most Protestant grass-roots opinion on the subject.

"It appeared from the suffering endured by the sponsors of the Discrimination Report in its two years of preparation that in Northern Ireland, even in the sixtles, no reform was possible without abuse being heaped on the heads of those who attempted it... Telephone calls from amgered Protestants, abusive letters and suspicion made their work a sacrificial act of Christian witness."

ATTITUDES ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION

Befor going on to examine the attitudes of Ulster Presbyterianism to the "troubles" in Northern Ireland in the sixties and seventies, it is worth looking briefly at the church's line on the national question since the foundation of the northern state. The last time an overtly anti-partitionist stand was taken at a General Assembly was in 1920 when the lone voice of J.B. Armour called the partition bill "divisive, anti-unionist, tending to accentuate racial and religious hatreds ... wanted by few, hated by all."

Since then the Presbyterian leadership has faithfully followed the feelings of its increasingly fundamentalist flock by identifying itself totally with the Northern state, with the occasional nod towards the civic responsibilities of its small flock in the south. It also saw partition in almost exclusively religious terms until the seventies, with its more paranoid elements- led by the evangelising Irish Mission- only too conscious of the overwhelming Catholic majority south of the border. In 1936 the Irish Mission reported:

"Ireland, in its close proximity to England holds today a strategic position; and rival world powers are striving to win this land of ours for their own ends. The Roman Catholic Church is, through Catholic Action, putting forth every effort to make Ireland a wholly Roman Catholic country. Republicanism is professedly determined to use every means to bring about an all-Ireland republic completely severed from England; while Communism,

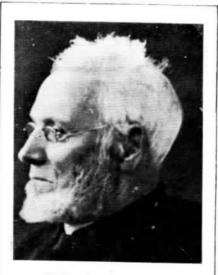
through its secret propaganda, is insidiously sowing the seeds of discord with a view to causing class warfare among different sections of the community; at the same time quietly waiting the opportunity to launch a mass movement for a Workers Republic in alliance with the Russian Soviet."

The Irish Mission, as late as the fifties saw

"the evangelicisation of our native land as the one real hope of a united Ireland,"

and as the only way to defeat the "encircling and crushing pressure of Roman Catholic infiltration." Even the liberal committee on national and international problems believed that Irish nationalism was nothing more than a sentimental attachment to Catholic inspired symbols.

"He(the Northern Protestant) must also recognise the place of sentiment, the love in men for prestige and the symbols of freedom, the hatred of England which has existed here in measure for centuries, and is still fed by schemers and dreamers, the sense of being thwarted in regard to the relatively wealthy north by the military powers of Britain and the like factors which meticate the Nationalist in his thinking and desiring." (1950)



REV. J.B. ARMOUR

And such a defensive ideology was only fuelled by the actions of the Dublin government and the Catholic hierarchy. Such things as the confessional nature of the I937 constitution, the sectarian nature of the Ne Temere decree on mixed marriage, the fiasco over the hierarchy's blocking of Noel Browne's Mother and Child scheme, or anti-Protestant statements by southern politicians and clergy, did nothing to convince northern

Presbyterians that there was a place for them outside the sectarian stronghold they had built for themselves in the six counties.

Discrimination against Protestants in the south was a recurring theme in general assembly reports throughout the forties, fifties and sixties. The persecution of Protestants by Catholics was seen as something endemic in the catholic religion, unlike the persecution of Catholics by Protestants, which wasseen as a thing of the past, repudiated and repented of . Most Presbyterians probably agreed strongly with the state of religion committee in 1954 when it claimed that "if Protestant witness is extinguished in Ireland, democracy and freedom will go too."

This was the sort of thinking which made the vast majority of Presbyterians such unthinkingly hard-line opponents of the Civil Rights Movement. Protestant privileges were seen as the old Orange catch-cry of 'Freedom, Religion and Laws' and the Civil Rights demands of the late sixties were dismissed as Republican, or even Communist, attacks on the 'democratic' Protestant people of the North.

SECTARIAN GUT REACTION

Very few Presbyterians saw the dreadful contradiction in this sectarian gut-reaction. Most of them would have certainly agreed with the sentiments expressed in a letter from a well-known Belfast elder to the Presbyterian Herald in 1960, in response to questions raised about intolerant attitudes embodied in the Orange Order and Unionist Party The first wrote:

"Wherein lies the intolerance complained of, and who are the intolerant? Surely the intolerance and provocation come entirely from the Roman Catholics and their church. They are responsible for the segregation of Roman Catholic children in schools of which 65% of the cost is provided by an 'intolerant' govern-They are responsible for blocking the Mother and Child scheme in Southern Ireland, for the Fethard affair and for assaults on Protestant lay preachers with the assailants eulogised by the District Magistrate. This is in Ireland. Take a look at what goes on in places like Colombia where Roman bigotry is so active that Protestants are murdered (Historical note: over 300,000 people were killed in the Colombian Civil War of the

forties and fifties, very few of them Protestants).

PRESBYTERIANS AND TROUBLES

The Civil Rights Movement and the violence of the Protestant reaction to it caught the Presbyterian leadership virtually unawares. According to the Church's important government committee in 1969:

"Those who hoped for an uneasy peace, by preserving the status quo, or by a gradual improvement in relationships without seriously disturbing the established pattern, do not seem to have realised the passions which were welling up in situations to which they had become uncitically accustomed. There has been, for too long, a conspiracy of silence or crying of 'Peace! Peace! where there was no peace."

The statement went on to admit that the Presbyterian church had not spoken out on issues of social injustice with " sufficient zeal and urgency, sufficient self-examination and self-denial." Yet the old attitudes died hard. A statement in August 1969 blamed the violence of that month in Derry and Belfast not on the excesses of Protestant mobs or the B-Specials, but on "continued fears and frustrations, mischiefmaking, provocations, misunderstandings, evil rumours and dru-nkeness." In the following year the Specials were actually singled out for praise :

"We also pay tribute to the loyal service of members of the Ulster Special Constabulary over many years in the defence of the security of the state. In any new forces to be recruited on a broader basis it is essential that this kind of service and security should be preserved."

The dilemma of the Presbyterian church leadership throughout the past eleven years has been how to project itself as a preacher of tolerance and reconciliation in a divided society, while at the same time having to reflect the opinions of its frightened grass roots. With the advent of the Provisional I.R.A. it was able to retreat more and more into ritual condemnations of violence. But there have been elements within that leadership, often based round the national and in international problems.committee, which have tried hard to understand the essentially political nature of the conflict and the real grievances of working-class Catholics: Unfortunately their

analyses have often been swept aside by the anti-Republican paranoia that increasingly took hold of Northern Ireland in the seventies.

In a study document in 1971 called "Radical Change, Reform and Revolution," this committee called on Presbyterians not to forget that "in our position of power, we meet the temptation to deny legitimate claims for reform and to refuse support for justifiable calls for righteousness and social justice." It absolved the Civil Rights movement for much of the blame for the outbreak of violence, admitted there was "much justice in the demand for civil rights" and called "the right to work a basic right for every person." But it went on to recognise that:

"Within our church there is a strong conservative body of opinion, who suspect the modern ecumenical trends and the more liberal policies of our church courts and church leaders as implying a weakening in or betrayal of fundamental Reformation principles. Hand in hand with this attitude is a deep-seated distrust of the Roman Catholic church both for its doctrines and its power structures."

It ended by condemning intimidation by Protestants of extreme conservative views, saying that "religious fascism is foreign to the spirit of Christ."

CATHOLIC TOTALITARIANISM

And always in the background was the spectre of Catholic totalitarianism which for so many Presbyterians was the main characteristic of the 26 county society.

"The persistent lack of any real understanding of the position of the great majority of our people and, we believe, of Northern Protestants generally, shown not least by so many government spokesmen and leaders of public opinion in the Irish Republic, must constantly be borne in mind. Nor is it just particular sectarian constitutional provisions in the Irish Republic, but also the general political and cultural traditions and claims which are seen as a threat to their identity, associations, standards and even their existence here." (February 1972)

The abolition of Stormont provoked a complaint from the government committee that the Protestants of Northern Ireland were "suffering a massive deprivation of their constitutional and civil rights and a substantial disenfranchisement exceeding any previous curtailment of local voting rights such as have caused widespread protests in the past."

The statements of the first three years of the conflict set the tone for the Church's reaction to events in the mid and late seventies: condemnations of the Provisional IRA, mixed with calls for reconciliation and occasional cautions about the level of state repression.



As Alf McCreary, a Presbyterian journalist not noted for his radical ideas, pointed out in 1978, the church leadership tried so hard to be all things to all men that it ended up saying precisely nothing.

"Politically our image is that of a solid church that is so afraid of offending the majority of its members that it has a word for everyone, and ends up saying very little of note."

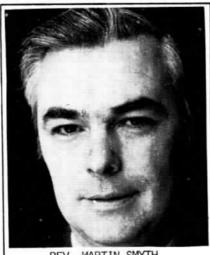
He quotes a 1978 statement urging "a constant pressure of the security forces in known republican areas" and goes on to comment:

"What do they mean by this - do they want troops to go in to Ballymurphy and Short Strand to root out terrorists and maybe kick in a few doors and bang a few heads, perhaps innocent heads, in the process? If this is what they want, why don't they say so plainly? The trouble with such a statement is that it panders to the hardliners who do want to root out anyone who is in the way, and yet it is not extreme enough to raise the hackles of the liberals."

The grass-roots feeling on the security issue in contrast was unequivocal. The Government Committee's 1977 report notes that resolutions had been received from the presbyteries of Tyrone, Derry, Down, Ballymena, Strabane, Newry, Armagh, and from the synods of Armagh and Down, Belfast and Derry and Omagh calling for "sterner action to defeat the terrorists."

"In transmitting these resolutions to the Secretary of State (Roy Mason), the committee conveyed to him the fears, the growing resentment and disillusionment of our Presbyterian people regarding the security policy being pursued by the government which has led to a serious loss of credibility."

The "disillusionment of our Presbyterian people" was resulting increasingly in defections to Ian Paisley's Free Presbyterian Church and the formation of fundamentalist ginger groups like the Campaign for Concerted Witness to Reformed Truth. The impetus for this came from such ministers as Revs. Martin Smyth (head of the Orange Order), Roy Magee and Bertie Dickinson (See separate article on Dickinson) and, more importantly, from the lay elders of the church. The Presbyterians have always prided themselves on their democratic organisation, which gives the leading laymen, the elders, an equal say in the government of the church with the ministers.



REV. MARTIN SMYTH

Now the elders, content for so long to be guided by their more liberal ordained clergymen, started to use their muscle. Organised since 1922 in the Ruling Elders Union (later Fellowship) they had become increasingly suspicious of what they saw as the "modernist" trend in

Ulster Presbyterianism - the involvement in the World Council of Churches and the timid overtures being made towards Irish Catholicism and its adherents. Their theology, as their politics, was largely motivated by sectarian bias. And they chose to make their stand for the purity of the Ulster Presbyterian soul on the issue of the World Council of Churches - an issue which perhaps at first sight seems to have little to do with specifically Irish problems, but in fact is a direct reflection of them.

THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES CONTROVERSY

The World Council of Churches was set up in 1948 and brought together 200 Protestant churches. over 70 of them Presbyterian (the largest single group) and the vast majority Calvinist and Lutheran churches from Western Europe, North America and the English-speaking nations of the old British Empire. For the first 13 years of its existence the Irish Presbyterian church was a wholehearted and enthusiastic member of this body, seeing it as a useful discussion forum for like-minded Protestants from different traditions.

The problems started to occur when Christians who weren't white English-speaking Calvinists started to join the Council and the new doctrine of ecumenism (that is, the coming together of all Christian churches) began to be seriously mooted. The WCC's 1961 assembly at New Delhi saw an influx of Orthodox, churches from Eastern Europe and black and brown Protestant churches from the Third World. To many hardline Ulster Presbyterians these people weren't even Christians, but communist fellowtravellers and dangerous humanists. The church's Inter-Church Relations Committee was instructed by that year's General Assembly to "consider whether our membership within the WCC endangers the consistency of our reformed and Presbyterian wit-

At the following year's General Assembly concern was expressed about the sending of WCC observers to the Second Vatican Council - was this a move towards recognising the "scarlet woman

of Rome," the church led by the papal anti-Christ. In 1964 sixtynine Presbyterian ministers sent a strongly-worded letter to the Belfast newspapers about the "Romeward trend" of of the WCC and demanded that the Irish Presbyterian church disaffiliate. They believed that there was an insidious plot by the WCC to take over Irish Presbyterianism as a first step towards unification with Catholicism. At that year's General Assembly the convenor of the Inter-Church Relations Committee, the Rev. Carlisle Patterson, felt it necessary to deny that "the title deeds of the Irish Presbyterian Church have been lodged at World Council headquarters."

The growing paranois was fuelled by a statement from the head of the Orange Order, Sir George Clark, also Chairman of the Unionist Party Council, on 12th of July 1966, expressing alarm at the apparent moves towards church unity and calling for "a return in our Protestant churches to the principles of the sixteenth century Reformation." A month previously the Rev. Ian Paisley had finally exploded on the Northern Irish scene with a violent protest rally against the Presbyterian Church's "Romeward trend" outside Church House in Belfast, where the General Assembly was sitting.

POINT OF NO RETURN

In 1966 the Presbyterian leadership was not yet very conscious of the gut fears of its congregation, most of whom sympathised with Paisley's basic objections if not his violent actions and wild rhetoric. It strongly reaffirmed its membership of the WCC and denied any "Romeward trend." But the following year the Inter-Church Relations Committee recognised just how deep was the suspicion of ecumenical and political change among ordinary Ulster Presbyterians.

"Most of us have moments of nostalgic longing for the days when the church had its unchallenged authority in a stable agricultural society; but we know that our calling is to bear witness in a much more insecure, even revolutionary, period."

But the real point of no return for Ulster Presbyterianism's "international dimension" came at the fourth assembly of the WCC at Uppsala, Sweden, in 1968. There the world's Protestant churches, led by the new radical Christians of Africa, Asia and

Latin America, decided to set up the Programme to Combat Racism (PCR) to help the victims of and fighters against apartheid and white minority rule in southern Africa. This move was to lead to humanitarian aid being sent to such guerrilla movements as the Patriotic Front in Zimbabwe and SWAPO in Namibia. The new radical stance of the WCC was underlined in a statement from the WCC central committee in 1971 which emphasised that the World Council did not "pass judgment on those victims of racism who are driven to violence as the only way left to them to redress grievances and so open the way to a new and m more just social order."

This of course was total anathema to Ulster Presbyterians, many of whom already saw the Provisionals as part of a worldwide Catholic-Communist conspiracy to overthrow white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant rule. At the 1972 General Assembly there was a concerted effort to disaffiliate from the WCC which was finally defeated by 219 votes to 168. And it wasn't only the PCR that the fundamentalists objected to: in 1974 the traditionally reactionary Tyrone presbytery, led by the Rev. Bertie Dickinson, presented a memorial to the General Assembly objectto a WCC grant to the British group "Towards Racial Justice," which it accused of being a Marxist front

The liberals in the Inter-Church Relations Committee replied with two long reports defending continued membership of the WCC. They pointed out that few Presbyterians were pacifists and had in the past accepted that armed opposition to an oppressive state was permissible. They cited the Germans who opposed Hitler, the Frenchmen who fought the Vichy regime and - most damning of all the Ulstermen who used the threat of violence to oppose the British government between 1912 and 1914.

But it was to no avail. In 1976 another General Assembly motion to disaffiliate was narrowly lost by 481 to 381 despite the fundamentalists' efforts to pack the hall. In the same year the Campaign for Complete Withdrawal from the WCC was set up, to be followed by the Campaign for Concerted Witness to Reformed Truth to clean up all "modernist" and "Romanist" tendencies within the church. Two years later, at a



Paisleyites demonstrate outside the 1966 general assembly in Belfast against the 'romeward trend' of the Irish Presbyterian Church.

specially convened assembly, the fundamentalists finally swept home on the tide of reaction with a 561 to 393 vote in favour of suspending membership of the world body. And this year's General Assembly in June will certainly turn that suspension into outright disaffiliation, with outgoing moderator Dr. William Craig (no relation!) from Portadown one of the strongest voices in favour of the retreat into ultra-Protestant isolation-ism.

All this may seem somewhat marginal to a socialist analysis of the place of Presbyterianism in Northern Ireland. But it is only the most obvious manifestation of the rightward drift within the church over the past 20 years, and more particularly since the advent of the Civil Rights movement and the collapse of the Orange state — a drift that has put them almost beyond the pale of world Protestantism. And the "international" attitudes of



REV. WILLIAM CRAIG AND WIFE

the majority who voted the church out of the WCC are reflected in local attitudes that have hardened on every conceivable social and political issue.

These are faithfully reproduced in the publications of the Campaign for Concerted Witness to Reformed Truth. It is worth quoting a sample of them to illustrate the depth and strength of this retreat into pietism and ultra-conservatism. One recent pamphlet bemoans the spread of communism throughout Europe and finally to the Protestant heartland of Britain itself,

"seeking to bring about that economic chaos in which, as Marx himself foresaw, Communism will take over without a seat in the House of Commons and without a shot being fired ... It is part of our moral responsibility to our children and generations yet unborn that we should not pave the way for the hammer and sickle to fly over Belfast, over Dublin and over London."

Absolute obedience to all forms of worldly authority is ordered, except where it violates "scripture or moral convictions (?)":

"Apart from this exception, the citizen, the employee and the child must abandon the attitudes of rebellion and self-will and subject himself to that chain of command established by God. There are two sides to the establishment of peace (in Northern Ireland): 1. the citizen subjecting himself to the government and its agencies; 2. the government doing what it is

supposed to do - establish and enforce the law." (Rev. R.J. Magee, 1977)

The views of racists like Father Arthur Lewis (an Anglican minister who was forbidden to practice after he had been appointed to Ian Smith's Rhodesian senate) are quoted with approval, and articles from the magazine of the South African government-backed Christian League for Southern Africa are reproduced. Orange Order resolutions praising opposition to the WCC and warning "brethren and churchmen at large of the attempted undermining of the Christian Faith by Marxist infiltrators" are featured. The EEC is characterised as the "papal-dominated regime in Brussels in which our elected representatives will be but pawns and /or pimps." Liberal attitudes to Catholicism, censorship and sexual ethics are virulently criticised.

Politically the new Presbyterian fundamentalism is nothing more or less than Paisleyism without Paisley. Ironically, it is through the exercise of democracy by grass-roots members in what is perhaps the



HENRY JOY MC CRACKEN

world's most democratic church that such an ideology is in the ascendant. Its theological bases come straight from pure undiluted Calvinism, a Calvinism rooted in "original sin" and religious wars of the sixteenth century. And that's just about how far the new breed of Presbyterian fundamentalist is trying to retreat into history.

... a history that has rejected the radicalism of McCracken and Montgomery for the elitism and exclusivism of Henry Cooke.

in an open letter to the Irish Times, asking him how he could reconcile membership of the Orange Order with being a minister in a Christian Church. It was to be the first of many times he was to cross swords with the spokesman of Orangeism.

In January 1972 he was billed as a speaker at the demonstration which later turned into Bloody Sunday. though at the last minute he couldn't go because his wife was in hospital. A year later he joined Father Edward Daly (now Bishop Daly) in a service to commemorate that massacre. This caused fierce resentment inside the Presbyterian church in the north But he believes that his lone voice was more easily ignored than persecuted, and has little fear of any danger of dismissal from the ministry, though Martin Smyth once pushed for such a punishment. He says he will remain in the Presbyterian Church because that is the Christian tradition he was brought up

He believes that to be a comitted Christian one must also be a committed socialist. But he sees no hope for socialism in Ireland until the country is reunited and politics can operate on a left-right basis. He says he understood only too well why the Provisionals appeared when the Catholic ghettoes needed defending. "There's no point in middle-class churchmen talking of them as if they come from another planet, they are the rough edge of sectarianism which we have created." But for him the "criminally unthinking" thing was their move to an offensive campaign which "reawakened sectarianism, which must wither away if we are to have a united Ireland."

Portrait of a radical

The Rev. Terence McCaughey is one of the few survivors of the radical dissenting tradition in Presbyterianism. He goes further and calls himself a socialist republican. But he freely admits that it would be impossible for him to live and work as a minister in Northern Ireland. For the past 17 years he has been variously assistant chaplain and lecturer in Irish and theology at Trinity College, Dublin.

He first raised Presbyterian eyebrows when he spoke at the inaugural meeting of the Trinity College Republican Club in 1964. He was an active supporter of the Civil Rights Movement, and was present at the marches in Derry and Newry in November 1968. At the Presbyterian general assembly of June, 1969, he launched a blistering attack on Protestant power in the forth:

"50 years ago and more the middleclass Protestants - who then as now controlled the churches fell in with those who followed Randolph Churchill's advice to play the Orange card. They were

seeking the defection of the working class everywhere and saw in sectarianism a way of holding on to the masses, while at the same time setting the Protestant and Catholic working classes at each others' throats. These interests clamoured for partition under the slogan 'A Protestant Parliament for a Protestant people. and they got it. Why be suprised when those who are not Protestants feel they have been cheated, or when the sectarianism which began then comes home to roost later on. People with eyes to see despise a church which now after years of non-involvement calls for a halt."

He was shouted down by the worthy clergymen and elders in the body of the hall. Mc Caughey spoke at meetings throughout the summer of 1969, causing quite a stir when he said the Irish Army should go into Derry to protect the Catholics there. He collected clothes for the victims of the Bombay Street pogrom—with at least one Dublin Presbyterian church responding magnificently. The following year he took on the Rev.Martin Smyth

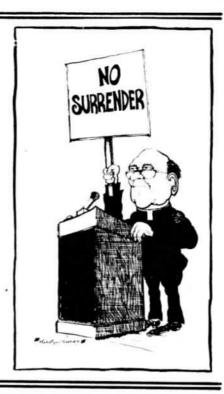


REV. TERENCE MC CAUGHEY

He sees the Roman Catholic Hierarchy as one of the biggest barriers towards progress in Ireland, a progress he sees in terms of a necessary secularisation of society north and south. The Protestant churches in the south, he says, behave like minicatholic churches, calling, for example, not for the democratisation of education but for their own minority rights,

As for the Presbyterian Church, be sees it losing membership from both sides as it moves to the right - its most fundamentalist elements graduating towards paisleyism and its liberals deserting it for more open-minded protestant congregations. He believes that the drift towards fundamentalism in the past ten or fifteen years is symptomatic of a decision by most Ulster Presbyterians that they would rather be a tight, inward-looking

'sect' with a Calvinist monopoly on the 'truth', rather than a 'church' which reaches out to other people of a broad Christian tradition. In this he sees a parallel with the decision of the Unionists between 1912 and 1920 to opt for dominance in a small part of Ireland because they couldn't play a more dominant role in the island as a whole any more. The rest of the world has been given up as 'lost' and Presbyterians are retreating more and more into their little laager in north-east Ireland. This he sees as largely a political decision, despite the trappings of theological purity in which it is cloaked. The fear of being outflanked by Paisley has only intensified this trend, so that now for the first time in the church's history there are more fundamentalists among Presbyterians than in the Church of Ireland.



Portrait of a reactionary

The Rev, Bertie Pickinson from Tobermore, Co. Derry, one of the leaders of the campaign to disaffiliate from the World Council of Churches, is representative of the new fundamentalist breed of Presbyterianism. For him it was the theology of the WCC which was the basic fault, and all its other misdoings — such as the Programme to Combat racism and the rapprochement with the Roman Catholic Church — flowed from that essential flaw.

de says that the WCC's theology started going astray with the entry of the Eastern European Orthodox churches, with their "non-scriptural" ideas and involvement in the Communist system. This opened the way for a possible eventual link-up with the Catholics. Later in the sixties came the "theology of liberation," imported from Latin America, which, according to Dickinson, "takes scriptural terms and misconstrues them for the purpose of advancing Marxist and ecumenical ideas." It interprets the doctrine of salvation no longer as "a personal iberation from the bondage of sin," but as the liberation of people from political and economic bondage. This is something most Ulster Presbyterians, brought up to believe that the only sort of liberation was that of being "born again," couldn't stomach.

He believes the movement against WCC membership, because of its aid to southern African liberation movements, was fuelled by the fear of ordinary Presbyterians, who linked the terrorist actions of the Patriotic Front with the same actions of the Provisionals



REV. BERTIE DICKINSON

here. He himself would like to see a much tougher line on law and order here. He says, like Alf McCreary, that the Presbyterian leadership always panders to the lowest common denominator in its statements on violence and ends up by saying virtually nothing at all. It is not enough to condemn violence and murder, he believes, without "taking up the sword against it."

He is outspokenly critical of those liberal stands taken by the church leadership over the past eleven years. He claims, for example, that its statement in favour of the Sunningdale agreement was totally unrepresentative of the vast bulk of Northern Ireland's Presbyterians. He is hoping this will change in the future with the election of the fundamentalist Dr. William Craig to the moderatorship and the new militancy of the elders.

He is embarrassed to be called a Paisleyite, though he agrees that he sees eye to eye with Paisley on many religious issues. But when taxed with the carrowness of his ideas towards the great big liberal, ecumenical Christian world outside the Six Counties, he falls back on the old Calvinist notion of the truth being held by a small elite group. "The truth does divide, "he says, and quotes Jesus Christ's famous message: "I come not to bring peace but a sword."

And the fundamentalist paranoia has an even more explicit biblical backing. Because, as Dickinson points out, the Book of Revelations says that in the final days, before the coming of the anti-Christ and the armageddon that will end the world, there will appear one world church (the World Council of Churches, it is implied) and one world government (a Communist one is the fundamentalist fear.)

PAISLEYISM

IAN PAISLEY IS ONLY THE LATEST IN A LONG LINE OF BIBLE-THUMPING, HELL-THREATENING, ANTI-CATHOLIC PROTESTANT PREACHERS, THEY ALL HAVE HAD TWO THINGS IN COMMON: THEY RISE TO LEADERSHIP POSITIONS BY PERSONIFYING THE FEAR, NARROWNESS AND BIGOTRY OF THOSE PROTESTANTS WHO FEEL THREATENED BY RAPID POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CHANGE; AND THEY SHAMELESSLY MIX FUNDAMENTALIST RELIGION WITH SECTARIAN POLITICS, PAISLEY IS A CREATURE OF THE TROUBLED 1960S AND 1970S JUST AS HENRY COOKE AND "ROARING" HUGH HANNA WERE OF THE MIDDLE YEARS OF THE LAST CENTURY.

This is not to play down the part his own considerable personality has played in his rise to notoriety. He is perhaps the most powerful rabble-rousing orator in modern Irish history. He is an astute political opportunist, swinging adeptly between clashing policies like total integration, Ulster independence and devolved rule, and cutting the ground from under his political opponents at every opportunity. Any lieutenants who were potential threats to his leadership have fallen by the wayside - Bunting, Boal, Beattie and Baird. One wonders how long Peter Robinson will last.

But it is the world view that he embodies which is the real reason for his attraction, an attraction which won him 170,000 votes in last summer's European elections. This is why we have examined the outpourings of the Protestant Telegraph. Papers like the Loyalist News may have been deeper into the gutter of bigotry and sectarian hatred, but Paisley's paper appeals in a more coherent semi-philosophical way to the deep defensiveness of the Ulster Protestant persona.

It also shows how little the ideas of Paisleyism have changed over the years, despite his new respectability as the representative of Unionist opinion at Humphrey Atkins' round-table talks. Jim Campbell of the <u>Sunday News</u> wrote recently that Paisley could be Northern Ireland's next prime minister, and called him "a man of moderation" and a "peacemaker." He has a very short memory. For Paisley's outbursts during the Pope's visit showed that his opposition to Catholicism and all its works was as bigoted and unyielding as ever. And as the man has pointed out himself time and time again, it's his theological fundamentalism which is the real faith behind his political ideas.

The rise of an ecclesiastical fascist

Ian Richard Kyle Paisley was born in Station Terrace, Armagh in 1926, the son of Pastor Kyle Paisley, a Baptist minister from Sixmilecross, Co. Tyrone, and Isobel Turnbull from Edinburgh. He had one older brother, Harold Spurgeon, born in 1923, who later joined the RAF, then the RUC and eventually became a preacher and emigrated to Vancouver in the late 1960s. There was also an adopted sister, Margaret, who married Rev. R.J. Beggs, Free Presbyterian minister in Ballymena.

In 1928 the family moved to Ballymena where Harold and Ian attended the Model School. Four years later, Pastor Paisley's congregation split and he founded the Independent Gospel Tabernacle in Ballymena. Ian followed in his father's footsteps after 'receiving the call' while working in the fields near Sixmilecross in 1942. He went off to Barry School of Evangelism in South Wales and later attended the Reformed Presbyterian Theological Hall in Belfast, from where he graduated with a diploma. On August 1, 1946 he was ordained a Baptist Minister and immediately began his ministry on the Ravenhill Road in Belfast.

On St. Patrick's Day 1951, Paisley was invited by the congregation of Lissara Presbyterian Church, Crossgar to give a sermon. The congregation split over the invitation and 66 members followed Paisley as he founded the Free Presbyterian Church with headquarters on the Ravenhill Road. The church's first year's income was £360.



Paisley and fellow Free Presbyterians in good voice at their first session in Dublin in 1978.

(Derek Spiers IFL/Report)

1953

With supporters in High Street, Belfast, burns books of J.E. Davey, new moderator of Presbyterian Assembly; Davey accused of being "evolutionist."

1956

- Oct. 13 Marries Eileen Emily Cassels, shorthand typist, from well-to-do East Belfast Baptist family. They later have five children. Rhonda, Cherith, Sharon, Ian and Kyle.
- October Gains public notoreity through disappearance of fifteen year old Catholic girl from Falls Road, Maura Lyons, "converted" to Free Presbyterianism. Paisley implicated in kidnapping of this minor. On her 16th birthday, Maura, no longer a minor, coincidentally "turns up" on Paisley's doorstep and is made a ward of court (May 10, 1957).

1958

April 27 Stages mock mass in Ulster Hall with Rev. J.J. Arrien, "a converted Spanish priest," the cel-

Recieves three degrees: a Bachelor's and Doctorate in Divinity from Pioneer Theological Seminity, Rockford, Illinois, and a Master of Arts after a six-week correspondence course from Barton College, Manitou Springs, Colorado. None of the degrees are worth the paper they are granted on.

1959

Leads protest at talk given by Dr. Donald Soper, President of Methodist Church Conference, in Ballymena. Soper accused of being a communist, has a Bible thrown at him, and is prevented from speaking. Paisley charged as result of fracas, defended by Desmond Boal. Fined £5. Fine paid by George Allport, Unionist Party member.

1961

Leaves Orange Order over attendance of Sir Robin Kinahan, Orangeman and Mayor of Belfast, at Catholic funeral. Joins Independent Orange Order.

There are now approximately 1000 Free Presbyterians.

1962

Oct. 16 Thrown out of Rome ("the Harlot City") after trying to disrupt the Vatican Council. Distributes film of his journey, titled "In the Hands of the Gestapo."

1963

Leads march to Belfast City Hall to protest at flag at half-mast because of death of Pope John XXIII.

1964

- Jan. 7 Rev. Harold Magowan and Antrim Free Presbyterian congregation split with Paisley because of "an absence of an annual election for moderatorship." Magowan says: "We are free at last. We are liberated from him."
- July 3 Paisley refused to pay fine imposed as result of march of previous June. Says he will go to prison. Fine paid anonymously. Later turns out that donor was Peter Courtney, an English businessman in Lambeg who later went bankrupt and moved to Rochdale.
- Sept. 23 Paisley supporters and RUC remove tricolour from Republican Party headquarters on Falls Road. Four days of rioting forlow.

1965

Feb. 25 Leads mass rally outside Unionist Party headquarters over meeting between O'Neill and Lemass.

1966

- Feb. 20 Warns that 30,000 from South are to converge on N.I. for Easter Rising commemoration.
- Feb. 23 During inquest on Joseph McComb, serving 8 years for armed robbery, Governor of Crumlin Road prison implicates Paisley. Hints that when visiting prisoner, Paisley persuaded him to stage attempted suicide to embarrass authorities and help Paisley's campaign to have McComb freed. But McComb overdosed and died.
- March 1 First rally of Ulster Protestant Volunteers in Lisburn. Adressed by its founder, Paisley, and by Edward Carson Junior.
- March 22 Is refused permission to disembark from plane in Rome where Dr. Ramsay, Archbishop of Canterbury, was meeting Pope. Says later that he is anti-papist, but loves individual Catholics.
- April First issue of Protestant Telegraph; Paisley editor.

- April 17 Forms Ulster Constitution Defence Committee because of "threatened" invasion from South for Easter Rising commemoration.
- May Twelfth Free Presbyterian church opened in Armagh.
- May 27 John Scullion, a Catholic, murdered, probably by UVF.
- June 6 Leads march in protest at Romeward trend of Presbyterian Church. Riot as march passes throug..

 Catholic Markets area. Another riot at Presbyterian General Assembly building. Governor of N.I.
 and his wife abused. Minister of Home Affairs, McConnell, later sacked for allowing march.
- June 16 Reads message of support in Ulster Hall meeting "from four divisions of the UVF."
- June 19 Pastor Kyle Paisley's summer bungalow near Rostrevor burned down.
- June 26 UVF murder Peter Ward, a Catholic. Hugh McClean, later charged, states: "I am sorry I ever heard of that man Paisley or Jecided to follow him."
- June 28 Paisley denies knowing McClean, and says McClean was never member of Free Presbyterian church, UCDC, or UPV. Also claims has never neard of UVF, nor has it any connections with UCDC or UFF.
- June 29 UVF banned.
- July University of Lancaster reports survey result, 200,000 potential supporters for Paisley if he stood in election, that is, 20 25% of electorate.
- July 20 Paisley refuses to keep peace in trial over riots of June 6.
- July 21 Announces at Ulster Hall meeting: "The day is coming when I will be in the House of Cormons."
- July 23 Jailed for three months. Four days of rioting follow.
- August 5 Guardian estimates Free Presbyterian Church has 3000 members.
- Oct. 6 Eileen Paisley defeated in Duncairn ward, Belfast, local government election. (Defeated in Windsor ward in 1963.) Opponent: Harold Smith, a pro-0'Neill Unionist, and a Jew. Election leaflet of Mrs. Paisley says: "Mr. Smith has every right to hold his views, but he has no right to expect Protestants to elect him to the City Council when he totally rejects Protestant principles."
- Oct. 19 Noel Doherty, former Secretary of UCDC, director of Paisley's Puritan Printing Co., Free Presbyterian and B-Special, jailed for two years for conspiracy to provide explosives to others, was link man between UPV and UVF.

Paisley released from jail. Awarded Honorary Doctorate from Bob Jones University, Greenville, South Carolina.

Nov. 5 Bomb attack on Free Presbyterian church in Armagh. Slight damage.

Income of Ravenhill Road church for year: £17,000.

1967

- July 6 Twenty first Free Presbyterian church opened in Portadown.
- Nov. 23 During televised Oxford Union debate, Paisley produces Mass wafer and condemns the "mockery of the mass." Loses debate. Norman St. John Stevas wins.
- Dec. 11 Leads protest as Lynch, P.M. of South, calls on O'Neill at Stormont.

Income of Ravenhill Road church for year: £34,616.

1968

- May 20 Leads "O'Neill Must Go" rally as P.M. addresses Woodvale Unionist Association. P.M.'s car pelted with eggs, flour and stones.
- Sept. 26 Organises expedition to return "Clyde Valley," ship which ran guns for UVF in 1912, from Nova Scotia.
- Nov. 30 With sidekick Major Ronald Bunting halts Civil Rights march in Armagh. Riots follow.

1969

- Jan. 3 Holds religious meeting at Guildhall, Derry, while Peoples Democracy march is in progress. Bunting tells crowd to be at Burntollet bridge next day.
- Jan. 4 March viciously attacked at Burntollet. Paisley not present, but Bunting takes credit for "hindering and harrying" the march. Later fined £25.
- Jan. 22 Protests outside St. Paul's, London, while Cardinal Heenan preaches inside.
- Jan. 27 Paisley and Bunting sentenced to three months over Armagh riots of previous November. Given two months in which to lodge appeal. Will not appeal.
- Jan. 29. Protest outside Crumlin Road jail as Paisley is jailed.
- Jan. 30 Paisley signs bail bond and is released pending appeal. Bunting does not.
- Feb. 4 Returns to Crumlin Road jail and signs bail bond for Bunting. Says they must be free to organise Paisley's campaign in General Election.

- General Election. Votes in Bannside, P.M.'s constituency: O'heili 7745, Paisley 6331, Fet. 26 Farrell (Peoples Democracy) - 2310.
- March 25 Paisley and Bunting's appeal rejected. Both are jailed.
- April 26 O'Neill resigns. Chichester-Clark becomes new P.M.
- P.M. announces amnesty for some offences. Paisley and Bunting released. May 6
- Swiss ban Paisley from coming to protest at visit of Pope to Switzerland. Paisley says Swiss are June 5 "dimwits" whose only contribution to the twentieth century was the cuckoo clock.
- June 10 Paisley detained in Geneva and deported next day.
- Tells rally at Loughgall: "I am anti-Homan Catholic, but, God being my judge, I love the poor July 13 hapes who are ground down under that system."
- Calls for rally of 100,000 outside Stormont while M.P.s discuss Cameron Report inside. 5000 turn Sept. 30
- Martyrs' Memorial Free Presbyterian church opened on Ravenhill Road to replace former church. Oct. 4 Cost: £180,000, third most expensive church in U.K. since the War (after Liverpoc! and Coventry Cathedrals). Congregation of 3400. Income for year: £60,826.
- Labourer from Newtownards, with connections with UVF and UPV, jailed for 12 years for causing three explosions in April, 1969, to create disorder to bring about release of Paisley from jail.

- Paisley and others protest at Windsor Castle over unity talks there between Catholics and Ang-Jan. 13 licans . Next day two Free Presbyterian clergymen chain selves to Buckingham Palace railings. Paisley denies driving away with keys to locks in his pocket.
- Sir Arthur Young, Inspector General of RUC, writes asking Paisley to use his influence to main-Fab. 18 min peace during forthcoming Civil Rights march in Armagh.
- Paisley wins election in Bannside as Protestant Unionist candidate by 1203 votes margin. Thus br:! becomes Stormont M.P. Rev. William Beattie, Free Presbyterian and Protestant Unionist, wins South Antrim by margin of 958.
- Paisley wins North Antrim seat in Westminster election by margin of 2679 votes. Is only one of 4121. A . I 11 Protestant Unionist candidates to be elected.
- to suspended and expelled at Stormont after noisy exchanges. As he leaves, he says to Sergeant-Jul at Arms. "If you land me your sword, I will decapitate a few of these people before I leave." to gres not get the sword.
- Adjust Jemands interpment of IRA.
- Demands resignation of Chichester-Clark because of imprisonment of Free Presbyterians. sept. 1

- At Westminster says he is against internment. Next day explains at rally in Newtownards; to be reb. 15 "fair" government would intern on a 50/50 basis. "I would be the first to be put inside."
- On eve of Chichester-Clark's resignation Paisley warns that loyalists will not accept Faulkner ten. '6
- Rejects new P.M.'s, Faulkner, proposals for parliamentary committees to allow SDLP to participine !. ate in government.
- June Lo Leads march of 3000 in Belfast to celebrate 50 years of N.I. parliament.
- Seeks to become leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition in Stormont when SDLP withdraw over July 15 Faulkner's refusal to hold inquiry into death of two men during riot in Derry.
- At march in Derry, says that if he were P.M. there would be civil and religious liberty for all. July 31
- In Irish Times interview says: "I would not shirk the duty of becoming P.M. of N.I. if the cir-August 3 constances were such that the people of this country felt I was the right man.
- Paisley and Craig address rally of 15,000 workers in Belfast and demand third force to defeat Sept. 6
- Sept. 10 Paisley addresses third force meeting in Carrickfergus.
- At rally in Portadown demands resignation of Faulkner and announces that Ulster Loyalist Civil Sept. 28 Defence Corps soon to be set up to defeat IRA. Oct. 5
- Parliament re-convenes; SDLP still absent. Paisley, Boal, Feattie and McQuade occupy Opposit-
- DUP Democratic Unionist Party formed. Paisley says Direct Rule is on the way. Uct. 30
- Group of M.P.s, including Paisley, visit Long Kesh. Internees refuse to see them. Nov. 4

DUP becomes official Opposition in Stormont. Feb. 23

- Narch 28 Stormont sits for last time. Direct Rule begins.

 Paisley breaks with Craig over latter's formation of Vanguard. "The voice of Mr. Craig and the advice of Mr. Craig are the voice and the advice of folly."
- May 12 Paisley says he is in favour of total integration of N.I. into U.K.
- June 5 Reiterates integration demand and says talk of an independent Ulster is "stupid and uttor halderdash."
- July 4 Calls for loyalist unity and rejects independent Ulster as "Trotestant Sinn Frinis"."
- August 12 Calls on Orange Order to organise conference on loyalist unity.
- August 17 Paisley tops Belfast Telegraph's "Man of the Hour" poll as man most able to unite N.I. and find path to peace.
- August 21 DUP and Loyalist Association of Workers turn down invitation to conference on loyalist or organised by Orange Order because UDA not invited.
- Sept. 29 Paisley refuses to attend Vanguard rally at Stormont because Vanguard supports independence:
 "It is but a ster from outright rebellion."

1973

- Feb. 8 Paisley condemns one-day electricity strike of previous day organised by Vanguard.
- March 21 New loyalist grouping Loyalist Action Group announced to oppose Assembly proposed in White Paper of previous day, consists of Paisley, Craig, UDA, LAW and Orange Order.
- June 30 Paisley elected for North Antrim in Assembly, gets 14,533 votes. 8 out of 16 PUP candidates elected.
- July 15 Pastor Kyle Paisley dies, aged 81. His wife had died a short time before on laster Sunday.
- July 31 Paisley takes part in loyalist disruption of first meeting of Assembly.
- August 22 Condemns recent bombings of Catholic churches in his constituency, but tells congregation that perpetrators "could be anarchists intent on promoting civil way."
- Sept. 29 Says DUP has no intention of sharing power on Executive of Assembly with a care who would destroy N.I.
- Nov. 21 DUP condemn formation of Executive.
- Nov. 26 Ulster Workers' Council formed to defeat power-sharing.
- Dec. 6 UUUC United Ulster Unionist Council formed from loyalist parties in Assembly for same reason.

Martyrs' Memorial church income for year: £86,517.

1974

- Jan. 16 Paisley, Craig and West (Official Unionist) address rally of 4000 workers protesting at first meeting of Anglo-Irish Law Enforcement Commission. Paisley says: "If the British government refuses to heed us, we will show ways and means whereby we can bring down the Executive."
- Jan 22 Assembly disrupted by loyalists. Paisley removed forcibly by RUC. 5 policemen injured.
- Jan. 23 Paisley withdraws from Assembly in objection to proceedings.
- Jan. 24 Again withdraws after disrupting proceedings.
- Jan. 27 Says on BBC radio interview: "I could not see the way should by an amalgamated Ireland. "W: " sould see the way ahead by an independent Elster."
- Feb. 1 Lord Brookeborough condemns Paisley's stand on independent Ulster. "He reminds one of a corncrake. He makes a tremendous noise, but one doesn't quite know which field he'll be in rest."
- March 1 UUUC win 11 out of 12 Westminster seats. Paisley wins North Antrim by majority of 27,631.
- April 24 Opens first church in 26 Counties, at Coragorry, Co. Monaghan, and announces that he is immortal until his work is complete.
- May 13 UWC plan strike to begin next day. Paisley says strike has not backing of UUUC.
- May 14 Assembly votes 44 to 28 in favour of Sunningdale Agreement. UWC begins strike in response. UWC has not involved loyalist politicians in planning and politicians sure it will not succeed. Only Craig gives support from beginning. Others do not support until it is obvious that strike will succeed. Paisley takes off to Canada to bury an aunt.
- May 21 On return from Canada says UWC has his full support.
- May 28 Executive resigns. Paisley, Craig and West meet together with UWC for first time. UWC says strike is not over yet.
- May 29 Paisley, Craig and West meet UWC for second time. UWC says strike is over. At victory rally in Ballymena Paisley warns IRA: "If you don't quit, we will destroy you.
- July 12 Paisley tells Independent Orange Order rally in Portglenone: "It's our right to arm ourselves to protect our homes and property. We are not going to surrender this right."

October 11 General Election. Paisley's majority now 34,479. 10 out of 12 seats go to UUUC.

Oct. 18 Calls for release of loyalist detainees in groups which have declared ceasefires.

1975

- August 23 Foundation stone laid for £100,000 Free Presbyterian church in Magherafelt.
- Sept. 11 Paisley says RUC have told him to expect murder bid from IRSP. IRSP deny claim.

1976

June 4 Paisley pledges while in Canada to open Free Presbyterian church in East York, Toronto, despite "ecumenical forces" uniting to demolish building in which 35 members of congregation, all from N.I. originally, meet under Rev. F. McClelland, formerly of Tandragee.

1977

May 3 Loyalist lock-out begins, led by DUP, Baird's UUUP and UDA. Demands greater "security." During it Paisley complains on TV of "lewd, immoral, foul-mouthed, drunken MPs who are mouthing about Ulster."

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- May 6 Ballylumford power station workers, key personnel in supporting strike, having been wooed alternatively by Mason and Paisley, vote two to one against striking. Lock out peters out. Paisley does not fulfill promise made earlier to resign if "strike" failed.
- May 10 Paisley and Baird arrested at Ballymena in last days of lock out.
- Nov. 18 Court proceedings instituted over Ballymena arrest. Boal to defend Paisley.
- Dec. 16 Trial adjourned.

Martyrs' Memorial church income for year: £96,000.

1978

- Feb. 3 Paisley not present for trial because at Westminster. DPP objects to further adjournment. Boal accuses DPP of "kicking into the ground an elected representative."
- March 2 Paisley claims in court that he and Baird reached pact with RUC in Ballymena. They agreed to being arrested in order "to defuse tense situation."
- March 3 Charges dismissed. RM James Tweed says would be unsafe to convict on the evidence.
- April 23 Paisley leads 250 in protest at filming of "It's a Knockout" in Carrickfergus on a Sunday.
- July 6 With Rev. Robert Bradford disrupts first Mass in Westminster since Reformation.
- Sept. 24 Delivers low-key, non-political sermon in Mansion House, Dublin to congregation of 300. Despite tomato-throwing protesters, says he looks forward to a Free Presbyterian church in Dublin one day.
- Oct. 17 Announces that election of Pope John Paul 11 proves the coming together of "Vaticanism and Kremlinism."

1979

- June 11 Paisley tops European election with 170,688 votes. Immediately begins to refer to himself as "the leader of the Unionist people."
- June 18 Warns that unless British government defeats IRA, loyalists will "be goaded into desperate retaliatory action ... If the British government is not prepared to do it, then we will have to do it."
- July 11 Alliance of independent members of European Parliament refuse to allow Paisley and Italian fascists to join. Paisley dismisses Alliance as "Roman Catholics and fascists themselves."
- July 17 Becomes first to speak in European Parliament when protests that Union Jack "the flag of my country" is flown upside down.
- July 18 Interrupts Jack Lynch, P.M. of 26 Counties and President of Council of Ministers, "in the name of Ulster's dead." Is loudly jeered by other M.P.s and withdraws. Armagh DUP telegrams him and congratulates him on "taking on the whole of Europe."
- July 23 Paisley most vocal of those protesting at possibility of visit of Pope to N.I. while he is in Ireland. Says that as spokesman for the Protestants of N.I., he can tell the Pope he is not welcome in N.I.
- July 31 Alliance councillor Bill Jeffries says Paisley does not speak for Protestants of N.I. Institutes petition to have Pope come to N.I. Wants more signatures than Paisley got votes in EEC election.
- August 22 Jeffries' petition complete; 60,103 signatures.
- Sept. 28 Paisley suggests Pope excommunicate "terrorists" and condemns Protestant clergy who plan to meet Pope. Says he is glad Pope has decided not to come to North, because it would "inflame passions."

Sept. 10 after Pape's sermon at Drogheda, Paisley says tope did not utterly condemn the communit, which bid "terrorists" while tacitly condemning the "security forces."

Paisley agrees to attend Northern Ireland Office talks with SDLP and Alliance Party to consider devoted government for N.I. Says that an Irish dimension is not on the agenda. As Hume from SDLP believes it is, looks highly likely that Paisley participates because he hopes to be Prime Minister in any devolved government to emerge from talks.

Inside the mind of Free Presbyterianism

Free Presbyterianism is a fundamentalist form of Protestantism. This does not mean merely that it has a strict moral code (espousing abstinence from alcohol, Sunday observance, etc.), nor that it has a way of worship akin to revivalist meetings. It means that it starts from a very strict theological point: namely, that the Bible is the literal word of God and that human beings can only approach God through the Bible. The Bible is literal truth for all time

The greatest of heresies for the fundamentalist is to believe that the faith of the individual in God must be mediated by someone or something other than the Bible. This is the source of Free Presbyterianism's antagonism towards Catholicism. The Church of Rome represents the "Whore of Babylon" spoken of in the Apocalypse. It is not just a non-Protestant organisation- it is non-Christian. In attempting to mediate God's word it dictates "faith" to its members and allows them no liberty.

"Liberty is the very essence of Bible Protestantism. Tyranny is the very essence of popery. Where Protestantism flourishes, Liberty flames. Where popery reigns, Tyranny rules." (Protestant Telegraph, 28.5.66; all references to this paper unless otherwise stated stated.)

The epitome of this tyranny is the Pope himself, the anti-Christ.

"He is a false prophet leading multitudes to eternal dammation through idolatry and false religion." (28.5.66.)

The problem with Catholicism is that it is not content to dictate merely to Catholics. Catholicism and the Pope are out to rule the world. They must be stopped because

"in minority the Roman Catholic church is like a lamb; in equality, she is like a fox; in majority, she is like a tiger."

(27.8.66.)

The Pope is seen as sinister and wily, with all the power of evil

behind him. So it is an easy step to believe that his influence is increasing day by day. As a result, he has the strangest of allies. For example, the movement towards ecumenism is a lowering of Protestantism's defences. Any church which thus so easily lets in the fox of Rome cannot claim the name of Protestant. That includes practically all Protestants except Free Presbyterians.

Thus, an incredible seige mentality becomes apparent. Free Presbyterians stand alone in the fight for Jesus. Rome has not just succeeded in wooing Protestant churches. Her allies are numerous.

"Watch the Jews ... Israel is on the way back to favour ... Watch the Papist Rome rising to a grand crescendo with the Communists. The Reds are on the march. They are heading for an alliance against the return of the Lord Jesus Christ." (4.2.67.)

Everyone is toger er in this conspiracy. Rome and Moscow

"are still sworn enemies of Biblical Christianity and both strive for the eradication of Christianity." (17.12.66.)

And they strive together. "Some years ago" they entered into an

alliance and agreed on their first tactic, infiltration of the World Council of Churches, using it to support world-wide terrorism. Another tactic is the control of Europe. In an article titled "The Common Market in Bible Prophecy - the Pope's Takeover Bid," the conclusion is crystalclear.

"The Vatican creates the common Market, sells out to the creation. The Kremlin eliminates the "two of Rome as an institution and turns to accost the Lord Jesus Christ." (27.5.67.)

In subverting the EEC Rome is doing no more than it has done elsewhere.

"Uleter, Vietnam, South Africa. Biafra and Israel - what's the connection? The interference of the agents of the Vatican. In all these trouble spots Roman Catholic activists have been involved." (21.9.74.)

Daily the enemy draws closer. The conspiracy grows even within the U.K.

"Nearly all the methods of propaganda are now firmly controlled by the Roman Catholic church - cinema, television, newspapers and magazines. Their representatives were carefully selected while posts were being prepared in pol-





itical parties, trade unions, universities and Protestant churches. Northern Ireland being the last bulwark of Protestantism in Europe, if not the world, was singled out for special attention." (14.12.68.)

So, it is in Northern Ireland that true Protestants must stand up against this conspiracy. The Lord is on their side. Because Rome is political, Protestants must organise politically.

"I am first and foremost a Protestant preacher of the old time religion and I am only in politics incidentally because of the tragedy of our country. If our country had been kept firmly anchored to Protestant truth, we would not be in the sorry state we are in this evening." (Paisley, Tyrone Constitution, 21.1.72.)

Hence the Democratic Unionist Party, DUP. It is political Protestantism. As such it has a concern about social issues, but this is not under any circumstances to entail skating on the treacherous ice of "Protestant Socialism."

""Protestantism ... is completely incompatible with Socialism ... Recently many Protestants have fallen into the trap of seeing Socialism as the answer to all our problems, albeit they call it 'Protestant Socialism' ... It cannot be said too often, without Protestantism Ulster cannot exist. No atheistic Socialism or atheistic loyalism will save Ulster. Protestantism may not be compatible with Socialism, but that is not to say that Protestantism does does not have a social conscience. The Party that has proven that Protestantism has a social conscience is the DUP, and surely it alone should be given the support of all working class Protestants." (15.4.78.)

Socialism means allowing Catholics another opening to control Ulster. As Protestant politics must prevent the increasing influence of Rome, the Free Presbyterian stance on all issues must be anti-Catholic.

No encouragement should be given to Catholic education.

"That behind the walls of secretive Roman Catholic schools is taught bigotry and hatred of everything Protestant and British cannot be doubted. The continued existence of Roman Catholic schools ensures the continued existence of Roman Catholic bigots who will be a constant source of civil strife as they put into effect the principles they have been taught by Mother Church."

(DUP Year Book, 1975, p.40)

Catholics should not be allowed to use public housing in the interests of domination either. Poleglass, a proposed housing estate in West Belfast, will be a Catholic incursion into Protestant Lisburn council's area. DUP councillor Rev. William Beattie opposed it from the beginning because it entailed the "encirclement of Belfast and the

"encirclement of Belfast and the increase of the minority's stranglehold on the Lagan Valley." (4.2.78)

He warned that

"If the authorities decide to proceed in spite of the opposition, they should ask the Ministry of Defence if they can send reinforaments over in support of the security forces. This estate may yet have to be built and the allocations supervised day and night by the British Army." (30.11.74)

These same authorities are notorious for their pro-Catholic bias, says Beattie. They evicted a squatter in Dromara, but do nothing against Catholic squatters.

"Let the government restore law and order in every part of Northern Ireland. Let them put every squatter out." (12.8.78)

Which in a perverse sort of way sounds non-sectarian enough! But, don't be fooled; Charles Poots, DUP councillor for North Down, puts the party's case well.

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"If I was in control of this country it would not be in the same state that it is now. I would cut off all supplies including water and electricity to Catholic areas and I would stop Catholics from getting social security. It is the only way to deal with enemies of the state and to stamp out the present troubles."

According to this view, Catholics are unemployed because they don't want to work. They are spongers and have no qualms about it. The Protestant Telegraph points out that there are only 92 people unemployed in Switzerland because it is a Calvinist country. But here, the Catholic Church teaches its members

"that the state, claiming separation from the Church instead of
being subservient to it, was an
apostate body and therefore liable
to be exploited by the 'faithful'
when opportunity offered - hence,
no trouble of conscience." (25.5.74)

Catholics, of course, are not the only enemies. Free Presbyterianism, threatened by Communism, must be anti-Communist, threatened by the Jews, must be anti-Semitic, and threatened by the World Council of Churches-backed black terrorists, must be racist. The opposition to the showing of "Jesus of Nazareth" on TV, for example, is not just that it is blasphemous, but that it was made by "Jew Sir Lew Grade". (23.4.77) Britain is urged to give Pakistan back the Koo-I-Noor diamond on condition that the Pakistanis take back their nationals and stop Britain being "a dumping ground for un-wanted natives." (18.9.76.) And



the condition of Britain, invaded by Irish, Pakistanis and blacks, all of whom end up "on the pig's back" is bewailed.

"The only circumstance which keep: "leter partly free of such paractes is the Safeguarding of Employment Act which serves, at least partially, to keep the Southern Irish and other foreigners out of the country." (4.9.76)

So, the opposition to the people of the South of Ireland is firstly on the basis of racism. At one point the DUP attempted an unsuccessful boycott of Southern Irish coins. The Protestant Telegraph carried an article on the significance of the symbols on each Southern coin.

"The old halfpenny carried the national emblem - a pig - which sums up, more than any other symbol, the national character of prolific breeding, doubtful clean-liness and distinctive physical features." (2.11.74)

And to add fuel to the hatred, Southerners are also Catholic, and Catholicism causes all sorts of ills, from mental illness to crime. Commenting on an unspecified report that the South has the highest mental illness rate in the world, the Protestant Telegraph concludes, tongue in cheek, that the unnamed committee which compiled the report, "advite that it can find no clear explanation for this." (15.4.67.) Moreover, although Catholics comprise only 10% of the population of the U.K., they make up 23% of its prison population.

"It is evident that Romanism does not decrease crime. Let Church leaders and social workers ponder this. Is union with Rome desirable?" (1.11.78.)

What of Free presbyterianism's position on other social issues? Take the family. Paisley, opposing the Westminster move to extend divorce legislation to Northern Ireland, argued:

"We must be prepared to buttress the family, to strengthen and to undergird marriage, doing everything in our power to save marriages ... We should be setting our strength as a Parliament behind a campaign to build up the family, not to destroy it, to buttress the sacred tie of marriage, to strengthen the knot, not to loosen it." (July 1978.)



Paisley and friends out in the cold in the early days, protesting outside the Presbyterian general assembly.

GREAT PROTESTANT RALLY

IN THE ULSTER HALL TO-DAY

WEDNESDAY, 20th July, at 11 a.m.

Speakers: THE DEFENDANTS IN THE HOWARD STREET COURT CASE

Rev. IAN R. K. PAISLEY, Rev. JOHN WYLIE, Rev. IVAN FOSTER, Councillor JAMES McCARROLL, and Mrs. BROWN.

Protestants of Ulster don't miss this important Service NO SURRENDER. GOD SAVE THE QUEEN

So much for the separation of Church and State!

Similarly, in an attempt to "Save Ulster from Sodomy" Free Presbyterians are against the extension to Northern Ireland of British legislation on homosexuality:

"We oppose the legalising of homosexuality as we believe the practice is contrary to the Word of God and the moral standards of the people of Northern Ireland. Homosexuality demands not acceptance, but a cure." (18.11.78.)

But how can people who claim to be British oppose British legislation? Because even the British have abandoned Protestantism:

"It was never DUP policy to have parity with Great Britain on every matter, our policy has always been that NO LESSER STANDARDS should prevail in Northern Ireland than those operative in the ret of the U.K." (3.9.77.)

But, who decides what is the lesser? The true protestant. And who epitomoses true Protestantism? The Rev. Ian Paisley, of course. Not that he is infallible. But speaking God's Word as he does, he is not only truthful, but immortal - well, temporarily at least!

"I am immortal until my work is done. When you hear I have gone, naturally, in an accident, or assassinated, you will know that I did not go one second before God's time." (24.5.74.)

In the face of such impeccable logic, all we can conclude is that God must be a Free Presbyterian who has seen fit to inflict this scourge upon us non-Free Presbyterians for some time to come yet.



TWO YEARS AGO THE IRISH TIMES SAID HOUSING COULD TURN OUT TO BE NORTHERN IRELAND'S WATLRGATE. A POTENTIAL SCANDAL IN THE NORTHERN IRELAND HOUSING EXECUTIVE FIRST HIT THE HEADLINES FIVE YEARS AGO WHEN TORY MP JILL KNIGHT ALLEGED THAT PUBLIC MONEY WAS BEING PASSED THROUGH THE HOUSING EXECUTIVE TO THE IRA.

That public money might be going to the Provos was a scandal, and it was the necessity to be seen to be doing something about it that led to the setting up of the semi-impotent Rowlands Commission of Inquiry in March 78. But September 1975 was by no means the first time that allegations concerning the mismanagement of the Housing Executive funds had been made; at the latter end of 1974 allegations of dubious practices against senior Housing Executive officials were made - and by someone rather better informed than Jill Knight - someone from within the ranks of the NIHE itself; senior architect in the Derry Western Division, Michael acCafferty. McCafferty was not alleging that money might be filtering through on the odd occasion to the Provisional IRA; he was concerned with somethin, much less dramatic, but nonetheless potentially much more costly in terms of public money - corruption within the Housing Executive itself.

THE ALLEGATIONS OF MICHAEL McCAFFERTY

acCafferty First became concerned in 1974 about connections between his then boss Gerry August, degional Architect, and local Derry building firms, particularly a firm called Messrs. Thomas Linton for (See Boxes 1 and 2) He therefore instituted ternal grievance proceedings against Ashton and ainst the then Director of Development, Gerry Sheffrey, (now retired). McCafferty's case rested 1 his observations of irregularities in the allation and management of contracts. The grievance of edure was heard by a panel, chaired by none mer than Gerry McSheffrey. McCafferty was asked to withdraw his allegations against Ashton and McSheffrey and when he refused to do so, he was summarily dismissed.

accafferty appealed the decision and won, when he as the to prove to the appeals tribunal that a tall document, which had been used to justify the first al, had been falsified.

Meanwhile not only was nothing being done about the corruption - after the grievance procedure and the appeal - but McCafferty was in an insupportable position. He had to work closely with the very people he had accused of corruption. He went to John Hume, who in turn wrote to Ray Carter (then Minister for Housing) who after trying initially to dismiss the allegations and then attempting to scare McCafferty off, eventually instituted an investigatory commission into the Northern Ireland Housing Executive contracts, chaired by Judge R.T. Rowland Q.C. It had taken from September 1975 till March 1978 for action to be taken. The action that was eventually taken - the setting up of a non-sworn inquiry with no guarantees of immunity for witnesses against legal action, and no power to subpoena witnesses, was designed to do the job that Carter wanted done; to be seen to be investigating the allegations, particularly those concerning the redirecting of funds to paramilitary organisations, in order to allay 'public concern', yet to retain the inquiry within the control of the government. The persistent allegations of corruption had to be stopped; the priority was to stop the allegations, not the corruption itself.

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The Rowland Inquiry then, was a perfect piece of political cosmetics. Troublemakers like McCafferty were to be invited to back up their allegations with factual evidence: the onus was on the accuser to prove to the Inquiry, not on the Inquiry to investigate. In a very real sense McCafferty was on trial.

THE INQUIRY

The issue of the constitution of Inquiry is central. Jill Knight MP declined to attend, hoping that her action might "enable the judge to go back to the Secretary of State and ask for the kind of Inquiry which really would be able to get at the facts." "If I had a very large amount of money that I could call on in the event of my being sued for libel because of giving evidence, I would come", she went on, "but I have no such finds. It is quite clear from the information and

advice I have taken that since there's no protection of privilege as there is in the House of Commons, I would be indeed very foolish."

It is interesting to note that it was only through speeches in the House of Commons under protection of privilege that any of the strong smells from within the Housing Executive were revealed at all. We note that the Judge did not go back to the Secretary of State and ask for a sworn inquiry with legal protections for witnesses. The report of the Inquiry, (paragraph 2, chapter 1) reads:

"Following our appointment we were conscious of much comment and criticism in the press, and concern was expressed as to the Commission's lack of powers. But at the end of our task we think it right to record that the lack of powers has not in general inhibited our efforts nor prevented us from reaching conclusions."

"... We also wrote individually to those public figures who had originally raised serious allegations ... either in parliament or in the press. We had hoped they would have assisted us, and it is a matter of regret that the response was minimal. Neverthless, whilst this lack of cooperation was regrettable the run of our Inquiry demonstrated that our efforts were not impeded."

Powers or no powers, the Commission forged ahead regardless: the allegations about money going to the Provos were amongst the first to be investigated by the Commission. The 'Belfast' allegations investigated by the Commission fall into two main categories: that public, ie. Housing Executive, money made its way to the IRA; and that secondly, money went astray through 'irregularities' in the contracts procedures, and that Housing Executive employees were directly implicated.

ALLEGATIONS

To deal with the allegations of money going to the IRA first: these matters were investigated by two specially seconded officers from the West Midlands Police, Detective Sergeant M.J. Tredgold and Detective Chief Inspector Harry West, both of whom have specialist knowledge of fraud investigations. The allegations made were that builders associated with 'terrorist' organisations were used by the Housing Executive in rehabilitation and repair work in West Belfast, and that money was received by 'terrorist organisations' and that 'terrorist organisations' had a say in the allocation of houses.

The building firms which were engaged in rehabilitation work in West Belfast were as follows: James Cairns and Sons (2 contracts - one in Whiterock, one in Ardoyne)

Stewart Rodgers and Co. (1 contract in Highfield) V'Neill Bros. (verbal contract in Turf Lodge and Moyard)

Broadway Building and Plumbing Works (verbal contract in Movard)

Andersonstown Cooperative (verbal contract in Moyard)

Raglan Construction Company (verbal contract in Springhill and Ballymurphy)

Cavendish Building Works (contract in Springhill)

According to the police themselves, their investigations concluded that little or no money went to the Provisional IRA, and that a sum of approxim-



ately £5,000 was paid to the Official IRA by Broadway Building and Plumbing Works. However no prosecutions have been recommended by the Commission of Inquiry report. The report concluded: "We accept that paramilitary influence dictated who could work on the sites, but the loss of money was due mainly to the weak contract...rather than to organised fraud."

WHERE THE MONEY WENT

Which brings us to the business of corruttion: we will begin in Belfast.

The Rowlands Commission looked in passing at the case of Mr D. Nugent, district maintenance officer with the Housing Executive in Belfast, who among his other duties, carried out those of a supervisory and monitoring nature on certain repairs and maintenance contracts in West Belfast. However in September 1973, the maintenance section in which Nugent worked was handed responsibility for monitoring rehabilitation contracts in the Greater Belfast area. It was Nugent who was the 'eyes and ears' of the Housing Executive in the supervision of these contracts on site. It was known at some stage by the Housing Executive that Mr Nugent was related in some way or other to Mr Gerard Murray of Broadway Building and Plumbing Works. The closeness of the relationship was not known. Nugent was in fact Murray's nephew.

It was also discovered that Nugent's father was the timekeeper for Broadway, and a key figure in Nugent's dealings with the firm. Furthermore, Broadway's main sub-contractors were a firm called Stewartstown Fireplace and Plumbing Works, owned by J. Nugent, the brother of our Mr. D. Nugent. Mr. Nugent only "discovered" his brother's business connections whilst under police questioning. He tendered his resignation to the Housing Executive but was permitted to withdraw it after having been removed from supervision of contracts in Turf Lodge/Moyard.

Mr Nugent's performance in supervising contractors in general came under the scrutiny of the Rowlands Commission of Inquiry. They said that "proper supervision and certification were crucial factorstheir virtual absence became a critical feature...some responsibility must rest with Mr Mugent" but they describe his workload as "beyond the physical capacity of one man." Wir Nugent certified for payment over £25,000 worth of work to Broadway, some of which went to Stewartstown Fireplace

and Plumbing Works. The Commission concluded: "Criticism must be directed at Mr Nugent for his failure to make a full disclosure of his family ties with Broadway and with Stewartstown Fireplace and Plumbing Works."

MR MOLLOY

No prosecutions were brought against any of the parties involved. Then there's the case of Mr Molloy, divisional maintenance manager with the Housing Executive. The Rowlands Commission took the view that he "should have put on the record his life long friendship with a principal of O'Neill Bros. (now O.N.B. Industries (Ballymena) Ltd.), one of the firms to which he gave a contract without competition. In fact during the period 1970-73 O'Neill Bros. had 10 Department of Finance contracts and 8 of these were awarded while Mr Molloy was in the position of senior architect in the works division of that department.

After joining the Housing Executive in April 1973, Molloy awarded O'Neills the Turf Lodge rehabilitation contract (which was a verbal contract), because he felt the existing contractors, Jefferson and Fullerton, were unacceptable in the area. Because of Mr Molloy's use of verbal agreements rather than normal written contracts, and the nature of the actual agreements reached, this contract, like other contracts in the area, cost the Housing Executive substantially more than absolutely necessary, even without other factors.

Other factors, however, existed, with a vengeance. Even after written contracts were introduced by Molloy, there is strong evidence showing that the time—sheets submitted on the Turf Lodge contract were totally inaccurate. One example was Block 141E-J Norglen Parade: according to the time sheets submitted by O'Neills between 23rd November 1973 and 31st October 1974 £102,046.06 manhours worth of work - not counting materials - was carried out in these flats - an average of £20,574.64 per flat. This was despite the fact that all the flats were occupied by early January 1974!!

Moreover, by a curious twist of fate it proved impossible to examine O'Neills' records to sort out this little tangle. On 7th November 1975, just after Jill Knight had started saying nasty things in Westminster, O'Neill's offices at Kells were burnt to the ground and all their records were tragically destroyed. This meant that they were beyond the reach of the West Midland Police, who were we understand, quite anxious to see them!

But the saga was not yet over. In early April 1975, when Mr Molloy had left the employ of the Housing Executive, the go-ahead was given for the Ballymena 1 and 2 contracts. They had been in the pipeline for some time, but it was only after Mr Molloy decided to leave that anything was done to get them under way. To cut a long story short, O.N.B. Industries Limited, formerly O'Neill Bros. got the contract. Several of the other companies who had tendered for the contracts were perturbed about this, especially in the light of the unusual way the tender documents were presented, and the fact that all the companies had earlier to contact Mr Molloy in person to obtain details about the tenders. Some suspected that Molloy suggested the 'right percentage' to each contractor in such a way that O.N.B. Industries got the contract.

Molloy alleged that he had a witness to prove that when he spoke to the contractors on the phone he behaved in a proper manner. Unfortunately, Mr

Molloy's witness denies ever having been a witness to the crucial transactions. Most suspicious of all was the sequence of events after the contract was awarded on 29th July 1975; Molloy left the Housing Executive on 31st July 1975 and went to work for SLABCON (now known as BASALA (N.I.)). Sean O'Neill the son of Mr O'Neill of O.N.B. and O'Neill senior was an investor in SLABCON and Mr Molloy was employed as a consultant to the company. Molloy had apparently been involved in SLABCON since well before he left the Housing Executive. He also became managing director of a company called Ulster Clay Products, which like SLABCON was heavily financed by O'Neill's money.

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No prosecution has ever been brought against any of the parties involved.



CONCLUSIONS

What is presented here is only a small selection of the evidence available on corruption and malpractice within the Housing Executive. A large number of the cases cited were not examined by the Commission of Inquiry, supposedly because they were either sub judice or because they were matters of Housing Executive internal discipline.

We leave the reader to draw his/her own conclusions about corruption and malpractice within the Housing Executive. However, a number of points emerge.

Firstly, it would appear that within the Housing Executive a powerful and pervasive subculture exists, which extends to the highest echelons of the organisation. This subculture not only closes in to protect anyone threatened with exposure, but may entail taking the heat out of an accusation by attributing a "suspect" decision to someone other than the accused. Because the Housing Executive is a bureaucracy with a hierarchical structure where each decision taken is in theory checked out by one's superior, covering for a colleague is fairly easy to do. It is interesting to see the case of Gerry Ashton and the Commission's comments on it in this light. It is also interesting to note that after years of allegations, cover-ups, internal and public inquiries into mismanagement within the Housing Executive that at this very moment large amounts of

public funds continue to be mishandled. In a confidential report to the Board of the Housing Executive on 5 September, 1979, it was reported that one of the statements made in the Inquiry was in fact untrue. It had been stated that the Housing Executive hoped to recover £91,000 from contractors operating on contracts in the Derry area. In fact on the Nelson Drive East Extension 2 contract £46,435 was irrecoverable. On the Creggan contract £6,406 was reported to be irrecoverable out of a total of £52,841. In short, out of a total of £91,000 only £38,159 is recoverable, unless the Housing Executive intends to take legal steps to recover more, which seems, in the light of their past record, singularly unlikely.

A second point follows, which is the other side of the coin; those who are threatening to expose what is going on are either ostracised, like McCafferty, or even physically attacked and threatened, as in some cases which we discovered, but were unable to report because of the personal danger to those involved.

Thirdly, it is apparent that the Housing Executive as an organisation operates one law for the higher echelons and another for the minions. Up to the end of September 1977, 30 lower grade emplovees were sacked for things such as absenteeism or fraud of sums as paltry as £6.10. From January 1978 to May 1979 70 such employees were sacked for similar minor misdemeanours. How many of the cases presented here have been sacked? Don Jackson, a foreman, Griffen and McKiernan, both of relatively low grades. The only high grade officer who was dismissed as far as we can tell was McCafferty himself (he was subsequently reinstated) and McCafferty is one of the few in this saga who is on the side of the angels. Finally, there is much evidence to suggest that these practices are still happening within the Housing Executive. True, corruption and "doubtful practices" abound within the building industry in general, but the Housing Executive and the government could hardly be said to be showing determination or rigour in investigating and stamping out these practices on their own front doorstep.

Some Skeletons in the Closet

<u>MR, J. MCMORNAN</u> CONSULTANT LIAISON ASSISTANT

Mr McMornan was suspended without pay during January 1977 and issued with a written warning for submitting fraudulent travel claims for 14th and 16th October 1976.

Transport had been provided by the contractor, Isherwood and Boyd, but McMornan claimed that he had used his own car, thus gaining the princely sum of £27. However, there was evidence to suggest that this was not all he had received. A representative of the contractor maintained that the practice was very common and was noted at the time as having asked a Housing Executive official who was questioning him about McMornan's fraudulent claims: "Why are you taking one fish out of the sea? Don't you know that everybody is involved in this?" McMornan was also noted to have threatened: "If you lift a finger against me in this organisation, I'll pull down the house. I'll take half your development directorate with me."



HUGH MOORE,

AREA MAINTENANCE MANAGER, DERRY

Hugh Moore had a relationship with "Barricade Dessie" Coyle, a contractor engaged in work for the Housing Executive. Moore's house was built by Coyle and it was alleged that Moore and Coyle together had a business interest in a Derry pub. The matter of the house was investigated by the Rowlands Commission, which discovered that Moore had a ten year lease on the house with an option to purchase at a fixed price at any stage in the lease. The potential value to Moore of this arrangement was estimated by the Commission to be at least £4,500. The Commission said: "We would have serious apprehension about the judgment of this officer." Moore was allowed to renegotiate the lease, and was downgraded to the position of Maintenance Officer. No further action was taken against him. The matter of the pub in Derry was not investigated.

DON JACKSON, FOREMAN, DERRY

Jackson, who was found to be in possession of Housing Executive material, was instantly dismissed, prosecuted and fined £50. Jackson's solicitor spent a good deal of time at the disciplinary hearing trying to persuade Jackson to name the senior managers above him who were also involved in corruption. Jackson refused to do so on the ground that his life would be in danger.

D.J. MCKEVITT

AREA MAINTENANCE MANAGER, NEWRY

Mr McKevitt had an interest in a company called Mourne Properties whilst employed by the Housing Executive prior to December 1976, but after the Housing Executive discovered this, he disposed of his interest. According to his solicitors an advertisement appeared in Stubb's Gazette on I6 August, 1976 naming McKevitt as a shareholder. McKevitt was also suspected of doing deals with local Housing Executive contractors in return for contracts. He also ran a "claims business" from the Housing Executive offices from at least November 1975 preparing claims for damage to buildings on behalf of his clients. When visiting a house on Housing Executive business he would simultaneously do an assessment for their claim, and for the Housing Executive to provide building materials and resources to repair the damage.

Mr McKevitt was later allowed to resign - apparently without any pressure being put on him. Shortly after his resignation the Newry offices of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive were broken into, and all the maintenance records went missing. Some of them turned up later where they couldn't be used as evidence against anybody - the Newry canal.

THE HOUSE THAT GERRY BUILT

An article in the <u>Sunday Times</u> of 24 October 1978 first brought to public notice what the Rowlands Report called "a private arrangement made by Mr Ashton (then regional architect with the Housing Executive) with Lintons for the acquisition of a site and the construction of a house in Limavady." This was at a time when Ashton was dealing with Lintons professionally as a senior employee of the Housing Executive. At worst the "private arrangement" was a downright bribe, at best it constituted a professional misdemeanour.

In September 1972, when Lintons were working on two Housing Executive contracts 'Mr. Ashton mentioned his housing difficulties to Mr. R. Noble of Lintons,' who told him of sites he had 'reservations' on. To cut a long story short, one of these sites was conveyed first to Mr. Corr, a principal of Lintons, and then to Mr. Ashton. Mr. Ashton gave Mr. Noble a sketch drawing and Mr. Noble estimated the cost of building a house on the site to be £7,400. The house was duly built, with Mr. Ashton acting as his own architect and also 'responsible for supervision; there was no written contract.' According to the Report the house was completed in March 1973 and was financed partly by a mortgage and partly by the proceeds of the sale of Mr. Ashton's previous house.

However, we are somewhat at a loss to find any substantial documentary evidence to show that the house was financed by Mr. Ashton at all. The transcripts from the Inquiry show that under cross-examination Mr. Ashton's solicitor, Mr. Cross, admitted that the documentation pertaining to the purchase of Mr. Ashton's house from Mr. Corr of Lintons was severely lacking. The title deed to the site, possession of which is the proof of ownership, which was conveyed to Mr. Ashton in October 1973 (having first been conveyed to Mr. Corr of Lintons) is incomplete. It does not record the fact that a house had been built on the site. It is not obligatory to record the existence of a house on a site conveyed to a new owner, but it is usual to do so, and stamp duty should have been paid.

In the matter of payment for the house it was alleged by Mr Ashton and his representatives that he paid £7,750 for the house to Robert Noble (not Corr) of Lintons. However the only evidence of such a payment is a letter on Lintons headed notepaper to Ashton which, in the words of Mr Comerton "is a document that is easily run off, and if I may say so would not carry a great deal of weight." (Transcript of the public inquiry)

Unfortunately, too, Mr Ashton, according to his solicitor 'may have got in a bit of a muddle" with his bank accounts at the time of the conveyancing and 'may have written some cheques from one and some from the other account. On the issue of the double conveyancing first to Corr and then to Ashton 'the mistake was nothing to do with Mr Ashton and we have found nothing sinister in it", said the Rowlands Report. On the purchase of the house and the site Rowlands said "Mr Ashton paid £1,200 for



the site and £7,750 for the construction of the house. We have no evidence that these amounts were anything other than the market value...he sold the house in 1977 for £25,500 ... and if the Sunday Times article intended to convey an impression of corruption we are satisfied that it was totally without foundation. On the whole deal between Lintons and Ashton the report concludes:

'Mr Ryder (Sunday Times) is basically correct in stating that Lintons had a contract with the NIHE at the same time when Mr Ashton's house was being built. But he is wrong in attributing to Mr Ashton the decision on Lintons' claim on the Shantallow 3E/3F contract for what he called "special financial arrangements". The final conclusion of the report is that "Professional officers....are in dut bound to be circumspect because of this potential of conflict of interest. However this does not seem to have crossed Mr Ashton's mind at the time. We believe he was in an unfortunate situation...We appreciate Mr Ashton's difficulties and we do not believe that his arrangement with Lintons was part of an improper relationship to secure favourable treatment for that firm."

The building trade provides many opportunities for shady deals to be done and 'favours' to be given to public officials. The ease with which bribes can be given and received is due in part to the nature of the business where recording of transfers of land or building materials is often sloppy and easily falsified. There is much evidence to suggest that Gerry Ashton is not the only official to have benefited from such transactions – he was merely one of the few to be found out.

YOUTH UNEVIPLOYIVENT

The chronic worsening of the unemployment problem in the last five years has been felt most deeply by young people. Unemployment among school leavers in the Six Counties increased by 300% between August 1974 and August 1979 compared with an average rise of 100% for the working population as a whole. (See Table 1) At present there are over 10,000 unemployed school leavers, 141% of the total unemployed. These figures probably greatly understate the extent of the problem as many young people (like many females) can't be bothered signing on because of hassle they face from the bureaucrats in the dole. A further disturbing feature is that the duration of youth unemployment is increasing rapidly. Not only are more young people unemployed today, but those who are remain on the dole for a much longer period than ever before.

School leavers	1974 (Aug.) 3,598	1979(Aug.) 10,401
Adults	31,608	61,201

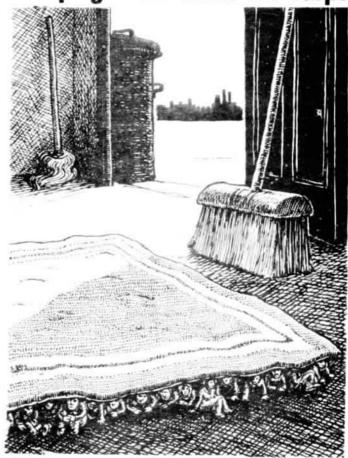
Table 1; Unemployment, Adults and Young People 1974-1979.

This massive increase in unemployment is a direct consequence of the world-wide capitalist crisis prompted by the 1974 oil crisis. Economic depression in Britain had severe repercussions in peripheral areas such as the Six Counties, and within the unemployed the young suffered disproportionately. This was because, as the grip of unemployment tightened, adult workers sought after the low status/low wage jobs which are normally left to school leavers.

The government response to the rapidly worsening situation was not to seek to create additional jobs, but to design programmes to "instill greater motivation in the young unemployed and make them more attractive to potential employers." This was the position of the Holland Report (1977) which, although alluding to the structural causes of youth unemployment, by which was meant the failure of the economic system to produce the necessary jobs, still managed to propose solutions which by implication laid the blame firmly on the victims of unemployment. Many young unemployed are labelled as too lazy to look for work. The absurdity of this reasoning is demonstrated by the haste with which available jobs are snapped up. (See Table 2)

So there is not, and never was, any difficulty finding people willing to fill job vacancies. Young unemployed people don't need courses to motivate them to look for work. In the last five years the ratio of young unemployed persons to notified vacancies increased twenty-fold, compared with a five-fold increase for the unemployed as a whole. In 1974 there was roughly 1½ unemployed persons for every notified vacancy. Today 35 young people compete for every available job.

Sweeping Them Under The Carpet



	NOTIFIED VACAN- CIES	JOOS FILLED	UNFILLED VACAN- CIES	JOBS FILLED AS % OF VACANCIES
Feb - April March - May April - June May - July June - Aug July - Sept	2471 2559 2592 2510 2293 2136	1910 1983 2023 2037 2145 1750	561 576 589 473 143 386	77 77 78 81 93 82
TABLE 2: TAK	E-UP OF J	08S	19.	79

YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAMME

Although there is much in the nature and content of Y.O.P. courses which is open to criticism, the fact that an increasing number of unemployed young people find themselves in such schemes makes it imperative that they be protected from exploitation and abuse. This in fact is the position of Terry Carlin, Northern Ireland Officer of the Irish Irish Congress of Trade Unions, who has described Y.O.P. as "far from satisfactory." The problem with Y.O.P. is that, like so many schemes for the unemployed in the past, it is proving of greater benefit to the state and employers than the people

it is supposed to help. A clear understanding of how Y.O.P. is actually increasing the rate of exploitation of the working class, and incidentally providing a useful form of social control for the state, is necessary if these programmes are to be adapted to really benefit the unemployed.

At present there are over 6000 places in Y.O.P. in the Six Counties. (See Table 3) These places soak up about 36% of youth unemployment and, considering that the vast majority of these young people are "enjoying" only a temporary respite from unemployment, the result is a major cosmetic reduction in the unemployment rate. (It is interesting that during last year's election campaign in Britain Jim Callaghan was accused of expanding these schemes to make political capital out of the reduced unemployment rate.) Although most of the schemes have the twin aims of "instilling work motivation" and "providing work experience," the reality is often much different. A detailed look at the workings of two schemes will reveal the extent to which they provide any real relief for the young unemployed.

WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAMME

The aim of work experience is that young unemployed persons should have some contact with the world of work, in preparation for eventual entry into the labour market. Current expenditure cuts will reduce the target figure from a maximum of 500 places at any time to 350 places. (The total throughput in a year is higher because the same place is used more than once in a given year.) In actual fact the reduction will not mean a reduced usage of the scheme. This is because W.E.P. has always failed to fill its quota, both in the Six Counties and in Britain. The total irrelevance of these schemes to the real needs of young people has led to them being largely ignored. This is shown by the fact than in October 1979 only 165 places were being used, and the total throughput in the last year was only 236 people.

Scheme	Places per Annum
Work Experience Schemes	1100
Work Preparation Schemes	200
Enterprise Ulster	450
In Govt. Training Centres	1200
By Employers	1800
Other	1250

Table 3, Places Available in Y.O.P.



In addition the range of job experience available is even narrower considering the dominance of one or two industries. Holland had specifically recommended training for new industries to offset the imbalance in available skills caused by the decline in textiles/clothing. EEC funds are also especially earmarked for people leaving the declining traditional industries. Yet of the 16 firms in the Southern area offering places in W.E.P., 6 were in clothing and stitching and a further 6 were in textiles. Similarly, 10 out of the 16 firms in the Eastern area were in these same two industries.

There are a growing number of reports, from trade unionists and from the young people on these schemes, that they are being ruthlessly exploited by employers. In particular, a number of specific criticisms have been made.

1. In October 1979 C.O.H.S.E. complained that workers on W.E.P. were doing the same work as full-time employees, often for half the wages and this in the public sector where wages are low. They also claimed that the Department of Manpower Services has no means of checking that young people taking part are treated properly. After a few months of this the young unemployed are back in the dole queue with the prospect of full-time employment no nearer.

	Belfast	Belfast Area (excl. Belfast)	Southern	Eastern	Western	North Western	North Eastern	<u>Total</u>
Number of firms participating	43	15	16	16	20	17	25	152
Number of places available	240						23	152
	143	49	45	43	93	53	1.7	416
Number of places being used	36	10	9	25	48	19	18	165
Total throughput						13	10	103
1978 - 79	89	7	12	18	73	22	25	236

- Young people on these schemes often find that they are expected to "do the dirty work:" jobs of a trivial nature and totally unrelated to their training skill. (See Box 1)
- 3. Employers use the opportunity of the training period to compare the usefulness of the young trainees for future employment. Obviously, preference will be given to those prepared to do the "dirty work" without complaint.
- 4. There is also evidence that Y.O.P. and other types of young persons' training reinforce sexist division and perpetuate discrimination against women in the labour market. For example, of the 14 Government Training Centres in the Six Counties 2 are specifically for women one in Alfred Street, Belfast and the other in Portrush. Between them they provide training in catering, light assembly and stitching. The light assembly course in Alfred Street is, according to the government's own brochure,

"designed to assess the suitability of young unemployed women for employment in new light industries. It provides training and practice in jobs for which good eyesight and manual dexterity are essential."

5. Young unemployed people often complain that they are treated in an arrogant and high-handed way by officials who seem only concerned to instil in them the "Protestant work ethic." The following quotation from Mr. Alan Armstrong-Smith, manager of the Lisburn Training Scheme, illustrates this.

"Eight young people joined the Lisburn scheme in 1978 ... Some of their attitudes were such that employers would have been unconvinced that they really did want work ... The transition from the unemployment situation (up late in the morning and nothing to do all day) to the position where work was becoming the done thing was slow. Latterly attitudes to work have changed dramatically. There is now a willingness to work, and more than that, a willingness to look for a job. The fact that young people have adapted, or maybe readapted to the role of going out to work is a major achievement. It is now a pleasure to work with them." (Stepping Stone, October 1978)



BOX 1

The following comments are from a group of young people who are currently on a Youthways course in West Belfast.

What sort of things do you do on the course?

Mondays and Fridays are recreation days. We make our own dinners and that is good. But then we just sit talking and talking and it's the same old discussions over and over again. You get sick listening to them, so you do. Some of us are taught reading and writing. We're treated as if we are back at school here. We get money taken off us if we don't do this or that. It's a group decision, but we're still treated like kids. They're always telling us that we should act like young adults and yet they treat us like children.

What about the jobs you are sent to? Could you give me some examples of the work?

We were sent to work in the laundry in the Royal Victoria Hospital. We had to take knots out of wet aprons and wash and press the sheets and pillow cases. The sweat was pouring out of us. Some of the fellas went down to the Royal too, but they played snooker while the girls worked in the laundry. In British Home Stores they stuck me in the storeroom all day unpacking boxes. We had to work from half one to ten to six without stopping. It was terrible.

In British Home Stores they stuck me in the storeroom all day unpacking boxes. We had to work from half one to ten to six without stopping. It was terrible.

I was working in the Blackstaff factory and we were doing clamping. We put sheets into a big iron thing and pressed them down. It really breaks your arm so it does. The fellas get money on the side from the people they're working for but we don't.

I went to a chemist's shop and it was lovely and clean. But it was a bit boring sitting there all day. There was too many people and not enough work.

We get sent to places like shops, canteens, laundries. Some of the places give you all the dirty work. Whenever I complained once the manager said: "You're only here and you're complaining already. You're here to do what we tell you. I think you're looking for your fucking cards."

YOUTHWAYS

This emphasis on instilling the "right" attitudes towards work and employers is most evident in the Youthways scheme. This scheme is based in Further Education colleges and provides 14-16 week courses in various pursuits. However, as Table 5 shows, there is a heavy emphasis on developing in young unemployed people the "right" attitudes.

The content of these activities is rigidly prescribed. Social and Life Skills, for example, involves learning how to take orders from superiors, how to accept authority, resist provocation and avoid the sack, how to make friends, get on with people and how to wash. The hobbies recommended in the official instruction booklet for tutors shows just how remote the planners are from the reality of being

ACTIVITY	PERCENTAGE OF TIME TO BE SPENT ON:
Social and Life Skills Industrial/Environmental Studie Communication Studies Ganeral Activities	45 10 20 25
TABLE 5: YOUTHWAYS ACTIVITIES	

young and unemployed in West Belfast. They suggest tallroom dancing, collecting stamps, etc. A recent government circular said that because of the expenditure cuts no more horse-riding courses were to take place. And Austin Mitchell, one of the government officials to pioneer Youthways has advocated that the unemployed youth of West Belfast should be made to do the Buke of Edinburgh scheme (mountainsering, orienteering, etc.) No doubt to make proper men out of them. All this concern that young people should be content is not without purpose, as the following quotation shows:

"A satisfactory private life can contribute to a person's work motivation." (Instructional Guide to Social and Life Skills, page 1.)

The Youthways scheme is the clearest example within Y.O.P. of a scheme which has the potential to be of use to the enemployed, but which has become for them just another form of official oppression. (See Box 1) There was considerable opposition within government circules to the scheme right from the beginning. Lord Melchett opposed the idea when it was first mooted in 1978, and a secret report by the Statistics Branch of the Department of Finance into two pilot Youthways courses, was unfavourable. In particular, two criticisms were made:

- the very low success rate in subsequent job placement,
- the fact that no useful skills were taught on the course.



MY PARENTS TELL ME MY HORIZONS ARE TOO LIMITED.



THEY KEEP URGING ME TO BROADEN MY CIRCLE OF FRIENDS. -TRY OUT DIFFERENT LIFE-STYLES - TRAVEL ABROAD

BOX 2

In the course of our research for this article we came across a number of cases of gross abuse by the government official involved in implementing training schemes. Since they are a purely random selection, it is probable that such examples reflect a much wider pattern of incompetence and administrative expediency.

CASE 1

A fifty year old man who spent all his life working in the construction industry as a ganger in Ireland and Britain. During a short spell of unemployment he was sent by the Employment Exchange on a six week Construction Operatives course in the local Government Training Centre. If he refused he risked losing unemployment benefit. The stated aim of the course is to train

"labourers who have little or no experience in the construction industry and who need to develop their practical ability to work effectively on building sites. The course covers use of tools, handling materials, excavation and concrete work, site safety and an appreciation of scaffolding and bar bending."

CASE 2

A twenty five year old man who had spent so long in a Government Training Centre (three years) that he successfully claimed redundancy pay when he left.

CASE 3

An ex-political prisoner who was denied a place on a training course because he refused to give the interviewing panel details of the circumstances of his arrest. He eventually successfully fought the case but only after the intervention of an M.P. and a threat that the case would be brought to the Ombudsman.



-READ THE GREAT PHILOSOPHERS, DISCUSS THE GROWING INFLUENCE OF EASTERN MYSTICISM ON MATERIALISTIC WESTERN SOCIETY,



DEVELOP A HEALTHY SCEPTICISM OF VALUES BASED ON OUTDATED AND IRELEVANT DOGMAS. -





Yet, in spite of this, and of the fact that there is no comparable scheme in Britian, Youthways was pushed through. Cynics say that it provides a useful "window" for the government, right into the heart of the most deprived areas. (It was always a government stipulation that the courses be located in the actual estates where the unemployed live.) So in a sense Youthways helps keep track of some of the most deprived people in the community, with what Mr. S. Smith, one of the civil servants responsible for organising the scheme, described as "the very bottom of the social pile."

TAKING THE MONEY

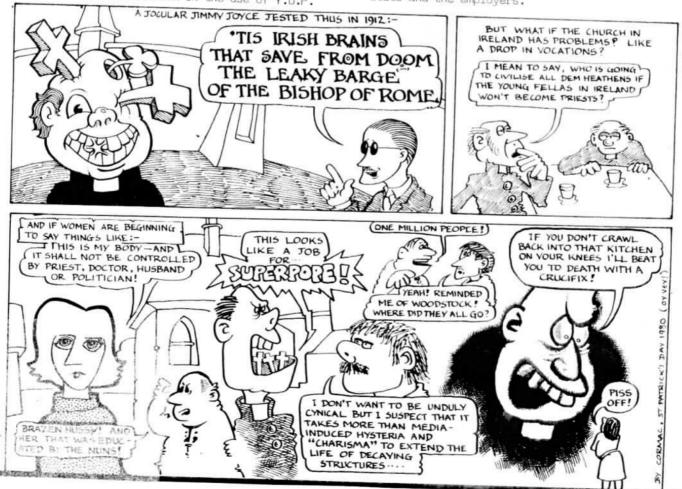
Much of the financing of Y.O.P. is done by the European Social Fund. All money for the Six Counties goes first to Westminster and becomes part of General Exchequer funds. This money is kept by the Westminster government. Which in turn finances Y.O.P. itself. The problem is that there is no satisfactory system of public accountability, so there is no way of knowing if all the European money reaches N. Ireland. The reason for this system is that in the past some of the available European money went unspent and remained in Brussels. Presumably now any unspent money stays in London.

EEC money is shelved once again when it reaches N. Ireland. The financing of Youthways, for example, comes from the Department of Education general funds. There is little doubt that some of the money is used for other purposes. In fact, at its last meeting, the North-Eastern Board decided to divert £80,000 of Y.D.P. funds to other areas of education. In addition Further Education Colleges have considerable discretion in the use of Y.D.P.

finances. Few make any secret of the fact that Y.O.P. is regarded as a low priority when it comes to the allocation of finance. In the Belfast area several lecturers who were recruited for Y.O.P. courses find themselves teaching normal educational courses. So money intended to alleviate youth unemployment is being diverted to other areas of education – a useful cushion against educational cuts.

CONCLUSION

The problem of youth unemployment has reached disastrous levels and is likely to get worse in the immediate future. There is nothing in the pipeline to suggest that new jobs are on the way. Indeed the current Tory expenditure cuts will affect N. Ireland disproportionately because of its heavy reliance on the public sector. Inevitably this will mean increased unemployment, especially for the young. Given this situation, there is an urgent need for programmes to help young unemployed people cope with the problems caused by this unemployment. However, there must be a major change in the nature and content of the existing schemes, which are proving not only to be wholly inadequate, but in many instances actually worsen the experience of being without work. The practice of government departments "ripping off" EEC funds for the relief of unemployment must also be exposed so that at the very least the unemployed receive those facilities which have been designated for them. Although no amount of motivation/work preparation programmes will solve the youth unemployment problem, the trade unions have a duty to ensure that these schemes benefit the working class and not the state and the employers.



If ever religion was an opium for an oppressed people, it has been in Ireland. For hundreds of years Protestants and Catholics have fought each other rather than their common enemies, whether foreign invaders or native exploiters. Irish clerics of every stripe have a lot of blood and bigotry to answer for. 130 years ago John Mitchel, Protestant-born republican, bemoaned this malignant clerical influence on the Irish mind.



"He (William Smith O'Brien) attributed his failure in great part to the behaviour (what shall I call it?-the cowardice, the treachery, the mere priestliness) of the priests. Priests hovered round him everywhere; and on two or three occasions, when the people seemed to be gathering in force, they came whispering round, and melted off the crowd like a silent thaw. He described to me old, greyhaired men coming up to him with tears streaming down their faces, telling him they would follow him so gladly to the world's end -that they had been long praying for that day-and God knows it was not life they valued; but there was his reverence, and he said that if they shed blood they would lose their immortal souls; and what could they do? God help them, where could they turn? And on their knees they entreated him to forgive them for deserting him. So they slunk home to take care of their paltry old soul and wait for the sheriff's bailiffs to hunt them into the poor-house."

from Jail Journal