

**POLITICS AND IDEOLOGY IN A PROTESTANT  
WORKING CLASS COMMUNITY IN BELFAST**

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## ABSTRACT

The thesis considers the politics and ideology of Belfast's Protestant working class (PWC). It is also conceived as a contribution to discussions concerning the nature and theory of 'ideology' within the Marxist tradition. Traditional Irish Marxism has been dismissive of the PWC reducing their politics to the protection of marginal privilege sustained by Britain's Imperialist presence. This thesis argues that such a perspective is inadequate. It is essential to move away from the concept of loyalist ideology as a systematised form of false consciousness, rather it is necessary to look at the ideology of Protestant workers at the level of day to day experiences and practices. Such collectively lived experiences give the alternative sets of practices embodied in working class culture. It is therefore important to draw on the sociological tradition of the community study. To fully understand PWC images of society it is necessary to construct the relationship between local ideologies and the theoretically developed ideologies generated by national institutions.

In order to do this the thesis looks at the social structure and politics of a particular PWC community in Belfast. The thesis then outlines by way of case study how the PWC have reacted to the contemporary political and social situation in Northern Ireland. The thesis draws on interviews with residents, political activists and paramilitary members. In particular it identifies the politics and ideology of those active in the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and the Ulster Defence Association (UDA). In overall terms it highlights the ideology by which Protestant workers make sense of, and give meaning to, their social and political worlds.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BICO	British and Irish Communist Organisation
CLR	Campaign for Labour Representation
CPI	Communist Party of Ireland
DOED	Department of Economic Development
DOE (N.I.)	Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland
DMS	Department of Manpower Services
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party (The party's official title is the Ulster Democratic Unionist Party. It is seldom used except in official party literature).
EBAHA	East Belfast Amalgamation of Housing Associations
HAA	Housing Action Area
IDB	Industrial Development Board
INLA	Irish National Liberation Army
LPA	Loyalist Prisoners Association
NIAS	Northern Ireland Attitude Survey
NIHE	Northern Ireland Housing Executive
NILP	Northern Ireland Labour Party
NIO	Northern Ireland Office
NUPRG	New Ulster Political Research Group
OUP	Official Unionist Party (The party's official title is the Ulster Unionist Party. It is seldom used except in official party literature)
PAF	Protestant Action Force
PD	People's Democracy
PIRA	Provisional Irish Republican Army
PSF	Provisional Sinn Fein
RBI	Royal Black Institution
RDA	Redevelopment Area
RUC	Royal Ulster Constabulary
SDLP	Social Democratic and Labour Party
SOSP	Secretary of State's Pleasure
UAC	Ulster Army Council
UC	Ulster Clubs
UCA	Ulster Citizen Army
UCAG	Ulster Community Action Group
UDA	Ulster Defence Association
UDF	Ulster Defence Force
UDR	Ulster Defence Regiment
UFF	Ulster Freedom Fighters
ULDP	Ulster Loyalist Democratic Party
UR	Ulster Resistance
UVF	Ulster Volunteer Force
UWC	Ulster Workers Council
UUUC	United Ulster Unionist Council
UYUC	Ulster Young Unionist Committee
VOU	Voice of Ulster
VUPP	Vanguard Unionist Progressive Party
WP	Workers Party



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## INTRODUCTION

This thesis considers the politics and ideology of Belfast's Protestant Working Class (PWC). The thesis is also conceived as a contribution to discussions concerning the nature and theory of 'ideology' mainly within the Marxist tradition. Theoretically it seeks to challenge the dominant analysis of the Protestant Working Class which is projected by the Irish left. The current phase of the Northern Irish crisis is now in its third decade. Throughout that time the 'left' has remained, at best, marginal to events. Indeed, the Irish case is often cited as a standard refutation of the central tenets of Marxism. In the north, the proletariat has no working class organisation of its own, is highly polarised, and segments of it are more willing to ally themselves with bourgeois co-religionists, than recognise, let alone try to improve their position as a class. Central to this is the position of Protestant Workers in Northern Ireland. As Lysaght put it:

"As a problem it is an acid test for anyone claiming to operate the Marxist method...The problem about the Protestants of Northern Ireland is this: a colonial community bearing certain of the stigmata of a nation insists that it has the right to adhere to the metropolitan imperial powers in defiance of the claims of the majority of the island where they both live".

(Lysaght, 1973:40)

Despite this recognition there has been little serious attempt by much of the Irish left to analyse the ideology and politics of the Protestant Working Class. More often than not they are dismissed as "pawns in an imperial game" (Unity, 15 September 1984), locked into a false consciousness. A grouping who "at partition...surrendered its independence and tied itself to its bosses in return for a small share in the profits" (Troops Out Movement, nd: 19-20). In such analyses

the desire of Protestant workers to remain part of the United Kingdom is reduced to the protection of marginal privilege, sustained by Britain's Imperialist presence.

The resulting analysis of the political ideology of Protestant workers is static. There is no notion of PWC ideology evolving or being modified in relation to changing historical circumstances. It is only in the works by Bew, Gibbon and Patterson that we find any notion of a dynamic in the politics of the Unionist bloc. Their contribution will be discussed more fully in Part One. At its most basic level their analysis has succeeded in identifying almost continuous conflict within unionism, surrounding tensions between populist and anti-populist traditions (Bew et al, 1979, Bew and Patterson 1985, Patterson 1980). Their works have however remained located at the level of the state. This thesis is located at the level of the community, the everyday lives, and local representatives of the Protestant Working Class. The thesis marks out the terrain on which real, concrete political expressions are shaped by the interaction of class positions, rooted as they are in productive relations and other forms of social relationships, most notably sectarianism. The articulation of class structures through political identity and activity does not derive from some form of 'pure class consciousness' but rather it is expressed in activities which are mediated by the social relations of particular localities. Giddens has made this clear when he argued,

"In class society, spatial division is a major feature of class differentiation...such spatial differentiations always have to be regarded as time-space formations in terms of social theory. Thus one of the important features of the spatial differentiation of class is the sedimentation of divergent regional 'class cultures' over time:

class cultures which today of course, are partly dissolved by new modes transcending time-space distances."

(Giddens, 1979:206)

To move away from the concept of loyalist ideology as a systematised form of false consciousness, it is necessary to explain how such ideologies are expressed and based in everyday life. That is not to deny that certain aspects of FWC ideology can represent the interest of the ruling class. That does not mean however that this is done as part of a conspiracy. To understand this it is necessary to look at the ideology of Protestant workers at the level of day to day experience and practices. Such experiences are different, not only between classes but within them. Protestant workers' experiences generate their own consciousness and their own culture. Collectively lived experiences give the alternative sets of practices embodied in working class culture. The consciousness which is generated is seen as 'commonsense'. Members of the Protestant Working Class learn through experience what is, and what is not, acceptable, what can and cannot be done in given conditions. This is an ideological construct because the conditions are given, therefore they are not questioned.

The politics of locality remain central. It is important therefore to draw on the sociological tradition of the community study. To understand Protestant Working Class images of society it is necessary to construct the relationship between local ideologies and the theoretically developed ideologies generated by national institutions. In doing so, it is again necessary to move away from a conceptual framework which portrays FWC culture as homogeneous.

The thesis begins by considering the dominant conceptual typologies of the Protestant Working Class as constructed by the left in Ireland. Part Two of the thesis looks at the social structure and

politics in the Protestant Working Class community of Ballymacarrett. It draws on interviews with residents and political activists in that community. The third part of the thesis further draws on this interview material as well as a survey of 300 Ballymacarrett residents. It outlines by way of case studies how the PWC have reacted to the contemporary political and social situation in Northern Ireland. Throughout Parts Two and Three of the thesis, all the names used, apart from those of leading Unionist politicians are pseudonyms.

## PART I

- MCKIBBEN: I think the solution's simple. Always do a deal with the Employers beforehand so that we get any disputed work, even if it means doing the job at a cheaper rate. At least it ensures we get it.
- JOHN: And you regard yourself as a Trade Unionist?
- MCKIBBEN: Why not?
- JOHN: Because any Trade Unionist can see that the present situation whereby the Employers can play the work off two Unions, wouldn't arise if we were one, strong Union. Catholic dockers and Protestant dockers. That's common sense.
- HENRY: Common sense my arse. Our job goes no further than to protect the rights of our members. Against the Protestant Union if necessary.
- JOHN: But they're Trade Unionists too. Two Unions at Belfast Docks defeats the very purpose of organised labour. Larkin didn't ask anybody's religion when he led the workers of Belfast to bring the city to a standstill in 1907. How it ever got to the stage of two Unions I'll never know.
- MCKIBBEN: Because they're Protestants and we're Catholics
- JOHN: But we're all dockers
- MCKIBBEN: That's got nothing to do with it

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**CHAPTER ONE      MARXIST ANALYSES OF THE PROTESTANT WORKING CLASS**

This chapter outlines the major Marxist analyses of Northern Ireland. Two broad schools are identified: the anti-imperialist analysis which argues that British Imperialism is responsible for sectarian division; and a broad 'revisionist' school which concentrates on internal divisions in the development of the Northern Irish crisis. Particular attention is given to the position Protestant workers occupy in these theories.

The traditional Marxist analysis of Ireland can be summarized as follows. In any capitalist society the natural conflict is between the native bourgeoisie and the proletariat. In the north of Ireland however, the development of this conflict has been distorted by British imperialism. The latter has sought to divide the working class and the country, to further the ends of the British ruling class. Partition in the 1920s is thus considered the product of a conspiracy to retain control of as much of Ireland as possible. The Northern Ireland 'state' was an artificial creation "arbitrarily carved out of the State of Ulster" (De Paor, 1970:xv). This conspiracy involved an alliance between the Unionist bourgeoisie and the British ruling class, in order to protect imperial markets in addition to other economic and strategic reasons (Farrell, 1976:325-326).

To ensure support for a campaign against Irish independence, and deny the possibility of a united labour movement, the British and Unionist ruling classes pursued a number of divisive strategies. Most important of these was the attempt to ensure the support of the Protestant working class. Orangeism was fostered as the dominant ideology among the Protestant masses. This ideology was given a

material base by the pursuit of active discrimination, particularly in employment, in favour of working class Protestants. This gave the Protestant working class (PWC) an interest in protecting their relatively "secure and well paid jobs" (Farrell, 1976:199).

Both the ideology of Orangeism and discriminating practices were institutionalised in the form of the "Stormont Statelet". However the material base for such sectarian politics is said to have begun to erode in the early 1960's. This was largely due to the arrival of monopoly capitalism in Ireland. Multi-nationals had no real interest in maintaining employment patterns based on sectarianism. They were more concerned with better relationships between both parts of Ireland and Britain (Boserup, 1972). For Farrell however, 'Orangeism' had assumed "a virulent life of its own", it was no longer merely a weapon in the arsenal of the Ulster bourgeoisie, but rather had "become the dominant force in Northern Ireland" (Farrell, 1976:331).

The growth of the Civil Rights Movement, and the loyalist reaction to it had by 1968 prepared the ground for confrontation. What emerged was a classic anti-imperialist struggle for national liberation. The revolution of 1921 was seen as incomplete, and moreover had led to continued economic dependency in the south and continued territorial domination in the north. British rule it was argued survived through an 'unreformable' client fascist regime, the existence of which depended on depriving the Catholic population of basic human rights, while at the same time material privileges were distributed to the Protestant population. Further if the northern struggle could be linked to the economic discontent in the rest of the island it could lead to a socialist revolution. The first step of this revolution was to abolish British control in Northern Ireland which would pave the way for a reunited island (cf Farrell, 1976:330-335).



In contemporary works, such a traditional 'anti-imperialist' analysis is best represented by the works of De Paor (1970), Bell (1976, 1984), McCann (1972) and Farrell (1976, 1983). The perspective also underlies much of the analysis concerning Ireland by the radical left in Britain and by Sinn Fein. It is often asserted that such views flow directly from the teachings of Marx, Lenin and Engels. Such claims can no longer be taken at face value and must be subjected to critical appraisal. Marx and Engels did have a lively interest in Ireland, and while a volume on their writings on this subject contains some 400 pages it can in no way be seen as a systematic analysis. Marx's involvement in the Irish question dates from the 1860's following his disappointment in the failure of the depression of 1857 to radicalise the English workers. His thoughts on Irish independence and social questions were inseparable, and Ireland was seen as a possible spark for the revolution in England. This is still the position taken by several Marxist groupings in Britain (Reed, 1984). Capital, where Marx's most interesting writings on Ireland appear is not an economic history of Ireland, (or even England for that matter), rather the aim of this work was to illustrate the general laws of capitalism. While some Irish Marxists make much of the fact that Marx and Engels saw Irish independence as necessary, they tend to abstract such references from their correct historical setting, and fail to recognise that Marx was much more concerned with the balance of class forces in Europe than in Irish independence 'per se'. For all of Marx's interest, the Irish struggle was invariably treated either in the context of a broader political concern, or appeared in a work which did not have the Irish social formation as a primary object. In the same way Lenin supported the uprising in 1916, not because he believed the Irish had a 'right' to independence but because he saw it

as part of the international struggle against imperialism. To do justice to Lenin it must be recognised that imperialism is not just colonialism, a feature of a number of modes of production. Rather imperialism is characterised by a growing concentration of industrial and financial capital with the former dominant. There must also be some recognition of how imperialism reproduces itself on a world wide basis.

In fact, much of the work of the anti-imperialists owes more to the teachings of James Connolly than any of the founding fathers of Marxism. Connolly "who lived his life as a socialist, and died as a nationalist" (Morgan, 1980:178) is a key figure on whom the Irish left has been inordinately dependent. His works, particularly those on the relationship between nationalism and socialism, and on sectarianism in Ulster, have been highly influential both within and beyond the shores of Ireland. Connolly saw independence for Ireland as impossible unless it was accompanied by a social revolution. Political independence represented a first step towards socialism, but English domination would continue unless real (economic) independence could also be secured. Consequently socialism was, is, and will be impossible in Ireland until it is free from Britain. In turn, the national liberation struggle is part of the wider socialist struggle. The Ulster Protestants were an "integral part of the Irish nation" (Connolly, 1915:8) but their opposition to 'Home Rule' was because of "skilful use by the master class of religious rallying cries" (Connolly, 1915:31).

Connolly still represents the best (the only?) socialist tradition in Ireland, and has given the left a foothold, albeit a tenuous one, in Irish politics. His relationship with nationalism however has weakened his socialist critique. He is all things to all people, and

both nationalists and socialist sift through his works in support of the national revolution, the social revolution and confusingly a form of analysis which is particular to Irish marxism which is a mixture of both.

There are two essential Connollys. The first, the socialist who supported contemporary (British) Marxism. The second, the nationalist who may or may not have remained a socialist (Morgan, 1989). In consequence of this something of a dilemma confronted those Irish socialists who interpreted the Irish situation through Connolly's eyes. In short, they became impaled on the simple problematic of Irish nationalism - 'Brits Out! and A United Ireland'; indeed much of their vocabulary has become synonymous with that of revolutionary nationalists. Many have either joined the forces of the national revolution or 'tail-ended' it. Hence in the third decade of crisis in the north, the Irish left has done little other than to reproduce much of Northern Ireland's indigenous sectarianism and uphold the centrality of the national question in Irish politics.

There are other cracks in the armour of the anti-imperialist school. Surprisingly there has been little analysis of the concept of imperialism itself; nor is there any clearly agreed definition of imperialism, from those who make up the 'school'. De Paor, for example, sees the essence of imperialism as the "exercise of responsibility in the affairs of other people, however well meaning" (De Paor, 1970:xx). Little attention is given to any economic considerations. For McCann and Farrell, however, imperialism is perceived in the extremely broad terms of economic, political and military domination of the north by Britain. Here again little attention is paid to the nature of capital accumulation or to the changing face of the class struggle; either in Ireland or at a global

level. Marx never proposed a theory of imperialism. In the absence of this, while it must be said that studies of imperialism since Marx have contributed much to our understanding of history, writers have found it difficult to ground their findings in Marx's own theoretical framework. The result has been a proliferation of approaches to the subject (cf Brewer, 1980; Barratt Brown, 1972; Roxborough, 1979; Wallerstein, 1974; Fieldhouse, 1973; Owen and Sutcliffe, 1972; Kemp, 1967). However, the debate on the meaning of 'modern' imperialism has had little impact on Irish Marxism. There has been little attempt to apply such concepts to Ireland itself. The traditional marxist school in Ireland seems content to argue that as long as Britain occupies a part of the island, then British imperialism must have a continued role and remain an important force within that society. More seriously, there has been no thoroughgoing attempt to analyse what British interests are, how these are advanced by maintaining a presence in Ireland today, or if these interests have changed since partition.

It would be wrong of course to view the writers mentioned as forming a coherent or monolithic school, and recent years have seen the development of some debate from within their own ranks. O'Dowd, Rolston and Tomlinson (1980) for example, have challenged the traditional Marxist analysis of the relationship between monopoly capital and sectarianism. The imposition of direct rule, they argue, has made little difference to the divisions in Northern Irish society. They argue that the initiative has failed, not because of Provisional IRA violence, but because of the nature of sectarian divisions and the basic functioning of a capitalist state. In their view such sectarianism cannot be treated as a superstructural phenomenon but rather sectarianism is a "material reality which has been constructed

and reconstructed throughout the history of capital accumulation and class struggle in Ireland" (1980:25). They further argue that the Northern Irish state is deeply penetrated by sectarian class relations. The Northern Irish state itself is part of the reproduction of sectarian relations. The problem is not one of opposing the hierarchical division of the working class, but rather removing the structural cause of sectarianism, which even under direct rule remains the Northern Irish state itself. They also reject the claim that multi-national capital has in any way played a progressive role in Ireland. Far from eroding sectarian division the multi-nationals merely "constructed it in a contemporary form" (1980:63). Hence the restructuring of the Northern Irish economy actually widened the socio-economic gap between Protestant and Catholic workers. While these authors concede that the actions of the Protestant working class cannot be rejected simply as a product of groundless ideology, they maintain the PWC continue to have a strong material interest in preserving British rule.

It is of course the position of the Protestant working class which provides the main evidence for questioning the approach of the traditional Marxists. Within the anti-imperialist framework the stereotype of this class is that of a willingly subservient group manipulated by evil capitalist masters. Since the mid-1960s the position of the Protestant workers has been even less worthy of defence. Formerly their reason for supporting the bourgeoisie in Ulster was that it ensured preferential treatment. This no longer being so evident it is asserted that their present actions are determined by a redundant and baseless ideology. It must be said that nowhere in the writings of the anti-imperialists is there an explanation of how Orangeism made the transition from a reflex

reaction to defend economic advantage, to the 'determinant and dominant' position it has assumed in contemporary Northern Irish society.

In this respect the work of Geoff Bell (1977, 1984) represents an advance in socialist writing on Ireland. He treats working class Unionism with more sympathy than is usual arguing that this support cannot be seen as mere ruling class manipulation. However, he too believes that such support is based on economic privilege, and continues to treat Protestant workers as a homogeneous privileged mass. He thus remains firmly located within the traditional anti-imperialist position. He dismisses evidence of any progressive potential within the Protestant masses. This means that he is unable, or unwilling, to account for the nature of political divisions and alliances within the Protestant 'bloc'. For Bell the 'false consciousness' of the loyalist masses flows directly from the attempt to maintain material privilege. Hence,

"The support given by the Protestant working class to the 1912-14 Ulster rebellion is a case in point, for of course the establishment of an all-Ireland parliament in which Catholics would be a majority would have meant the end to Protestant privilege. Similarly, although the 1974 power sharing proposals were hardly far reaching, they still contained a logic which the Protestant workers feared would ultimately threaten the superiority they had enjoyed in the Northern Ireland state".

(Bell, 1976:68)

Such an argument, that is, that the partition of Ireland was an imperialist plot ignores the importance of the uneven development of capital in Ireland. More importantly perhaps, as Nairn (1981) has pointed out, it seriously understates the extent to which the Protestants of the north of Ireland had, and continue to have, social, political and religious reasons, as well as economic ones, for rejecting Home Rule.

In 1968, the Irish left was ill prepared for a crisis of state. The crisis created by a Catholic movement protesting against discrimination changed the nature of the question and the new issue was the very existence of the State of Northern Ireland itself. As intercommunal and state violence increased, socialists became deeply entrenched within their own communities. The re-invigoration of Unionist and Nationalist politics with their latent antagonisms polarized left opinion on the Nationalist side still further. The dynamic of events was legitimised by ignoring much of Connolly's socialism in favour of his nationalism. Thus many Irish socialists increasingly concentrated on the collectivity of the 'Irish people', and socialist aspirations were expressed within nationalist ideologies. The burden of this theoretical approach was to highlight imperialism which manifested itself in the British presence. The Leninist imperative of 'smash the state' (meaning the bourgeois state) was invoked in support of the Provisional IRA's military campaign but was subverted to the nationalist imperative of 'smash the British state' in Northern Ireland. A creative development of Marxism in Ireland was possible through Lenin, with his view of the national question as an aspect of social revolution. Instead Lenin was discovered only through his 'endorsement' of Irish nationalism.

Overall the anti-imperialists have added little to the works of Connolly written some 70 years previously. Commentators have been content to repeat many of his ideas, rather than to re-evaluate them in a contemporary light. Much of the anti-imperialist argument makes sense only in terms of the additional notion that Ireland is an ancient nation which should be re-united. Morgan appears justified when he points out that "the red socialists of 1968 have become green" (Morgan, 1980:188).

Criticisms of the anti-imperialist analysis have led to the development of another 'school' of Marxist writings. These have questioned and rejected much of the basic analysis and the solutions offered by the traditional Marxist grouping. This 'revisionist' school found expression in the works of the British and Irish Communist Organisation (BICO) (1972a, 1972b, 1975a, 1975b), Boserup (1972), Gibbon (1975), Nairn (1977, 1981), Probert (1978), Bew, Gibbon and Patterson (1979), Bew and Patterson (1985), Patterson (1982, 1985), Bew, Hazelkorn and Patterson (1989).

There is something of a paradox here. At the outbreak of the contemporary phase of the conflict, there were two major prognoses of the situation. One was based on the view derived from the application of certain works of Connolly which are noted above. The other was the view taken by some Marxists who achieved a leading role in the Civil Rights Movement and 'Peoples' Democracy'. Whilst acknowledging the 'incompletion' of the national revolution, they saw it as a by-product of the social revolution rather than the other way round. Socialism was seen as a secular force capable of uniting the northern workers. The Northern Irish state was not fascist; it was rather,

"in many respects though not in all ..... an  
ordinary bourgeois state"

(McCann, 1969:55)

going through a crisis of modernisation. The strategy adopted by the Civil Rights movement then was to speed up this modernisation and provide a basis for class unity. The Catholic masses were to be detached from their traditional leadership, with the hope of eventually uniting them with radicalised Protestant workers. This prognosis was generally abandoned in the early 1970s, the authors convinced that the Northern Ireland state could not be reformed. Today with few exceptions they espouse a modified version of the



former prognosis (that is that the conflict in Northern Ireland is an anti-imperialist struggle).

The belief however that Northern Ireland is an 'ordinary bourgeois state' provides a base line for those in the revisionist school. These authors share the view that imperialism is not of crucial importance in Ireland today, and indeed for some never was. The emphasis is placed on internal factors, such as the uneven development of capitalism on the island in the 19th century. This uneven growth is attributed to different systems of land tenure, the existence of different modes of production on the island, or the natural consequence of the development of capitalism. These processes are offered as an explanation for the emergence of two distinct communities in the north, giving the Protestant population the material interest, by way of Ulster's industrialisation, to reject Home Rule.

As imperialism cannot be regarded as a major factor in Northern Irish society, the current campaigns which the PIRA and other military Republican organisations are pursuing cannot be identified with the struggle for socialism in Ireland. On the contrary the 'struggle' actually inhibits the development of class unity by perpetuating divisions within the working class and driving Protestant workers back into the arms of loyalist ideology. As one leading member of the Communist Party of Ireland (CPI) put it,

"[The Provisionals'] actions permitted the unionists, especially the extreme right wing to whip up sectarian hysteria amongst the Protestant section of the working people and so blind that section to the need for the struggle for democratic rights"

(J. Stewart, Marxism Today, August 1973)

Of course the solutions suggested by the revisionists differ greatly from those proposed by the traditional school. Bew et al (1979)

believe the only hope of a progressive solution is through uniting the working class in a reformed structure of the Northern Ireland state. Probert (1978) believes the establishment of a genuinely democratic assembly is the pre-requisite to any solution, while Nairn contends that the rights of the Ulster Protestants to self-determination must be recognised if a socialist solution is to be found. For the BICO the way forward is by way of a united British and Irish working class.

It was the BICO which produced the earliest version of this approach and has developed it in a series of theoretical pamphlets since 1972. Much of their theory of the uneven development of capitalism as it applied to Northern Ireland rested on the now somewhat discredited notion of the 'Ulster custom' of land tenure which is said to have given rise to two nations in Ireland. Crucially however for the BICO the Protestant people of the north constitute a separate nation and have the right to self-determination. Moreover the Protestant workers are the separate proletariat of a separate nation. Partition was not only economically inevitable but actually in the interests of the Ulster working class. BICO has left unanswered the question as to whether it regards the Protestant working class as part of the British nation or if it possesses the potential to become an independent nation, but in their analysis, Ulster workers are definitely not Irish.

There are many problems with BICO's analysis. Republican socialists refer to struggles for a nation-state (meaning an all-Ireland state) as anti-imperialist. In doing so they do not transcend the national frame of reference. However in trying to refute the central tenets of this analysis, the BICO tends simply to reverse the values of its adversaries. Imperialism thus is seen as a force for good, as BICO put it

"The working class has no cause either to regret, or to feel guilty about the development of capitalism .... capitalist imperialism has revolutionised and drawn together the world in a relatively brief period"  
 (BICO, 1975b:4)

The BICO analysis at various points is static and arbitrary. For them, socialism in Northern Ireland is dependent on capitalist development, which in turn is dependent upon the British state. In practical terms it is non-creative. Republican socialists have impaled themselves on the sword of national revolutionaries, with the PIRA acting as self styled anti-imperialist 'freedom fighters'. As long as the British state retains a presence in Ireland they will quite happily grind the axe of anti-imperialism regardless of the direction, or strategy, of the struggle. However if it is true that those in the anti-imperialist camp are "green before they are red" (Whyte 1978:261), then BICO's brand of socialism is distinctly 'orange' in its hue. What is more, the imperialist sword is double-edged and orange socialists have suffered considerable self inflicted wounds. In the North this means that they are torn between supporting the British state on the one hand and being incorporated into the loyalist struggle on the other, a struggle which occasionally lapses into the pursuit of Ulster nationalism, and even outright independence (Workers Association Strike Bulletins, 1974). Although the BICO no longer publish a theoretical journal, several of their leading members have continued to write concerning Ireland. The central tenets of these works, is that there are two nations in Ireland, have remained unchanged (B. Clifford, 1985, 1986, A. Clifford (Ed) n.d.)

The notion that there are "two potential national communities and states in Ireland" (Nairn, 1981:241-245) is something which Nairn supports in his book 'The Breakup of Britain' (1981), where in general

he is sympathetic to peripheral nationalist movements. He goes on to argue, however, that due to the inability of Protestants in Northern Ireland to construct a strong 'Ulster' nationality, there are not two nations which correspond to these two communities. The Protestant community suffers from a 'double isolation', caught between objectively being part of Ireland but with a strong desire to remain British. Although often suspicious of British intentions they have elevated their British identity above a specifically 'Ulster' one (Nairn, 1981:237). The economic strength of the Protestant community has been used to force Britain to intervene on its behalf. However this intervention has merely increased the dependence on Britain and set further obstacles in the path of an emergent Protestant nation.

Nairn identifies two major forms of nationalism in the United Kingdom. Firstly, that type of nationalism associated with under-development, such as that found in Wales, in 19th century Irish nationalism and in contemporary Irish nationalism in Northern Ireland. Secondly, there is a form of nationalism associated with economic over-development by a political core. It is in this category that he places Ulster Unionism, which he regards as a potentially progressive force. He accepts the point that the 'national question' must be resolved before the emergence of socialism is possible, but for Nairn this does not mean the establishment of an all-Ireland state. Rather it means the granting of the right to self-determination to the Protestant community, if it is ever to adopt any form of progressive politics. Nairn believes that the most likely development is "the formulation of a more than nominal Ulster nationalism" which will lead to the establishment of an independent Ulster. He argues that "'imperialism' is the loose meaning of capitalist or metropolitan domination.... and has no interest whatsoever in saving the Protestant

state" (Nairn, 1981:241).

Although he is highly critical of its position it is possible to see some resemblance between the work of Nairn and that of the BICO. For the latter, Protestant ideology is seen as the legitimate expression of economic, cultural, and political fears. For Nairn they represent 'lunatic' and 'aberrant' substitutes for nationalism. Both however fail to come to terms with the essence of that ideology; neither is there any serious attempt to deal with divisions within the Protestant grouping which is treated as if it was a monolithic whole.

The relationship between the Protestant 'bloc' and the Stormont state is the main concern of the analysis of Bew (et al). Based on the work of Balibar (1977) they are critical of the work of Eamonn McCann and Michael Farrell arguing that they have regarded the state merely as an arena for political conflict. In doing so its fundamental significance as a uniter of the dominant classes and a divider of the dominated classes has been overlooked. In other words,

"their position was blind to the character of the bourgeois state as the site of the operation of specific bourgeois strategies, operationalised by the leaders of specific parties to secure specific bourgeois political objectives"

(Bew et al, 1980:155)

The objectives of Unionist leaders were three-fold: to secure the territory from southern control; to secure the greatest degree of autonomy from London; and to maintain class unity within the Unionist 'bloc'. In the early years of the state these objectives became 'institutionalised', incorporating private violence in the state apparatus in order to deter attack upon it. The northern bourgeois were forced to concede a portion of class power to the orange section of the working class, "so as to retain hegemony over this class" (Bew et al, 1979:49). The Protestant masses were thus incorporated into

the state apparatus and the result was the emergence of a predominantly populist regime.

As the overt threat to the new Unionist state represented by militant Republicanism receded, the main concern of the Unionist leaders shifted to securing unity within their own 'bloc'. There can be little doubt that the main strategy adopted to accomplish this involved continuing the sectarian divisions, both within the repressive apparatus and without. The most important consequence of the latter was workplace discrimination. The state therefore proved itself responsive to the needs of the Protestant community, while simultaneously pursuing a policy of visibly and ritually excluding Catholics. This strategy further integrated the Protestant working class into the dominant class alliance, while it deepened divisions within the working class as a whole.

Class conflict however could not be totally submerged and erupted at various times such as 1919, 1932, and between 1943 and 1945. In the 1950's significant sections of the Protestant working class escaped from bourgeois control, and transferred support to the Northern Ireland Labour Party (NILP). It has been argued that this support has been significantly exaggerated, and was,

"less an adventure into secular politics, than an attempt to extract more from within their own exclusive class alliance"

(Martin, 1982:66).

Nevertheless, the NILP was the party of Ulster's trade union movement, and more importantly it could lay some claims to non-sectarianism. It attempted to operate the Westminster model and had a socio-economic programme which looked beyond the basic constitutional question.

In the post-war period, as sectarianism became less significant, it became increasingly necessary for the unionist leadership to

emphasise its ability to preserve economic growth, the essential condition for maintaining inter-class unity. However this was never meant to be at the 'expense of sectarianism'. O'Neill took no initiatives whatsoever to reform the state, while the efforts of Chichester-Clarke must be interpreted in this direction, in the light of the more sweeping reforms he anticipated from the British state. The reforms he did make precipitated a crisis, both within Northern Ireland, and between the Northern Irish and British states. Paradoxically it was the efforts of Unionist leaders to maintain centralised control over the state apparatus which led to the collapse of the state. Such tendencies were present long before the Ulster Workers Council took to the streets in May 1974.

Clearly the revisionist schools of thought have challenged many of the assumptions underlying the traditional Marxist approach in Ireland. The 'Revisionist' approach has succeeded in the attempt to focus on internal developments, and move beyond general theories of nationalism and imperialism. The latter theories are often inadequate, not only because the national question left unresolved in the post decolonisation period, requires specific analysis to unravel its complexities, but also because such theories fail to come to grips with the specific political, ideological and economic factors which shape an epoch.

This is particularly true when it comes to evaluating the role of the Protestant working class. By focusing attention on the complexity of the class position of this group, the 'revisionists' have highlighted an important weakness in the traditional Marxist approach. Previously the Protestant working class was conceived of as a pliant group, easily manipulated by its masters, but which one day will awaken, or be awakened to its 'real' interests. The way would thus be

clear for Protestant workers to join forces with their true comrades, Catholic workers, in a struggle for independence. The revisionist analysis may not be flawless, but at least it allows questions to be asked regarding the dynamics and tensions of the Protestant 'bloc' and the position of the Protestant masses. Traditional treatments cannot even permit questions of divisions and conflict within that class. In addition the state is identified as the instrument of the Unionist ruling class.

However, there are also problems with the revisionist approach. The 'revisionists' are concerned almost exclusively with the Northern Ireland state. There is little reference to the possibility of its being in any way subordinate to the British state, at best it is conceived of as responding to 'imagined' pressures from Westminster. Smyth, (1980) believes this position to be false. For him, Britain's role in Ireland cannot be reduced to a series of uncoordinated external interventions, rather Britain's role was both constant and planned and proved decisive in the development of capitalism in Ireland. The formation of Unionist and Nationalist politics, which have a firm material base, was thus a product of both internal conflicts and conflict with Britain (Smyth, 1980:40-42). This point must be taken seriously, as it is difficult to see how one can theorise the state in terms of divisions imposed on oppressed classes without some reference to the role of Britain in maintaining divisions to at least some extent.

Several differences exist in the debate within the left regarding Northern Ireland. Two concepts are central to this debate. The first concerns the Protestant masses and the Protestant labour aristocracy. The second is about the uncompleted national revolution and the role of imperialism, and it is necessary to briefly consider both.



The traditional view as noted above identifies the Northern Ireland state with the material deprivation of Catholics and the preference given to the Protestant masses in the provision of better jobs and houses. The Northern Ireland state is therefore deemed to be unreformable because the task of persuading Protestants to give up such advantages by way of a reform programme seems impossible. Further the relationship between this labour aristocracy and the state is such that there is no possibility of winning over the Protestant masses to socialism until that state (Northern Ireland) has been destroyed.

Farrell uses the term labour aristocracy to refer to Protestant manual workers (1976:11, 16-17). It seems however improbable that this class was 'bought off' by such differentials, and conversely it is even more difficult to see how working class Catholics were revolutionised by the process of differential allocations. Protestant unskilled workers are simply ignored. The term labour aristocracy is coterminous with Protestant skilled workers. There are additional problems with the analysis. Historically, skilled Protestants have been the most politically progressive. It was amongst the poorest section of the working class, that militant loyalism was most likely to be found. Bew (et al) have shown that the Protestant working class often opposed the Unionist bourgeoisie, in secular terms, through the NILP. Further the 'power base' of the NILP was within the Belfast engineering works, "the 'aristocracy' within the labour aristocracy" (Bew et al, 1979: 218,220).

In fact the traditional approach involves a self-fulfilling prophecy, in that identifying all Protestant workers as a labour aristocracy makes it impossible to act upon divisions within the Protestant 'bloc' to counter reaction. In addition the crucial

criterion for membership would seem to have less to do with differentials, than with support for the British state. The labour aristocracy being equated with all Protestant workers is thus regarded as socially elitist and hence politically reactionary. This 'Protestants as reactionaries' theme is further developed by those who continue to identify Marxism with Nationalism. Indeed for Farrell the choice has become devastatingly simple, between,

"On the one hand a semi-fascist orange statelet in the North, matched by a pro-imperialist police state in the South, and on the other hand, an anti-imperialist and socialist revolution".

(Farrell 1976:231)

The only political position offered by such an analysis is the continuing pursuit of the 'national liberation struggle'. This position rules out any strategy for consolidating whatever support for progressive politics exist within the Protestant community. If the national struggle was realised the new structure would have to be imposed, undoubtedly by force, on the majority of the people in Northern Ireland. Like its counterpart, a return to the old Stormont system, it would involve further restrictions to democratic rights. Neither of these solutions is likely to provide a base for any form of progressive politics.

Another problematic surrounds this notion of the unfinished national revolution. For McCann the strategy of the left should be to,

"Complete the national revolution by making the theoretical and practical link between what we are doing now and what was fought for in 1916".

(McCann 1972:176)

To recap, in this perspective partition is seen as the product of a British conspiracy to hold as much of Ireland as possible. Ideology which manipulated division amongst the Irish working class, and the

selfish material interests of the Protestant masses are offered as explanations for the behaviour, both past and present, of the northern Protestants. The struggle of the Catholic minority against the northern state became the struggle of the Provisional IRA against the British state and was legitimised as part of the international struggle for socialism.

Mainline Marxist analysis is based on social classes and political forces. The relationship between the two must be empirically constructed for given times and places. The idea of a nation, articulates the notion of a community of social classes where 'nationalism' is an important political force. It is possible to invoke Stalin's authoritative definition of a nation as a historically evolved stable community of language, territory, economic life and psychological make-up, manifested in a community of culture (Stalin 1971, 1971a). It is possible then to see nationalism as an element in Marxist analysis. It is important however not to ignore internal contradictions and succumb to the subjectivity and 'sentimentality' of nationalism. A nation is the unity of social classes, expressing an ideological and cultural link and mobilized into a nation state.

Lenin's great achievement was to shift Marxism from a national to an international frame of reference, to try and make some sense of the global environment. The era since the second world war has seen the creation of a whole host of new nation states, but the creation of 'independence' or socialist movements is a rarer phenomenon. More often 'independence' has meant continued economic and political dependence within the capitalist world economy. The self styled anti-imperialism of the third world would be better conceptualised as anti-colonialist.

In Ireland the identification of many socialists with the Catholic

minority occasioned a reaction of socialist empathy for the northern Protestants. The resulting 'Two Nations' theory gave equal status to Irish Catholics and northern Protestants, while Lenin's themes formerly used by nationalists, were invoked to justify self-determination for each of the two 'nations'. Orange socialists identified with the British state as an an 'a priori' progressive force and the basis of Protestant politics was given rational justification in terms of material self interest.

Like those who claim 'self determination' in the third world, both Republican and Orange socialists remain pre-Leninist, employing national frames of reference. Republican socialists regurgitate a left-nationalist concept of imperialism. The struggle for a nation-state is seen, either as a preliminary, or more ambitiously as the actual struggle for socialism itself. Anti-imperialism is seen as being merely anti-British.

The 'two-nations' of orange socialism, on the one hand, and its green counterpart on the other which brands anyone who dares question the subjectivity of Irish nationalism, have little to do with Marxism. Lenin's legitimisation of the events of 1916 as anti-imperialist for example, had nothing to do with the participants' consciousness of a 'free Ireland'. It was anti-imperialist, not because it was anti-British, not because it was the beginning of an Irish revolution, but rather that Lenin perceived the war against the British state as a focal point in the international struggle for socialism which might spark off the proletariat elsewhere. An Irish nation state was considered necessary, not because it would create an Irish utopia, but rather that it would break the logjam of Irish/British antipathy in both countries. The 'national democracy' of Republican and orange socialism is simply that of dominant traditions, the alternative

versions of Leninism simply being the subjectivity of Irish or British nationalism.

It is basically incorrect to view Unionism as being sustained by the 'prop' of British imperialism. Such an idea for one thing assumes that Irish nationalism is a 'natural' state of mind, absent only under artificially created circumstances. Rather nationalism and Unionism are ideologies created by specific groups of Irish people at a specific historical conjuncture: to advance and defend different interests. If somehow the 'prop' was removed those different interests would not disappear as well. Rather it seems they would be intensified as the different interests struggle for advantage. For socialists a united independent Ireland should mean a united independent group of people, not a geographical unit. It is foolish to assume that the barricades on the road to such a goal are staffed only by the forces of the British Army. While the actions of opposition parties such as the PIRA may have helped to produce 'awakening experiences' within the loyalist community, and encouraged independent working class activity, they have also increased intransigence and deepened sectarian divisions within the northern proletariat.

In practical terms the anti-imperialism of Republican socialism creates nothing but problems. McCann claims the Provisional IRA "are the vanguard of the anti-imperialist struggle in Ireland", and furthermore "there is no such thing as an anti-imperialist who does not support the Provos and no such thing as a socialist who is not anti-imperialist" (McCann 1972:176). That there is no organisation of the 'left' in Europe which enjoys more support than Sinn Fein (the political wing of the PIRA) cannot be denied. However one must question whether there is a coherent socialist philosophy behind its

strategy. It is also questionable whether support has been won on the basis of its socialist claims, rather than in spite of them. Gerry Adams has written of the need for Republicans to "pinpoint the relationship between the social-economic issues and the national question, and present sound logical social and economic reasons for Irish independence" (Fortnight, Sept 1985). The dominant perspective within the Irish left is to explain the crisis in terms of the presence of British imperialism and colonialism. As Adams explains,

"Sectarianism will only be defeated when its source is removed. The removal of the cause of sectarianism, of the British prop which sustains it, will initiate a coming together of all our people and the undoing of sectarian influences, violence and politics."

(Adams 1986: 167-168)

The starting point for any solution is seen as British withdrawal. This is a perspective which has tended to incorporate the views of nationalist commentators, the burden of which is to demonstrate that Ireland is colonially oppressed by Britain. Such commentators have been highly critical of, and impatient with, those on the left who have tried to pinpoint social and economic issues. They consider that the 'solution' lies in the simple fact of British withdrawal. Whether by choice or necessity the Provisionals have shown themselves to be inarticulate theoretically and are content to mine the limited support of nationalist areas to the exclusion of a wider audience. The message from Republicans is that socio-economic issues are almost insignificant compared to the priority of the 'war'.

The task facing progressive forces in Ireland is enormous. Traditionally the left has supported Irish nationalism on the grounds that any struggle against 'imperialism' must be progressive. Even liberal opinion, whilst rejecting the physical force element in Irish nationalism has offered little, except an alternative conception of a

unitary state. It is an indication of the weakness of what passes for Marxism in Ireland that those who question the traditional analysis are often dismissed as unduly economic in their outlook. In Ireland 'economism' means refusing to accept the primacy of the national question. The dangers of such a view are demonstrated by the experience of the left in the Republic of Ireland. Here the long fixation of the left on the 'unfinished' national revolution, has meant, that until very recently, little attention has been paid to the analysis of the existing bourgeois state. This aspect of southern politics embodies a conception of the situation as one in which all classes have a common interest.

In the north, the fluid nature of the political situation makes the reassessment of the social system a pressing necessity. The disarray and fragmentation in the Unionist camp since the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, for example, contradicts the nationalist dogma of a Unionist hegemony. A closer look at the post war economy would seem to point to a realignment, both ideologically and economically of various sections of the working class. That is not to deny that the average Protestant remains 'better off' than the average Catholic, or that the two communities occupy different spaces in the context of the economy. However the notion of a Protestant labour aristocracy cannot take account of the overlap between 'poor' Protestants and 'better off' Catholics, nor crucially of the level and strength of Protestant resistance. In addition, the state's major role becomes no more than reproducing marginal privileges established in more prosperous times.

Much of the left continues to see British domination as the source of all problems in Ireland. The divisions amongst Irishmen are the result of 'false consciousness', the consequence of the

divide-and-rule policies of imperialism. In this way the Northern Ireland situation is subsumed under the 'broader Irish question'. In turn the quest for socialism is subsumed under a national liberation struggle to free Ireland, with the PIRA as the 'leading force in the anti-imperialist struggle' (Irish Freedom Movement 1983:107). Thus the fight to unite Ireland,

"is not only a means of liberating six county Catholics from Unionism, it is also a means of liberating the men of the Shankill Road, and the surest road to socialism".  
(Greaves 1972:214)

Obviously the greatest problem this perspective encounters are precisely those men (and women) of the FWC and the Protestant community, whose opposition to Irish nationalist aspirations is unwavering. In the past the problem of Ireland's one million Protestants has been glossed over by defining the Irish people as a homogeneous nation. By characterising the Unionist workers as 'unwilling dupes' it is possible to understate seriously the economic, political and ideological bases of their resistance. Much of the anti-imperialist stance remains Utopian, since it ignores the structural bases which give coherence to the Unionist position. At the same time it continues to set obstacles in the way of the incorporation of the Unionist people in an all-Ireland Republic.

Another fixed notion of the left is that there is no possibility of a reformist solution in Northern Ireland because the state is founded on bigotry and is essentially irreformable. Little attention is paid to the fact that since 1974 the same government has ruled on both sides of the Irish sea and since 1979, Northern Ireland has been subject to the same 'Thatcherite' administration as the rest of the U.K. Of course, some may reply that this is precisely the problem, Britain is a foreign state which has no place in Northern Ireland.



That however is not the same as saying Northern Ireland is irreformable. That is to reject the pursuit of reform on a principle, but the principle is not socialist.

Two scenarios have been advanced in relation to the Protestant working class. The first is that they are historically redundant and therefore no accommodation can be sought. At best the Protestant working class are irrelevant to the pursuit of national liberation, at worst they are an obstacle. The struggle for reunification should therefore be pursued whatever the consequences for this section of the working class. The following statement explains this position,

The structure of oppression built into the six counties state means that most social conflict takes the form of Nationalist resistance against Loyalist repression. The Protestant working class has no political existence as a class - it acts and fights as part of the Loyalist community."

(Irish Freedom Movement 1983:85)

The second scenario suggests that the Protestant working class will only be capable of participating in revolutionary politics after the event of national liberation. The following statement from Sinn Fein members makes this position clear,

"Over the centuries, Protestant workers and farmers have been taught that Loyalty to the British crown guaranteed them marginal privileges over their Catholic neighbours. Loyalism has thus become hopelessly entangled with the British state's military presence in Ireland, creating a colonialist aristocracy of labour dependent to a large degree on the British military machine for employment.

Before Loyalist workers can ever discover their real class interests, that military machine must be destroyed. Any attempt to delay struggle until the majority of Loyalists allow the scales of imperialism to drop from their eyes is misplaced."

(Sinn Fein members cited in CPI 1987:7)

It is the British state, or rather the guarantee from that state of a link with British imperialism, which ensures that the Protestant working class can never emerge from a state of false consciousness.

There are considerable problems attached to labelling a whole section of the working class as 'irreformable', and trying to sweep from the stage the highest concentration of the proletariat in Ireland. Not least amongst these problems is the denial of a whole range of working class experience. To assert that the principal problem is that of British Imperialism, exercised through simple colonialism in the north, and neo-colonialism in the south, and therefore that the only possibility of the emancipation of the working class lies in the resolution of the 'National Question', is to accept a position which is more moralistic than Marxist. It is the range of PWC experience which is identified in this thesis. Firstly however it is necessary to consider the notion that PWC politics and ideology is reducible to the protection of marginal privilege. This itself is seen as a device of British Imperialism which anti-imperialist theorists believe continues to pursue an active strategy in Ireland.

## CHAPTER TWO THE PROTESTANT WORKING CLASS - A LABOUR ARISTOCRACY?

As the previous chapter has indicated, Irish Marxism has long had difficulty in accounting for the perceived lack of revolutionary potential by Protestant workers. Irish Marxism has tended to characterise the Protestant working class in two main ways: either it is 'written off' in bitter polemic, or alternatively ultimate faith is placed in the inevitable development of 'historical forces' which will sweep it from the historical stage. The fundamental argument put forward to explain the ideology of Protestant workers is that it was the result of 'false consciousness' implanted and nurtured by a self-interested bourgeoisie who sought to inhibit the realisation of Protestant workers' 'real' class interests. The argument is elaborated by the introduction of another factor which highlights the alleged role of a labour aristocracy. The Irish Marxist position remains firmly located within ruling class conspiracy theory, but additionally credence is given to some possible social, and crucial material bases for the process. The section of the Irish left who define the problem as imperialist domination by Britain, identify the core of the resistance by Protestant workers with the defence of material interests. The following encapsulates their position well,

"The Protestant working class, (then), has had sound material reasons for supporting the political and economic status quo..... (similarly), although the 1974 power sharing proposals were hardly far reaching, they still contained a logic which the Protestant workers feared would ultimately threaten the superiority they had enjoyed in the Northern Ireland state. For 50 years that state had protected the 'poor white' Protestant privileges against the 'black' Catholics, an imbalance which the 1974 general strike and all of Paisley's campaigns aimed to preserve. To quote the threadbare Unionist cliché: 'This we will maintain'"

(Bell 1984: 67-68)

The adoption of this position has helped legitimise the idea of a Protestant labour aristocracy evident in some analyses of popular unionism (Bell 1976, 1984, Farrell 1976, 1983). The consequence of this argument is however to reduce Protestant working class ideology and politics to little more than the protection of privilege. In seeking to challenge this viewpoint this chapter will examine the implications of the changing composition of the local labour force which in turn is heavily influenced by the forms of capitalist organisation on the island. It will begin by briefly examining the pre-partition period, a time which is perceived as central by those who support a theory of labour aristocracy. It will then examine the changing economic base of Northern Ireland, outlining important changes in the deployment of capital, and the consequences of the latter for PWC politics. No claim will be made that changes at a base level imply automatic and (or) immediate changes at the superstructural level.

The industrialisation of Ulster began with the rapid development of Belfast in the mid nineteenth century. In the decade beginning 1860 the population of Belfast increased by around 40%, from 121,602 to 174,412. The American Civil War precipitated a cotton shortage which meant a major boost for the linen industry in the north of Ireland. The linen industries rapidly became Belfast's largest employer, the numbers employed trebling between 1850 and 1875 (Weiner 1980:13).

The core of the industrial development in the north east of Ireland, however, was shipbuilding. Belfast had a history of shipbuilding from as early as 1791 but the real growth of the industry began in the 1880s and by the turn of the century it employed around 20,000. (Patterson 1980:88).

Linen and shipbuilding also occasioned the emergence of a large number of auxiliary industries and,

"rope making, vehicle building, heating and ventilation, machine making and armaments followed in rapid succession, together with food and drink manufacturing and the service industries".

(Budge and O'Leary 1973:75)

More importantly the north of Ireland rapidly became integrated into the British industrial market place. As one commentator noted,

"the occupations of the people of Belfast were in broad type very similar to the occupations of the people of Leeds or Bradford or Newcastle. About threequarters of the gainfully occupied population was employed in industry, just over one-twentieth in the professions and about one-twelfth in domestic service ..... Belfast was much more like Leeds than Dublin".

(W. Black, 1967:158)

Belfast contained the only significant concentration of capitalist industrial organization in Ireland. Its development however has been incorrectly identified with the imperial export of capital from Britain to Ireland. By the end of the nineteenth century the momentum of unionism had moved away from the Landlord fraction towards manufacturing. Capitalist development was autonomous to the same extent as in places such as Clydeside, Liverpool or Tyneside. How it differed from these conurbations is that its foundations remained perilously narrow; highly concentrated on engineering and textiles. In all other crucial respects however it was a core region of the British Empire. As opponents of Home Rule pointed out,

"Belfast had done very well under the union: her population had quadrupled in 50 years; her wage rates were higher than anywhere in Ireland and in some cases up to British standards; as to her customs revenue she ranked as the third port in the United Kingdom, being exceeded by only London and Liverpool; she had the largest weaving factory, the largest shipping output, the largest tobacco factory and the largest ropeworks in the world".

(Cited in Budge and O'Leary 1973: 107)

The labour force in the north of Ireland had a number of important characteristics. Central were cleavages along the lines of gender, skill and geographical location. Female industrial activity for example was high. Workers in textiles and clothing were almost exclusively women, and almost completely ununionised. There were several reasons for this. Most of the tasks in the mills could be quickly learnt, and the supply of labour, swelled by large numbers of migrants from rural areas, meant the market position of textile workers was weak. As the workforce was predominantly female it failed to attract the sympathies of male trade unionists up to the 1890s. The level of 'localism' was high with employers encouraging daughters to follow their mothers into the same mill (Messenger 1980: 31,205). The influence of such paternalistic employment practices should not be underestimated. The role of the employer extended beyond promoting loyalty to conservative politics. For those working in mill villages or in mills housing, the consequences of losing one's job were considerable.

Historically researchers have looked at this industry for evidence of sectarian divisions. The 1911 census showed Catholic women were over-represented in textiles and more likely to be employed in spinning than weaving. Much of the evidence however suggests that the industry was reasonably free of sectarian divisions (Messenger 1980). Those divisions along sectarian lines which did exist appear to have been determined by spatial location within Belfast (see Chapter Four).

The pattern for male employment was characterized both by sectarian divisions and differences in the levels of trade union organisation. At this time it is possible to identify two almost discrete labour forces in the north of Ireland. The first was skilled and Protestant and was concentrated in the industrial heartland, the

second was Catholic and unskilled and was located primarily in the service industries. Sectarianism was most sharply felt in shipbuilding and engineering. This pattern should not be regarded as exceptional, indeed it was to be found in some other important British industrial centres such as Merseyside and Clydeside. There were then two proletariats on the island, an unskilled labouring proletariat, common to the whole of Ireland and a manufacturing skilled proletariat, highly unionised and almost exclusive to Belfast. Of course a large percentage of workers in industrial production around Belfast were unskilled. However engineering employment, especially in the shipyards, was the main sources of jobs for male, adult, skilled and semi-skilled workers. This situation gave those workers a disproportionate influence on the labour movement in Belfast and on unionist politics in general. East Belfast was central to these processes. An important feature of skilled workers was their intense sectionalism (Patterson 1980:176-177, Reid 1980: 117-120). Bew notes,

"They were obsessively concerned with the protection of their place in the labour market and the work process. Inevitably therefore there were regular disputes with other workers, skilled and unskilled".

(Bew 1983:143)

The fact that the organised section of the working class was disproportionately Protestant has led some commentators to assert that PWC politics can best be explained by the notion of a 'labour aristocracy'. Engels first put forward the notion that a fraction of the proletariat might have a material interest in upholding bourgeois ideology. It was however James Connolly who successfully implanted this notion in Marxist discourse in Ireland. He regarded popular religion and the reaction of Protestant workers as an 'atavistic survival', deliberately fostered by an unscrupulous ruling class. This notion has since been developed, most notably in the works of

Hobsbawm, (1964, 1973) Foster (1974) and Gray (1976, 1977).

Although these approaches differ they share common problems. Firstly there is a common assumption that workers 'naturally' unite around progressive ideologies. If this process does not occur then the situation is abnormal and requires an 'exceptional' explanation to account for such exceptional circumstances. One consequence of this approach is that the development of a capitalist mode of production necessarily produces a system which replaces the diversity of pre-capitalist popular strata with a simplified class structure consisting of two, and only two contending classes. Hence all political action is determined by economic interest.

Secondly there are problems of definition. Hobsbawm's approach reduces the social position of skilled workers to little more than a classification based on high and stable wage earnings. Some of the difficulties surrounding this approach are recognised by Foster and Gray. Both take an income based definition as their starting point but seek in addition to analyse relationships between skilled and unskilled labour at the point of production. Foster identifies the labour aristocracy as a conduit for the transmission of bourgeois ideology. Gray introduces a sophisticated notion of hegemony developed from Gramsci and Anderson and Nairn. He acknowledged the possibility of a labour aristocracy with a level of autonomy from capital, but noted that any ensuing struggles must remain locked within a framework of subordination.

Various problems occur with the application of the concept 'labour aristocracy' to the Belfast working class. If it is accepted that the social position of skilled workers can be identified with earnings, the immediate problem is how to distinguish a 'labour aristocracy' from adjacent or even overlapping strata. The method by which a



distinction can be made between occupations with similar incomes is nowhere elaborated. An inability to distinguish between the petty bourgeoisie and the labour aristocracy may be used to explain reformist ideology by the latter. The difficulty in drawing a distinction between the labour aristocracy and other well paid lower social groups has made this area of research a minefield of contradictions.

In respect to wages, two considerations must be made overt. Firstly there is a division between 'high-wage' industries, such as shipbuilding, and 'low-wage' work such as linen. This distinction refers to the industrial setting. Secondly it is equally important to note the divisions within the same industry between skilled and often unionised workers and the mostly non-unionised unskilled workers and women.

In Ulster, the period between 1841 and 1912 saw the hired labourer all but disappear from Irish agriculture. There was little or no other source of employment. Thus the position of employers, particularly if situated in an agricultural hinterland was favourable. They were guaranteed a supply of labour to fill unskilled jobs. Low rates of pay were common to all unskilled workers, including labourers in engineering. The relative position of the unskilled worker remained desperately weak until at least the period immediately after World War One.

Gibbon (1975: 93-96) uses the term labour aristocracy to characterise one identifiable section of Protestant workers, those employed in the Belfast shipyards. This marks a departure from traditional applications of the notion of a labour aristocracy by introducing the concept of the class alliance and class fractions thereby recognising internal differentiations within Protestant working

class. Comparing the working conditions of linen workers and those employed in shipbuilding Gibbon has this to say of the latter,

"Possessing trade qualifications as they did, they were generally free from reliance upon conditions of purely local prosperity to find work ..... They were not tied to the mechanical indefinite repetition of the same tasks, but had a fair discretion of job selection, freedom of movement and could work more or less on their own time."  
(Gibbon 1975:83)

It is clear that conditions for skilled workers were superior to those of employees in unskilled work, for example the linen industry. Those conditions however were, however, relative, and should not be over emphasised. Shipbuilding was subject to severe trade fluctuations. Between 1902 and 1920 unemployment figures for unionised shipyard workers averaged 6% and in the depression years of 1903-5 and 1908-9 it reached 20% (Patterson 1985:171). As Reid points out concerning skilled shipyard workers,

"high earnings have to be evened out over periods of lower rates, under employment and unemployment. Thus skilled workers' overall earnings may not have been significantly greater than those of unskilled workers as has normally been assumed."

(Reid 1980: 117-118)

Privilege did exist but only for a minority of Protestant workers. The majority of unskilled workers were also Protestant. It is extremely difficult to see how the politics of this section of workers can be explained by reference to privilege. Moreover it was from within the privileged fraction of Protestant workers that the most progressive albeit mainly reformist ideas of the era emerged. Security of employment had been assured through trade union activity. The position of the skilled worker involved economic and organisational contradictions. The Trade Union movement in Ireland was far from unique. It developed as a class based organisation opposing capital, but equally it developed within the context of

subordination to capital. Organised labour in Ireland as elsewhere accepted the logic of capitalism, namely the necessity to exchange labour power for wages. Shipbuilding remained highly labour intensive centered upon a nucleus of skilled labour until around the outbreak of World War Two. The shipyard workforce exhibited a highly developed division of labour. The conditions of skilled workers varied greatly at the actual point of production and with their dependence upon the industry. Intense competition for work and the perceived necessity for maintaining skill boundaries defined day-to-day life. The marginally greater earnings of skilled workers could only be protected by effective Trade Union organisation and activity and this was an index of insecurity as much as it was of privilege.

Among those who applied the notion of 'labour aristocracy' to the north of Ireland, Bell and Farrell have achieved the most prominence. Both however tend to simplify the complexities of relations at the point of production. This permits them to portray the Protestant labour aristocracy as a homogeneous and national social fraction. They therefore produce a uni-dimensional analysis of the Northern Irish state. The PWC are seen to give unquestioning support to that state and this in turn becomes the primary mechanism for the defence of privilege. By restricting the concept in this manner Bell and Farrell depart from the classic use of the term. The term is an indisputable part of the analysis of the capitalist state and labour aristocracy is conceived as one of the means by which the bourgeoisie attempt to resolve contradictions in their own interest. The use of labour aristocracy theory to advance an anti-imperialist interpretation of events seriously underestimates the difficulties faced by the Unionist bourgeoisie in its attempt to win and hold power. To conceive of labour aristocracy as synonymous with marginal

privileges raises additional problems, as the following indicates,

"The Protestant working class are very much captives of their own history. They have been fed on marginal patronage, they have been almost indoctrinated into a position that anything radical jeopardises the unionist base" (therefore) "certainly on all major issues you have to remove the reason for that illness before you can perfect a cure"

(J. Austin, Sinn Fein spokesperson cited in Stack 1986:20)

It is doubtful if such statements have any explanatory value. Assertions about unionised and skilled workers are generalised without warrant to incorporate all Protestant workers. Groups of unskilled and unemployed workers such as those in East Belfast are either ignored or subsumed under a general category of an aristocracy of labour.

More seriously, this use of the concept is essentially ahistorical. The labour aristocracy can be usefully conceived as a temporary product of a particular phase in the development of British capitalism. Many of the arguments put forward by the anti-imperialist left have relevance only in the period up to the formation of the state. It is this period which most clearly produced a homogeneous and privileged Protestant working class. Contemporary anti-imperialistic analysis merely transpose social and political relations of the 1880s onto the 1980s. No serious attempt has been made to periodise capitalist development in Ulster.

The remainder of this chapter will be concerned with changes in the organisation of production and the implications these had for PWC politics. These implications are derived from the re-organisation of capital and are not simply a byproduct, as some commentators have argued, of the fact that multi-national capital in Northern Ireland is administered by people who ignore or are insensitive to sectarian divisions (Boserup 1972, Probert 1978).

Post-partition capitalist organisation can be separated into three distinct phases:

(i) the period from the formation of the state until the end of World War Two.

(ii) the time from the immediate post-war period up to the outbreak of the current phase of the troubles.

(iii) the contemporary period from around 1970.

The first of these phases will be dealt with very briefly. By the mid-1920s it was becoming increasingly obvious that the role of Belfast as the site for autonomous capital in Ireland was becoming increasingly less viable (Isles and Cuthbert 1957:158). The linen industry was facing increased competition from synthetic products. By 1930 over 20,000 linen workers were unemployed in Belfast. In shipbuilding the situation was equally grim. Employment in the shipyards dropped from 20,000 in 1924 to just over 2,000 in 1933. The pillars upon which Ulster's phenomenal industrial expansion had been built were crumbling. The industrial base remained extremely narrow, with the vast majority of production workers concentrated in very few industries. Furthermore these staple industries were largely dependant on markets outside the newly formed Northern Irish state.

The Northern Irish government remained intensely suspicious of any form of economic intervention policy (cf Probert 1978:71, Farrell 1976: 81-121, Bew, et al, 1979: 102-128). As the depression began to bite there were increased demands for some form of centralised control. The response finally came in the shape of the 'New Industries Development Acts' of 1932 and 1937. These provided grants to new industries which would produce goods which were not already being manufactured in Northern Ireland. One consequence was that the autonomous nature of the ownership of Northern Irish industry was

lost. Up until this time the typical unit of production had been the 'family firm'. Although it remained resistant, Northern Ireland like other areas in the U.K. was affected by the rise of monopoly capital. The general movement towards the concentration of capital in advanced industrial countries and the de-localisation of control applied to Northern Ireland as it did to all of the other industrial heartlands of the United Kingdom (Parson 1980, 1984). The interwar years saw a crucial reconstruction of private capital which changed the economy and had implications for the Unionist political bloc. Although the second world war, like the first, brought short term industrial prosperity to Northern Ireland the underlying trends were clear. The decline of the traditional industries had led to an increased dependence on foreign investment. Agriculture remained the main employer, industrial production remained concentrated in shipbuilding and linen and further there was an overdependence on exports. The Unionist government increasingly began to recognise the need for state action to alleviate the problems facing capital.

Between 1945 and 1953 Stormont governments introduced a further series of 'Industrial Development Acts' aimed at providing financial aid to new and expanding industries. Different fractions of the unionist leadership tried to ensure that these reforms reflected their own particular interests. Thus the government felt constrained to respond to that section of capital identified most readily with the traditional Unionist leadership. The leaders of the linen industry mustered their remaining influence within the Unionist party to win substantial aid from the 'Re-equipment of Industries Acts' of 1951 and 1953. Nevertheless the post war economy of Northern Ireland seemed to be driven in another direction which was to create new conditions of dependence. Modernization was the new aim.

There had been an unconvincing attempt to attract new industry in the 1930's. This attempt had been only marginally successful and had little effect on the economy. In the post-war period Government policies throughout the U.K. increasingly accepted this need for state intervention especially in the field of employment. In the immediate post-war period there were a number of agreements between Stormont and the British Labour government in the areas of finance, social services and education which laid the foundations for local participation in the welfare state. Such reforms significantly left the local control of employment in Unionist hands. There were however a number of important and unforeseen developments. The Catholic middle class were making increasing political demands on the state. Within the Unionist bloc liberal Unionism re-emerged and there were increasing demands from the FWC that their circumstances should not return to pre-war conditions. In 1962 the shipyards and engineering workers of Belfast marched on Stormont to protest against unemployment. In early 1963 a Unionist backbencher from the Shankill voted with the NILP in a censure motion on unemployment. The threat of wide scale defections to the NILP suddenly seemed real as their party mounted their most successful post-war electoral campaign (Bew, et al, 1979: 168-170).

The response of state and capital can best be described in geo-political terms. The period saw a marked movement to an active 'regional policy' everywhere in Britain (Pickvance 1981: 239-241). In Northern Ireland this manifested itself in the formation of the Regional Economic Planning Council. Such policies found support in the 'new generation' of the Unionist Party: O'Neil being prominent among them. One of O'Neil's first acts when he assumed power was to commission the Wilson economic plan in 1965. This report set targets for three key employment areas: 30,000 new jobs in manufacturing,

30,000 in service 5,000 in construction. A regional survey was carried out and a comprehensive plan was proposed by Sir Robert Matthew. The Matthew Plan recognised that labour remained highly concentrated around Belfast, and that relocation should be pursued and could be achieved by implementing the following policies:

(i) The creation of a 'stopline' to prevent the further unplanned expansion of Belfast.

(ii) The establishment of 8 growth centres to take both the overspill from Belfast and to further the development of new industrial centres. One of these was to be

(iii) A 'new city' to be located between Lurgan and Portadown.

The Industrial Development Act of 1966 introduced these policies and provided initial finance through a system of government loans, grants and subsidies. These inducements, together with the high rates of unemployment and low wages (around 70% of the U.K. average) meant Northern Ireland was able to find favour with mobile capital (Paor 1970:127). The physical reconstruction (predominantly state inspired) was paralleled by pressure for the reform of the welfare state to bring it more into line with the British model. Government strategy precipitated a period of destabilisation fuelled by Catholic dissent and expressed through the civil rights movement. Resistance also emerged from within the PWC. The development of class based parliamentary politics by way of the NILP continued to be of major concern to the ruling elite. The continued success caused "panic among Unionists in Belfast who feared the NILP had not reached the limit of the Protestant vote" (Buckland, 1981:109). Unionist regional strategy had been directed towards solving the problem of mounting Protestant unemployment. The PWC had achieved a central position, economically and politically, in the state. This it achieved by the



ability to dominate the unionised, higher skilled selection of workers in shipbuilding and engineering. Its political position was maintained by state patronage especially in housing and job allocation. However although vehemently opposed to the civil rights movement, which most saw as a direct threat to the state, the PWC was not unaware that regional policies had inbuilt class priorities (Weiner 1980: 132-147). These policies seemed to place more emphasis on upgrading the infrastructure than providing new homes for Protestant workers. While the PWC could embrace demands for social and economic reform it refused to do so at the expense of its central political position in the state. Divisions within Unionism intensified between the fraction who advocated progressive reform and hard liners reluctant to lose power. O'Neill's 'technocratic Unionism' sought to convince voters that the benefits of changes to welfare outweighed some loss of patronage wielded hitherto by the Unionist state. Growing class and sectarian pressures led to the break-up of local political control; the Unionist party split openly thus precipitating O'Neill's resignation in April 1969. His successor Chichester-Clark suffered the same fate in 1971. The latter was followed by Brian Faulkner whose position was constrained not only by the continued splits in Unionism but the fact that Catholic opposition to the state had become institutionalised in the shape of the 'SDLP. The Unionist party fragmented, leaving the British state little option but to assume full responsibility.

These events did not however mark any substantial change in the direction of Regional Policy. The main aims of successive British governments were to promote the continued attraction of capital investment and the quelling of social unrest which it was assumed could be achieved by the reduction of unemployment levels.

The Matthew plan was expanded through the 'Development Programme 1970-1975'. The main features of this policy were the continuation of the Belfast Stop Line and an up-grading of the growth-centre policy. It also highlighted the continued need to attract industry by way of a comprehensive package including the upgrading of facilities for training, education and tourism. The most important features of this programme were the commitment to redevelopment and housing and proposals concerning the Belfast Urban Motorway. The combined effect of this programme it was thought would 'encourage' Belfast's working class residents to relocate in one of the 'growth centres' in the province. It was the settled working class communities in Belfast which were to bear the cost of this wide scale social disruption. Weiner has shown in detail some of the consequences of these policies for one Protestant working class area in Belfast (Weiner 1980). Another such area was inner-East Belfast. We shall see in later chapters that 'politics of territory' remains the focus for residents, community activists, (including paramilitary groups) and local politicians.

The 'Development Programme' was followed by a discussion paper 'Regional Physical Development Strategy 1975-95' issued by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Planning. The main purpose of regional strategy it asserted was to: "develop a settlement pattern which will be conducive to the provision, at economic cost, of the full range of infrastructure.... throughout the province" (para 6.01).

These proposals were formally adopted when the Regional Physical Development Strategy was published in 1971 by the Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland. The plan's objective was to develop a pattern of settlement which "will favour the attraction of new

industry" (para 3.01) and this was to be achieved by the continued depopulation of Belfast with a resulting population increase in growth and key centres (para 4.06). Thus it is possible to trace the central impetus of the strategy directly back to the Matthew Plan.

State economic policy towards Northern Ireland has been heavily reliant upon state sponsored industry. The capitalist state plays a crucial role in the accumulation process and in social reproduction. Regional and urban imbalances are continually reproduced by the process of capitalist economic and political development. These forms of development change with variations in the mode of accumulation itself characterised by different forms of the labour process and differences in the types of reproduction of the labour force. The implications of the changing process of capitalist development both for the composition of the labour force, and for working class politics in Northern Ireland, are often overlooked.

Initially the government's strategy sought to bring about industrial diversification, and create large numbers of jobs to replace those being lost in the traditional sectors of shipbuilding and engineering where the numbers employed declined dramatically from 24,648 in 1960 to around 6,000 in 1984. The textile sector has in the same period seen the almost total disappearance of the linen industry. The numbers employed in textiles fell from 74,000 in 1952 to 11,000 in 1983. In the post-war period around 60,000 worked in over 400 linen factories which were mainly small family firms (O'Dowd, 1986:206). Between 1960 and 1973 these firms had to come to terms with the active promotion of the synthetic fibre industry as a core element of industrial strategy. The synthetic fibre industry was characterised by newly arrived multinational firms which were highly capital intensive. These multinationals (among them Courtaulds, ICI and

Enkalon) relocated away from the established centres of linen production to the new growth centres such as Antrim, Carrickfergus and Coleraine.

This new industrial sector had a high proportion of male workers and was located in predominantly Protestant areas. It offered employment which was relatively well paid, and more highly skilled than was the case with the traditional linen sector. One further important feature was that these plants were part of international capital and family firms no longer had a role to play. Unemployment fell to 31,000 in 1961, and did not rise above 38,000 for the rest of the decade.

This manufacturing upturn while long term was not however permanent. The equilibrium between developed and under-developed countries was disturbed by the 1973 OPEC oil crisis. The transnational companies, which had been the engine of growth in Northern Ireland, survived by transferring production to minimal labour-cost economies. The Northern Irish economy proved highly vulnerable to this 'new international division of labour'. The basis upon which Northern Ireland had attracted new industry had been low cost overall, comprising an attractive package of grants, low wages and promises about a docile labour force. However such advantages were quickly eroded by external developments. Between 1973 and 1979 manufacturing production fell by 9% and between that year and 1983 overall production fell by a further 12% (DOED Press Notice 27/1/1984). The volume of industrial output in 1986 was 17% below the 1978 figure and 21% below that of 1973 (Morrisey and Gaffin, 1986:8). More significantly entire industrial sectors were lost. This has been the case in synthetic fibres, where Enkalon, Courtaulds and ICI closed; in rubber production, with the withdrawal of Goodyear and

Michelin; and in other areas with the closure of Grundig and STC.

**TABLE 2.1: NET EMPLOYMENT CHANGE IN SELECTED MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES  
1960-1970**

1960-1970 All Manufacturing Employment = -2.1%

Very High Growth (100%+)

Animal and Poultry Foods; Synthetic Resin, Plastic Materials, Synthetic Rubber; Industrial Plant and Steel-work; Pumps, Valves and Compressors; Telegraph and Telephone Apparatus and Equipment; Insulated Wires and Cables; Man-made Fibres; Hosiery and Knitted Goods; Footwear; Rubber; Miscellaneous Plastics.

High Growth (50 to 99%)

Domestic Electrical Appliances; Motor Vehicle Manufacturing.

Medium Growth (20 to 49%)

Bacon Curing, Meat and Fish Products; Milk and Milk Products; Fertilizers; Surgical Instruments and Appliances.

Low Growth (0 to 19%)

Bread and Flour Confectionery; Tobacco; Textile Machinery; Electrical Machinery; Carpets; Men's and Boy's Outwear; Miscellaneous Dress Industries.

Low Decline (-19 to 0%)

Broadcast Receiving and Sound Reproducing Equipment; Electronic Computers; Aerospace Equipment; Woolen and Worsted Textiles; Overalls, Men's Shirts, Underwear; Dresses, Lingerie, Children's Wear.

(Continued)

Medium Decline (-20 to -49%)

General Chemicals; Radio and Electronic Components; Spinning and Doubling on the Cotton and Flax Systems; Textile Weaving; Textile Finishing.

High Decline (-50% or more)

Made-up Textiles; Women's and Girl's Tailored Outerwear.

**TABLE 2.2 NET EMPLOYMENT CHANGE IN SELECTED MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES  
1970-1978**

1970-1978 All Manufacturing Employment = -18.2%High Growth (50 to 99%)

Domestic Electrical Appliances.

Medium Growth (20 to 49%)

Synthetic Resin, Rubber, Plastics; Radio and Electronic Components;  
Broadcast Receiving and Sound Reproducing Equipment; Carpets;  
Miscellaneous Plastics.

Low Growth (0 to 19%)

Milk and Milk Products; Fertilizers; Women's and Girl's Tailored  
Outerwear; Rubber.

Low Decline (-19 to 0%)

Bacon Curing, Meat and Fish Products; Animal and Poultry Foods;  
Tobacco; General Chemicals; Surgical Instruments and Appliances;  
Electrical Machinery; Motor Vehicle Manufacturing; Man-made Fibres;  
Miscellaneous Dress Industries.

Medium Decline (-20 to 49%)

Bread and Flour Confectionery; Tobacco; Industrial Plant and  
Steelwork; Pumps, Valves, Compressors; Telegraph and Telephone  
Apparatus and Equipment; Insulated Wires and Cables Aerospace  
Equipment; Spinning and Doubling on the Cotton and Flax Systems;  
Textile Weaving; Woollen and Worsted Textiles; Hosiery, Knitted Goods;  
Made-up Textiles; Men's and Boy's Tailored Outerwear; Overalls, Mens  
Shirts, Underwear; Dresses; Lingerie, Children's Wear; Footwear.

High Decline (-50% or more)

Electronic Computers, Textile Finishing.

Note: Industries selected employed at least 750 people at some time during the period.

Source: DMS Gazette Nos 1,3.

After some initial success the regional industrial strategy has been in crisis since the mid 1970s. The flow of mobile capital has dried up and the only major concerns attracted since then have been in high risk, high cost ventures. Among these De Lorean Motors and Lea Fan Jets proved to be most spectacular disasters (O'Hearn 1981:35). The net employment change in selected manufacturing industries between 1960-1978 can be seen in tables 2.1 and 2.2. Since the turn of the decade manufacturing employment in Northern Ireland has increasingly come under state influence. Between 1946 and 1982 state agencies promoted 170,000 manufacturing jobs, 137,000 of which materialised. By 1982 only 40,000 of these remained. In addition the state financed around 82,000 jobs in small industries between 1971 and 1983. Of these only 46,000 still existed in 1983 (O'Dowd 1986:207). Between 1950 and 1970 those employed in the industrial sector did not vary significantly and settled at a level around 45% of the workforce. By 1984 however this figure had fallen to around 27%. Table 2.3 shows the changes which have occurred in more detail.

**TABLE 2.3 PERCENTAGE OF OVERALL MANUFACTURING EMPLOYMENT IN MAJOR INDUSTRIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND, 1952-1984.**

	1952 %	1965 %	1971 %	1984 %
SHIPBUILDING/ENGINEERING	26	22	21	27.5
TEXTILES/CLOTHING	51	42	39	28.5
TOTAL	77	64	60	56.0
N	161,480	110,883	102,176	56,040

Sources: Isles and Cuthbert (1957:63), DMS Gazettes 1978-9, Unpublished DOED statistics, O'Dowd (1986:25)

**TABLE 2.4 RATES OF NET CHANGE IN EMPLOYEES IN SERVICES EMPLOYMENT 1950-1980**

Standard Industrial Classification Order	%	1950-1958	1960-1965	1965-1970	1970-1975	1975-1980
21. Gas, Electricity, Water			10.3	4.6	17.9	- 6.7
22. Transport and Communication	-11.8	- 6.4	-10.2	- 1.4	- 7.1	
23. Distributive Trades	6.1	2.5	- 8.6	- 8.1	- 5.3	
24. Insurance, Banking, Finance Business Services			11.4	28.8	21.8	33.8
25. Professional and Scientific Services	37.8	26.5	28.6	34.8	17.4	
26. Miscellaneous Services	- 5.1	16.4	15.9	12.5	30.0	
27. Public Administration and Defence	2.1	4.8	11.5	38.1	7.4	
Total		4.1	9.1	8.5	16.8	13.4

Note: 1950-58 figures are on a different basis and are not strictly comparable. Miscellaneous Services in 1950 includes Gas, Electricity and Water, Insurance etc and Miscellaneous Services including motor vehicle repairs.

Source: Digest of Statistics, DMS Gazette



**TABLE 2.5 RATES OF NET CHANGE IN PUBLIC SECTOR CIVIL EMPLOYMENT  
1961-1978**

	1961- % 1965	1965- 1970	1970- 1975	1975- 1978	1974- 1978
United Kingdom	3.4	10.2	13.3	1.9	7.6
NI: estimated	9.4	15.4	31.1	5.9	14.9
NI: actual	-	-	-	8.8	16.9

Source: DMS Gazette Nos 1, 3; "Employment in the Public and Private Sectors 1961-1978" Economic Trends Nov 1979 CSO

Since 1979, rising unemployment, the 'New Right' dominance in British politics, and the reconstruction of the Welfare State have all moulded the shape of a state dependent service sector in Northern Ireland. Since 1974 public expenditure has increased at twice the British rate (The Economist, June 1984: 41-2). The pattern remained constant until 1979 when 40% of the workforce were state employees. By 1983 the figure had risen to 46% (O'Dowd 1986: 209). These increases have been confined to particular sectors: 'Health and Education', 'Public Administration' and 'security'. The latter category for example provided over half (56%) of male public sector employment in the period 1974-79. Part time employment has also increased. Between 1971 and 1978 part time jobs increased at a rate of 5,644 per annum and since then the rate has averaged 2,332 per annum. The majority of such workers are women. In 1971 part time work comprised 19% of female employment, in 1977 the corresponding figure was 37%.

These general trends obscure important differences in employment patterns between (1) men and women, and (ii) Protestant and Catholic workers. Between 1959 and 1980 manufacturing in Northern Ireland lost 14,000 (14%) of its male workforce and 31,000 (40%) of its female workforce. It has been the growth of services which has provided

employment for those women moving out of manufacturing. Between 1950 and 1976 public administration grew by 13,000, over half the increase in jobs being for females. In finance and other services there were an additional 17,000 jobs, 9,000 of which were female jobs (Byrne 1980:90).

Employment in the service sector not only absorbed women workers from manufacturing but increased the total number of females in the labour force. Between 1959 and 1980 female employment in services increased by over 129%, while the equivalent growth in male service workers was 22%. The service sector in Northern Ireland is heavily dependent on part-time female labour.

The labour force in Northern Ireland is characterised by a massive decline in industrial employment and an equally noteworthy increase in service employment. The shift is most marked in female employment patterns and particularly the replacement of full time women's work in manufacturing by part time service work.

**TABLE 2.6 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF MALE AND FEMALE EMPLOYEES IN MAJOR INDUSTRIAL SECTORS.**

	1952 (%)		1971 (%)		1983 (%)	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Manufacturing	55	39	35	37	16	27
Services	44	40	63	45	82	61
Agriculture/ Construction	1	21	2	18	2	12
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Sources: Isles and Cuthbert 1957, D.M.S. Gazette, D.O.E.D. Statistics, O'Dowd 1986.

These changes in the composition of the service sector have to be set in the context of the developing productive forces within Northern Ireland imposed by the logic of the contemporary organisation of capital. Of primary importance is the obliteration of that sector of the economy which was heavily reliant on skilled male manual workers. In Northern Ireland this is of crucial significance since it is this section of employment which has traditionally provided the backbone of Protestant employment.

The overall vulnerability of the economy in Northern Ireland has received much attention (cf Isles and Cuthbert 1957, Byrne 1981, Harvey and Rea 1982, Rowthorn 1981, 1983, 1985). The decline continued into the 1980s with the virtual disappearance of entire industrial sectors. The structure of employment reflects these changes as can be seen in the following table 2.7.

**TABLE 2.7 EMPLOYEES (OOO'S) IN NORTHERN IRELAND 1965-1985**

	1965	1985	%CHANGE
MANUFACTURING	174	101	-42
PUBLIC SERVICE	112	207	+85
PRIVATE	116	113	- 3
CONSTRUCTION	45	23	- 49

Source: Coopers and Lybrand (1986:4)

The latest strategy for industry in Northern Ireland has been the plan published by the Industrial Development Board (IDB). The core of the plan is to shift the balance of development away from a 'service ethos' towards an entrepreneurial one. The strategy is highly reliant on market led private sector development and little or no attention is given to the expansion of the public sector. Implicit in this approach

is the idea that success in private production would overcome sectarian divisions. There is little that is novel in this approach of the IDB. It is merely an attempt to modernise the approach initially introduced in the 1960's. The contemporary period, of international mobile capital, or rather, the new international division of labour which has channelled capital to other locations, has made such a strategy redundant.

The full limitations of this development strategy are apparent in the unemployment figures for Northern Ireland. In the 1960s and 1970s the rate of job creation ranged from 5,000 to 8,000 per year. Such jobs helped offset the rapid decline in staple industries. After 1975 however the numbers of jobs created fell below 3,000 per annum. Although the 1980s has seen an increase in the numbers of jobs created (see table 2.8) they have had little overall effect on employment levels.

**TABLE 2.8 JOB PROMOTIONS IN NORTHERN IRELAND 1981-85**

YEAR	IDB	L.E.D.U.	TOTAL
1981/82	1700	1600	3300
1982/83	3800	2600	6400
1983/84	3600	3700	7200
1984/85	5300	4000	9300

Source: Coopers and Lybrand (1986:32)

The level of unemployment has increased from 27,300 in 1974 to 127,800 in February 1986. It is within manufacturing industry that the process is most obvious. Between 1970 and 1980 employment in manufacturing fell by around 10% and in 1987 the numbers employed in manufacturing dropped below 100,000 for the first time in the history

of the Northern Irish state (Teague 1987:12). Historically manufacturing has been highly concentrated in and around Belfast. This reflected the late 19th century division of labour and the domination by male Protestant workers in industry. Spatially the divisions created at this time have remained constant with East Belfast dominant.

The relationship between sectarianism and space will be dealt with more fully in the next chapter. It is impossible however to discuss employment patterns without making reference to the social construction of space. Catholics are disproportionately represented in West Belfast and in the west of the Province generally. Since the outbreak of the present phase of conflict the tendency for Catholics to locate in West Belfast has heightened (Rolson and Tomlinson 1988). Within Belfast there are vast variations in employment and unemployment rates. The figure in West Belfast has been estimated at between 25-30%, while in East Belfast the figure is considerably lower at around 15-20%(see Chapter Four). These figures indicate not only the creation of 'labour reserves' in response to an ongoing process of capitalist restructuring, but also show the different relationship Catholic and Protestant workers have to capital. East Belfast relies heavily on public expenditure in the form of state subsidies to manufacturing. There is also a concentration of administrative jobs in East Belfast due to the location of Government Departments. West Belfast is of course also dependent on Government expenditure but in a radically different way. Employment in West Belfast is highly dependent on education and health services, much of which is female and part-time, broadly following the pattern indicated previously in this chapter.

In general terms capital is seeking to develop productive forces within Northern Ireland in accordance with that logic imposed by the contemporary forms of the capitalist system. Of primary importance is the abolition of that section of employment occupied by skilled manual males. Historically it is that sector of employment which has provided the material base for Protestant workers and is now being rapidly eroded. Although employment in the security forces does provide a safety net for many Protestant workers, many Protestant working class communities, including East Belfast, are now experiencing unemployment levels not seen since the 1930s. That is not to deny unemployment rates among Protestants remain lower than among their 'Catholic' counterparts. Nevertheless the unemployment rates now being experienced by loyalist communities are extremely high relative to the position they have come to expect. The Protestant working class has neither a tradition of, nor the informal networks to deal with, such levels of unemployment. The impact on Protestant working class consciousness is therefore a question of some importance.

Clearly Northern Ireland has many features which make it distinctive. It is possible to agree with Massey that regions have specific histories which internalise general trends in both national and global economies in particular ways (Massey 1983, 1984, 1986). Developing this theme Cooke has outlined the following five features which distinguish class relations within specific regions. These are:

- i) The Productive Base
- ii) The Labour Process
- iii) The Ownership of Capital
- iv) Specific Social Relations
- v) Institutional specificities (Cooke 1985: 213-241)

In supporting this theme in general terms one must be careful not to overstate the case to the point where the integration of the Northern Irish economy into the British economy is obscured.

The role of the capitalist state in the process of accumulation and social reproduction is crucial. Patterns of development and underdevelopment of the economy are shaped by state policy and state institutions. Variations in state policy, including regional policy must be situated in the context of the accumulation process and take account of variations in class structures. The current economic crisis, for example, has had an uneven effect across the various Regions of the United Kingdom. Historically the North-East of Ireland developed an independent regional manufacturing base specialising in Shipbuilding and Textiles. The decline of this base throughout this century is part of a pattern which manifested itself in other weak peripheral regions such as the North East of England and South Wales (Blackman 1985). The State in Northern Ireland has had to secure conditions for the continued accumulation of capital in the same way as any other western state. The working class in Northern Ireland were however much more divided, both economically and culturally, than was the case in other capitalist societies. Apart from this there was little that was unique about the position of Northern Ireland an advanced capitalist state. As elsewhere the decline in manufacturing has led to the creation of a 'reserve army of labour'. The needs of the state to reproduce workers as wage labour, or as a reserve army has shaped post-war working class experience, both Protestant and Catholic, in Northern Ireland.

At the outbreak of the present phase of the conflict in Northern Ireland, world markets were increasingly being organised by transnational capital. Against this, local business dominated by the

Unionist elite was helpless. Stormont was forced to intervene directly in the economy and adopt measures (recommended for many years) to 'modernise' capital. O'Neill's policies were conceived to accommodate increasing demands from Protestant industrial workers and to meet the needs of international corporations. The former were making increased demands to reap some of the benefits of the post-war capitalist boom conditions while the latter were seeking to secure the best conditions for profit maximisation. Politically O'Neill attempted to weaken Irish nationalism and thus to secure both the legitimacy of the state and the liberalisation of Unionism. It was this which was successfully resisted by the rise of 'Paisleyism'. The Unionist mandate crumbled under pressure from both Protestant and Catholic workers who, although not acting in unison were making increasing demands on the state. The latter were concerned with establishing 'Civil Rights' within the state, while the former sought to confirm their central position, both economically and politically. The break-up of the Unionist hegemony was therefore precipitated at least as much by the problems Northern Ireland faced as a capitalist state, as it was by being a sectarian one. Attempts to restructure Northern Ireland's economic base in the 1960s were based on British regional strategy. One of the major results was the high level of dependence upon external capital. Northern Ireland, like other regions in the U.K., became increasingly vulnerable to changing investment patterns at both the national (British) and international levels. Thus while Northern Ireland has its own particular features it was and remains, fully integrated into the British economy. Seeing the Northern Irish economy in a wider context and in the context of other British regions is gaining increasing validity. The current economic crisis has had an uneven effect across the regions of



the U.K. Some areas have been virtually by-passed by closures and redundancies and indeed benefitted from net investment. In Northern Ireland the economic crisis has had a devastating effect, threatening to obliterate whole communities. This has exaggerated the tendency of some commentators, particularly those who adopt an anti-imperialist stance, to see Northern Ireland's problems as unique. This view ignores similarities across regions in order to emphasise differences.

The view of the anti-imperialist left is that, in Ireland, social relationships can best be understood in terms of the dominance of Ireland by 'British Imperialism'. Although anti-imperialists have dealt in minute detail with the way internal divisions have manifested themselves in the Northern Irish state they have consistently failed to locate these in any adequate conception of the social structure. Furthermore the economic relationships between Ireland, Britain and the rest of the international capitalist economy are not adequately explored. Such issues are subsumed under an all embracing term of 'imperialism' which explains the position of Protestant workers as the defence of economic privilege and nothing else.

In broad terms 'Imperialism' can be characterised in three main ways: the export of surplus capital from advanced industrial countries to less developed regions; the super exploitation of such regions; and the political and military subjugation of such regions. The application of the concept of imperialism to Northern Ireland raises problems. Firstly the assumption that Britain benefits materially from the union must be questioned, in terms of both profit and spatial-military gain. A second assumption is that there is a unity between the British ruling class, the British state and multinational capital in ideas and programmes of action. There is now a considerable body of literature which illustrates the tensions between

different fractions of capital, different state apparatuses and different fractions of the ruling class (Poulantzas 1973, 1978). The assertion that there is a coherence of purpose between the various sections of the British ruling class, concerning policy towards Ireland, fails to address this important body of literature.

From a historical perspective the concept of 'Imperialism' is equally problematic. Capitalist accumulation in the north of Ireland is not easily confined within the boundaries of the state. By 1900 Belfast was a major location of international capital. It formed part of a huge industrial triangle including Clydeside and Merseyside. The dramatic growth witnessed in the latter part of the 19th century concentrated economic and political power in the hands of the indigenous bourgeoisie. Linen, Shipbuilding and Engineering formed the basis of the class alliance whose material interests rested firmly on the union, City of London Finance and Imperial markets. It is difficult however to see in what ways the region was more dependent than other regions such as the north west of England. While it is true that Ireland was the scene of subjugation, both economic and political, it nevertheless had characteristics which were distinctive and which provided the basis for loyalism to Britain.

Partition institutionalised class and sectarian relationships, confirming both the strength of the Protestant Alliance and the rejection of the state's legitimacy by many of the Catholic population at the time when Unionism achieved political autonomy. The manufacturing base, which was highly concentrated around shipbuilding and linen, entered a sustained period of decline. The contraction of the industrial base and the political reinforcement of sectarian divisions meant Northern Ireland maintained an essentially 19th century social structure until after the second world war.

The situation in Northern Ireland has not however remained static. It is no accident that the outbreak of the present conflict coincided with the modernisation of the Northern Irish economy and the increasing penetration of transnational capital. In retrospect the late 1960s and early 1970s seem the highpoint of employment and affluence, but, even in its finest hour, capitalism could not contain the aspirations its rhetoric was generating.

The working class in Northern Ireland continues to be deeply divided. The state has a complex role to play in the reproduction of social order. This is especially the case in Northern Ireland where both communities have considerable control over the agencies of social reproduction. The relations involved in the reproduction of class politics are far from stable. For this reason the arguments forwarded by Bew, Gibbon and Patterson (1979) must be given a central position in any analysis. It is they who provide the most important evidence concerning class responses to the reproduction of capital-labour relations in Northern Ireland. The Protestant class alliance is best conceived of as a product of uneven capitalist development. It has been pointed out that,

Loyalism as an ideology involves a deeply rooted set of social practices and beliefs whose base is the industrial development of the North East of Ireland which had been integrated thoroughly into British markets and British capitalism. The revolt by Protestant workers against Home Rule in the early part of the century was not a manipulated departure from real class interests. It was rather a rational expression of the belief that the Victorian prosperity of Belfast could only be maintained through the continued integration of the British and Northern Irish economies"  
(Morrisey 1981:74)

The Home Rule period saw the construction of a loyalist bloc, which was ideologically coherent. While it is true that Protestant workers formed the solid foundation of this bloc, it was nevertheless subject

to fissures and tensions. Furthermore only those who supported partition were allowed to make decisions concerning the structure and direction of the state.

While relations within the loyalist bloc fell some way short of total cohesion the intra-group divisions were obscured by the apparent depth of inter-group conflict. The divide can be described in a number of ways such as Protestant-Catholic or Unionist-Nationalist. This divide was the main focus of interest and has led to an over concentration on the peculiarities of the situation in Northern Ireland. It will be argued here that seeing the events in Ireland as 'unique' gives an extremely distorted view of politics in Northern Ireland. The writers who concentrate on the particular aspects of the situation are led to give precedence to the national struggle, as for example in Farrell (1976, 1983) or else to describe the Protestant workers as 'duped' as in Bell (1976, 1984). Rather than this reading of social life in a mechanistic fashion, based on a single process, what is needed is a detailed class analysis of relations within unionism. Neither the notion of 'labour aristocracy' nor the all embracing concept of 'imperialism' provide the necessary tools for such an analysis. Protestant working class culture is not unidimensional. As a class it is not necessarily passive to ruling ideas, even if its perspectives are often constrained by more immediate political concerns. The temptation of a premature closure of the debate, dismissing the Protestant population as an undifferentiated reactionary mass, must be resisted. An effective analysis of class formation must start without any presupposition of its form. Furthermore it must incorporate all aspects of behaviour which sustain the social structure. To do otherwise is to dismiss a vast range of working class experience. As Allen says,

"Class analysis based in the concrete reality of capitalism should tell us about the formation and distribution of political allegiances not simply through voting patterns but through an identification with policies over everyday affairs"

(Allen 1977:64)

It is this behaviour, and the expression of the politics of everyday affairs within a loyalist community that the rest of this thesis seeks to examine.

## PART II

"The Sectarian Divide that poisons the air of the community I write about is a smoke screen, a camouflage to obscure the social problems. Belfast is, after all, no different from other industrial cities, with the usual contradictions between rich and poor, privileged and underprivileged. It is a city of high unemployment and bad housing where the working class has been nourished on mistrust. Probably no other working class in Europe has been so divided, so alienated... Unemployment, poverty, illiteracy are not acts of God but conditions of men; they are remediable, not inevitable."

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John Boyd, Introduction to Collected Plays  
pp vii and viii

### CHAPTER THREE      METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

#### Towards a Rationale for the Methods Chosen

The assessment of contemporary PWC consciousness must be at least two-fold. Not only must it be concerned with the major political and social issues, but attention must also be given to the relevance of being Protestant in areas of day to day life. As Lockwood once pointed out, people,

"visualise the class structure of their society from the vantage points of their own particular milieux, and their perceptions of the larger society will vary according to their experiences of social inequality in the smaller societies in which they live out their daily lives"

(Lockwood 1966:249)

Questions asked at this level should show where, when, and how divisions and contradictions within classes are made relevant in the context of political and economic divisions. They should also identify the socialisation processes, image construction and framework of thought within a given community. It is through such processes that classes alter their composition.

The thesis rests on the periods of fieldwork I spent in Ballymacarret, a Protestant working class area of Belfast (see Chapter four). Obviously both the theory and methods used very directly influence the transposition of the social reality which is recorded. The chapter begins therefore by considering some of the more general problems in fieldwork and how they were related to fieldwork in Ballymacarrett. It further considers the relationship between theory, method and substantive claims in participant observation, the main information gathering technique used.

My research was orientated by a theoretical interest in political ideology and the way in which political action is sanctioned and

understood within certain communities. The example chosen was the social and political consciousness of a section of Belfast's Protestant working class. This was investigated by identifying those elements which are most relevant in creating and maintaining the various components of PWC ideology. It was particularly concerned with how PWC consciousness affected peoples' attitudes not only to the major political issues in Northern Ireland but also how it determined relevance in areas of day to day life. Underlying this it sought to identify divisions based on class within the Unionist block and to understand how these contradictions within classes were made relevant in the context of political and economic divisions.

Concerns at this level of analysis led to the adoption of the method of participant observation and the use of depth interviews as my major tool of empirical method. This was supplemented by a small scale structured questionnaire and these supplemented theoretical and historical inquiry. As in many anthropological studies there was in my case a 'prima facie' argument for employing the research methods I did. Quite simply many of the activists within Ballymacarrett were active in paramilitary organisations, or in other community based groupings who often had close links with paramilitary organisations. Even if they were in party political groupings they often had to play a complex role in mediating between those active in Ballymacarrett in other organisations. In the case of the former it was unfeasible to survey or formally interview many of these people, or in the latter grouping structured interviews simply couldn't draw out the multitude of reasons to explain their reasons for taking on their 'public role'. To obtain any meaningful response from such individuals meant entering and establishing myself in the community (in basic terms 'winning their trust'). If this had not been done it seemed unlikely that the



response to interviews would have been meaningful. It was only after considerable time in Ballymacarrett that I attempted to conduct a small scale structured questionnaire survey. Indeed it was only after the same period that I began to suggest conducting and then taping 'depth interviews' with individuals, some of whom I had met on several occasions before.

### The Setting of the Research

In all I spent 12 months in Ballymacarrett. Initially I was faced with the traditional problem of many wishing to employ anthropological methods, that of making contacts in a community which is at best semi-closed, both geographically and culturally. Obviously in any social setting it is impossible to observe everything or interview everyone. My initial selection of a research site was reasonably unproblematic. As I was concerned with the relationship between class, identity and social and political consciousness the research site had to include a large aggregate of urban working class. As Belfast is Northern Ireland's only large industrial city it was the obvious choice. The choice of exact location was determined by two other considerations. Firstly, the only other ethnographic studies of a PWC community are largely located in the Shankill Road in the west of the city (Weiner 1980, Nelson 1984). As such they had several special features, namely: the 'Shankill' is highly symbolic in loyalist culture, it has a long and direct interface with neighbouring Catholic districts, its political representatives have a higher than usual independent tradition, and finally the most influential paramilitary grouping is the UVF. Counter to this, Ballymacarrett is overwhelmingly Unionist/Protestant. The only Catholic/Nationalist area on the east side of the city being the Short Strand. It also contains much of what remains of the old shipyard community with its

associated traditional patterns of kin and social structure. Since the mid 1970's there has been a marked increase in activity by the parliamentary Democratic Unionist Party and the UDA is by far the most influential paramilitary grouping.

Once I had decided where to do research, the next major decision was 'who' to research. It obviously was not easy for the outsider to determine just who was active in parliamentary and paramilitary organisations in Ballymacarrett, (the second grouping being more difficult to identify than the first). I attempted to resolve this by means of snowball sampling, whereby informants are used by the researcher to introduce other members of the group. This method has been successfully employed by several researchers seeking to interview 'sensitive' groupings (cf Plant 1975, West 1980, McCall 1980, Hoffman 1980). Key contacts not only provided detailed data on the research setting but also introductions to other contacts, to people in other organisations and to other situations. My major problem was to set the 'snowball' rolling. I adopted two main routes. Firstly I wrote to all the local councillors for East Belfast. Secondly I re-established some contacts I had made the previous year while working on a research project studying community groups for the Department of Education (NI) (McAuley 1983a, 1983b) I had decided not to make any formal approaches to paramilitary groups but hopefully to make contacts through introductions and snowballing interviews. At first the strategy seemed to be failing. Although I had some success in making contact with community workers I had no response from those belonging to political organisations. After several weeks a DUP councillor agreed to meet, in fact he contacted me by telephone. Thereafter I had little problem making contacts. Not only did the councillor set up directly several other interviews but others whom I

had approached agreed to an interview. Although I was never able to confirm it, it seems my ever obvious presence in the district was legitimised by that initial interview. It is possible of course that the use of key-contacts can actually close-off situations. Contacts have a central gate-keeping role as they facilitate access for the researcher. It was the use of key-contacts however which gave me access not only to others but legitimised my presence at group meetings, such as housing associations or political party branch meetings, where I could expand on my range of contacts and often talk to people not known to the key contact on anything other than a casual basis. Although it is far from comprehensive Fig 3.1 illustrates the way in which contacts were made through snowballing interviews.

### Events

According to Schatzman and Strauss (1973) it is vital for fieldworkers to distinguish between three discrete types of events they may encounter. These are the routine, the special and the untoward. Within this thesis I have tried to give examples of the significance of each. By routine events Schatzman and Strauss mean events which regularly occur. Here I have discussed the significance of everyday events in Ballymacarrett in the socialisation process and image building within that community. Special events are defined as situations which are fortuitous but can be anticipated. In this context I have discussed the confrontations over housing in Ballymacarrett and the 1985 local council elections. Finally untoward events are defined as emergency situations and Chapter nine of the thesis discusses in detail loyalist reaction in Ballymacarrett to the signing of the Anglo-Irish agreement in November 1985.

Participant observation and conventional problems : The case of Ballymacarrett

Much has been written about 'how to do field research?' without any definite answer to that question. It may well be possible that to search for a specific guide to doing research is in itself futile. As Freilich states,

"No specific techniques exist to help the young ethnographer transform a group of hostile natives into friendly informants; no specific and operationally useful rules exist for translating raw data into information that is meaningful for anthropological analysis; and no specific techniques exist for drawing productive generalisations from such information"

(Freilich 1977 p.15)

Nevertheless, no matter which tactics are adopted by the researcher they must overcome a number of conventional problems associated with fieldwork. One of the primary concerns must be that the perceptions and interpretations of the research will be contingent on the values of the researcher. It is argued that the intellectual make-up of the sociologist determines the type of judgement attached to events. At its most negative, it suggests that the data collected may be corrupt or invalid because the researcher's findings have been subject to the particular outlook of the researcher, who might be biased, culturally or ideologically. It is therefore suggested that the researcher's 'findings' may bear little relationship to the reality of the actors social world. The problem is usually seen as being resolved by treating the researcher as a variable and by some overt declaration by the researcher of those facets which the author believes may influence their perceptions. Thus at this point it would be normal for me to declare that I am from a PWC background in Belfast, a socialist and so on. However I tend to agree with Burton that such an approach while honourable remains problematic, if not naive. As Burton explains,

"In the first instance, who defines what elements of a researcher's personality are relevant? Second, all the sincerity in the world does not remove the possibility of the theorist's operating with 'biases' he is not aware of. We rarely do see ourselves as others see us. But the most important objection is that the mere stating of one's 'position' is an entirely different matter to weighting the effect that an individual's biography has on the monographs he produces. A problem is not resolved by admitting it exists"

(Burton 1978:168)

It would be futile of course to claim that once an observer joins a social situation that they can hold that situation static or constant. I was not (nor would I have wished to be, even if it were possible), simply an external observer. My observation was interlaced with periods of participation. For example, at various times during my fieldwork I acted as 'secretary' at a Housing Association meeting, helped deliver copies of the UDA magazine 'Ulster' and helped out with phone calls and enquiries at the DUP advice centre in Ballymacarrett. At such times a few people knew that I was conducting research (or 'writing a book'), but the vast majority did not. Mostly however I did not indulge in covert participation, because of the physical dangers involved. The traditional fieldwork methods of 'nipping into back rooms and making notes' could easily be misunderstood in Belfast. There was another reason for adopting an overt approach. The central problems in participant observation are not solved by covert participation. No matter which role the researcher creates (or is assigned) it will affect the 'quality' of the social interaction with respondents. If the role makes the researcher aloof then they are in great danger of missing much useful material. If the role means they are to 'go native' there is the danger of over romanticising the actions and behaviour of those involved. I tried therefore to adopt an approach somewhere between the two. There are of course further problems to be aware of here. The researcher may make acquaintances

and contacts which mean his or her acceptance by others is limited, or even excluded. On the other hand, however, if the researcher tries to be all things to all people, with contacts in all the different social worlds of the milieu studied, he or she is likely to remain 'marginal' to all these events. Developing the researcher's role is dependent on many of the same factors as other relationships. Factors such as time spent in other persons' company and the personalities of both researcher and researched. The building of trust involves creating a situation where people become more and more willing to give information. As Whyte (1981) pointed out, the type of information a sociologist is given, is contingent upon the type of person they are. Consequently I undertook the research with the assumption that if I put up a front, people would recognise it as just that. I tried (as far as one has to try) to simply 'be myself'. Obviously this may well have upset some people who no doubt took a dislike to me. On the other hand, it hopefully endeared me or at least made me seem accessible to some others. Being 'oneself' involved talking to people and projecting one's views, not as dominant, but as a form of generating discussion. Again no doubt, airing my own views, may well have closed off several contacts, but hopefully it created responses from others. The vast array of social skills necessary to undertake social research cannot be learnt from textbooks. There is no prescribed set of rules concerning tact, on the spot decision making and the politics of research. The researcher is better to 'be themselves' than to play a role of being a 'neutral' observer. Many sociologists have shown just how fraught with difficulties research is. As Hughes put it,

"The observer, in greater or less degree, is caught up in the very web of social interaction which he observes, analyses and reports. Even if he observes through a peephole, he plays a role: that of spy. And when he

reports his observations made thus he becomes a kind of informer. If he observes in the role of a member of the group, he may be considered a traitor the moment he reports. Even the historian, who works upon documents get caught in a role problem when he reports, unless there is no person alive who might identify himself with the people or social group concerned. The hatred occassionally visited upon the debunking historian is visited almost daily upon the person who reports on the behaviour of people he has lived among; and it is not so much the writing of the report, as the very act of thinking in such objective terms that disturbs the people observed. It is a violation of apparently shared secrets and sentiments."

(Hughes, 1960: xii)

Field research itself is a social process in which the researcher plays a major role. However it is necessary not only to focus upon the level of intrusion the researcher makes up the setting studied but also upon justifying why the researchers comments are the ones that they are.

#### Analysing Field Data

Another major problem is therefore any potential abuse in writing up, and after the fact explanations. This can involve ignoring material which does not fit in with desire for reporting material in a conceptually tight way. Results produced by participant observation can be rewritten, reworked and reshaped. As Malinowski explained when studying the Kula ring,

"In fact I have written up an outline of the Kula institution at least half a dozen times while in the field and in the intervals between my expeditions. Each time new problems and difficulties presented themselves."

(Malinowski 1922: Ch 18)

During the course of my fieldwork I amassed a variety of data from different sources. The data originated not only from different sources but from distinctly different types of intrusion. For example, through the use of a social survey I attempted to gather information on such areas as population, social structure, marriage

patterns and political perspectives. In broad terms this was an attempt to establish the general characteristics of Ballymacarrett.

Another source of data was comparing respondents' statements with observed behaviour. This allows the researcher to compare material relating to specific incidents and identify structural and social reasons underlying various types of behaviour. It is thus possible to begin to construct a multifaceted model of the community studied. Statements and actions can then be evaluated according to an individual's social position, organisational membership etc. The internal logic of local social systems can be uncovered and by the use of case studies, for example, the 1985 local council elections, can be used to validate the deductions made by the researcher concerning political support. I also introduced case study material to try and deal with changes over time. FWC identity and culture is often presented as static, as frozen in time. Loyalist identity results from events which took place before I was in the field and part of the analysis was therefore retrospective to show how present behaviour forms part of a sequence of events. Indeed a major characteristic of Ballymacarrett is the strength of shared identity, values and beliefs.

The 'tool' for this was the depth interview. A series of conversations where respondents were asked to relate, in their own terms, experience and attitudes which were relevant to FWC social consciousness. Depth interviews provided,

"the opportunity for the researcher to probe deeply, to uncover new clues, to open up new dimensions of a problem and to secure vivid, accurate, inclusive accounts that are based on personal experience."

(Burgess 1982: 107)

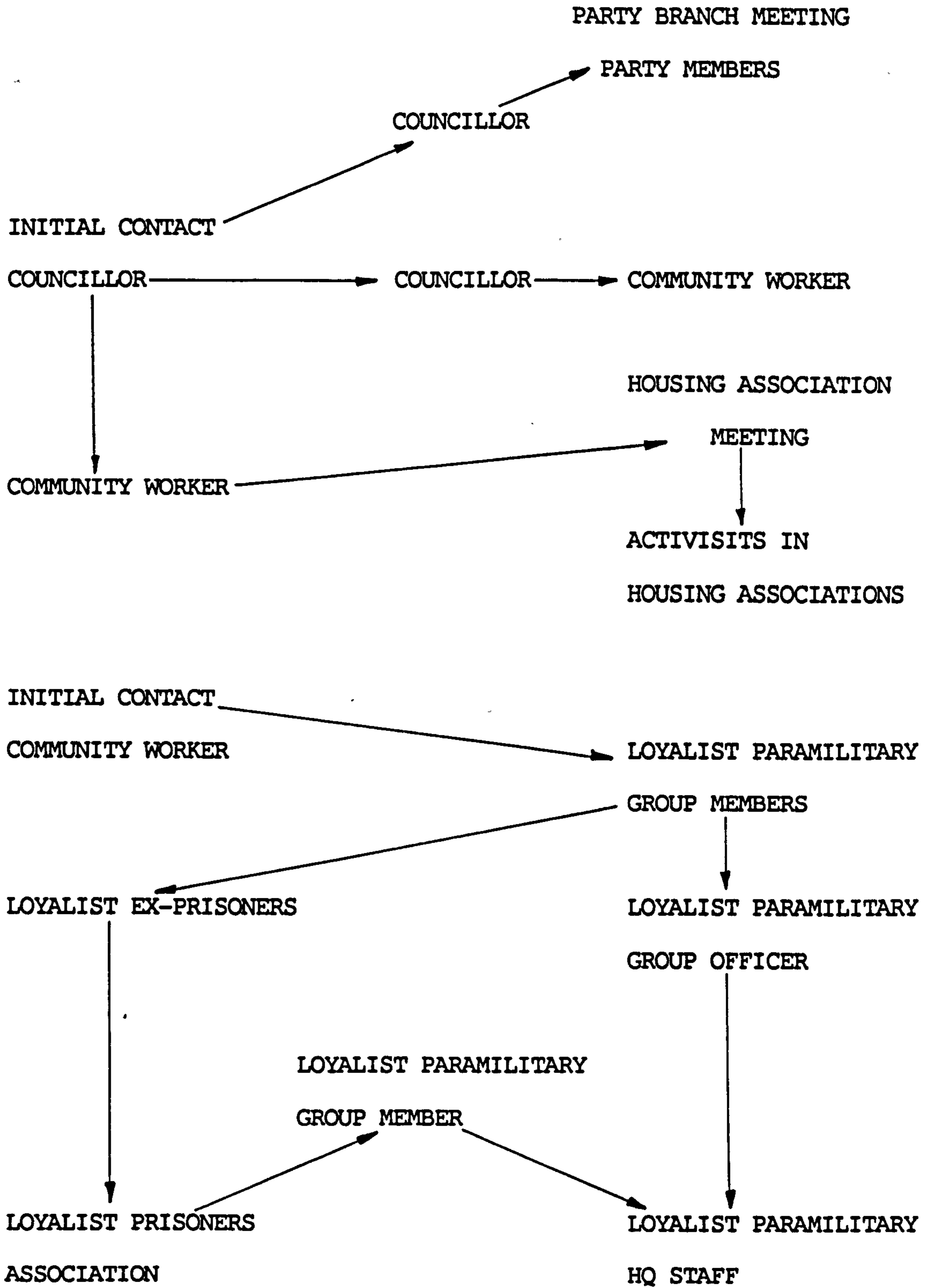
The researcher is not constrained by rigid questionnaire design, designed to ensure that the same questions are asked of all



respondents in exactly the same manner. Depth interviews were used to develop the implications of data which emerged.

All research means making choices. Such choices depend on the nature of the research topic, on the particular information sought about the topic, on whichever 'model' or theoretical perspective is adopted by the researcher and the research setting. Something which I hadn't fully appreciated was that research is also dependent upon very practical concerns such as time, energy and indeed money available to do research. There are numerous methods researchers can construct for themselves for analysing data. We all use routines and tools which we have found and feel comfortable with. I would make no claim for this to be, or to have followed a 'best' method of undertaking research. What I tried to do was to follow a programme which made it possible to make sense of the ways in which others make sense of their realities.

FIGURE 3.1 AN EXAMPLE OF 'SNOWBALLING' INTERVIEWS AND CONTACTS IN BALLYMACARRETT.



### The Survey of Ballymacarrett Residents

The kind of participant observation outlined above seeks to explain particular local facts by reference to their involvement in a complex set of interconnected variables that the observer then constructs as a theoretical or descriptive model which best explains the data assembled.

I decided to try and formalise this, through the use of a questionnaire, and survey data. There was another reason for conducting a small scale survey. There was the possibility that participant observation may have produced 'biased' results because it may focus upon those most 'active' and 'public' in any given social situation. The major purpose of the survey was to provide background and context to the qualitative material in the thesis. The target sample was 300, taken from the electoral register for the two innermost wards of East Belfast, Ballymacarrett and Mount. The main results of this survey are presented in Chapter seven. The questionnaire itself is reproduced as Appendix A.

## CHAPTER FOUR SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF BALLYMACARRETT

The main task of this chapter is ethnographic. It will outline the social and physical structure of the study area, Ballymacarrett. This will provide important background information which will make the content of subsequent chapters understandable. The descriptive material seeks to present the overall sense of 'community', allowing the latter chapters to draw on the ethnographic material presented. This chapter also portrays an important theoretical position. This is the inter-relationship between a pre-existing common culture and social change. What is sociologically important about the study area is the manner in which it has reacted as a community to the contemporary phase of the conflict in Northern Ireland. The community of Ballymacarrett has been threatened by redevelopment, physical and social change, physical and social conflict. Under these dramatically changing circumstances the existing social structure plays a central role in the reaction to events and the development of organisations articulating reaction to such change.

The area chosen for study is inner East Belfast, known locally as 'Ballymacarrett', after the original townland on the east bank of the river Lagan. The area is roughly covered by the innermost wards of the Pottinger local electoral district. There are several reasons for choosing this area,

- (i) It contains a large concentration of the urban working class
- (ii) Parts of the district are in direct (physical) contact with a Catholic working class area.

- (iii) It contains much of what remains of the old shipyard community, and provides important evidence of the breakdown of that community and is directly relevant to examining notions of a 'labour aristocracy'.
- (iv) The area has a political tradition of both labour and independent unionist representation.
- (v) Since 1979 there has been a marked increase in electoral support for and activity by the Democratic Unionist Party in the area.

To understand fully the key features of life in the area it is necessary to examine the historical development of Ballymacarret, its cultural tradition, and the degree of physical segregation which recent population movements and conflicts over territorial boundaries have emphasised.

At the beginning of the 19th century, Belfast was a small town with a population of under 20,000. The 'Falls', 'Shankill', 'Andersonstown' and 'Malone' districts of the town were mostly rural. So too was Ballymacarret which was in reality a distinct entity, linked to Belfast by the 'long bridge'. The exception to this was a small industrial complex which had grown up at the 'Bridge End'.

Around 1830, Belfast began to grow rapidly and it expanded to around 50,000. An important feature at the time was high levels of migration from rural districts. This was compounded by the effects of the 'Famine', which forced many to flee to Belfast, Ireland's only industrial city. The route many took was down the 'Lurgan corridor' through Lisburn and into Belfast by its western and southern approaches. There the rapidly industrialising Falls and Shankill absorbed many of the newcomers. This is one reason why Ballymacarret

traditionally has had such a small Catholic population. Few of the substantial number of Roman Catholic migrants to Belfast ventured across the river, and those who did, remained encamped in a small enclave, immediately on its eastern bank.

By the mid 19th century Belfast was a 'boom town'. Between 1835 and 1850 the population doubled and in the next 50 years it increased four-fold. As Jones notes, the period,

"saw rows of artisans' houses spreading rapidly westwards and bursting over the Lagan to Ballymacarrett; a minor port became a major one in this half century, linen manufacturing became a symbol, and shipbuilding grew from nothing to challenge the great shipyards of the entire world".

(Jones 1967:109)

The stage for such phenomenal growth had been set during the previous 30 years. During this time linen had replaced cotton as the major manufacturing industry, especially as the American civil war had significantly restricted the supply of cotton. The increased mechanisation of the industry provided much of the catalyst for the growth of engineering in response to the demands for the provision and repair of machinery.

In the absence of any natural raw materials, pressure on Belfast's port facilities grew and in the 1850's shipbuilding was transferred to the east side of the river. Ballymacarrett had now been joined to Belfast by two new bridges and had been almost completely absorbed into the city. As Brett describes it,

"row upon row of working class houses spread up the hill sides and across the sloblands of Ballymacarrett".

(Brett 1967:124)

Ballymacarret became synonymous with engineering and in particular shipbuilding as it developed along Connswater. In particular Harland and Wolff shipbuilders attracted workers not only from the west of the

city but from other British industrial centres such as Clydeside and Merseyside.

This migration had important consequences as Bardon explains,

"The working class remained packed into the warrens of Ballymacarrett, the Docks, North Queen Street and Fredrick Street, Millfield, Smithfield, the lower Shankill, the Pound and Sandy Row. Most were recent immigrants and they had chosen where they had settled with care. Belfast has been described as a collection of villages; certainly, almost self contained communities clustered round the mill but the invisible dividing lines running through these districts were primarily a reflection of sectarianism imported from the Ulster countryside".

(Bardon, 1982: 107)

One of these 'clusters' was predominately Catholic and settled in the 'Docks' on either side of the Lagan. This provided the location for the only significant Roman Catholic population in Ballymacarrett. In 1824 the decision was taken to form the parish of Ballymacarrett and build a Protestant church. The circular issued stated,

"The parish of Knockbreda contains a population of eight thousand and three persons of which number two thousand five hundred are computed to be members of the established church. Four thousand belong to different sects of Protestants and one thousand five hundred are Roman Catholic".

(cited in Redmond, 1960:2)

Then as now Catholics were physically concentrated within an area to the west of the townland of Ballymacarret - now known as 'Short Strand'. When in 1884, St. Matthews, the local Roman Catholic church was built, Ballymacarrett's Catholic population was 3,100 (Redmond, 1960:5).

A further feature of city life was a series of outbreaks of sectarian rioting. These first occurred during the 1832 election campaign. Serious trouble however largely by-passed the east of the City at this time, and remained concentrated on the boundary between the 'Protestant' Sandy row and the 'Catholic' Pound districts in West

Belfast. A further series of riots in 1845, 1857, and 1863 forced a clear pattern of demarcation along sectarian lines. As many native workers reacted to the perceived threat of continued migration of Catholic workers (Boal 1980) working class neighbourhoods in Belfast took on a recognisable form as the city rapidly industrialised. This entailed the development of distinct local social structures and segregation between Catholic and Protestant workers (Gibbon 1976).

The relations between Catholic and Protestant workers worsened in the latter part of the 19th century and the early part of the twentieth century as the ideologies of Unionism and Nationalism began to take shape. It was during this period that cultural differences became crystalised into a social division of labour. As Gibbon points out,

"the development of ethnic from purely local hostilities was to prove one of the decisive conditions of the success of conservatism and nationalism among the Belfast working class".

(Gibbon 1976:85)

By the time Belfast city expanded its boundaries in 1896, the 'Falls' and 'Smithfield' wards in the west were predominant 'Catholic' and 'Victoria' in East Belfast was overwhelmingly Protestant. The dual features of industrialisation and sectarianism created patterns of residential segregation which were identifiable in Belfast up until the outbreak of the contemporary phase of the conflict.

Throughout that period the Short Strand remained the only significant concentration of Roman Catholics in East Belfast. During the 1950s however there had been a general, if limited process of integration in Ballymacarrett. This continued in the 1960s with the building of new housing estates on the East and South fringes of the city.



At the outbreak of the current phase of the conflict, Ballymacarrett contained a broadly integrated area, of both Catholic and Protestant residents, around the Short Strand interface (Poole and Boal and Murray, 1976; Boal, 1975, 1975). However following a series of riots in 1969 and 1970, sectarian residential patterns quickly re-emerged. As one man who lived on an estate in outer East Belfast explained,

"We cleared that lot (Roman Catholics) out of here early on, most of them jumped on a lorry one weekend and ran to the Short Strand"

(Mark, East Belfast resident)

This process reached a climax in August 1971, when following the introduction of internment there was heightened conflict on the streets. The sectarian residential patterns were concentrated, as intimidation, both physical and psychological was widespread. As Darby notes,

"Protestants who left their homes tended to move to 'safe' estates on the outskirts of the city and to other parts of the province. Catholics crowded into the already over-populated Catholic areas especially West Belfast and the Short Strand".

(Darby 1986:1959)

By 1972, seventy one percent of Protestant households resided in streets that were almost entirely Protestant; sixty six percent of Catholics resided in streets that were almost exclusively Catholic. (Boal, Poole and Murray 1976:77). As a Belfast housing manager explained,

"Although before August 1969 the different religions lived in separate areas, the lines of demarcation had become blurred, mainly through the movement of Catholics into Protestant districts. After that August the trend was reversed and we moved about 1,200 Catholic families out of Protestant areas. Then the lines were drawn more sharply than ever before".

(The Times 18/9/1971)

Ballymacarrett as elsewhere experienced this phase of the conflict, which was characterised by widespread intimidation between Catholics

and Protestants. In a short period following 1969 the 'mixed' areas surrounding the Short Strand-Ballymacarrett interface evaporated. These became sectarian divides separating ethnically homogeneous areas in Ballymacarrett. These sectarian demarcation lines became more clear cut as continued street violence saw the destruction of private housing, pubs, halls and shops in the intermediate zone. The 'frontier' between 'Catholic Short Strand' and 'Protestant East Belfast' was bounded by the Newtownards Road and Albertbridge Road to the south and north, and by Templemore Avenue and the River Lagan to the East and West (see map 4.1). The divisions were institutionalised in July 1970 when the British army erected a series of semi permanent barricades around Short Strand following a series of violent conflicts between residents and loyalists.

One of these incidents, the events surrounding an extending period of gunfire on 2 June 1970, remains deeply impressed on the consciousness of Protestants in Ballymacarret. Following a night of petrol bombing, rioting and intermittent gunfire, heavier gunfire broke out and developed into an extended 'gunbattle' between nationalists in the Short Strand and loyalists on the Newtownards and Woodstock Roads. In the confrontation two Protestants were killed. This incident was referred to by several of the older residents who alleged that gunmen had been firing from the spire of the local Roman Catholic Church, St. Matthew's. Indeed one resident considered the incident as central to his attitudes concerning the situation in Northern Ireland, as he explained,

"I was a moderate man up till that night. But after I seen what happened it changed me. I'm getting on now (growing older) but ever there's the chance to get rid of them (Short Strand residents) I'll be at the front of the charge".

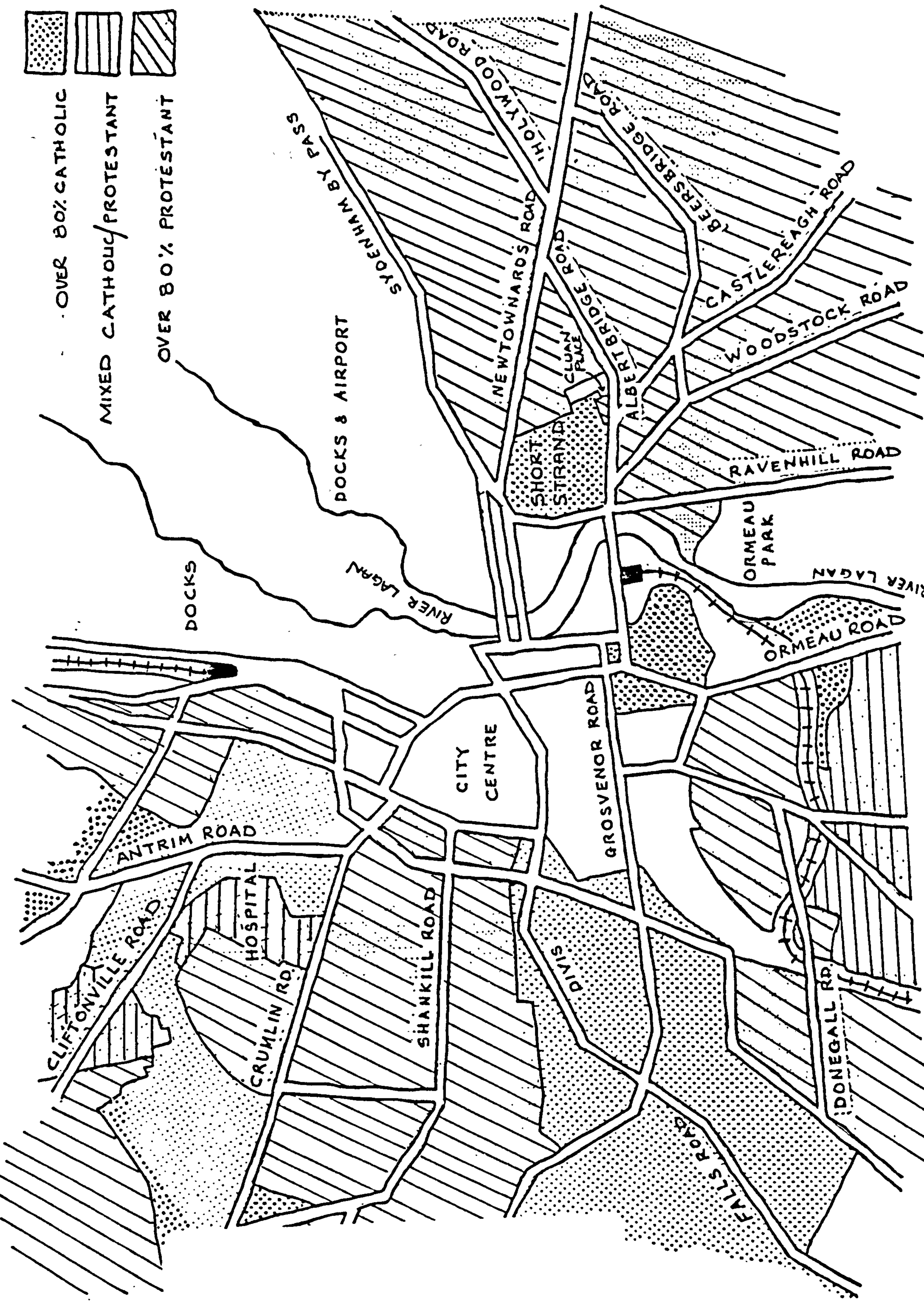
(Bert, Ballymacarrett resident)



OVER 80% CATHOLIC

MIXED CATHOLIC/PROTESTANT

OVER 80% PROTESTANT



MAP 4.1

Bert further 'explained' that 'our boys' (loyalist paramilitaries) had on that night shot several of the nationalist gunmen but these had been 'smuggled out' of the church by priests, and residents of the Short Strand.

There is little evidence to support the allegations. However what is important is that the incident has become a historical reference in the local community. It was referred to with equal authority by older residents and those who could not possibly have been old enough to have actually experienced it. Such 'community myths' are far from unique to Ballymacarrett. These reference points are the building blocks from which working class Protestants construct their social world. They form part of the conceptual and material backdrop against which much social behaviour must be understood.

Unlike other areas which have been studied, such as the Shankill-Falls interface (Boal 1978) or the Suffolk Estate (Darby 1986) the situation in East Belfast is not one where Unionist and Nationalist 'heartlands' meet and come into physical confrontation. The Short Strand is a peripheral nationalist area in Belfast. As a Catholic resident of West Belfast graphically explained,

"If trouble breaks out you could find safety anywhere on the Falls - this does not apply to the Short Strand where there are one hundred thousand Protestants all around them".

(cited in Boal 1978:76)

Unlike other Protestant communities in the city, Ballymacarrett has never been perceived by its inhabitants as being under direct physical threat. Physical location is partly the reason why Ballymacarrett has not experienced the strength of community identity comparable to that of Protestant communities in west Belfast (cf Weiner 1980, Nelson 1984).

Nevertheless Ballymacarrett does have a strong community identity built up over several generations and located in kin, class, religion, residence and occupation. Although no specific study of East Belfast exists it can be reasonably suggested that community identity there was similar to other traditional loyalist working class areas in the city. These communities were densely populated and in many cases practically self contained. Their social structure was organised around the extended family, close friendship networks, geographical stability and cultural homogeneity (Crawford, 1987, Devlin 1981, Weiner 1980: 70-71, Munck and Rolson, 1987, Hammond 1986:12.35). The position has no doubt been somewhat romanticised. The description should also include such everyday events in working class communities as wife beating, family conflicts, unemployment and other types of dependency. Nevertheless such communities did provide some form of supportive environment for collective dissent, making much life public through a plethora of shared beliefs, values, tradition and shared 'knowledge' or world view which were held as a common possession of the group.

The development of physically segregated areas between Protestants and Catholics also entailed the development of distinct local social structures and district cultures. The values of this culture are imposed on all aspects of experience: not merely physically, in the networks of streets, housing, pubs etc, but also socially in the common culture outlined above. This sectarian culture is not confined to the ideological sphere but it is also embodied in concrete social institutions, in education, politics, work and leisure which reflect and/or determine ideological differences.

Before the outbreak of the contemporary phase of the conflict, the Northern Irish state had been widely perceived as resting upon an

essentially paternalistic relationship between the Unionist bourgeoisie and PWC(Probert 1978: 48-56, Griffiths 1979: 165-68). The belief of Protestant workers that their livelihood rested upon support for the Stormont government, the Unionist Party and the Orange Order was encouraged by the middle and upper class leaders of those organisations especially at election time. One loyalist paramilitary member describes the scene,

"Coal lorries bedecked with union jacks and carrying flute bands appeared as if by magic. Unionist candidates (they were always Orangemen) would appeal to the working class electorate with impassioned pleas. They always resurrected the border issue along with the orange card, and our people would turn up on polling day voting en masse for an Orangeman. These same candidates would then disappear for another four years, leaving us in the belief that Catholics were 'second class citizens' and we had more going for us as Protestants".  
(S. Sloan, Fortnight No.185:18)

It was within this system that sectarian ideology was powerfully reproduced. Boyd in an autobiographical work recounts part of his early socialisation,

"'Fight for Billy', 'Fight for Billy', 'Fight for the Cock o'the North!' That was one of our best songs, and we used to shout it at the top of our voices as we paraded along the smelly back entrys in defiance of the Catholics who were preparing to attack us. That none of us had ever seen a Catholic or knew anything about the 'Cock of the North' didn't matter in the least. Somewhere near us there was a big fight going on and we Protestants wanted to be on the winning side".  
(Boyd 1985:176)

This socialisation into sectarianism is reinforced by each community's ignorance of the others life patterns. A small collection of biographies and oral histories of childhood in working class Protestant areas is now developing. One of these describes attitudes in Belfast in the late 1950s,

"Our ignorance of the Catholic world was profound. I, for instance believed that Mickeys existed only in parts of Belfast and nowhere else except the Free State and

Rome itself. That many Catholics were living in London, or were allowed to live in London with our Protestant King seemed impossible.

(Harbinson 1960 131:132)

Such attitudes seem to have changed little in contemporary Ballymacarrett. One woman told me,

"It's the Catholic church son, they cause trouble wherever they get a foothold. Look at Poland there was never any trouble there till they started."

(Greta, resident)

Another was equally concerned to lay the blame for the troubles on the nationalist community.

"Its bred into them, they're taught to hate us. They're bitter. They've ruined this country. No-matter what they get they wreck it. They're taught when they grow up to wreck this place so they get an All-Ireland.

(Mike, retired shipyard worker)

Central to the understanding of day to day life in East Belfast is an understanding of the social relations of loyalism and sectarianism. It is these relations which underlie attitudes both within Ballymacarrett and between local residents and the wider society. It is also these relations which provide the conceptual background against which basic social divisions can be understood.

Sectarianism in its contemporary form, is located in a strong common identity and manifests itself in the high levels of physical and social segregation. 'Loyalist' Ballymacarrett is cemented by strong traditions, which are institutionalised, and a common view of the 'enemy' based on a common perception of history. This history (i.e. 'loyalist history') is highly selective (as is 'Republican history'). Several commentators have pointed out the way in which history is put to use in everyday life. (Burton 1978:39, Barritt and Booth 1972:1, Hickie and Elliott 1971:33). As Rose suggests,

"Ireland is almost a land without history because the troubles of the past are relived as contemporary events".

(Rose 1971:75)

It is possible to give a brief outline of the main reference points for the construction of contemporary loyalist ideology. Such an outline is of course both crude and over simplified. Nevertheless it will introduce several of the major themes in terms of which loyalist attitudes developed and found expression. It concentrates on the situation since the mid-1960s and indeed these are the most frequently referred-to events by those respondents interviewed which are reported on in the following chapters. The particular and specific awareness and understanding of these events orders loyalist sectarian consciousness in Ballymacarrett.

The passing of Northern Ireland's premiership from Lord Brookeborough to Terence O'Neill in 1963 seemed to mark a turning point in Unionism away from an overtly discriminatory state towards modernity. O'Neill's limited modernisation plans were accepted by a growing Catholic middle class. This 'reconstruction' became linked with the formation of a reform movement which began to articulate itself around demands for the dismantling of the more overt Unionist institutions. Such changes however were far from uniformly welcomed. Major tensions emerged within Unionism between those who supported O'Neill's policies and those who strenuously opposed his conciliatory actions as undermining their traditional position. In 1964 Belfast saw the worst riots and street confrontations since the 1930s. These events were precipitated by the flying of a Republican emblem and brought to centre stage a totally obscure Protestant cleric, the Rev. Ian Paisley who along with his followers reacted with hostility to the visit of the Prime Minister of the Irish Republic. During 1966 the



first political murders for many years took place in Belfast and the emergence of what appeared to be an organised but underground example of loyalist resistance was manifested.

By 1967 the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) had developed from the reform movement and proceeded to articulate middle class grievances, particularly concerning unfair housing allocation and an unfair system of voting rights at local government level. The Northern Irish state reacted strongly mobilizing the 'B' specials, an exclusively Protestant reserve security force organised along paramilitary lines. By mid 1969 the liberal faction had lost its control of the Unionist party. By August, following widespread street violence in Derry and Belfast the British Army was called in by the N. Irish prime minister James Chichester-Clark. He had replaced O'Neill after the latter's resignation following the general election which O'Neill had called in a futile attempt to isolate his opposition within Unionism.

Violence escalated as the British Army became involved in 'policing'. Conflict with the IRA became overt as they began to reorganise and re-arm following their stand down in 1962, after a border campaign had been abandoned due to lack of support. This phase culminated in the introduction of internment without trial in August 1971, following which there was widespread and prolonged violence in nationalist areas. The early 1970's saw an escalation as violent act followed upon violent act, including the Provisional IRA's bombing campaign against 'civilian' targets and the loyalist assassination campaign against equally 'civilian' individuals.

In the spring of 1971 Brian Faulkner replaced Chichester-Clark as Northern Ireland's Prime Minister. His short lived premiership is best characterised as a series of totally contradictory political

initiatives. In March 1972 Westminster suspended Stormont and imposed direct rule.

Following this, local vigilante associations in many Protestant districts began to amalgamate to form the Ulster Defence Association which quickly boasted 40,000 members (Flackes 1980:229). The organisation was created largely in response to the continued Provisional campaign. This development seemed legitimate to many working class loyalists given their social construction of the world. The following statement captures well the general feeling,

"Uncertainty aroused great fear among Protestants that their presumed millenium of Stormont solidarity secured by whatever the government of the day might impose under the Special Powers Act under the Protection of Westminster Statute - and the convention of Westminster blind eyes- was suddenly vulnerable."

(McKeown 1984:44)

The deteriorating relationship between the British administration and the Protestant working class was characterised by illegal marches, industrial stoppages and the setting up of loyalist 'no-go' areas for security forces, such as the one centered around Dee Street in Ballymacarrett. Politically the UDA marked a departure in Northern Irish politics. It was, and, as we shall see in a later chapter, has remained essentially a working class movement, often acting outside the arena of traditional Unionism and party politics.

In 1973, the Northern Ireland Assembly met. It was a 'power-sharing' administration, in that it included members of the Catholic opposition, the Social Democratic and Labour Party on its executive body. It faced widespread resistance, both from the Provisionals and Unionists, the latter's interests co-ordinated by Politicians such as Ian Paisley and Bill Craig. In May 1974, the Ulster Workers Council, an ad hoc organisation based largely in the shipyards and power stations, along with the UDA organised a general

'strike' by Protestant workers. It forced the power sharing executive to resign within 14 days.

Since then the general situation has been one of political stalemate. In 1975 the report of the constitutional convention, set up with a majority of loyalist members, demanded a return to Unionist Government from Stormont. In 1980 a round table conference succeeded only in further dividing unionism. The Northern Ireland Assembly ran its course and was abandoned in 1986, having again failed to win cross-community support or produce any hint of compromise. Direct rule by a Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, responsible to the Westminster Government was established and continues to this date. The Secretary of State is supported by a local government organisation largely administered through executive boards, responsible either for education or health and social services and appointed by the Secretary of State. Local councils have little real power with most public service functions being controlled by central government agencies such as the Northern Ireland Housing Executive who are responsible for housing.

The latest initiatives have concerned the Anglo-Irish agreement signed between the British and Irish governments in November 1985. The events surrounding this and loyalist reaction to it will be dealt with in detail in Chapter eight. In overall terms the Anglo-Irish agreement must be seen as a continuation of the above process. The signing of the agreement was interpreted within 'loyalist history' as yet another lost battle. Indeed in November 1985 it was projected by many unionists as the ultimate defeat.

The above account is of course partial. However it is by selective reference to these events that the world of Protestant working class people in Ballymacarrett is constructed. One example of

this is that the UWC strike which was used as a constant reference point by people when expressing their opinions or creating their own self portraits. The 'Big Strike', as it was usually referred to, to distinguish it from the failed strike of 1977, or the many one day strikes which have occurred, has become a dominant folk memory in Ballymacarrett. Despite evidence of widespread intimidation the 'Big Strike' is now remembered as one where loyalists took control of their own destiny and saved Northern Ireland from destruction. As one man expressed it,

"that was the last time we won anything. The Protestant people took control".

(Mike, retired shipyard worker, May 1985)

This 'sectarian socialisation' is not however all embracing. The development of a distinct sectarian culture which binds together loyalists is cross-cut by external forces. The structure of work and workplace links the local labour force to wider economic institutions. The overall effects of these cross-pressures is to create conditions which socially are highly complex. Williams (1983) has called the general process 'bonding' and goes on to say that,

"the institution of modern industry, especially in the most modern aggregated forms of factory, mill, mine, dock, shipyard has produced in otherwise diverse cultures and societies, the characteristic forms of unionisation and some regular minority association of these with socialism".

(Williams 1983:166)

It would seem strange to argue that this process has completely by-passed Belfast and the PWC. In Ballymacarrett, as elsewhere, spacial unevenness of production combined with local particularities such as relationships with fellow workers, kin, neighbourhood and recreation patterns to generate characteristic forms of expression. One example of this was the strong sense of shared occupational experiences based on the shipyard which gave Ballymacarrett the

distinctive characteristics of a classical occupational community (Lockwood 1966; Salaman 1971; Bensman and Lilenfield 1973). As one ex-shipyard worker recently explained,

Even while they are socialising, out, say having a drink in a pub or even at a dance or anything like that, you'll always find that the shipyard has come up in their conversation. They are always bumming about how good their trade is and about this particular ship they are building, and about this particular oil rig that they worked on. There is great rivalry. The shipyard is in their blood as they'll tell you".

(Harry Fletcher cited in Hammond 1986:23)

The following quotations give some indication of the consequences of these patterns of socialisation for the patterns of life in Ballymacarrett, which itself is based on the extended family and friendships built up over many generations,

"Well the street I grew up in was Ulsterdale Street.... it was a great street for shipyardmen. The next door tenant he was a Boilermaker on one side, the other was a plater and there were fitters, riveters and shipwrights and people like that scattered about the street. It was dominated by the shipyard as far as employment was concerned and of course there were some people who worked in the ropeworks which was also quite convenient".

(Tom Boyd, cited in Hammond 1986:15)

"There's been four generations of our family with the shipyard up to now. There's me, my father, his father and his father before him."

(Peter Waddell, cited in Hammond 1986:15)

The FWC community in Ballymacarrett has been employed in one main industry, shipbuilding and its 'spin off' industries. Generations of families of workers have experienced particular and specific types of social relations at work. Ballymacarrett residents still largely possess homogeneous skills (or perhaps the lack of them) in the labour market. Their experience, attitudes, resources and life chances are dominated by local labour markets. As Chapter two has indicated such localised markets have altered dramatically in recent years, with

subsequent effects on the employment levels of Protestant workers.

It would therefore be incorrect to describe Protestant working class culture as simply sectarian, it is more complex than this. The area has a strong tradition of both independent unionist and labour, albeit reformist, allegiance. The Northern Ireland Labour Party (NILP) found considerable support in Ballymacarrett in the late 1950's and early 1960's. This followed the general trend in Belfast where the party gained 26% of the votes cast in the 1962 Stormont General Election. This led some commentators to claim that it was through the NILP that,

"important sections of the Protestant proletariat have come under the influence of relatively secular labourism"

(Bew, et al, 1979:221)

Activists in several organisations ranging from the Democratic Unionist Party to the Ulster Defence Association consider themselves to be the contemporary representatives of this tradition.

Differential access to power and privilege are crucial concerns in the analysis of Northern Irish society. It would, however, be a mistake to overestimate the direct effect of economics. The capital-labour relationship is not the only significant material relationship which acts as a determinant of political consciousness (O'Dowd, et al, 1980). In Ballymacarrett a social class identity has to compete with an ethnic one for saliency in the lives of individuals. The working class in most societies is internally differentiated in ways not directly attributable to economic interests. In advanced capitalist society dual and segmented labour market theories have emerged to account for both racial and sexual discrimination (Barron and Norriss 1978, Blackburn and Mann 1979, Edwards, Reich and Gordon, 1975). Protestant working class ideology

is not unidimensional, it is a dual consciousness where sectarianism does not exclude labourism or vice-versa. These ideologies co-exist. This should be remembered when considering the rest of this chapter and also when interpreting the views expressed by working class loyalists in much of the thesis.

There are several other key features when considering the local social structure in Ballymacarrett. The first of these is the changing physical structure. In the last 15 years East Belfast has been changed drastically by redevelopment. Such changes can originally be located in the plans in the early 1970s to build a Belfast Urban Motorway. The plan which intended a major new road scheme through Ballymacarrett has been shelved, largely because of the opposition it encountered from local residents. Nonetheless the area has been subject to widescale redevelopment which has produced a complex physical structure. New housing of high quality, redeveloped housing and housing which dates from the original expansion of Ballymacarrett in the late 19th century exist side by side. Despite extensive work by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE), who have reduced the level of unfitness in Belfast's housing from 30,000 in 1974 to 17,000 in 1979, much of the housing remains of poor quality and lacking either a bath or a hot water supply. This has led the local M.P. Peter Robinson to claim,

"I have seen housing conditions that I thought would have gone out by the time Dickens was writing. Some of the conditions particularly in the inner East Belfast area, Newtownards and Albertbridge Road areas are the worst in the province".

(Slate, Summer 1984 No. 1:3)

A further insight to the overall housing situation can be gained from table 4.1. Much of the poorest quality housing has been allocated to Housing Redevelopment Areas (RDAs). The table summarises the housing

conditions in four of the largest RDAs in East Belfast.

**TABLE 4.1 : HOUSING CONDITIONS IN BALLYMACARRETT**

	RDA 49	RDA 54	RDA 75	RDA 53
No. of Houses	219	372	104	170
1 Person Household (%)	36	39	29	58
2 " " (%)	32	25	30	23
3 " " (%)	16	15	19	8
4 " " (%)	9	11	13	6
5 " " (%)	5	5	6	) 5
6+ " " (%)	2	5	3	
O.A.P.	25%	22%	20%	30%
Unfit Housing	98%	93%	91%	84%
Owner Occupied	25%	30%	41%	N/A

Source: adapted from NIHE Explanatory Statements for Redevelopment Areas 49, 54, 75, 53.

Housing issues are one of the main focuses for community activity in Ballymacarrett. This will be considered as a separate case study in Chapter Eight. In the context of this thesis it is important because it is in concern over housing conditions that the PWC have most readily articulated class issues. Housing however can also be used to illustrate the duality of consciousness suggested in this chapter. Part of the reason housing issues are high on the agenda in Ballymacarrett is not only concern with its quality but also the fear that the Housing Executive is attempting to "depopulate Loyalist areas



of the city" and to turn East Belfast into a "car park instead of an area with residential accommodation" (Peter Robinson cited in SLATE op cit p5).

Campaigns over various housing issues have been given a high level of commitment from all those who are politically active in the district. In several Housing Associations representatives of the DUP and the UDA compete in order to demonstrate which organisation best represents local interests. The involvement of paramilitaries in such matters was not universally welcomed by local residents. At several community meetings I attended individuals were pointed out to me as 'UDA men'. The reason for their involvement was a matter for debate. Several thought their main aim was to 'work themselves in', so they could take the group over.' Others thought that they were there to 'keep an eye on what was going on'. Others welcomed them as long as they were prepared to work. Such views highlight the ambiguous relationship between the PWC and loyalist paramilitaries, a topic which will be explored fully in Chapter Six.

Tables 4.2 and 4.3 illustrate two other central features of contemporary Ballymacarrett. Its population is both reasonably sparse and aging. Those living in Ballymacarrett also display a remarkable level of geographical stability. Of those who responded to the formal survey over 72% had lived in East Belfast for 21 years or more, while exactly 50% had lived in their current neighbourhood for more than 21 years. There was also some evidence to suggest that traditional extended family networks remained intact. Over half of those interviewed (see Chapter Seven) saw relatives other than those whom they lived with several times a week, 34.4% of the total had contact with relatives on a daily basis. As in other communities, the

TABLE 4.2 HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED IN EAST BELFAST

Length of Time	No	(%)
0-5 yrs	7	4.5
6-10 "	9	5.8
11-15 "	4	2.6
16-20 "	23	14.9
21-25 "	30	19.5
25+ "	81	52.6
	n = 154	t = 100

TABLE 4.3 HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED IN YOUR CURRENT NEIGHBOURHOOD IN EAST BELFAST

Length of Time	No	(%)
0-5 yrs	19	12.3
6-10 "	17	11.0
11-15	19	12.3
16-20	22	14.3
21-25	19	12.3
25+	58	37.7
	n = 154	t = 100

primary responsibility for providing domestic services falls on women. It is they who are responsible for care for the young, the sick and the old, and perhaps most importantly able bodied adult men (most often their husbands). Women remain highly restricted by strong family networks. In Ballymacarrett they are socialised into strong maternal roles, a responsibility for maintaining the family and 'making ends meet'. Moreover they are restricted to the domestic domain which, with a very few exceptions excludes them from participating in the political arena. Political campaigns and tactics are largely determined by men. Fixed gender roles are heavily influenced by the church, and in organisations are the interface of politics and religion, for example the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP). The Rev Ian Paisley has claimed,

"I believe that the husband is the head of the wife and the home. I believe that the father should be prophet, priest and king in his home. As king he should exercise rulership. As prophet, he should exercise rulership. As prophet he should establish a family altar in the home and see that the family gathers around that altar in prayer. As priest he should intercede for, and on behalf of, his family.

(Cited in Fairweather et al 1984:266)

There were additionally several more practical encounters which demonstrated how women saw themselves as being excluded from the political process. When collecting data several women simply did not believe that I was interested in their views. One woman explained,

"Oh you'll have to see my husband when he gets home,  
he'll tell you what we think"

another that,

"My Brian takes all to do with that sort of thing"

A few women had become politically active but their activities largely revolved around supporting men. The UDA had several women active in Ballymacarrett in the Welfare Rights Department, one of whom contributed regularly to the UDA magazine 'Ulster'. These women however gained their initial status from being either the wives or girlfriends of loyalist prisoners. Mainly they were responsible for successfully organising visits and benefits for prisoners, rather than holding an individual membership of the paramilitary organisation itself.

In turn, the wives and girlfriends of UDA members sometimes turned to the organisation for help or in search of a 'policing' role. One clear example of this was when Margaret, the wife of a UDA member complained regularly over a period of several weeks to a UDA officer about her husband's involvement in a 'card school'. Here, on a Friday night he regularly lost a considerable portion of his weekly wages from Harland and Wolff shipyard. Margaret finally contacted one of the UDA's women welfare workers and the next week, the card school was rather unceremoniously 'broken up' by about six masked UDA members. In another incident Janet, the girlfriend of a UDA member also sought out the UDA for a policing role. Her boyfriend had been twice convicted for 'drunken driving', but continued to use his car to go

drinking in the local pub. As he was under a suspended sentence Janet was fearful that he would be caught and sent to prison. After a late night drinking session he returned to his car to find all the wheels removed and the car propped up on bricks. It was made clear to him, much to the amusement of those leaving the pub at the same time, that if he continued to drink and drive this would be the least he could expect.

Such 'policing' roles, however, unlike in several nationalist areas, were limited to the UDA's own members. It was a role that the local brigade were happy to undertake, because it increased their legitimacy. However, the majority of Ballymacarrett residents, both men and women, were always likely to turn to the legitimate forces of the state for protection rather than paramilitary organisations.

Not all women were passive; several were active in community issues and particularly housing, as Chapter Eight indicates. By and large such issues were seen by those men, who professed an interest in politics, as not concerning real political issues. There is little expression of politics in the private domain in Ballymacarrett. The dominant conception of politics was party politics and as such it remained firmly located in the male domain.

Perhaps one of the major ways in which men reinforced the notion of politics as a male domain was by drinking in all male groups. 'Politics' had a central place in pub discussion from which women were excluded. Many of the clubs in Ballymacarrett had a formal or informal male-only rule, while others only allowed women on certain nights only (usually Saturday) when they could be signed in by members. There were certainly many places for men to exercise their autonomy. When a local supermarket in Ballymacarrett applied for a liquor licence, the Bloomfield Residents Association opposed it on the

grounds that within a one mile radius of the proposed off-licence there were in existence,

"44 licenced clubs, 21 public houses, 18 off licences, 3 licenced hotels and a handful of shebeens".

(cited in SCOPE No.74, June 1984:19)

The many pubs and clubs also provide the environment for the maintainance of strong close friendship networks. It was common to find in Ballymacarrett ex-residents who had returned to the area to go drinking. 'Drinking' also provided the place for the distribution of goods and the circulation of work. During my fieldwork visits I was offered everything from socks to high quality electrical equipment. Such transactions roughly followed the pattern outlined by Henry (1981). Men would also exchange their skills and do small jobs for each other. Electricians, plumbers and plasterers for example were often asked to do jobs ('homers') for friends or acquaintances. Payment for these would either be in cash or an exchange of skills and jobs at a later date.

The central purpose of this chapter has been to familiarise the reader with Ballymacarrett, a loyalist urban working class community. One of its key features is well defined residential segregation. Several commentators have pointed out that this segregation serves several functions (Boal 1976, Darby 1986). Contact between the groups is lessened as is the chance of overt conflict in day to day life. Residential segregation also provides the base for the promotion of specific cultural heritages and a common set of values and beliefs. This is reflected at many levels from reading materials to non-work activities. Traditional working class pastimes are popular in Ballymacarrett - snooker, darts, football are all well organised in leagues, but there is no contact between Protestants and Catholics. Such 'avoidance' of course can never be total. The initial period of

mass hostility between residents of Short Strand and Ballymacarrett has passed, and there have been no recorded 'gunbattles' or rioting between the areas for 10 years. However 'avoidance' manifests itself at a much less immediate level. The adjoining 'Catholic' Short Strand is a highly self contained community, however its physical resources are limited. There is no Post Office or Bank for example. It seems reasonable to suggest that people from the Short Strand were forced to venture into Ballymacarrett. Most local residents, especially the women, who have the responsibility for shopping were aware of this. Several claimed to be able to identify 'fenians' who came into Ballymacarrett to shop, and on occasions groups of women were pointed out to me as being from the Short Strand. The truth of such claims is in many ways unimportant. Their significance lies in the reinforcement of Protestant working class culture. The importance of 'telling', the identification of an opposing group, based on name, dress, residence and symbolism has been outlined by Burton (1978, 1979). In Ballymacarrett, segregation between the two groups was never total but there was certainly a very limited level of contact.

Ballymacarrett is built on a distinct local social structure. The values of this culture impose themselves at both the material and social levels: physically in the networks of streets, houses, pubs, clubs etc., and socially in the networks of kin, friendship, neighbourhood and recreation patterns. Ballymacarrett is bounded socially and economically. At the horizontal level there are the ties which bind spaces and institutions to the neighbourhood, such as local culture, heritage and tradition. At the vertical level are those structures which lock it into the dominant culture and ideology (Hall, et al, 1977:43). Much attention has been given to the way in which the two communities have become polarised. Developments within each community

are less well understood. Contemporary Ballymacarrett has witnessed the growth of self help and support groups located mainly in the PWC. They find expression through the DUP, UDA and ex-loyalist prisoners groups. These have established an organisational platform which potentially challenges the power of the dominant order. Furthermore the emergence of these local organisations coincided with the fragmentation of Unionist politics at the national level. The relationship between the PWC and mainstream political parties can no longer be taken for granted but has become a matter for negotiation. Both the DUP and UDA have important roles to play in filling the vacuum left by the demise of older allegiances.

PWC culture cannot simply be described as unidimensional. Nor is there any linear development in PWC consciousness. Unionist hegemony is not universal: it has to be won, sustained and reproduced. Gramsci describes the process as a "moving equilibrium" (Gramsci 1977). The character and content of this hegemony can only be established by looking at concrete historical situations. For this reason it is now necessary to examine the role and attitudes of active members of PWC organisations, in particular loyalist paramilitary groups and the DUP.

**CHAPTER FIVE      PARLIAMENTARY POLITICS IN BALLYMACARRETT**

By far the most active political organisation in Ballymacarrett was the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP). Despite the success of the DUP in Northern Irish politics there has until recently been very little serious literature produced on either the party or its activists. Those works which do exist have concentrated either on the personal attributes of the party's founder and leader, Ian Paisley (cf Heskin 1980, Marrian 1973, Smyth 1987), or 'Paisleyism' (cf Bruce 1986, Taylor 1984, Wallis, Bruce and Taylor 1986). A common view is that the DUP's success is attributable to Paisley's charismatic leadership (Heskin 1980:117, Smyth 1987:48). Others argue DUP success rests on the way in which Paisley has articulated "the historical interrelationship between religion and politics with specific reference to the connections between fundamentalist Protestantism and Unionism" (Taylor 1984:59). While the body of literature concerning Paisley is growing, there is still very little material on the views of those members belonging to, and active in the DUP.

This chapter seeks to examine the social composition and the views of those active in the DUP in Ballymacarrett. It will be argued that support for the DUP in East Belfast cannot be understood simply in terms of Paisley's charismatic leadership, or as a direct link between Paisley's fundamentalist preaching and Protestant working class ideology. Rather it is essential to see the rise of Paisleyism and the subsequent development of the DUP in the context of autonomous political action by the Protestant working class. Support from Protestant workers for the DUP has never been predetermined. It is



therefore necessary to explain the circumstances under which the DUP gained popular support in Ballymacarrett.

The first manifestation of political support for Ian Paisley was the Protestant Unionist Party (PUP) in 1969. Paisley had come to prominence over the previous two years when he had led a series of demonstrations, most notably against the visit of the Taoiseach of the Irish Republic to Stormont, and mobilised counter demonstrations to civil rights marches. Following the introduction of a reform package by the Northern Irish Prime Minister, O'Neill, Ian Paisley had organised a series of "O'Neill must go" rallies and when Terence O'Neill called a snap election in 1969 in an attempt to isolate his opponents, the Protestant Unionist Party, led by Ian Paisley fielded six candidates. None of the PUP candidates were elected but in a direct contest for Bannside, Ian Paisley came within 1,414 votes of defeating the Prime Minister. Four of the other PUP candidates took the runners-up place in their respective elections. By April of the next year however, Ian Paisley had won a by-election seat at Stormont, and within two months had won a seat at Westminster.

It is important to outline briefly the roots of support for Paisley's original political movement. The choice of candidates for the 1969 election and the constituencies in which they stood all suggest PUP support was located amongst the traditional, religiously committed, and largely rural Protestant community. A large number of Paisley's followers saw the Protestant churches at the time moving towards a dangerously ecumenical position. Paisley's central theme was the denunciation of theological liberalism. His movement, however, also found support in a wider range of Protestant groups. In rural areas he was able to mobilise small farm owners and tenant workers. In Belfast, his religious teaching also had widespread

support amongst the petty bourgeoisie, where he had also made contacts with loyalist paramilitary organisations. As one commentator put it,

"Political Paisleyism was proletarian, but religious Paisleyism attracted lower middle class congregations which crammed in the ample car parks with their Cortinas".

(Boulton 1973:126)

In political terms, 'Protestant unionism' was never a simple anti-Catholic phenomenon. One commentator described its earliest form as,

"certainly anti-republican, and no-doubt many of its adherents equate Catholicism and Republicanism. But it is fundamentally a working class movement whose policies in the social, economic and libertarian fields differ very little from such Catholic movements as the Social Democratic and Labour Party".

(Harbinson 1973:224)

The 'Protestant Unionist' movement Paisley had mobilised quickly fragmented as the conflict developed. As a result 'Protestant unionism' sought to relocate its social base in the Protestant urban working class. The support of Protestant workers was also being sought by Bill Craig the former Home Affairs Minister, from within the Unionist Party, who was attempting to reconstruct the Unionist class alliance, under his leadership. In August 1971, Brian Faulkner who had taken over the premiership of Northern Ireland introduced internment in an attempt to quell criticism from, and recapture the support of, rank and file unionist support. This resulted in a widespread and rapid expansion of violence in nationalist areas. (McGuffin 1973). In Loyalist areas internment precipitated the formation of local vigilante groups which eventually came together to form the Ulster Defence Association. As Faulkner's premiership became as insecure as his immediate predecessors, the allegiance of Loyalist workers became the key issue. This caused a further realignment in

Northern Irish politics. Faulkner's key opponents within unionism formed a partnership in opposition. Desmond Boal, a barrister, and MP for the Shankill, Paisley and Craig headed a 'Unionist Alliance'. Such a short term tactical unity was never likely to hold, however, and by September 1971 Boal and Paisley announced the formation of a new political party from which Craig disassociated himself. By the end of that year, the new party called the Democratic Unionist Party had taken on the role of official opposition at Stormont. Boal declared the new party would be 'right wing in the sense of being strong on the constitution, but to the left on social issues'. Furthermore after a series of meetings with the SDLP the DUP claimed that they were in agreement on 'their opposition to internment', and the need for 'urgent measures to combat unemployment'. DUP support in Belfast was quickly defined both socially and to some extent geographically. It drew on the 'socially discontented, articulating the "social grievances of people left out of the new affluence, squeezed on the one side by the middle class, on the other by Catholics" (Nelson 1984:53).

The success of the DUP was however extremely limited. In the two years following its formation recruitment was slow (Calvert 1981:6). Any claim the DUP had to be the voice of the Protestant masses was being undermined by the immediate response of Protestant workers to the rapidly deteriorating political situation. Large sections of Protestant workers were finding political expression either through joining the embryonic UDA or responding positively to Craig's counter initiative, the formation of a new political movement called Ulster Vanguard. Vanguard drew heavily on the traditional unionist symbolism, which was discussed in Chapter Four. It organised mass rallies throughout Northern Ireland, called for the reformation of the

old unionist alliance and a return to Stormont Government. If this attempt to reconstitute Stormont failed Vanguard argued the only option was a unilateral declaration of independence. Vanguard's leadership and ideology were deeply immersed in Unionism's traditional form. Its social base lay in the remnants of Ulster's indigenous capital. However the movement also succeeded in gaining widespread working class support. It was Vanguard who best articulated the grievances and sense of betrayal felt by the Protestant masses. This manifested itself in a series of demonstrations and one-day general strikes. During one of these on 7th February 1973, there was a province-wide electricity blackout and throughout the day there were eight explosions, widespread rioting and shooting resulting in two deaths.

The justification of such actions by Vanguard's leadership further alienated them ideologically from conservative unionists, and when Craig announced he was forming the Vanguard Unionist Progressive Party (VUPP), several prominent members of the Unionist Party immediately disassociated themselves from the new political party. Craig resigned from the Ulster Unionist Council, and called on others to join him declaring that membership of both Vanguard and the Unionist Party was incompatible.

The opportunity to test loyalist opinion came almost immediately in the form of elections to the new Northern Ireland Assembly. The British government had outlined its intention to form a 'partnership government' in a White Paper published in March 1973. Craig's Vanguard Party, the DUP and the 'Anti-White Paper' Ulster Unionists were all committed to opposing any power-sharing solution. Both the DUP and Vanguard remained hostile to reform and the parties formed an alliance to oppose the White Paper proposals. There appears to have

been considerable overlap between members of Vanguard and members of the DUP. Indeed there was much confusion as to which party several individuals were standing for.

Both Vanguard and the DUP advised their electorate to use their second preference vote for each other. Formally Vanguard won seven seats to the new Assembly and the DUP eight. Relations between Vanguard and the DUP were, however, highly antagonistic. The parties had little in common other than their joint opposition to reform. Smyth summarises the position well,

"Though the rival DUP and VUPP parties were agreed that the unrest in the Province had been prompted by an Irish Republican conspiracy, supported the concept of majority rule and opposed the power sharing philosophy of Brian Faulkner, the supporters of both parties were as antagonistic towards each other as Craig and Paisley were suspicious of each other".

(Smyth 1987:39)

There was another important aspect to the Assembly results. Ian Paisley's political role was now legitimised. He was now placed alongside, and on an equal footing with several prominent unionist politicians. As Bruce notes,

"no longer was Ian Paisley some sort of raving lunatic on the fringes of unionist politics. He was now part of a coalition with people who had had cabinet office in Stormont and more than that, his party had polled better than one led by an ex-minister."

(Bruce 1986:106)

In response the DUP began to organise itself along traditional British party lines. It employed full time officials and opened a central party office in East Belfast. In short it began to construct an organised party structure.

The DUP's electoral position was consolidated by the events of 1974. In February, a Westminster general election was called which the unionists used as a referendum on power-sharing. The electoral

pact between the DUP and Vanguard held and joined by the anti-power sharing unionists, the United Ulster Unionist Coalition won 13 out of the 14 seats contested. Another major event for unionism was the UWC strike which ended the power-sharing experiment, several aspects of which will be discussed in the next chapter. Although Paisley was initially reluctant to lend support to the strike several key DUP personnel were highly active at the local level. This was especially true in Ballymacarrett where a leading DUP member was responsible for co-ordinating several of the groups active during the strike.

Loyalist party claims that their actions were supported by the majority of the Protestant community seemed justified by the electoral success of the UUUC in the Westminster general election of October 1974, and the Convention election of 1975. It seemed Unionism had succeeded in reconstructing itself, including the DUP, into a coherent political movement.

Such an analysis was indeed put forward by several commentators. (Farrell 1976, Bell 1976). This perspective ignored the wider tensions and divisions which underpinned the reconstruction of the Unionist inter-class alliance. UUUC unity was undermined in late 1975 when Craig proposed an emergency coalition with the SDLP. The Majority of Vanguard convention members disassociated themselves from the notion, and Craig was expelled from the unionist coalition. Bell's dismissal of this change as purely "tactical" (Bell 1976:76) is misplaced. Craig's conversion reflected a final attempt to protect what remained of his power base, Northern Ireland's indigenous capitalists.

The narrowness of the social base of Craig's core support accounts for the movement's failure. The faction within which Craig's support was located had by late 1975 almost ceased to exist as an independent

social force. In Ballymacarrett Vanguard were unable to maintain support for several reasons. Firstly there was their notion of Independence, or rather the concept of a Unilateral Declaration of Independence. Vanguard had always made it clear that if UDI was to become necessary it would mean a huge drop in the living standards of working class Protestants, including wage cuts and reductions in social security expenditure. Increased levels of unemployment in the early 1960's had heightened the awareness within the Protestant working class of the need for welfare provision. It was the DUP who best articulated these interests. Frank Wright tracing the demise of the NILP and the rise of the Protestant Unionist Party in the early 1970s has commented,

"The major difference was that whereas in the former case the tacit assumption was that the interests of Protestant and Catholic workers were the same as regard to unemployment: in the latter case the Protestant Unionist manifesto dwelt on the preferential treatment which it was alleged that the Catholic working class on the Falls were receiving".

(Wright 1973:262)

The DUP attacked the notion of UDI as "not acceptable to the majority of loyalist people" (Boulton, 1973:142). In several areas of Belfast, the DUP were also developing close working relationships with loyalist paramilitary groups at the local level, particularly the UDA.

In the aftermath of the UWC strike it was the DUP who increasingly played a leading role in urban working class politics. This was reflected in the inability of Vanguard to mobilise widespread support in Ballymacarrett. Given Vanguard's social base outlined earlier, this was hardly surprising. Probert summarises Vanguard's position as,

"reflecting the interests of the most reactionary sections of the province's business community, Vanguard was able to mobilise those Protestant groups to whom the benefits of the Union with Britain were not sufficient to outweigh the loss of privileges, both economic and political, stemming

from the reform programme. In particular Craig had the support of the petty bourgeoisie"

(Probert 1978:123)

For many Protestant workers this was a time of uncertainty, socially, constitutionally and economically. Physical conflict on the streets corresponded with urban renewal and deprivation. Increasingly it was the DUP who convinced Protestant workers that they would best protect their constitutional position and their wider social interests. Vanguard did not contest the 1977 district council elections and ceased to be a party in 1978, reverting to its pressure group status within the Unionist Party. Craig however still held the Westminster seat for East Belfast and stood as a Vanguard Unionist as late as the 1979 General Election.

For the reasons already outlined Craig did not have the workers to run an effective election campaign in East Belfast, whereas the DUP were able to mobilise party workers and supporters in large numbers. Smyth describes two key elements in this support,

"DUP Party activists, some of whom were members of Sandown Road Free Presbyterian Church, worked throughout polling day to 'get the voters out', while simultaneously a group of UDA men were engaged in taking voters to the poll in support of the DUP candidate".

(Smyth 1987:165)

The mobilisation of these different fractions of the PWC succeeded. The DUP leader in East Belfast, Peter Robinson took the seat by 64 votes. At the same election the DUP took North Belfast. The results had widespread consequences for unionism. It was not merely that the DUP had increased its national representation from one to three seats. More significantly the DUP had established a base in the Protestant working class. As one commentator noted,

"In the late sixties it was commonplace for left wing writers on the growing crisis in Ulster to represent the embryonic Protestant Unionist Party of the Rev Ian Paisley as a populist movement



destined to capture and articulate the latent resentments of the Protestant working class in Belfast. Yet a political breakthrough eluded Paisley's party. In fact such a breakthrough was to come first in rural Ulster. May 3rd 1979 has radically altered Paisley's catchment area."

(Irish Times, 8th May 1979)

The DUP's victory resulted in attracting several key activists who had previously been on the fringe of the party in Ballymacarrett. Several of these people are still active in the DUP in the area. One of these individuals, now a DUP councillor explained;

"initially I was involved in Vanguard and when it split up it was significant that I and a lot of people who lived in public sector housing moved to the DUP while those who lived in large private housing joined the Official Unionists."

(Alan, DUP councillor)

Alan saw the split in unionism at the time as reflecting clear class lines. For others however the reason for the division was much more simple. It was the DUP who could best be relied upon to ensure unionism's traditional aims. This councillor's views were typical,

"when things started getting really bad in the early 1970s... like a lot of other people I went to meetings and rallies like the big ones organised by Vanguard. I was really interested in what Vanguard were doing and joined the East Belfast Branch.... then I was invited to a meeting by a friend of mine who had joined the DUP.... when I heard what they had to say it really made sense to me. I believed that they were the only party that were committed to what they were saying, that were committed to the union at all costs. It wasn't just a political superficial commitment but a real honest commitment. I've never considered leaving or joining any other party since then"

(Brian, DUP councillor)

One of the reasons the DUP have been able to maintain this image is because unlike other unionist groupings (such as the OUP) the Democratic Unionists have never seen the British government as guarantors of Northern Ireland's constitutional position. As this DUP member put it,

"The very basis of Ulster Unionism was hostility to the British government to the point of arming and saying 'we'll fight you if we have to', it's no new phenomena".

(Alan, DUP councillor)

It was a common view of those active in the DUP in Ballymacarrett that Westminster wanted to 'sell Ulster down the river'. As we shall see in the following chapters this view has strengthened in the period following the signing of the Anglo-Irish agreement.

The DUP in Ballymacarrett continues to represent itself as the leading defender of the traditional unionist cause. This straightforward image underplays the complex relationship between the DUP and the FWC. This can clearly be illustrated by reference to official DUP literature. One example are DUP party manifestos which over the last decade have developed a distinct style. Their early sections reaffirm the party's steadfastness and resolve to maintain the unionist cause. This is true of the material produced for the 1985 local election which will be dealt with in detail in Chapter Eight. The election manifesto for the 1982 Assembly election also demonstrates the trend when it declares "the DUP offers the surest guarantee against the admission of Republicans to government" and the "firmest stand against all attempts to force Ulster down the Dublin Road" (*The Voice of Ulster*, October 1982:8). The section concludes "you know where you stand with the DUP" (*VOU* October 1982:8) which in fact became the DUP's 1982 election slogan.

The manifesto then calls for a widespread military offensive against the IRA, for extensive "search and seizure operations to root out all terrorists from their safe havens and tighter border security to cut off external attacks on Ulster". (*VOU*, October 1982:8). The manifesto further demands the reintroduction of the death penalty as "the only suitable punishment for the heinous murders committed in our

province". Having re-established their credentials as the current manifestation of traditional unionism and their resolve to 'tackle Ulster's enemies' however the manifesto moves on to a wide ranging series of proposals on social issues.

The DUP's economic and social programmes outline a series of what are basically Keynesian proposals. For example it claims the need to "cut the dole queues and re-vitalise our economy" and advocates "additional but sensible public expenditure". It calls for "ten thousand houses" to be "built over each of the next five years" and to rally opposition to "the savage economic cuts which are destroying all levels of education". The party then demands that the government's (Westminster) running down of hospitals be halted, more facilities be provided for the handicapped, and state pensions to be set "at a realistic level related to the cost of living". It is only after social policies are outlined that religious arguments are introduced calling for a "strong and forthright stand.... to be taken in accordance with Christian principles on the great moral issues of our day".

A similar set of priorities can be gathered from the party's annual conference agenda. The major composite motions usually concern "Security" and re-commitment of political position. Subsequent motions however usually tackle socio-economic conditions. For example at the 1983 Annual Conference the East Belfast branch had two motions accepted. The first on education stated,

"that the education policy of the present government; based on economic criteria and educational need, is having a detrimental effect on the educational system in Northern Ireland"

Amongst several proposals it called for,

"the retention of small but vital schools especially in rural and border areas"

and,

"considerations of other factors such as social and political implications before any decision is taken to close a school"

furthermore it condemned,

"the present government proposals on the rationalisation of schools", the "financial cut-backs in educational provision", and "any government proposal to replace student grants with a system of student loans".

(UDUP Annual Conference Agenda 1983, Motion No.6)

A further motion from the East Belfast Branch stated,

"That this conference deplores the increasing levels of poverty in Northern Ireland and declares its opposition to the government policies which have exacerbated this problem which has always existed in Northern Ireland."

(UDUP Annual Conference Agenda, 1983, Motion No.1)

Such motions have to be placed alongside others at the same conference such as those re-affirming Party allegiance to Sunday Observance. However they may also indicate that the ideology of those active in the party in East Belfast differs from the mainstream DUP consciousness. This is something to which we shall return. In general terms, however, DUP literature emphasises 'hardline unionism'. They have succeeded in maintaining the image of being the true inheritors of traditional unionism. Its propaganda consistently projects the DUP as the only trustworthy opponents of any changes in the political structure and as totally uncompromising in their relationships with nationalists and republicans. Within the unionist bloc the DUP stress 'You know where you stand with the DUP' and continue to be hostile to the official unionists in particular. The DUP continues to attract support for this 'hardline unionism' as Chapter Seven confirms. However in Ballymacarrett issues other than the link with Britain itself are open to debate. Certainly, it is

hard to believe, given the development of social forces in East Belfast, that the DUP attracts any widespread support simply because of its "strong and forthright stand.... on Christian principles". It is this backdrop which provides the context for much of the contemporary relations between those active in and supporting the DUP in Ballymacarrett.

What follows is several-fold. It attempts to outline how DUP activists define their loyalty, why they joined the DUP and why they believe this to be the best expression of their politics. It also examines DUP members views of relationships within the unionist bloc and identifies the role of DUP activists in day to day issues in Ballymacarrett.

There are two main dynamics to DUP politics in Ballymacarrett. The first concerns those activists whose primary motivation is the religious fundamentalism of Paisley's own Free Presbyterian Church. The second surrounds that grouping more concerned with social and economic issues. Neither grouping exists as a coherent or discrete faction and there is some overlap of membership. The basic beliefs of the religious grouping are more easy to describe. Some DUP members are convinced that their ability to worship in the Protestant faith would be lost in a united Ireland. As one member of the East Belfast branch explained,

"I believe one of the problems of a united Ireland is that my religious freedom would disappear. You only have to look at any country where Catholicism is in control to understand that religious freedom is an awful lot less than that enjoyed by Catholics in this country".

(David, DUP member, East Belfast)

Another explained the main differences between Catholics and Protestants as follows,

"When I was brought up I was taught to believe and think for myself. Catholics are made to believe. They're not allowed to think differently or for themselves. They have to accept what they're told and not question it"

(Sarah DUP supporter and member of Free Presbyterian Church)

Some DUP supporters narrowed this argument and condemned Roman Catholics for what they perceived as their support, tacit or otherwise, of the IRA. In particular several referred to the Catholic church's failure to excommunicate Republican Paramilitary group members, particularly those convicted of murder. Some DUP members referred to an alliance of interests between the Roman Catholic Church and Sinn Fein. This is sometimes reflected in statements by DUP officials as the following illustrate,

"The voice may be that of Cardinal O'Fee (sic) but the words are unmistakably those of the IRA in whose camp he has firmly confirmed himself to be".

(Jim Allister, DUP Chief Whip, cited in Irish Times 20/7/85)

"After members of his flock have murdered many hundreds of Protestant bombed and buried millions of pounds worth of Protestant properties (sic) the Cardinal declares that 90% of the bigots in Northern Ireland are Protestants. He is seen now as the real black Roman bigot!"

(Protestant Blue Print Vol 1 No.7)

Even although Roman Catholic clergy have consistently condemned terrorism, many religious orientated DUP members still refused to believe the Roman Catholic church did not support IRA action. One overt example of this was that when the Roman Catholic Bishop of Down and Connor, Dr. Cahal Daly called on 'Catholics to get out of the IRA' (Belfast Telegraph 3/9/85) the official DUP response was as follows,

"The call by Dr. Daly for Catholics to get out of the IRA is as usual riddled with the double speak which he is so capable of.

How on earth can he justify young people having become involved with the IRA in the past for 'idealistic reasons'. What is idealistic about an organisation set up specifically to murder people

who disagree with it or who stand in the way of aims which cannot be achieved by means other than violence.

Dr. Daly's claims of injustices to the Roman Catholic community is an echo of the IRA rhetoric used to justify the continuing killings. It is the continued harking about mythical injustices which have caused Ireland to be covered in the tears and blood which Dr. Daly condemns.

His condemnation and implorings whilst qualified in the manner which Dr. Daly has done are hollow and meaningless and deserve nothing but contempt from the Protestant community who have been the butt of IRA killings"

(Protestant Blue Print Vol 1, 10 6/9/1989)

This reflected another widespread belief, that the church maintained great control over Roman Catholics. In turn this sometimes merged with the view that support for the actions of the IRA was widespread within the Catholic community. One councillor argued,

"Did you see the thousands marching behind the coffins in the hunger strikes. You're not going to tell me all those people were intimidated into going and marching".

he continued,

"when a Protestant sees that what do you expect them to think. All those people going along with and supporting the men of violence."

(Brian, DUP councillor)

Another DUP member argued,

"If you had Catholics coming out and speaking against the Provos Protestants would say 'they're not all bad', 'there's some good ones in there'. You would get people in Protestant areas saying maybe some of them are all right".

(George, DUP member)

One woman stated her case even more bluntly when she said,

"I still think all Catholics back the IRA. They're not all in it, but they look after them and hide them".

(Greta, DUP supporter)

Here the lines between religious orientated members and those with a more political orientation began to blur. The notion of a conspiracy between 'ordinary' Roman Catholics and the IRA was common to many DUP members in Ballymacarrett. Often this was presented as the desirability of the 'ideal type' of the 'Protestant way of life'. The perceptions Protestants hold of themselves and Roman Catholics are now well documented. (cf Bruce 1986:124, Nelson 1975:155-187, O'Donnell, 1977:96-105, McNamee and Lovett 1988:413-479). The dominant DUP stereotype of Roman Catholics is close to that suggested by O'Donnell,

"they are ordinary enough people but Irish-nationalist republicans. They are seen as brainwashed by priests, having too many children, and as being superstitious and bitter."  
(O'Donnell 1977:96)

On the other hand many Protestants consider themselves,

"fine ordinary decent, British people.... loyal determined to remain in power and maintain their hard working, consevative ethic."  
(O'Donnell 1977:103)

These views were well represented within DUP members and supporters in Ballymacarrett, as was a 'positive' stereotype of Protestants as the following demonstrates,

"The unionist people are basically hard working people who believe you go out and do your day's work, bring up your family and get on with it....

I think that on the other side there's an attitude of I want as much as I can get from the state... that's a very different attitude to the one I have on life."

(Brian, DUP councillor)

Several DUP members however differentated between what they called 'ordinary Catholics' and 'Republicans'. The following sums this position up well,



"I've nothing against the ordinary Catholic, especially if he's an ordinary working class man like myself... at the end of the day he's likely to do all he can to get an all-Ireland and that's where we fall out."

(Colin, DUP councillor)

Even with those people who held such views there were obvious limits to the possibility they saw for some form of accommodation between the two communities in Northern Ireland. One DUP councillor explained his views concerning 'ordinary Catholics',

"If they showed they didn't support violence people would be more willing to get along with them. You're never going to get peace in Northern Ireland but you could have it where people say 'they're Catholics, leave them alone.' If they don't bother us we won't bother them. As long as they didn't start shouting about a United Ireland".

(Colin, DUP councillor)

For such DUP supporters religious fundamentalism was far from the primary motivation.

There was a recognition of this amongst those who were both active in and who supported the DUP. One councillor put it this way,

"People have this stereotype of a DUP man, a solid Christian, goes to Paisley's every week. Must go to Paisley's every week and gives all his money to the church. That's certainly not the way it works round here".

(Colin, DUP councillor)

Another Branch Officer suggested the following situation,

"A large part of the party support, say up to 50% would be from evangelical Protestants who see the party as the guardians of the moral beliefs that they have. The other 50% comes from ordinary working class Protestants many of whom would have no religious beliefs at all. On a Sunday night you'll find half of the DUP supporters in East Belfast in church and the other half down the pub having a drink".

(David, DUP member)

It is important to identify this second non-evangelical element in Ballymacarrett. In the early days Ian Paisley was highly dependent on the Free Presbyterian church for political support. (Bruce

1986:130-131). In East Belfast DUP support has drawn on different sources. It was located heavily in both the independent unionist populist tradition and to some extent Belfast's labour tradition. Often this has brought about conflict within the East Belfast branch, and confrontation between those in E. Belfast and others in the DUP. One example of this was the issue of sabbatarianism, which was a major area of tension between differing factions of support. Those in the East Belfast branch whose position was informed by the evangelicalism sought to strengthen 'Christian principles' in branch policy. Some expressed it as 'the defence of moral standards'. For example when a 'sex shop' opened on the Castlereagh Road in the mid 1980s it was the local DUP who organised petitions, held protest meetings and mounted a perpetual picket outside the building describing it as the 'Soho of Belfast' (Voice of Ulster, September 1982:1). There was friction within the local Branch because several members believed the issue was not given a high enough priority.

In part this was true. For others active in the DUP in Ballymacarrett such concerns were secondary to articulating those social economic and political issues which concerned the PWC. One expression of this was the overt hostility many DUP members expressed towards the Official Unionist Party, both in terms of ideological differences and in terms of their actions at a local level. These criticisms rested on two key themes. Firstly the DUP in general terms continue to regard the Official Unionists as 'weak' in terms of their commitment to the defence of unionism. Secondly however there was a much more specific response, that the Official Unionists continued to be out of touch with the real needs of people in East Belfast which could only be really understood by the DUP. The first theme can be easily illustrated by the following statements from DUP activists.

One way DUP members highlighted OUP 'weakness' was to emphasise divisions within the Official Unionists. As one DUP councillor explained,

"There isn't an official Unionist Party as far as I can see. They're a bit of a bag of dolly mixtures. There's those who believe that there ought to be a return to a devolved government. There's those who would be prepared to sit down and negotiate a settlement with Sinn Fein and these are those whose thinking is much the same as us. To be honest I find it difficulty to tell why those people are in the official unionists at all".

(Brian, DUP councillor)

another said,

"I don't ever see there being one Unionist Party again. There's more determination in the DUP. We are more determined to 'smash the IRA'. Many OUP members still try to wear the cloak of respectability".

(Alan, DUP councillor)

These views reflect many of the tensions between the DUP and OUP at a national level throughout this decade. Throughout the 1980s the DUP in East Belfast have presented the Official Unionists as hopelessly divided between devolutionists and anti-Stormont integrationists. The alternative was clear as the DUP was "totally united and determined in its resolve to see a Stormont parliament return to Ulster". (Voice of Ulster October 1982:5) Nor can the Official Unionists be trusted, they 'speak with one voice in Westminster and another in Northern Ireland'. Again the DUP see themselves as offering the true alternative for loyalists, because the party,

"enjoys strong united leadership which knows where it is going and how it intends to get there. The forthright traditional unionist message is the same in Northern Ireland as it is in Westminster as it is in Europe."

(Voice of Ulster, October 1982:6)

There is of course internal conflict and dissent within the DUP in Ballymacarrett and in the party in general (Smyth 1987:135-137).

However in the public arena, activists in the DUP in East Belfast always projected themselves as following a coherent programme and unified direction. (For example to 'smash Sinn Fein' or oppose the Anglo-Irish agreement). DUP councillors and supporters used every available opportunity to highlight divisions within the OUP and any weakness on the part of local OUP representatives. Such views were supported by official DUP literature. For example in May 1986 the Protestant Blue Print declared that the

"shameful six break unionist solidarity",

it went on to explain,

"Six official unionist councillors in Belfast broke ranks with their unionist colleagues and voted at Tuesday night's council meeting to end the adjournment Protest campaign... Their despicable and reprehensible actions in voting along with the enemies of Ulster was naturally welcomed by Tom King."

(Protestant Blue Print Vol. No.42 9/5/1986)

At the time unionist councillors were undertaking a campaign of adjourning local council meetings in protest against the Anglo-Irish agreement (see Chapter Nine). Following a court action by an Alliance Councillor Belfast City Council faced a fine of £25,000 if the protest continued. However for the DUP this was evidence of yet another 'sellout'. The DUP in East Belfast made much of the fact that three of the OUP councillors were representatives in East Belfast. As one DUP councillor put it,

"the OUP have chickened out again. They're so worried about looking after their own skins they don't care if they stand beside Ulster's enemies".  
(Colin, DUP councillor)

There remained only one conclusion,

"King, Barry and Co. have a surprise in store if they think the majority of unionist councillors in the DUP, Independents and the rest of the OUP are going to simply give up. The twenty-three who

stood firm are determined to bring the work of Belfast City Council to a complete standstill despite the treacherous and self-serving activities of the 'shameful six'".

(Protestant Blue Print Vol.1 No.42 9/5/86)

For the DUP this was just another example of the susceptibility of OUP representatives. So in October 1985 the Protestant Blue Print carried the banner headline,

"OUP vote with SDLP and Sinn Fein to break United Unionist stance".

(Protestant Blue Print Vol 1. No.14 4/10/1985)

Several official Unionist members of Belfast City Council voted against a DUP led proposal to have all City Council meetings and its committees adjourned for one month in protest at the presence of elected Sinn Fein members on the council. Again the DUP projected themselves as the true guardians of Ulster loyalism. As one DUP news sheet claimed,

"Five out of them (OUP) councillors voted with the eleven DUP councillors as did one independent unionist. The rest of the official unionists and independent unionists either abstained or voted with the SDLP, Sinn Fein and Alliance Party again adjournment. So much for their election pledge to do everything possible to 'put Sinn Fein out of business'".

(Protestant Blue Print Vol 1No.14, 4/10/1985)

This notion of Official Unionists refusing to stand up to Republicans was another consistent refrain from DUP activists. Sometimes this was expressed as an overt desire on the part of Official Unionist members to be seen as 'respectable'. As one councillor coherently argued,

"I think the difference (between the two main unionist parties) is that over the years the members of the old unionist party, being in government for so long became a part of the establishment".

(Alan, DUP councillor)

while another East Belfast branch member explained,

"one of the marks of Official Unionism has been that they want to maintain respectability and if unionists are going to deal properly with Sinn Fein

it involves losing respectability and taking risks. I don't think the OUP has shown it's ever prepared to take risks of any sort."

Sometimes individual unionist councillors were identified,

"DD is like the rest in the OUP..... all she's worried about is being seen with the right people and making sure people think she's respectable."

(Frank, DUP Branch member)

However such traits were more generally identified with all Official Unionists. The following conclusion of a DUP councillor was typical,

"In the long term we've got to look to our own (DUP) resources because we can't depend on the Official Unionists to keep up the kind of pressure that's required.

he continued with this explanation,

"if legal ways could be found I've no doubt the OUP would support us....

(Alan, DUP Councillor)

As we shall see the justification of methods which counter legality is central to the relationship between the DUP, the OUP and loyalist paramilitaries. It became increasingly complex in the wake of the Anglo-Irish agreement, and will be dealt with in detail in Chapters Eight and Nine especially in the context of loyalist violence towards the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC).

For several DUP members the relationship between the DUP and OUP was remarkably straightforward, especially in East Belfast. A branch member expressed it as follows,

"there's a very clear difference between us and the OUP on social issues, especially in this branch, there's a much greater commitment to the community by the DUP".

(George, DUP Branch member)

while another claimed the essential difference to be,

"OUP supporters are more subdued and more elderly. DUP supporters are more boisterous about their loyalism. I still think the DUP are rightwing on

the constitution and to the left on social issues. Desmond Boal said that a long time ago when the party was founded and I still believe in it."

(Colin, DUP councillor)

and one DUP member expressed it as a difference between the class backgrounds of the respective party candidate,

"If you go through the whole of the official Unionists Party in East Belfast the only working class man on it is X. The rest of them are high faluting. With our branch most of the people are working class from working class areas and they're staunchly loyalist".

(Alan, DUP councillor)

This idea, that the DUP were more in touch with the needs of the community and indeed was part of that working class community was central to the consciousness of many DUP stalwarts. In part this too represents the contemporary version of the old working class independent unionist tradition of militant loyalism and a populist critique of the ruling unionist 'elite'. It was this grouping which gave the DUP in East Belfast much of their political momentum and enabled them to mobilise support. The DUP's position in Ballymacarrett has in recent years been strengthened by the work of several young councillors. In this respect they have adopted a clearly populist line, which in many ways fills the gap traditionally occupied by the Labour grouping, most recently represented in East Belfast by the Northern Ireland Labour Party. One of these councillors described his motivation for joining the DUP as follows,

"As an individual I couldn't see any future in the official Unionist Party but I did feel a very individual need to become involved in unionist politics. So that only really left the DUP which if I'm truthful I probably felt a strong affiliation to anyway coming from my background and living in inner East Belfast."

He continued,

"The OUP certainly wasn't the place where I would have felt at home...the majority of people involved in it were from upper middle class areas of Belfast and I don't think even my accent would have fitted in, let alone some of the politics I believed in."

(Alan, DUP Councillor)

It was the work of these young DUP councillors who were highly active which proved highly influential in recruiting support and new party members, particularly those involved in community work. The following illustrates the influence DUP activists had on one local welfare worker who had become deeply involved in local politics,

"Before I joined the DUP I was a welfare worker in East Belfast. I remember one meeting with the SDLP, the Official Unionists, the DUP and the Alliance Party.... I think the Workers Party had people there too.... the DUP came along and said they would like to see more housing in the area and a revitalisation of the economy.... now that made sense to me.... the Official Unionists came along and said 'we want to pull down the slums'.... me and half the people I knew were living in these houses and they were calling them slums".

(George, DUP Branch member)

Indeed one DUP member who was now a councillor had come to the party along the same route. He recalled his experience,

"I came to the DUP through local community work. I was mostly involved in housing issues and supplementary benefit work. I saw that the DUP were the only people in the unionist side who would actually pull up its sleeves and muck in... go to housing meetings for example, and not only go when there's 50 or 60 people, but go if there's only two or three. Go when it's not going to get them a lot of votes... and when they go they're not afraid to open their mouths."

(Colin, DUP councillor)

The activity of local councillors and workers was important in ensuring support for the DUP. One councillor directly attributed the party's success in Ballymacarrett to such work when he said,

"before other parties we recognised and understood the social problems the people in the area were having, especially housing..... never mind what you hear about West Belfast, the part of the town with the worst housing is here in East Belfast... the



DUP have always been active in numerous housing and community issues and pushed for improved housing in East Belfast... we're always done our best for ordinary people in the area and I think people have recognised that."

(Alan, DUP councillor)

Another member explained the DUP's success in this way,

"One of the reasons we've got in here (East Belfast) is that we've worked for ordinary people, doing ordinary things like social security tribunals for people. Last week for example I fought seven. You build up a reputation and people see you as someone not just that shouts about the security situation but that really knows what the community wants or needs."

(George, DUP member)

This view was reflected by another party member when he said,

"On everyday issues we're (the DUP) not afraid to get stuck in, open up advice centres, do supplementary benefit work... I spent weeks going through supplementary benefit regulations to find out what people are entitled to.... how much you get for repairs, how much they get for clothing, how much for food, how much for heat... that's my attitude."

The same person went on to expand on his personal political philosophy,

"Since I was elected (as a DUP councillor) I've dealt with hundreds of complaints.... I believe that there are certain issues which should cross political and religious divides.... poverty and bad housing. That's my type of politics. Some people would call it socialism. My type of socialism is basically about helping people who can't help themselves."

(Colin, DUP Councillor)

Another in an extremely frank statement, a DUP councillor, explained,

"I personally would call myself a socialist, although I don't think it would be right to term the party a socialist party... if you're a socialist in any way people immediately brand you a republican.... though it's surprising if you put forward socialist policies without calling them socialist just how much support they have in the Protestant community."

He expanded,

"Well if you go round the doors and put forward socialist economic and social policies... if you said you were a socialist they'd throw you out. But if you explain the policies and don't say the word socialist they'd say 'that's right that's what needs to be done'".

He concluded,

"I think it would be naive to say that normal class politics could operate here given the constitutional crisis, but I think it is possible to make people more aware of class divisions".

(Alan, DUP councillor)

This councillor in particular tended to over estimate the willingness to embrace these ideas. People would tolerate such views because they knew they could depend upon him to represent them on local issues, and knew the person as a 'hardline' unionist. Alan in particular had a wonderful local reputation for representing people. However his views on social issues were far from popular with other DUP members and many DUP supporters in Ballymacarrett. As one of those DUP councillors who liked to call himself a socialist related,

"I get dog's abuse. You're nothing but a fucking socialist people say. I get called that all the time. At a community services meeting one unionist member called me a communist. Afterwards he told me it was the worst insult he could think of. All I did was stand up and try and get some money and better conditions for ordinary people... unionists think that everybody who does that is either a commie or a republican."

(Colin, DUP councillor)

These criticisms came from two main sources. Firstly this small grouping of young articulate DUP representatives offended the more conservative members of the OUP. Their views also brought them into conflict with those DUP members in East Belfast whose views were located in evangelical Protestantism. There was for example reluctance to accept DUP motivated initiatives such as grant-take-up schemes especially amongst older residents in the area. The following

statement by one frustrated community worker summarised this perspective well,

"We have great difficulty in getting people to take grants. A lot of people still see it as scrounging something that only Rebels do."

(Harry, Community Worker, East Belfast)

Not everyone criticised such schemes, especially after almost ten years of the present Conservative administration which had brought urban decline, poverty and unemployment to the fore. Certainly DUP councillors had formidable reputations for serving the interests of electorate. They spent considerable time and effort on local issues and problems. There may be several reasons for this. With the disappearance of Stormont parliament and the Stormont Assembly, councillors, even although they have extremely limited powers, have, apart from Westminster M.P.s, become the major tier of public representatives in Northern Ireland. Councillors however are much more accessible than Westminster M.P.s. This was especially the case with the DUP. Tables 5.1 and 5.2 show the case loads of two DUP councillors for two one month periods during 1986. One notable feature was that of the 63 people who contacted councillor A, Alan, 61 did so by personal contact. The figure is similar for councillor B, Colin, where 52 out of the 56 people made personal contact. These figures indicate a higher level of personal contact than average in Northern Ireland if compared with Birrell's findings that 41% of electors approached their councillors personally with problems (Birrell 1983:107). These approaches to DUP councillors were not restricted to 'surgery hours'. It seemed commonplace for electors seeking help to call at the homes of DUP councillors at 'all times of the day and night'. Often this drew an immediate response from the councillor by way of telephone call. For this reason it may be that

the work undertaken by councillors as suggested in tables 5.1 and 5.2 is an under-estimate. Councillor Alan for example only recorded a 'case' if it resulted in formal written correspondence. By far the most prominent issue was housing, closely followed in both cases by Department of Health and Social Services issues. This needs some explanation as councillors in Northern Ireland are no longer responsible for any of these services. Ballymacarrett residents regarded their councillors as important public representatives who would best liaise with the appropriate public body on their behalf. The excellent reputation on such matters built up by DUP activists help strengthen their claim to be 'part of the community'. The majority of DUP councillors also lived in inner-East Belfast. This was especially apparent when compared to their Official Unionist counterparts who largely lived in Belfast's suburbs or the middle class housing on the outer fringe of the Pottinger electoral area. This meant that Official Unionist representatives could only usually be contacted at their ward surgeries which were held in the East Belfast branch buildings.

TABLE 5.1 : CASE LOAD FOR DUP COUNCILLOR

COUNCILLOR A

CASE LIST      APRIL 1986

32 MALES, 31 FEMALES = 63 CONSTITUENTS

NATURE OF COMPLAINT/ENQUIRY

NORTHERN IRELAND HOUSING EXECUTIVE	34
DEPT. HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES	18
ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY	6*
BELFAST CITY COUNCIL	2
DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT	4
OTHERS	<u>2</u>
TOTAL	66**

\* INCLUDED 3 PEOPLE ARRESTED UNDER SPECIAL POWERS ACT

\*\* SOME PEOPLE HAD MORE THAN ONE COMPLAINT/ENQUIRY

TABLE 5.2 : CASE LOAD FOR DUP COUNCILLOR

COUNCILLOR B

CASE LIST AUGUST 1986

24 MALES, 32 FEMALES = 56 CONSTITUENTS

NATURE OF COMPLAINT/ENQUIRY

NORTHERN IRELAND HOUSING EXECUTIVE	24
DEPT. HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES	8
ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY	4*
PRISONERS AID	2
INDUSTRIAL TRIBUNIAL	4
NORTHERN IRELAND ELECTRICITY SERVICE	3
DEPT. OF THE ENVIRONMENT	8
OTHERS	<u>3</u>
TOTAL	56

\* INCLUDES 1 PERSON ARRESTED UNDER SPECIAL POWERS ACT

One other example of the relationship between the DUP councillors and the protestant working class can be demonstrated by reaction of the local DUP Branch to the social services review in 1985 by Norman Fowler. Local DUP councillors were extremely hostile to the proposed changes in social security. They helped organise a local campaign demanding that the changes be 'scrapped'. DUP councillors from Ballymacarrett were also instrumental in calling for a special meeting of Belfast City Council to reject the recommendations on the grounds that,

- (a) their implementation will increase poverty among those forced to live on state benefits;
- (b) the review is a step away from benefit as of right, without a means test;
- (c) it introduces the notion of deserving poor and undeserving poor amongst claimants;
- (d) it will create further inequality among our citizens."

(Belfast City Council, summons to councillors to attend a special meeting, 9th September 1985).

The resolution opposing the social security review was proposed by Seamus Lynch, a Workers Party councillor, and seconded by a DUP councillor from Ballymacarrett, who argued that,

"the Labour Leader, Mr. Neil Kinnock, accurately described the review by saying it would make the poor poorer and the insecure more insecure... many fancy political phrases have been used in reference to the review but they can all be summed up in one word - cuts."

(cited in Belfast Telegraph, 14/9/1985)

The level of cross-party co-operation should not be over-emphasised. At the same meeting was the scene of constant disruptions and confrontations between rival councillors. Following their election pledge to 'smash Sinn Fein', DUP members had been trying to stop Sinn Fein councillors 'being heard' at Belfast City Council meetings. This involved making as much noise as possible, foot shuffling, heckling,

banging desk tops and carrying on loud conversations between DUP councillors every time a Sinn Fein member rose to speak. This behaviour continued at the special meeting even though three Sinn Fein councillors wished to speak in favour of the motion. The same DUP councillor who had seconded the motion constantly interrupted the council meeting by shouting "Sinn Fein members are scum" and later declared,

"It is because we care about the people of Belfast that we are not going to allow these people (Sinn Fein councillors) to present themselves as decent citizens. They are scum."

(cited in Belfast News Letter, 14 September 1985)

The meeting was temporarily halted following a DUP motion to suspend the meeting. During this time the Lord Mayor (an Official Unionist) held private talks with the DUP. However when the meeting was resumed it again became the scene of disruption and heckling, amidst which the resolution calling for the withdrawal of Health Secretary Norman Fowler's review was passed.

Such behaviour can only be understood if the DUP response to the constitutional crisis is considered. The DUP from its formation has sought to gain popular support by promoting a more egalitarian unionism, claiming to represent Protestant working class interests, and undermining the unionist elite. Advocating a more even distribution of economic and social resources continues to be given a high priority by certain urban DUP activists, especially in areas of deprivation such as Ballymacarrett. However this can only ever be part of the DUP's appeal and part of the political consciousness of their supporters. The other is their 'steadfastness', their willingness to take on, and 'defend Ulster against its enemies'. It is this which is always given priority especially in the public arena such as council meetings. Any truck with 'republicans' is seen as a



step on the road to a united Ireland. As one DUP document put it, such "is the antipathy of Northern Unionist to Irish unification that even if the alternative was to eat grass and die, they would sooner die. To the Northern Protestants of today, just as to their forefathers of sixty or a hundred years ago, Irish unification, in any form, is an anathema". (The Unionist case, the Forum Report answered, n.d.)

That is not to say that DUP members in Ballymacarrett do not differ in several ways from the mainstream DUP or that other values are not negotiable. Firstly, it should be apparent that DUP councillors do, in everyday issues at least, continue to have a distinct view to social and economic issues. In Ballymacarrett there is no clear correlation between Free Presbyterian Church and Democratic Unionist Party. It is possible to suggest that any overt emphasis by DUP members on 'christian principle' may in fact loose support in inner East Belfast. In a recent publication the DUP stated their position concerning moral issues, declaring the DUP would,

"Lead opposition.... to such matters as the legalising of homosexuality, opening sex shops and Sunday opening of public houses. Ulster should decide its own moral standards and codes of behaviour."

(UDUP 1982 Assembly election manifesto:2)

Yet such views were far from popular in Ballymacarrett, especially the promotion of Sunday observance. As one Branch Officer put it,

"On the Sunday opening thing. The position round here has changed and that's because a lot of people around here didn't agree with it, and people in the party had to change their position because of local opinion".

(Frank, DUP Branch Officer)

The ability to air such views contributed to the feelings of most of those involved in the DUP in Ballymacarrett who believed themselves to be part of a highly democratic party political organisation. All

spoke of Ian Paisley, or 'the Doc' as he was known, with respect and great warmth. However many wished to point to the autonomy of the branch within the DUP. One said,

"I strongly disagree with all those who say Ian Paisley runs the DUP. If you look at his views on temperance and not opening things on Sundays he's obviously strongly in favour of both. But we had to tell him that we had to go easy on both because it was losing us votes."

(Colin, DUP councillor)

Another described this incident,

"People seem to think Paisley comes down to East Belfast and says 'I want this' and 'I want that'. But that's not right and I can give you a very good example. In the last election Ian Paisley wanted us to put up four candidates in this area..... Now we said we're confident of getting three in but if you put four up we might split the vote and only get two in... We had a lot of arguing and fighting to do but in the end he decided to relent and let us stand three. In the end he saw our point and agreed with us. Power just doesn't come from the top".

(Brian, DUP councillor)

While one Branch Official summed up his views as follows,

"I think Ian Paisley is a magnificent leader, and I have every respect for him, but I wouldn't say I am a Paisleyite. I am a branch officer in the Democratic Unionist Party..... most people in the branch pay great attention to what Dr. Paisley says, but I don't think they follow it blindly".

(Ken, DUP Branch Officer)

This situation needs some explanation as several commentators have pointed to the close link between the Free Presbyterian Church and the Democratic Unionist Party. As Bruce notes, "in the early stages of his political career, Ian Paisley depended a great deal on the Free Presbyterian Church" (Bruce 1986:134). Especially in rural areas the Free Presbyterian Church has been, and continues to be, an important focus for organising political support for the DUP. Such a direct correlation between Church and Party does not exist in Ballymacarrett. Here support for the DUP is likely to be forthcoming because of the

emphasis by the DUP on the strength of their commitment to loyalism and their articulation of working class Protestant interest, rather than any emphasis on evangelical beliefs.

It is this emphasis on economic and social issues which gives the DUP in Ballymacarrett some sense of autonomy as well as fostering the belief of members that they are part of a genuinely 'democratic' organisation. It would be incorrect to over emphasise the branch's autonomy within the party structure. There is however another important reason why those from Ballymacarrett often regard themselves as standing apart from mainstream DUP politics. The DUP has not been characterised by its strength of internal debate or tolerance of internal dissent (Smyth 1987: 135-137). For the first ten years of its existence, at least, much emphasis was placed on personal allegiance to Ian Paisley. Anyone seeking to alter policy decisions had to do so in a way which did not bring into question allegiance to the Party Leader. Failure to do so often bore due consequences for the individual. As Smyth noted,

"dissenting voices within the DUP have either to accept the limitations which the monolithic nature of their Party imposes on them or they have to resign".

(Smyth 1987:65)

One exception to this has been Peter Robinson, the Westminster MP for East Belfast. Robinson came to prominence by his effective organisation and mobilisation of the local party machine and workers in Ballymacarrett. He has gone some way towards creating an independent social and political base. In Ballymacarrett the personal loyalty of several key DUP activists was to Robinson rather than Ian Paisley. In particular Robinson had a less ambivalent attitude towards loyalist paramilitary groups, and is more prepared to justify direct action, than are many prominent DUP members. This became

crucial in articulating specific responses to the Anglo-Irish agreement in East Belfast.

The development of the DUP in Ballymacarrett must be seen in the context of the fragmentation of unionist politics at the national level. This meant the relationship between the PWC and mainstream political parties could no longer be taken for granted but became a matter for negotiation. The DUP was to play an important part in filling the vacuum left by the demise of older allegiances. For half a century unionism had not permitted economic or social issues to divide the party, although on some occasions dissension was just below the surface. This was often the case in East Belfast with its strong labour and independent unionist tradition. While the fragmentation of unionism has been well documented, there were in addition to the main splits, others flowing from working class dissatisfaction. Some merely regarded the traditional leadership as being weak in the battle with the IRA. Others however saw the unionist leaderships completely distant from the needs and concerns of the PWC. Underlying both was a widespread fear of 'betrayal' by Britain. In Ballymacarrett it is the DUP who have best articulated these feelings of the PWC. Having split unionism on a class basis an attempt has been made to reconstruct unionist hegemony around the DUP.

None of the previous fissures within unionism articulating social grievances produced anything more than short term responses or political organisation. It was through the exercise of this special kind of power, that of being able to frame alternatives, and to win and shape consent, which Lukes has called the power to 'shape the agenda' (Lukes 1974: 23-24) that unionist hegemony was maintained. One of the most enduring ideological effects of this among the Protestant masses was their belief that their well being was

codeterminous with the existence of the state and the particular type of control and repression developed to support the state.

As Northern Irish society split along communal lines in the early 1970's conflict and violence appeared at many levels. The dominant unionist class still retained power but its options were increasingly reduced. The most striking example of this has been the shift in the exercise of control from mechanisms of 'consent' to those of 'control'. At one level the DUP have readily adopted this traditional agenda, they have been to the forefront of calls for stronger 'security' measures. It is because they have continued to define the agenda as centering on law and order that support has been maintained from substantial sections of the PWC whose fear is that the Union is increasingly under threat. As this Chapter has indicated the relationship between the DUP and PWC however is not a direct one. The DUP in Ballymacarrett are quite capable of calling for increased state repression while at the same time organising campaigns against 'cuts' in the social security system or protests in favour of better housing conditions. It is the tensions between the different strands of unionist populism and the ability of the DUP to redefine the agenda which partly explains the fragmented response of the PWC to the crisis. It has been claimed that Paisleyism is 'the' voice of grassroot loyalism and "the best introduction to what the consciousness of large sections of the Protestant poor is all about." (Bell 1976:41-47). Here as elsewhere Bell has underestimated the complexity and forms of PWC consciousness.

In the present crisis not all sections of the PWC have been content to express themselves through any parliamentary political party. Loyalist paramilitary groups have been one important source of identification for the PWC. The next chapter will consider the role

of these groups, and, in particular the actions and consciousness of the largest of these, the Ulster Defence Association, in relation to politics in Ballymacarrett.

## CHAPTER SIX PARAMILITARY POLITICS IN BALLYMACARRETT

Since the early 1970's paramilitary organisations have provided an important channel both for articulating social grievances and for reproducing sectarian ideology within the Protestant working class. By far the most influential have been the Ulster Defence Association (UDA) and the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF). The origins and development of the latter have been discussed elsewhere (Boulton 1973, Nelson 1984). The most active paramilitary grouping in Ballymacarret, both in terms of membership, influence and organisation is the UDA. Membership of the UDA remains legal (unlike that of the UVF) and historically the UDA have always been stronger in East Belfast than the UVF. (Dillon & Lehane 1973: 168) Members are visibly active in Ballymacarret, although not necessarily in the areas where it would be expected to find members of a paramilitary organisation. For example many of the members who were active in Ballymacarret were involved in welfare and community issues. While it is not the intention to deny or gloss over those actions by the UDA which have taken the form of 'military' activity, the major purpose of this chapter will be to concentrate on the political development of the organisation and the UDA's relationship with the local community.

As elsewhere in Northern Ireland, in Ballymacarrett the UDA emerged in 1971, as a direct response by the PWC to the worsening security situation. Throughout that year 'vigilante' groups had been organised in loyalist working class districts of Belfast. Such groups were largely uncoordinated and were responsible for the protection of individual or small clusters of streets usually by the mounting of 'check-points' at the end of streets. This was the broad pattern followed in Ballymacarrett. Local vigilante groups were usually

directed by one or two individuals. A circular distributed around Ballymacarrett at the time explained their limited aims as,

"the protection of life and property in the area"

and,

"to coordinate (our) efforts with similar groups in the immediate vicinity"

(Hand-circular, East Belfast, 1971)

It is important to try and understand the feelings of those taking such actions. There was a widespread feeling in loyalist areas that no one was safe from the IRA. Local vigilante groups' main desires were essentially parochial, "to prevent our city being reduced to rubble". They also sought to "resist incursions of the common enemy... to keep them out of our area, for as long a time as the manpower at our disposal will permit" (Hand-circular, East Belfast 1971).

In August 1971 there was an attempt to co-ordinate these groupings on a widespread basis. A leaflet appeared throughout loyalist areas of Belfast which called upon,

"All members of our Loyalist institutions, and other responsible citizens, to organise themselves immediately into Platoons of twenty under the command of someone acting as Sergeant. Every effort must be made to arm these platoons with whatever weapons are available. The first duty of each platoon will be to formulate a plan for the defence of its own street or road in co-operation with platoons in adjoining areas. A structure of command is already in existence and the various platoons will eventually(sic) be linked in a co-ordinated effort".

the leaflet issued further instructions,

"Under no circumstances must Platoons come into conflict with Her Majesty's Forces or the Police... Members of Platoons must act with the highest sense of responsibility and urgency in preparing our people for the full assault of the enemies within our Province.

(Hand-circular Belfast August 1971)



One of the earliest to organise was the Shankill Defence Association. The group had developed out of another local organisation which had been formed to oppose the effects of the Belfast Urban Renewal Programme. In response to the initial phase of the conflict it "readily turned into a paramilitary group patrolling the Upper Shankill and the border with the Catholic Falls". (Buckland 1981:28). Local Defence associations quickly emerged in other loyalist districts such as Woodvale, Donegall Pass, Hammer, Newtownabbey, Lisburn Road, Seymour Hill, Suffolk and Dundonald. In East Belfast, the Woodstock, Beersbridge and Castlereagh Defence Associations were reasonably well established by late August. The next month, a founder member of the Woodvale Defence Association made a systematic attempt to bring these Defence Associations together under a general council which became known as the Ulster Defence Association.

Again it is important to try and establish the political consciousness of those involved. One UDA officer recalled the events as follows,

"The UDA came about because people in streets around here, banded together, to go about after dark, and patrol the streets, vigilante type movements... if the IRA had decided to make a determined attack I don't know what we would have done about it... But, it was a way of releasing frustration, the people didn't know what to do, so rather than do nothing, they felt they had to do something. As the tension increased, the groups banded together and you had these defence associations all over Northern Ireland and then these came together to form the Ulster Defence Association... it was, and suppose still is, the product of fear and the tension and the frustration of Ulster Protestants who believe they are continually under attack".

(Mike, UDA Officer, East Belfast.)

By 1972 the UDA had a membership of around 40,000 (Flackes 1980:229). Throughout 1972 there were a series of marches featuring mass ranked UDA members, wearing military uniforms and marching in military

formation. On 19th August, 5,000 UDA members marched in companies to a rally in East Belfast.

The emergence of the UDA seemed legitimate to many working class loyalists, given their social construction of the world. It is also important to realise that the UDA emerged from, and were based upon, the social structure described in Chapter Four. In its early days in Ballymacarett, as elsewhere in Belfast, the UDA's leadership was composed of leading members of the local community. Those immediately in charge tended to be "shrewd street leaders - local bookies, garage hands or small businessmen" (Fisk, 1975:28). It was the dominance of this faction which gave the UDA its initial direction and momentum. This was illustrated in the early demands of the UDA to 'wage war on the IRA', and that 'Stormont must Rule'.

Many who joined the UDA fully supported such aims and were prepared to do so by military means. However, to generalise this to a point which portrays their ideology as homogeneous is misleading. From its inception the UDA contained a number of different ideological positions. The organisation's history reveals almost continuous factional disputes. In Ballymacarrett, as in other urban areas, some of this merely reflected the organisation's involvement in 'protection', the setting up and management of 'drinking clubs', and the fact that as an organisation with a mass base it contained a criminal element. Other disputes involved power struggles aimed at demarcating control between individuals in localised areas, or between different local paramilitary groups. Serious disagreements also arose from differences over the direction of both military and ideological struggles.

One early example of this was the UDA's relationship with the Ulster Vanguard Movement led by ex-official Unionist politician,

William Craig. Vanguard articulated the sense of 'betrayal' that many working class Unionists were feeling. In doing so it earned considerable working class support (see Chapter Five). It was Vanguard who first mooted the idea of independence. During 1973, in a series of newspaper advertisements, Vanguard sought to present a Unilateral Declaration of Independence as a viable alternative to union with Britain. In one pamphlet it declared,

"We shall assert our right to take whatsoever action we consider necessary to safeguard our Loyalist cause... such action to include, if there is no alternative, the establishment of an Independent British Ulster".

(Ulster Vanguard, 1972:10)

Subsequent calls for an Independent Ulster from the UDA, and the notion of independence often discussed by UDA members in Ballymacarrett, however do not follow on directly from the Vanguard notion of independence. Partly this reflects a long standing tension between paramilitaries and established Unionist politicians. As early as 1972 there were growing voices of dissension within the UDA from those who were becoming increasingly articulate in their criticisms of middle class Unionist politicians. The following statement from the then chairperson, James Anderson demonstrates this position well,

"I feel that people are beginning to catch on about the Unionist government. The ordinary man is starting to think for himself about the fifty years of misrule that we did have. If a Unionist candidate came down a street, all he had to do was wave a flag and beat a drum and he was elected for the next five years, and you didn't see him for the next five years. People are starting to catch on".

(cited in the Belfast Telegraph 19/9/72)

Tensions became overt when a section of the UDA issued a press statement in which it was claimed that class conscious members were forming a new body called the 'Ulster Citizens Army'. It expressed concern that ex-unionist politicians were becoming too influential in

UDA planning. The statement continued:

"These parasites, who never in the past were the friend of the Ulster worker, have not changed. Their sole aim is still the pursuit of power at any price."

(cited in Boulton 1973:178)

A short time afterwards the Ulster Citizens Army issued a manifesto which stated that the UCA had,

"decided to officially declare its existence as the UDA becomes more weak, ineffective and incapable of defending Protestant workers and working class homes against attacks by the security forces."

It claimed that the UCA was composed,

"of more socialist orientated and class conscious members of the UDA, the Army came into being as a result of growing dissatisfaction and frustration within UDA ranks"

(Press statement cited in Lobster 14:19)

Such unease could not have been alleviated by the following statement from the leader of the largest of loyalist workplace organisations, the Loyalist Association of Workers, (LAW),

"The children of the workers deserve the opportunity of higher education... they are not getting it here today. Where there ought to be rows of terraced houses with modern bathrooms, up to date playing fields and old peoples homes, swimming pools and normal necessities of life today, the Shankill Road and other workers' areas present a bleak picture of desolation... the leaders of unionism have not inherited our automatic support".

(cited in Boulton 1973:138)

There was much internal friction within the UDA at this time. Because of the spontaneous way described in which the UDA developed, the command structure within the organisation was extremely loose. This meant that much power and decision making was devolved to local commanders. These schisms revolved around personalities, power-disputes at the local level, and the demarcation of local territories. One of the main tensions was between the leadership in

West and East Belfast (Dillon and Lehane 1973:144). In the west of the city, the leadership wanted to integrate with the UVF and to adopt a hardline approach. The West Belfast command was also seeking to tighten the command structure and to clamp down on racketeering. In East Belfast extortion existed at a high level. There was also a reduced threat of attack by the IRA because of the overwhelming physical dominance of Protestants (see Chapter Four). There were also serious ideological differences between two factions. The 'hard men' of the west wanted to step up military action. In East Belfast the local command was more sympathetic to the moderate element in the UDA. At various times this faction was said to have been in discussion with Peoples Democracy, the Official IRA, the British and Irish Communist Organisation and the Communist Party of Ireland (Lobster 14:20). Reaction to this faction was dramatic, rapid and bloody.

In an intense campaign those within the UDA who were in any way associated with this radical line were isolated within the organisation. Two of the three people believed to have been behind the UCA were assassinated, while the other was forced to flee the country. (Dillon and Lehane 1973:148-9, Probert 1978:140-1) The more conservative leadership of the UDA took control. As a result the more military orientated members were unleashed. One result was that the number of sectarian murders rose dramatically; as Dillon and Lehane explain it,

"The story of the sectarian assassination in Ulster is the story of the Protestant back lash. There can be no questioning the simple truth that the greater part of the near-200 such assassinations were committed by Protestants organised in groups, often for this specific purpose... The story of this phase of the troubles is that of a small group of Protestants concentrated mainly in Belfast, who were driven to despair of the legitimate constitutional procedures they had been brought up to revere by an indiscriminate campaign of killing and destruction that seemed all too likely to

succeed in its every aim. That the backlash took over three years to emerge was due chiefly to the fact that the people involved were deeply interested in preserving the status quo. Only when the status quo seemed to be crumbling before them, and no other course seemed open did they act."

(Dillon and Lehane 1973:24)

The UDA's role was however far from settled. They were being forced to adopt a number of conflicting positions. For example the UDA increasingly found itself in a position of direct confrontation with the British Army. This was highlighted during 1972 by the UDA's strategy of setting up 'no-go' areas (including an area of Ballymacarrett), in protest at the continuance of such areas in republican districts (Hamill 1985:129). In October 1972 there was serious rioting in East Belfast when two Protestants were killed by an army vehicle which crushed them against a wall. The local UDA commander for East Belfast declared,

"To hell with the British Army. The British government and the British Army are now our enemies."

(cited in Hall 1988:40)

The declaration was rescinded within barely eight hours but underlined changes in the political thinking of the PWC. The accusations of brutality by the British Army, which had surfaced from the Catholic community were no longer automatically dismissed as Republican propaganda. Furthermore a growing number of Loyalists were being detained under the Special Powers Act. The PWC and those active in the UDA were undergoing important perceptual changes concerning their position within unionism and their relationship to the British state.

Such considerations were however rapidly shelved in the light of the Ulster Workers Council (UWC) strike in May 1974. The UWC strike emerged as an amalgamation of loyalist workplace organisations. The events surrounding the 'strike' have been well documented (Fisk 1975,

Holland 1982: 110-11, Bell 1976: 4-5, Probert 1978: 141-44, Hamill 1985: 144-54, Nelson 1984: 155-69, Buckland 1981: 169-173) Briefly, the strike began on Wednesday 15th May, following the ratification of the Sunningdale Agreement by the Northern Irish Assembly. Initially there was much confusion but as the strike progressed, the UWC, supported on the streets by the Loyalist paramilitaries, took control of the distribution of electricity, gas and petrol. As the strike gained momentum the UWC regulated the opening of retail shops, places of entertainment, Banks, Post Offices and foodstuffs. Daily instructions were issued in loyalist areas, by the Ulster Army Council concerning movement. The Ulster Army Council was a co-ordinating group for several loyalist paramilitary organisations including both the UDA and UVF. One commentator summarised the situation as follows,

"the strike started, slowly at first, with many people unsure of what they were doing. Nor did anyone know how the army would react. The Protestant paramilitary armies, however, did back the strike and the momentum grew. Road blocks were established and manned by masked men; transport was disrupted and farmers blocked country roads; people were intimidated into returning home. The UWC controlled everything - milk, bread, petrol, and even passes for essential workers like doctors to get around."

(Hamill, 1985;147)

The turning point in favour of the strikers appeared to be when Harold Wilson, the then British Prime Minister made a speech on the national media, in which he declared that 'the people of Ulster spent their lives sponging on Westminster'. During the following days, in Belfast, many wore sponges in their lapels in protest. At best the speech was counter productive in its influence on Loyalist opinion.

As the strike reached its second week, the UWC shut down Belfast's gas supply and began to run down to a crisis point the electricity supply for the whole of Northern Ireland. On Tuesday 28th

May the Northern Ireland Executive collapsed following the resignation of Faulkner and his Unionist Ministers. The political initiative which had begun eighteen months before at the Darlington Conference had crumbled. The strike ended the next day.

Unionist hegemony reconstructed during the strike. However class tensions quickly re-emerged. As Fisk pointed out,

"the politicians and the paramilitary leaders retreated to their old position of mutual distrust."

(Fisk 1975:28)

The 'strike' had far reaching consequences for relations within the bloc. The widespread involvement of the FWC in community action during the strike marked a distinct break with what had gone before. It is important to understand that both paramilitary groups and many subsequent community groups developed from the same social base. Often they relied upon the same people and drew upon the same physical structure. Hugh Frazer commentating on the development of community work in Northern Ireland in the 1970's had this to say,

"Pressures for social change came from a range of different sources inspired by a variety of motives, including compassion for victims of misfortune, anger at injustice, and fear of unrest. Thus, literally hundreds of local self-help community and pressure groups have emerged over the past decade - some to protest at local conditions (eg save the Shankill) and some to try and meet immediate needs (eg lunch clubs, summer schemes, play groups). At the other end of the scale, government, motivated by a mixture of fear at social unrest and concern for the worst extremes of poverty and deprivation, backed community programmes (eg increased expenditure on community work, Belfast areas of need etc). In the middle, lots of concerned and compassionate individuals became involved in organisations such as those running children's holiday schemes, helping the elderly and so on."

(H. Frazer, speech given IVS Workshop 1980, mimeo)

The experience of the strike led some within the UDA to question their own structural position. The UDA leadership was forced to reconsider



its fundamental position, in response to pressure from the PWC. As one commentator suggests,

"An important perceptual change was that, after the constitutional stoppage of 1974 much of the community action within loyalist ghettos moved towards the acceptance of basic tenets of opposition to the state."

(Deane 1981:15)

This perspective is still evident in Ballymacarrett and is reflected in this statement from a paramilitary spokesperson some ten years later,

"The Loyalist community has been brainwashed for years. We are supposed to be the privileged class yet we live in atrocious conditions, houses with no baths, run down estates, high unemployment; few social amenities and whole communities which are dying because of the planners and government policies. Yet for years people have continued to vote for politicians who created and allowed these conditions to exist. People vote out of fear."

(Shankill Bulletin Sept. 1984:5)

The immediate response of the UDA was to seek to establish a joint working committee with leading Loyalist politicians. The latter, however rejected this suggestion and remained intensely suspicious of any level of independent action by the PWC. The instability of Loyalist party political unity was demonstrated in 1975 when William Craig in an incredible volte-face called for an all party coalition which would subsequently give way to a conventional parliament. The UDA leadership supported the idea but it was opposed by all the other Unionist parties. By early 1976 the Convention had failed to present any form of agreed report to Westminster and was dissolved. Throughout 1975 the UDA and UVF became involved in a bloody feud resulting in the killing of several members of each organisation. Furthermore there was growing dissension within the organisation. Many who had joined the UDA to 'fight for Ulster' simply weren't

interested in, or capable of fulfilling the role of community workers (Nelson 1984:193-202). More seriously for the organisation, the UDA were facing a growing crisis of legitimation within loyalist areas. In Ballymacarrett there were renewed claims of 'gangsterism' and 'racketeering'. Accusations such as these are still often heard in Ballymacarrett, although the actual levels appear to have fallen dramatically since the mid 1970s.

The growing alienation from the wider PWC was heightened in 1977 when the UDA gave its support to an indefinite strike called by the Rev. Ian Paisley. This was an attempt to force the Government to implement stronger security measures. They were opposed by Vanguard, West's Official Unionist Party, and the Orange Order. The UUUC split apart accusing Paisley of seeking UDI. On the first day of the 'strike' many workplaces remained open despite widespread intimidation. Unlike 1974, the police responded to incidents of intimidation and removed many barricades. Most notably the power workers failed to give their support. The segmentation of the unionist bloc manifested itself in open hostility between the UDA leadership and the Democratic Unionist Party. The strike's abject failure, made worse by the obvious comparison with the UWC strike, resulted in a further weakening of the UDA, and delegitimization of their role in Protestant working class communities.

The consequences of the 1977 strike for the UDA were profound and far-reaching. Andy Tyrie who led the organisation until quite recently expressed the position as follows,

"The British Government stopped taking the Loyalist community seriously after 1977 because they saw them so divided.... the most it (the British Government) can expect from most Loyalists is to march about and protest. But if it means taking on the British establishment in a civil war situation, that is totally different."

(Fortnight No.204:5)

This line of argument has remained a constant feature of UDA thinking.

One member expressed similar views when he said,

"The problem with the loyalist leadership is that they run around telling everybody how united they are. The politicians are giving the impression that they're going to spearhead the attack and if the truth were told they just don't know what they're doing or how they're going to do it... they've no plan of campaign... they haven't got the bottle for it... in fact they've nothing up their sleeves but their arms... no wonder the British don't worry about us."

(Nigel, UDA Officer, East Belfast)

The UDA was becoming increasingly alienated from the PWC. As an organisation it was less than six years old but the agenda had already been set for contemporary UDA politics. In Ballymacarrett as elsewhere since the 1977 strike the UDA has sought to negotiate and legitimise its relationship with the PWC and its class relations within unionism.

The UDA resolved its immediate problems by conceding ground to those members who were calling for a coherent social and political programme. The most immediate political outcome was the formation of the New Ulster Political Research Group (NUPRG). It quickly began to promote the idea of an 'Independent Ulster' as the solution to the Northern Irish conflict. Simultaneously the UDA made a conscious effort to strengthen its position at the community level by way of the Ulster Community Action Group (UCAG). The following statement from the NUPRG's Chairperson captured the mood of the UDA's thinking,

"The problem to date has been that the UDA has always relied on the established politicians to represent them politically. But we believe that over the last few years representation hasn't been reflecting the true feelings of grass-root people."

He went on to outline the reasons for such disillusionment,

"On the Loyalist side the Loyalist politicians have manipulated the Protestant people... on the Catholic side they have been used and manipulated

by emotional type politicians. Because over the years if you look at politics in Northern Ireland no one ever talked about pure politics. Every election time, all you have is a flag being waved at you repeating threats to your constitutional position."

(cited in Holland 1982:112-113)

The major intellectual output of the NUPRG was a discussion document, 'Beyond the Religious Divide', first published in March 1979. It contained a series of proposals for the introduction of an 'Independent Ulster'. The basis of this was to be a constitution based on the American Presidential system and a 'Bill of Rights'. This was to be supported by guarantees from both Britain and the Irish Republic, both of which would withdraw their claims of sovereignty over the Northern Irish State. The document declared that a negotiated independence was,

"the only proposal which does not have a victor and a loser. It will encourage the development of a common identity between all of our people, regardless of religion. We offer through our proposal, first class Ulster citizenship to all of our people, because like it or not the Protestant of Northern Ireland is looked upon as a second class British Citizen in Britain and the Roman Catholic of Northern Ireland as a second class Irish Citizen in the South.

(NUPRG 1979:6)

The language the UDA were using at the time, 'proper politics' and 'pure politics' was not expanded upon in Beyond the Religious Divide. Guelke suggests that what the authors had in mind was,

"the development of class based politics that would permit a broadly based Labour Party in Northern Ireland."

(Guelke 1988:71)

A further indication of this was given in the Editorial of the weekly magazine of the UDA, 'Ulster' at the time,

"Unionist politics have dominated Ulster because of the absence of a strong labour movement. This absence allows Britain to keep a policy of conditional support for the union while at the same time continuing to explore ways and means of

uniting Ireland in cooperation with the Dublin Government. This is fertile ground for sectarian politics.

The Ulster Defence Association came into being as an expression of the mistrust of Ulster working people with Unionist politics. The UDA is a working people organisation, the only one of its kind in Ulster. While its main concern has been the maintenance of an armed body of citizens, the UDA has found itself in the position of exploring its political potential, because of the increasingly obvious weakness of Unionist politics."

(Ulster, Vol.2, No.3, 1978)

Under this momentum the UDA entered the field of constitutional politics. The Ulster Loyalist Democratic Party (ULDP) was formed. The ULDP contested a council by-election in East Belfast in August 1981, where they received 8.4% of the vote. Their main spokesperson stood in a by-election in South Belfast but only polled 1.3% of the vote. The ULDP stood two candidates in the October 1982 Assembly elections but again fared extremely badly. In May 1985, the ULDP stood on a manifesto which included a pledge to 'utterly defeat the IRA', and to oppose any summit between the British and Irish Governments. The manifesto went on to outline the ULDP's opposition to 'health and education cutbacks' to 'fight for a better deal for Loyalists in housing' and to introduce 'Ulster history, culture and music to schools and radio and T.V. programmes' (Ulster, May 1985:2). Again there was little response from the electorate. There were however several members in Ballymacarrett who remained committed to the political dimension. The ability of the UDA to permeate PWC consciousness at the party political level is weak. Even those active in the political sphere recognises this, as one member explained,

"Putting up candidates doesn't really seem to be getting us anywhere. But I don't really know what else we can do. Ordinary Protestants aren't ready for it perhaps... but there's no point voting for the established politicians because when it comes to the bit... they've no idea, or any ideas they do

have don't work."

(Sam, UDA member East Belfast)

Another explained the lack of electoral success this way,

"Protestants see independence as a stepping stone to a united Ireland. There's a fear that if you break the link with the U.K. you leave yourself wide open and will be sucked into a United Ireland..."

he added,

"I suppose to the Catholics it seems like some sort of a trap... that we're trying to get them into it (an Independent Ulster), so that will get the British referees out and we'll kick the shit out of them... beat them all over the place."

(Michael, UDA Officer East Belfast)

Those active in this 'political wing' were far from autonomous. Members overlapped with other UDA members involved in other non-military activities (and sometimes 'military' activities), such as welfare and community group work. In particular there was a great deal of overlap with those individuals active in loyalist prisoner groups. One member Tom was extremely active in the 'Ulster Heritage Agency'. This was formally set up by the UDA to 'promote research' into Ulster people's beliefs before the beginning of the religious conflict in the seventeenth century, but Tom was the only member in Ballymacarrett interested in this wing of the UDA.

Increasingly the UDA has sought to promote their notion of an independent Ulster in the idea of a 'shared identity and history between Protestant and Catholic'. This involves a historical reconstruction based largely on the works of Adamson (1974,1982). These seek to show that the origins of the Protestant population in the north of Ireland predate the 16th century Plantation of Ulster. Adamson argues that the 'Cruthins', the original inhabitants of Ireland were driven north by the invading Gaels. The last foothold of the Cruthins in Ireland was in what is now Antrim and Down. Many

however, fled to Scotland, strengthening the historical link between the Scottish and those from the north of Ireland. Significantly according to this interpretation,

"the 17th century plantation brought many Presbyterian Scots who may be justly considered as returning to the home of their ancestors"  
(Adamson 1982:12)

This concept is important in UDA thinking, as it becomes possible to represent the Plantation as a 'homecoming'.

The adoption of this interpretation of history has involved the adoption of a number of symbols and hero figures from Irish history and pre-history which previously have been regarded as the property of Irish Republicanism. In particular the UDA have taken the events of the Tain bo Cuailnge as central to their ideas. This is the centre piece of the eighth century Ulster cycle of heroic tales. The saga revolves around the invasion of Ulster by the forces of the King and Queen of Connaught. The central hero of the myth is Cuchulainn, the Hound of Ulster, who resists the armies of Connaught single handed.

The adaption of Cuchulainn as a popular image by the UDA is particularly important as it was previously highly significant to and extensively used in Republican imagery. For example, a commemorative statue of Cuchulainn to the 1916 rebels stands in the GPO in Dublin. The Army of the Republic of Ireland also issues medals which feature Cuchulainn. Adamson regards this as a total misrepresentation of history and outlines what he sees as the consequences for contemporary politics,

"So total has become the Gaelic domination in language and culture that even in these modern times Gaelic Ireland is synonymous with Irish nationalism, and the Gaelic tongue is unequivocally known as Irish. That the Irish Gaels suffered under late English domination is but one side of

the coin which carries on its reverse the long  
cruel extermination of the population and culture  
of the ancient kindred of the Ulster people."

(Adamson 1974:15)

Such views had an important impact on the thinking of the UDA leadership. For example, from 1978 on, stories concerning the Cruthin and Cuchulainn began to appear regularly in the magazine 'Ulster'. One early example of this explained,

"You are the children of the Cruthin, the sons and daughters of the Picts. This is our land, your culture, your heritage. You are indeed the people. You are older than the Gaels, older than the Welsh, older than even the English. You have a right to belong here, no less than the trees. You have a right to be heard here; you have a right to be FREE!"

(Ulster Vol.1 No.4: 2,1978)

Another example of this deals directly with Cuchulainn and political culture in Ireland,

"All through the years in Irish Nationalism there has been a constant search for the typical Irish hero... Cuchulainn is a most ironic choice as an Irish nationalist since he was an Ulsterman and the idea he died for was that of an independent Ulster! He lived around 300 B.C. in times as troubled as our own. When Ulster was under attack from her perpetual enemy - the rest of Ireland, Cuchulainn became our champion... Cuchulainn was indeed a hero. But a strange one for our enemies to adopt."

(Ulster April 1984:5)

The interpretation and the appeal to UDA members is obvious. Cuchulainn is projected as a prototype UDA member defending the border against the 'ancient enemy'. This reading of Irish history is, at best, highly questionable and controversial, and this author would not attempt to demonstrate its accuracy. More important however is the effect it has had on UDA thinking and strategy and the political consciousness of the PWC. One member explained his position like this,



"I think we're so busy saying we're British... that anything that isn't British you didn't want to hear about it."

(Tom, UDA member, East Belfast)

Another leading member put his case quite articulately when he said,

"large bits of our history were all taken over and moulded into this Irish, Nationalist, Catholic ideal. One example is Cuchulainn... In Londonderry the Provos have a statue of Cuchulainn as a commemoration of the Republican dead. But Cuchulainn was an Ulster warrior who fought against the Gaels. The idea that Ulster Protestants are only here from the seventeenth century is wrong... we're not just planters, we belong here, there were people going back and forward all the time."

he continued,

"the vast majority of Ulster Protestants don't know anything about their history and that's a shame. Ulster Prods must stop believing Republican propaganda that we don't belong here, that we're just planters."

(Nigel, UDA Officer, East Belfast)

That a debate on such issues is necessary is attested to by these words from a UDA officer,

"The more we talked to people and asked 'what's it all about?', the more we got the same answers, 'no surrender', 'remember 1690', 'fuck the Pope'... we did a survey asking people when Protestants came to Ulster? When was the plantation?, and lots of other things. People knew nothing of their history, absolutely nothing."

(Michael, UDA Officer, East Belfast)

This view was reflected in a recent statement by the then Commander of the UDA, Andy Tyrrie, who pointed out that,

"Historically, Ulster people, if they got interested at all drifted into British Empire Culture; Opera, Ballet and Theatre... we hoped to interest people in something besides pop groups and TV... we wanted to get back to a sense of our own community... Our people here often didn't realise what was happening in their own hearts. They took part in demonstrations and then forgot and went back to the T.V."

(cited in Bell 1985:2)

The thinking of the UDA leadership on the subject was perhaps best indicated by a play co-written by Tyrrie. Entitled 'This is it', its central subject is working class culture. In it one of the central characters, claimed,

"We're so paranoid about anything that seems 'Fenian' or 'Irish'; we close our eyes to everything that isn't 'British', which usually means English. You talk to an Ulster Prod about traditional music or dancing and he'll think you're a 'Fenian-lover'. The bloody Prods have denied half of their own history. They've clung to England just to keep the Catholics down. And now what's happening? England doesn't want to know us, and we've lost our own roots, we now feel like homeless orphans. Take any people in the world: look at the Palestinians; they've been knocked about from pillar to post, but they know where they belong, they can point to their homeland. What about us? Well? Are we Irish? Northern Irish? British? Ulster? West Britons? Scots-Irish?"  
(Theatre Ireland 7:2,1982)

The play was written in an overtly populist form. Designed to be produced by and for "Ulster working-class clubs and community centres" (Theatre Ireland 7:2,1982) Again its intellectual stimulus comes directly from Adamson's books. As Cairns and Richards point out "History, far from being rejected, is being given a developing role in the political campaign of the UDA (Cairns and Richards, 1988:28).

There were several examples of how this notion of an Ulster identity affected everyday political relations. During one fieldwork trip I had arranged to meet a contact in a local pub. While we were there a violent verbal confrontation broke out at a table close to us. I knew one of the people drinking at the table, who was a UDA member. He quickly approached me and asked me to mediate as I 'was a teacher and would know the answer'. The ensuing conversation revealed that the group had been discussing politics when one suggested that 'Ireland had once been united under British Rule'. This was strongly objected to by another member of the company and the argument had



# ULSTER

Price 30p

June 1986



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In 637 A.D. Congal Clán, the greatest of all Cruithin kings of Ulster, massed a huge force of Ulstermen and their allies, to confront the Gaelic armies. The ensuing Battle of Moira (Magh Rath) was, according to Sir Samuel Ferguson, "the greatest battle, whether we regard the numbers engaged, the duration of the combat, or the issue at stake, ever fought within the bounds of Ireland." Congal was slain, and the Ulstermen's defeat also destroyed their last real hope of retaining their independence from Gaelic Ireland. Although the Ulstermen's former dominance of the whole North was now irretrievably at an end, they kept their autonomy east of the Bann for another 500 years.

ensued. Throughout several conversations concerning politics it became clear that many UDA members had little idea of their own history or past. Certainly there was little sense of a continuity of history as is found in Republican paramilitaries. One example occurred at UDA Headquarters in East Belfast, while waiting to talk to a senior officer. I began to talk to the two teenage members who were 'looking after me'. Although both were keen to project themselves as 'fighting for Ulster' there was little sense of a historical identity. Neither had heard of the 'plantation' and one of them suggested that 'Protestants had come to Northern Ireland just before World War One', because his grandfather had died in the war, 'at the Somme'. That is not to say that such members were not politically motivated. They did however represent a particular grouping of UDA members who tended to be young, militant and not too questioning. The idea of a distinct 'Ulster' identity had not permeated the thinking of many UDA members in Ballymacarrett. Another example of this can be seen in an incident surrounding the attempt by the UDA leadership to promote the idea in the 'Ulster' magazine. After much consideration the UDA editor gave over the whole of the front page of the magazine to a line drawing representing an ancient Cruthin warrior. It also contained the following text,

"In 637 AD Congal Claen, the greatest of all Cruthin Kings of Ulster, massed a huge force of Ulstermen and their allies, to confront the Gaelic armies. The ensuing battle of Moria (Magh Rath) was according to Sir Samuel Ferguson, 'the greatest battle, whether we regard the numbers engaged, the duration of the combat, or the issue at stake, ever fought within the bounds of Ireland'. Congal was slain and the Ulstermen's defeat also destroyed their last real hope of retaining their independence from Gaelic Ireland. Although the Ulstermen's former dominance of the whole was now irretrievably at an end, they kept their autonomy east of the Bann for another 500 years."

(Ulster, June 1986:1)

This was due to much hard work by a couple of UDA activists involved in the Ulster Heritage Agency and made more significant by several factors. Most notably those involved in the Loyalist Prisoners Association were also more active than usual in June 1986. There was talk of 'another Loyalist Hunger-strike being on the cards', because of the conditions under which Loyalist prisoners were being held. There were also claims that following the violent reaction to the Anglo-Irish agreement, and the banning of a Loyalist parade at Easter, 'hundreds of Loyalists' (mostly teenagers) had been arrested and 'interviewed by police'. There were also strong rumours that many of these people were being subjected to violence at the hands of the RUC. The summer of 1986 had also been declared the 'Summer of Destiny' by the UDA. (See Chapter Nine) All of these were mentioned in the same copy of 'Ulster', any one of which would normally have been given the front page lead.

The limit of such ideas was also readily obvious. On the day that the June issue was released I travelled in a van round East Belfast distributing the magazine. The two UDA members delivering the magazine were rather bemused by the cover. One explained to the other that he thought it was 'awfully fenian looking' and the other confessed that he didn't see what it had to do with UDA. It is worth recording this members view. When asked about the Ulster identity being promoted by the UDA he replied,

"that's John (McMichael) and Andy's (Tyrie) baby  
and I don't take much to do with it."

(Robin, UDA member, East Belfast)

This was despite an increased promotion of 'Ulster's separate identity', throughout 1985 and 1986 within the UDA. Some UDA members from Ballymacarrett had become involved in the campaign to save the Navan Fort. The campaign surrounded the fate of Emain Macha, the

ancient capital of Ulster. The Navan Fort marked the seat of the ancient Kings of Ulster. Emain Macha and its surroundings are the landscape of legendary Ulster and the immediate geographical area around Navan are supposedly where Cuchullain came as a small boy.

A small limestone quarry had begun near Navan Fort in the last century. Since that time it had expanded towards the very edge of the fort. These were further plans for expansion. The site of the Navan Fort is the only archaeological site in Northern Ireland nominated by the Department of the Environment to UNESCO as a site of international importance. The threatened destruction of the site by the expansion of the limestone quarry was opposed by the academic establishment and a large number of institutions ranging from the National Museum of Denmark to the Ulster Archaeological Society. Irish Nationalists rallied to defend Ulster's ancient capital. The campaign however was strongly backed by the UDA. The magazine 'Ulster' declaring that,

"Some strange aspect of our natural character continually makes us deny our culture, our origins, and our ancestry and Navan Fort is an important part of all three. If we honestly look around us we can see that most of our fellow Ulstermen are ignorant of all these points. What is our culture? Where did we come from? - are questions which the average Ulster Protestant would answer with Orangeism and Scotland respectively, but what they do not realise is that there is more, much more."  
(Ulster, July/August 1985:9)

One leading member had this to say concerning the campaign,

"Unionist politicians didn't want to have anything to do with Navan Fort because Sinn Fein had stuck its spoke in. So once Sinn Fein say something they've got to be on the other side. What we've got is Irish nationalists crying out for the preservation of Navan Fort and the Unionists totally disowning it. That means it's the Gaelic culture that has taken all that over. In Londonderry the Provos have a statue of Cuchulainn as a commemoration of Republican dead. But Cuchulainn was an Ulster warrior who fought against

the Gaels, but he's totally unknown by Ulster Protestants... there was a civilisation here before the Gaels.

(Michael, UDA Officer, East Belfast)

Such views in Ballymacarrett were limited to a very few individuals. Their views were tolerated but far from understood. UDA members, in general, either simply ignored such views or often reinterpreted them in an overtly political and sectarian manner. One member had selectively reinterpreted such views and saw the notion of an 'Ulster identity' as a weapon in the propaganda war against Sinn Fein. Such views are reflected in the following statement,

"The political relevance of culture today can be clearly seen when one examines the way our enemies especially in Sinn Fein have hijacked the so-called 'Gaelic culture' of Ireland. They have made street names and schools into political issues which they exploit and by reason of the fact that we reject this so-called Irish culture, they claim that we are not Irishmen; and therefore have no right to claim this country as our own."

(UYUC, 1986:2)

It would be incorrect therefore to think that the notion of an Ulster identity as conceived by the UDA leadership had not permeated PWC consciousness. However this 'Ulster identity' was not always interpreted in the same way by the membership and supporters of the UDA as the leadership. The ideology and the ideological appeal of the UDA can be separated in part into an 'esoteric' appeal to 'intellectual' insiders, and a grossly simplified 'exoteric' appeal to the wider membership.

One obvious way in which the idea of an Ulster identity has affected attitudes within the wider loyalist cultural tradition has been loyalist popular culture. This can clearly be identified if we briefly examine working class Loyalist literature. Since 1969, a large number of poems, prose and songs concerning politics have emerged. Most of these extol the heroic and martial aspects of

Loyalist working class life. Such songs were extremely popular in clubs and bars in Ballymacarrett especially when social nights were organised by Loyalist Prisoners Aid. Sometimes they would be sung at parties or late night gatherings after drinking. One early example of this type of loyalist literature, which is both overtly sectarian and supportive of violence is the following piece of prose, entitled 'dear sniper',

"You must feel good, now don't you?  
A virile rat and strong  
Like others of your witch's brew  
Who use the gun and bomb.

But here's a little food for thought  
That you might contemplate  
Some Vermin run before they're caught  
But Orange Tom Cats fear for nought  
and Rats exterminate"

(cited in Rolson 1978:57)

A contemporary song, in the same vein explicitly praises the military prowess of the UDA,

"This song is near and dear to me  
A song of truth and liberty  
of the boys who'll beat the IRA  
those loyal men of the UDA

Chorus,

For 30,000 men have we  
who'll fight to keep our Ulster free  
we're on our guard, both night and day  
For we're the men of the UDA

Those Rebel scum can't bear the light  
They kill and murder in the night  
but time draws near to their doomsday  
they'll be destroyed by the UDA

Now this advice I'll freely give  
to all those Rebels who wish to live  
Lay down your arms this very day  
You cannot beat the UDA

So lift your glass and toast away  
to the UDA and victory  
For they will surely win the day  
So here's good luck to the UDA"



Some of these songs have now been in existence since the early 1970s but have changed in form and content over the last 20 years. One early and extremely popular example was the following song, sung to the tune of the 'Red River Valley',

"Have you heard of the Battle of the Shankill  
where most of the fighting was done  
it was there that a young UDA man  
was shot by an IRA gun

As he lay on the battlefield dying  
with the blood running out of his head  
he turned to the bastards that shot him  
and these are the words that he said

God bless my wife in the dear old Shankill  
God bless my home and family too  
God bless the flag that I fight under  
The Union Jack, red, white and blue"

(for a slightly different version, see Jenkins  
1982:37)

Significantly in the contemporary version the final verse has changed to,

"Will you bury me under the Red Hand  
Will you bury me in Ulster's clay  
Will you bury me under the Red Hand  
When my fighting for Ulster is done"

There are many others songs popular in Loyalist pubs and clubs throughout Ballymacarrett which demonstrate an allegiance to an 'Ulster' identity, or at least a duality of national consciousness which is not explicitly 'British'. Consider the words of this song,

"The Red Hand's my emblem  
the Sash is my song  
to the Republic of Ireland  
We'll never belong  
We have only six counties  
But we're proud and true  
and will always be loyal to that Red Hand so true

And the Red White and Blue boys  
That part of our cause  
It gave us our freedom religion and laws  
We'll fight to defend it  
with heart and with hand  
and we'll never be driven from this Ulster land"

This song indicates a significant move away from similar songs in the early part of the current phase of the conflict. Then most songs declared their loyalty to, and willingness to fight for 'the Red, White and Blue', rather than it being merely part of the reason for fighting.

There remained however clear differences between the leadership's political ideas and concept of 'Ulster' and those of the rank and file. In the discourse of ordinary members 'Ulster' often meant something quite different, probably much closer to the way in which DUP activists used the term. Some members did support the organisational political objectives especially following the publication of the booklet 'Common Sense' in January 1987. Again this proposed the establishment of a devolved government in Northern Ireland on a power-sharing basis. It will be discussed further in Chapter Nine, in the context of the overall loyalist reaction to the Anglo-Irish agreement. This gave politically orientated members like Tom, a more legitimate role in the organisation. Tom himself was convinced that 'Common Sense' 'was the only way out of a civil war' and that Paisley and Molyneaux 'had done nothing'. It also gave Tom a high profile especially in the pubs and clubs because as one person explained "he knows what the big boys (UDA leadership) are talking about."

Tom was in little danger of isolating himself by criticising the established unionist politicians. Hostility towards the unionist leadership was a fairly consistent feature of the thinking of UDA members in East Belfast. There is an obvious paradox to confront here. The ULDP have consistently failed to win any significant level of support at the polls and as John McMichael the focal point in the ULDP admitted "most of the people in the UDA would vote DUP because

they come from working class areas" (Interview, Belfast, June 1985). Nevertheless there was often overt criticism of the unionist leadership in general and Ian Paisley in particular. To explain this it is first necessary to consider the sources of such criticisms. Two groupings which have had a profound effect on UDA thinking in this respect are The Loyalist Prisoners Aid, a support organisation for UDA prisoners and their families, and the loyalist ex-prisoner associations. Throughout the 1980s many UDA members have been disillusioned by the lack of support given to them by unionist politicians. This is especially true regarding several campaigns organised by Prisoners support groups regarding prison conditions and more recently in the campaign for the physical segregation of loyalist and republican prisoners. As an member of the UDA active in Loyalist Prisoners Aid explained,

"Ninety-five percent of the people I know would never have seen the inside of a Prison if it wasn't for the present situation. The reason why they're in there is the Martin Smyths and the Bill Craigs and the Paisleys. Now if you listen... Paisley's still shouting about civil war... still wants to use the muscles of the paramilitary if it suits them."

(Robert, UDA member, LPA Worker)

The views of those active in Loyalist Prisoners groups will be considered in more detail later in the chapter. There was another major source of criticism of the Unionist leadership from within the paramilitaries. Again this was far from a coherent grouping, but in general, many UDA members still looked to the Unionist politicians for leadership, and felt that the leadership had failed them. So for example those active in the Loyalist ex-prisoners association continued to warn of the dangers of manipulation by the Unionist leadership, claiming that they had repeatedly plunged the community into turmoil " by their cul-de-sac politics" (Sunday News 1st January

1987). Such views sometimes found an airing in the UDAs magazine, as the following illustrates,

"it can be safely said that in the last ten years not one constructive idea has emerged out of Paisley's head. Indeed his 'political tactics' and 'know how' amount to little more than huffing and puffing... Ian Paisley has never actually led our people anywhere but has merely voiced and reflected their fears and opinions. He is merely the politics of reaction, coupled with blood-thirsty threats of things to come should the English ever betray Ulster to Eire."

(Ulster, May 1987: 4-5)

This point was reinforced by this view from a UDA officer who was extremely hostile to Ian Paisley. He expressed it this way,

"you know there's a lot of talk goes on. It's more of a talking war than a fighting war. I suppose it's more of a propaganda war than a physical war... too many people can play games with the situation and they can say whatever they want... make all kinds of threatening noises and gestures and talk about civil war... they're not even making any preparations for it, they don't even take it seriously themselves... they can't play about with people's lives like that."

(Nigel, UDA Officer, and member of ULDP)

Nigel was certainly prepared to 'fight' if a civil war situation ever did materialise. As the above indicates however he was convinced that the unionist politicians were not genuinely seeking a solution. Nor did he believe that the UDA should be 'at the beck and call of Paisley and the like'. Nigel believed that civil war was inevitable, but hoped that a solution could be found. He explained it this way,

"The majority of the population is sick of the whole thing just going on and on and on... the politicians are becoming irrelevant... I think people would prefer to have a big bang and get it over with... I'm beginning to think that's inevitable. I had high hopes for several years that we would find an alternative... I think the people could be brought together but not Ulster Unionism and Ulster Nationalism... because it's about the national existence of Ulster... there can't be any compromise, there isn't a way to compromise, it has to be one way or the other, you have to be either British or Irish."

(Nigel, UDA Officer, and member of ULDP)

A similar point of view can be seen in the following statement from another UDA member who had served a long prison sentence and was now active in Loyalist prisoners Aid. He reacted strongly to the calls during the summer of 1985 for loyalist paramilitary groups to become more active, following the re-routing of the traditional Orange Parade in Portadown away from a predominantly Catholic area of the city. Victor's reaction was as follows,

"I'm quite delighted by the call of Ulster's men to arms being heard once again. I'm quite delighted. I wish they'd make more of them, because for every call that's made there's a greater chance that it'll be exposed for what it is and those people promoting them will be exposed for what they are... That anyone who says 'we will smash Sinn Fein' when they haven't got the ability to do it... when the Rev. Martin Smyth can demand the right to walk through Oban Street right up to the day before it happens and then back off... you've got to say to yourself, what in the name of God are these men playing at... I was delighted by the organisations response to the sabre rattling and the war cries - Their attitude of 'well you're not going to fight to the last drop of my blood' is quite right. Nor are we going to fight without me knowing what you're going to do or that you're going to be there along with me and seen to be there."

Later he explained his reason for this disillusionment,

"At one time they influenced me very directly. The belief that Dentists, Doctors, Solicitors, the Professions, Businessmen were people to be listened to... and therefore they were the people to respect... it was one reason that made me as a 16 or 17 year old attend a rally in Ormeau Park with 100,000 people where Bill Craig said 'shoot to kill' and in the Victoria Park where Ian Paisley said 'Ulster will fight and Ulster will be right'... shoot means only one thing, kill means only one thing, fight means only one thing... that was probably my leanings anyway and only needed the push of officialdom to make that last step. So whilst they might say they desired another form of reaction from me I felt the reaction they desired from me was the literal one so I became a member of the UDA, ended up in Long Kesh, served a fairly

heavy sentence... I had to lie in bed at night and question not just what I had done, but why I had done it and who had wanted me to do it.

(Victor, UDA member and Loyalist  
Prisoners Association worker, June 1986)

The relationship between the UDA and Unionist politicians is far from a direct one. It is made more complex by the fact that although hostile to established unionist politicians several UDA activists were on good working terms with local party political activists, particularly the more politically orientated councillors in the DUP. It was not for example unusual for Robert, the UDA welfare worker to send his clients to Colin, the DUP councillor. Robert would usually do this if he considered the case to be too complex or if it needed immediate action. This was partly a recognition of Colin's greater experience, and partly the understanding on Robert's part that people saw Colin as a 'real' politician who would get things done. As Robert put it,

"Colin and I went to school together. Many's a time we fought each other in the playground. Now Colin and I don't agree on a lot of things, but he knows if I send someone to him, it's for the right reasons and he's not likely to turn them away".

(Robert, UDA member and LPA worker)

The relationship was complicated still further by respect many DUP activists had for the local DUP member of Parliament. Even Victor, overtly hostile as he was to the DUP in general, and Ian Paisley in particular, was quite supportive of Peter Robinson. Robinson was, from 1974, the first full time secretary of the DUP, a councillor for Castlereagh from 1977, and MP for East Belfast from 1979. Robinson has exerted an important influence on the party, as one commentator noted,

"... a large number of those attracted to and recruited into the party through Robinson's efforts were different in a number of important respects

from the traditional Paisley follower of the early rabble rousing days."

(Ed Moloney, Irish Times, 19th Feb 1983)

As Bruce (1986: 154-155) notes it is now commonplace to suppose that Robinson is one of several of the younger generation of DUP officers who want to create a mass popular party by underplaying the party's evangelical dimension and emphasising political action. Robinson was also one of the few unionist politicians to be actively involved in the campaigns in support of loyalist prisoners in the early 1980s, during which time he appeared on the same platform as several well known paramilitary leaders. This relationship between Robinson and the paramilitaries in Ballymacarrett was important in the realignment of loyalist politics in the period following the signing of the Anglo-Irish agreement. Importantly the relationship between the UDA and Unionist politicians is not a direct one and although close to Robinson, the UDA in Ballymacarrett were not under his control. One leading member expressed this forcibly when he said,

"Are we just tin soldiers, robots that somebody blows a whistle and we make the right noises, programmed to react, and we all come marching out of the box and kick all round us... and when they (Unionist politicians) think its O.K. - that they've made their point - with the British Government, that they blew their whistles and we all neatly march back into our box... the trouble is that everytime we came out less and less of us went back in."

(Michael, UDA Officer, East Belfast)

The other important grouping in this respect were the support groups for loyalist prisoners. One member with similar views expressed it straight forwardly when he said,

"there are very few politicians in prison and even fewer in Rose Lawn Cemetery"

(Albert, ex Loyalist prisoner)

Almost all of the UDA members active in Loyalist Prisoners support groups had themselves been convicted and served prison terms for

paramilitary activities. Some had been the victim of Loyalist super grasses and although they had never been convicted, had served remand sentences in prison. To fully understand the role of Loyalist Prisoner support groups, and Loyalist Prisoner Aid in particular, it is necessary to briefly outline Northern Ireland's prison system. In 1972 'Special category status' was granted to 'political' prisoners. These prisoners were held in compounds, were allowed to associate freely, wear their own clothing and organise their own affairs on a day to day basis. This allowed prisoners to, for example, conduct their own physical fitness classes, education classes and general recreation groups. On 'special days' in the Loyalist calendar, such as 'Remembrance Day' or the 12 July, the UDA would have parades in paramilitary uniform. Several years later, the British Government declared that special category had been a serious mistake. They announced that prisoners convicted of offences committed after 1st March 1976 would not be granted 'political status'. From 1st April 1980 the Government announced that all convicted prisoners, regardless of offence would be housed in conventional prison accommodation. It was this withdrawal of the recognition of any political motivation by prisoners which is normally called 'criminalisation'. In 1976 a general remission rate of 50% was introduced as part of this overall 'criminalisation' policy. As Rolson and Tomlinson point out, there,

"has been a major change in the prison regime since 1976, whereby lifers are subjected to 'normal' prison conditions in the H blocks as opposed to those 'special category' conditions in the compounds."

(Rolson and Tomlinson, 1986:163)

The number of 'status' prisoners has consequently fallen from 1,476 in February 1976, 581 of whom were Loyalists to 175 in 1985. While both the UDA and UVF continue to have 'special category' prisoners,



obviously the numbers continue to fall. Another major trend of the Northern Ireland penal system is that the numbers of those sentenced to life imprisonment has risen from 13 in 1969, to 181 in 1976, through 377 in 1980, to 421 in 1983. (Annual Reports on the Administration of the Prison Service, 1979-1983). There are also distinct differences in the patterns between scheduled (political) prisoners and non-scheduled (non-political) prisoners. "Only 13% of scheduled prisoners are serving short term sentences, while only 16% of non-scheduled prisoners are serving long term sentences" (Rolson and Tomlinson, 1986:166)

Loyalist prisoner support groups are involved in two main ways. Firstly they have increasingly organised in campaigns against the use of special powers interrogation methods, Diplock courts and more recently the use of informers. Secondly, prisoner support groups are involved in providing support for prisoners themselves, their family and relatives. They are also to a lesser extent concerned with the reintegration of ex-prisoners back into their community. Loyalist Prisoners Aid (LPA) in Ballymacarrett thus provided a direct link between prisoners, their community and the State. It is important therefore to consider the strategies mounted by the LPA and evaluate how successful they are in building the above links. The two major campaigns in which the LPA were involved during the period of research were 'Justice for Lifers' and the 'separation' or 'segregation' issue. 'Justice for Lifers' focused on the position of those loyalist prisoners' under 'detention at the Secretary of State's pleasure'. This refers to those being currently detained for an indefinite time because they were under 18 years of age when they were sentenced. Such prisoners were usually known quite simply as SOSPs. Another closely related campaign concerned the review procedures for those

sentenced to life imprisonment. Under British Law a life sentence can mean literally just that. However, prisoners sentenced to life can be released on a conditional licence. Such conditions range considerably but usually involve close contact with a probation officer. The licence can be cancelled if the prisoner is considered to have suitably integrated into the community. On the other hand, if the prisoner is deemed to have behaved unsuitably, then the licence can be revoked and the person recalled to prison.

Those under life sentence in Northern Ireland have their case reviewed at regular intervals. There are annual reports written by prison officers which assess the prisoner's attitudes, behaviour, his or her relationship with family, work performance and any official education courses which have been taken. Reviews begin at three years into a life sentence and further reviews are held at six and ten years. While the prisoner is informed that their case is being reviewed, and may submit a written statement, they may not appear before the actual review board. Should the review prove unsuccessful the prisoner is not given the reason, or told in what respect it has been judged that the prisoner has failed. The major complaint of many loyalist prisoners is that this procedure gives no indication why the prisoner has been refused and therefore the individual cannot change their behaviour or attitudes. One ex-prisoner explained his major grievances,

"the board of assessment needs to be widened, because you've Doctors, Prison Officers, psychiatrists, middle to upper class people who don't know what the trouble is. The only violence they see is on T.V. or read about it in the newspapers. It's got to be spread out to take in such as Trade Unionists and the like. People who come from working class areas and are involved in their own way in the troubles, in trying to stop it."

We further explained that,

"the men really resent the fact that there's a psychiatrist on it. I mean we live in troubled times... if you're going to do that the argument is... every British soldier should have been treated in the last war... every prisoner of war should have been treated by a psychiatrist, asking them why did they fight each other... there's a war going on here but the British Government doesn't accept it so that's why they make a big issue of having a psychiatrist."

(Billy, ex prisoner, member of LPA)

Such reviews represent an overt form of social control within the prison to pressurise 'political' prisoners to conform to prison rules.

As Rolson and Tomlinson suggest,

"... it is clear that the main concern is to use the review procedure to control prisoners, particularly non-conforming or political prisoners."

(Rolson and Tomlinson, 1986:168)

The loyalist prisoner support groups had only limited success in bringing the case of SOSPs onto the main political agenda. Throughout the fieldwork period there was an intense series of lobbies by relatives of prisoners. By 1986, this precipitated the formation of a pressure group calling themselves 'Justice for Lifers'. They formulated their demands around the review procedure for lifers which they described as, "at best inadequate, and at worst atrocious" (Combat 22nd June 1985). They immediately sought to locate themselves in the community by claiming "This is a procedure affecting thousands of people, not only life-term prisoners but also wives, children parents and other relatives" (Combat 22nd June 1985). One of the major claims regarding SOSPs was that they often had a low key role in paramilitary action. Because they were under 18 at the time, and in terms of paramilitary action were given little responsibility, usually acting as 'look-outs', or making sure the route was clear. There may be some truth in this. The following was given as a 'typical' example

of a SOSP,

"Edward was a young lad of sixteen when joining a Loyalist paramilitary organisation. 'Men of so-called standing' were raising the blood level of young impressionable youths with their rhetoric of a sell out and a call to arms in defence of Ulster's cause. At the age of seventeen Edward received life for taking part in a bombing. He has now served eleven years in prison. At 28 the best years of his life are passing him by he has studied hard, in most other countries young men like this with some screening would be allowed their freedom"

The statement then gave some hint of the thinking of the Loyalist paramilitary group concerning the position of SOSPs,

"I have deep suspicions that these young men have become complete pawns in a dirty political game being played out in Ulster"

(Combat Vol 3, No.10)

Nevertheless, the Loyalist Prisoner workers regarded it as a victory when Ken Maginnis, the Official Unionist MP raised the matter in Westminster. He too argued that many SOSPs were gullible youngsters who had been exploited by more experienced and more hardened Loyalist paramilitary members. (Hansard 24/5/84 OAc. 1231-2; 23/10/84 c. 664-8)

Activity based on the position of lifers in Ballymacarrett was limited. There were several reasons for this. While those relatives engaged in the campaign were extremely vigorous the numbers involved in East Belfast were small. More importantly however although LPA workers were supposedly backing the campaign, the focal point was West Belfast. Not only this but its main activists were in the Loyalist Prisoners Welfare Association (LPWA) who worked most closely with the UVF. As such, old tensions and suspicious between East and West Belfast and between the UDA and the UVF undermined effective action.

This was far from the case in the other main campaign, in which LPA workers were involved, which surrounded the issue of segregation of loyalist and republican prisoners.

The official policy of the Northern Ireland Office is that the prison system should be fully 'integrated'. That is, that loyalist and republican prisoners should be mixed in prison accommodation. The justification for this is that it provides a more effective tool for prison control and that security is more easily maintained. Integration can also be seen as central to the criminalisation policy of the British government.

Loyalist protests in support of segregation actually began in 1980 when six loyalist prisoners went on hunger strike demanding the return of special (political) status and 'total segregation' from Republican prisoners in the Maze prison. There were further protests in 1981, most notably when loyalist prisoners staged a rooftop protest on the roof of a wing of Crumlin Road jail. Protests continued throughout the early 1980s, focused on the Maze prison (referred to by loyalist prisoners as 'Long Kesh'). Here the UDA claimed that their members were repeatedly receiving death threats from Republican prisoners. Protests culminated in October 1982 when loyalist prisoners smashed over 200 cells in the prison. There was also at this time the first attempt to involve unionist politicians in the campaign. It was supported by a few DUP Assembly representatives but almost immediately there was criticism from within the UDA of both the OUP and the DUP, for their lack of identification with loyalist prisoners demands.

The LPA continued the campaign. In Ballymacarrett they distributed leaflets and made announcements in pubs and clubs. The core of their arguments were simple - that Loyalist prisoners were outnumbered by around 2 to 1 by Republican prisoners, and were therefore constantly in danger. As one UDA member expressed it,

"to me it's quite simple, you have a divided society here with two communities brought up with a

different background, different values... we are kept apart... you have a war situation here with hatred, bitterness and deep scars... Now how can you take the people who are supposed to be at the extremes of both communities on opposite sides of the war... how can you expect them to be integrated and accept it."

he argued his case forcibly,

"there is separation of schools here, separation of churches, housing... well here we have the extremists in the prison and they're going to force them together - it's impossible. All we asked for is not political status, not that, although I think we should have that as well, all we ask is that prisoners should be under the same prison rules but separate, not separate prisons."

(Michael, UDA Officer, June 1985)

There was continued friction between Unionist politicians and those active in LPA in Ballymacarrett. The focus of this was that many in the UDA felt that the 'politicians' were ignoring them, or not giving the support they felt they deserved. As one Loyalist Prisoner Aid worker put it,

"Paisley, Molyneaux and the rest of them - they've all come to fame on our backs, the backs of ordinary working class loyalists and now they're sticking their heads in the sand hoping we'll all go away. These are the same men who shouted 'Ulster will fight'. They're part of the reason that so many are inside in the first place."

(Billy, UDA member and LPA worker)

Another UDA member aired similar views when he said,

"I would like to see the Loyalist people having one party. The official unionists and the DUP aren't worth tuppence. One is trying to outdo the other one in everything. The only time they've come together is when Sinn Fein went to the poll in the council elections... but they don't worry about us... I'd love to see one of them doing time."

(Clive, UDA member, East Belfast)

While a third loyalist ex-prisoner explained it this way,

"When you come out of jail you understand a wee bit more... I think the loyalist people are starting to wise up a bit. The days of Bill Craig and his 'shoot to kill'... men are still inside because of his sort and the politicians couldn't give a shit... they don't care about the ordinary

five-eight. If the Upper Newtownards Road (upper middle class area in East Belfast) is happy, they're happy."

(John, ex-Loyalist prisoner)

Such views were extremely common amongst UDA ex-prisoners themselves. Here one expressed his views on the relationship between prisoners and politicians,

"men need representation on the outside... we've never got it from the M.P.s so welfare groups have to do what they can on behalf of the men... we've gone to great pains trying to get politicians involved but again they don't want to know."

(Albert, ex-Loyalist prisoner)

One gave this view of Unionist politicians,

"they're good at beating the big drum... agitating... a lot of them got elected on it but I've never seen them doing anything for Loyalist prisoners... I've never heard them making any sensible statements on behalf of Loyalist prisoners."

(Chris, ex-Loyalist prisoner, personal correspondence July 1985)

Another said,

"the men rely on welfare groups, very little on MPs, councillors, politicians. You could write them down on a bus ticket the numbers of politicians who helped. The welfare groups are relied upon to put our case..."

(Billy, ex-Loyalist prisoner, member of LPA)

One ex-prisoner expressed the basic difference in perspectives between prisoners and loyalist politicians as follows,

"how can you go to politicians when they just think you're a criminal."

(John, ex-Loyalist prisoner)

Such views clearly illustrate the tensions between loyalist prisoners and Unionist politicians. However those active in Loyalist welfare groups were rather more pragmatic in their outlook, as this member argued,

"when you're in a prisoner's welfare group you go out and look for whatever support you can get... on the supergrass thing, to be fair Ian Paisley condemned it, so I can't take that away from him,

but the official Unionists didn't. I think they thought the supergrass system was 'dead on', the same as internment... so I suppose I feel closer to the DUP, but only because they're the best of a bad lot."

(Robert, LPA worker, East Belfast)

Another UDA welfare worker was in agreement

"I suppose I'd find myself more in line with the DUP than the Official Unionists, but neither has a monopoly of brains or nice people... the DUP is sort of half way between us and the official unionists because the DUP don't necessarily accept the authority of Westminster... most of the people in the UDA would vote DUP because they come from working class areas and they think they'll do more for them."

(Victor, LPA worker, East Belfast)

By continued pressure through lobbying, rallies and parades, Loyalist welfare groups kept the issue high on the agenda throughout 1984 and 1985. Government opposition continued. Firstly, the prisoners demands ran counter to their policy of 'criminalisation'. Secondly the official response was that segregation would allow paramilitary organisations to operate in a 'cohesive and effective way' (Belfast Telegraph, 22nd August 1983) and segregation would allow for effective escape plans to be made. There were also claims that Loyalist prisoners were exaggerating the degree to which they were in danger.

The campaign was eventually taken on board by several Unionist politicians most notably Peter Robinson of the DUP, who appeared at several rallies with leading paramilitary figures. As Bruce noted,

"when loyalist prisoners were campaigning for segregation from republicans (a campaign which involved the tactic so loudly condemned when used by republicans: the hunger strike), DUP spokesmen were conspicuously more active than the officials in the promotion of the prisoners' case."

(Bruce 1986:142)

The role of the campaign was crucial. It was effectively organised by the loyalist paramilitary groups, the politicians only becoming involved in its latter stages. More importantly in



Ballymacarrett it effectively linked prisoners, their relatives and friends, and prisoners support groups to the wider community. It also moved the frame of reference from the individual experience of Loyalist prisoners, to communal or community experience and thus gave the UDA a more legitimate role in Ballymacarrett. The campaign also highlighted class divisions and tensions within loyalism, and the mistrust the paramilitaries had of politicians. This can also be seen in the positions adopted concerning 'supergrasses'. On this issue too there were clear divisions surrounding claims of lack of support from Unionist politicians. Again it was the Official Unionists who came under most criticism. For example in 1984 Alan Chambers, the publicity officer for the East Belfast Unionist Association argued that,

"it is a nonsense to claim that because a substantial number of people charged under supergrass evidence have been acquitted, the system is useless, unfair or ineffective."

(The Voice of Ulster, June 1984:4)

Such views brought criticism from those active in LPA in Ballymacarrett. One man who had himself been arrested on supergrass evidence explained,

"it was sold to Loyalists as something that would destroy the IRA and in the end Loyalists became deeply involved... Harold McCusker said he didn't like the supergrass system but if it saved lives in his constituency that was OK. What they (unionist politicians) are really saying is that we don't like it but the police are going to use it and we can't go against the police... the politicians refused to look at the principle of the thing... what they were actually saying was, well they may not actually be guilty of this, but they're in the UDA or the UVF, but to hell with it let's get them out of the road."

He continued,

"Unionist politicians have never been seen to stand up and say - that's wrong. it doesn't matter whether its affecting loyalists or republicans, as an issue it's wrong... plastic bullets... I can

understand that if security forces find themselves in a particular situation they have to use them... what I don't understand is that if the police aim plastic bullets at people's heads then that's wrong."

He was also aware of the obvious comeback to such views within Ballymacarrett,

"some people say I should be on the side of the Provos cause that's how they talk... the trouble is too many Unionists are blinkered... they don't want anything better, they just want to keep what they have... but what they have isn't good enough."

(Robert, LPA worker, East Belfast)

While Robert's viewpoint was treated with some suspicion, criticism of Unionist politicians stance on supergrasses was widespread, as this statement indicates,

"Loyalists have been betrayed. Not by those who have been seen as traditional enemies, but by elected representatives who, in private supported them but now publicly castigate them. This is not an entirely new phenomena, but is a serious attempt by the two major Unionist parties to intensify their support for the supergrass system, each in their own way to obtain maximum support for their own law and order programmes... A policy of 'Anything you can push we can push harder.'"

(Combat February 1984:1)

Issues such as 'separation' and 'supergrasses' had important consequences for the political consciousness of loyalist prisoners, their families, UDA members and LPA workers. They were in some ways however very special cases. Neither of the issues reflected all prisoners and their families. It is important therefore to consider the 'everyday' activities of Loyalist prison welfare groups. The LPA provide a wide range of 'day to day' support functions for the families of members in prison. These range from simple financial support, to the provision of food parcels and daily newspapers to those in prison. In recent years they have also provided summer holidays for the children of prisoners. One of the most basic

functions they provide is to arrange transport for prison visits. One journalist described graphically those taking the UDA bus to the Maze prison,

"A Dodge so old it 'once carried the wounded in the blitz', which now trundles off to the jail three times a week from the UDA office and the Shankill. There were hard benches along the sides and folding wooden chairs to put in the central aisle for the overflow of passengers. Most of them were women, a cross section of the poor. It was bitter cold and the bus unheated but only one woman was dressed for it in a tatty old fur; the others, in their serious efforts to look nice, had put on pointed high heels and freshly ironed jeans with miserably inadequate, if gaily coloured, jackets.

(Belfrage, 1988: 219-220)

Such facilities provided the UDA with further legitimation within Ballymacarett and it also provided the organisation with a reason to recruit new members. Often Loyalist Prisoners Aid workers had quite limited organisational goals. As one leading worker explained,

"What I try to do is to make sure that their (prisoners) families are looked after to the best of my ability. Now the most important thing to us and them is obviously to get to see their families.

(Victor, LPA worker, East Belfast)

Another explained his role,

"I try to keep in close contact with the families, small things... so a child's birthday I try to make sure they get a card, even prisoners I make sure we publish dates (birthdays) in our paper. That mightn't sound much but that's very important to prisoners that they're not forgotten."

(Robert, LPA worker, East Belfast)

Loyalist prisoners Aid also provided a means to recruit fringe members and for ex-prisoners to become reinvolved with the UDA. One loyalist Prisoners Aid worker explained,

"When a prisoner is released the first thing we would do is get him a job... see when he's come out as far as we're concerned he's done his bit... but you get quite a few coming back and saying 'well I'm done with that end of it' but I want to help the guys that are left."

(Victor, LPA worker, East Belfast)

a newly released prisoner explained,

"I've haven't got too involved since I got out because I've got a wife and a little boy now... but I've done a bit, I've help collect for Loyalist prisoners, help run a dance down the club and sold some tickets."

(Richard, ex-Loyalist Prisoner)

However in Ballymacarret the activities of LPA workers often expanded beyond this in the form of material provision for prisoners. As the wife of one prisoner put it,

"I'm not sure what I'd do without them. Like they send him clothes, jeans and boots and sometimes running shoes that I couldn't buy."

(Janet, East Belfast Resident)

Sometimes UDA involvement would go further as this LPA worker explained,

"On a few occassions the sons is growing up and getting a wee bit out of hand... well we would go down, not to lay a heavy hand, because they're not our kids. But we'd go down and say 'look give your mother a break', 'your father's inside, do you want to end up with him?' We would sometimes take these kids on free holidays and the organisation pays for it."

(Victor, LPA worker, East Belfast)

The LPA are, of course, also responsible for the 'welfare' of those imprisoned and their behaviour during their sentence. There is a long tradition of sociological research into the effects of imprisonment. Most recently three major approaches have emerged. Firstly there are those structuralists who seek to establish links between capitalist development and types of punishment (Foucault 1977, Fitzgerald 1977) Secondly several writers have focused on the fact that traditional studies include virtually nothing about women (cf Carlen, et al 1985, Morriss 1987, Eaton 1988). Finally there are those studies which have taken a social-psychological approach which mainly consider how individuals adopt survival tactics in prison (cf Banister et al 1973,

Heskin 1974, Bolton 1976) In part these build upon classic works which suggest that prisoners like other inmates of total institutions are subject to increasing dependence (Goffman 1961).

From the above literature it is possible to identify several key features of those serving sentences (particularly long term sentences). Loyalist prisoners, (like their republican counterparts) have adopted fairly sophisticated strategies for coping. There are two key aspects. Firstly how loyalist prisoners have dealt with this 'increasing dependence' with the institution. Secondly how the links are maintained between 'prisoners' and the wider community in Ballymacarrett. In the context of this thesis the latter is most important, however it is necessary to briefly consider the former as this cannot be seen in isolation. A key feature of the LPA is its ability to link UDA members within prison to the community outside. As one UDA member explained,

"A guy's brought in off the street, he's lost, like a fish out of water. Never been in prison before. So if some guy walks up to him and says 'what's your name', 'come on', 'there's tobacco there's milk, tea-bags and sugar, it calms them. He says these people are going to be my friends and that's important."

(Tom, UDA member, East Belfast)

An important part of this was a well organised structure within the prison. An ex-prisoner recalled his experience,

"There's always a commander... if you were on remand and you were the commander and were sentenced you have a man picked out at least a month before your trial and you actually stand down... there's always a well organised command structure... it's the same when you are sentenced."

(John, ex-Loyalist Prisoner)

One of the major roles of the prison in any society is to force the prisoner to conform to prison rules. Often this is done by individualising them and by channelling this into forms which are

acceptable to the prison regime. A common feature of prison systems is how they discourage forms of collective identity and suppress any form of collective action. Several writers have conveyed this experience within the British penal system (Boyle 1977, 1984, McVicar 1974, Devlin 1985).

Several UDA members indicated that there was a strong awareness of political identity and collectiveness amongst ex-Loyalist prisoners in Ballymacarrett,

"inside we are still fighting the same war as the people on the outside."

(James, ex-Loyalist Prisoner)

"we're not criminals, we're no different from the men who were sent inside 10 years ago, some of which are still inside... no one called them criminals.... we never were and never will be criminals, at the end of the day we were all fighting under the one banner."

(Stuart, ex-Loyalist Prisoner)

"when I went in, in 1975, I was 19 years of age, and I'd never been in trouble with the police before. So I didn't regard myself as a criminal... I believed in what I was doing. I thought it was necessary to help save our country."

(Billy, ex-Loyalist Prisoner)

The following statement, although the person was actually describing prison conditions, clearly illustrates the differences UDA members perceive between themselves and 'ordinary' prisoners,

"The British government is calling everybody in here a criminal, but they make the difference when it suits them. 'D' wing in 'Crum' (Crumlin Road Jail) have a colour T.V. and birds in their cages. They're allowed a record player... whereas a loyalist on remand in the Crumlin has absolutely nothing, no facilities whatsoever. They are criminals because they're in there for raping kids of 2 or 3 years old... our people are in A+C wings for defending their country."

(Clive, ex-Loyalist Prisoner)

This had led several prisoners and ex-prisoners to radically rethink their political position. As this ex-prisoner expressed it,

"we've been educated in the last 10 years, by people being taken before courts which are illegal".

(Billy, ex-Loyalist Prisoner)

Another expressed it this way,

"Protestant working class politics have grown up with the troubles, its been a process of self education... we've seen the wrongs regarding unionist politicians... it's like the time when the Maze prison was burnt we went to see Paisley and ask him for the lend of some of his buses to get relatives to the Maze and he wouldn't lend us them."

(Chris, ex-Loyalist Prisoner)

Several loyalist ex-prisoners described their own personal experiences of this 'self-education'. One of them put it as follows,

"It (prison) allowed me the 'hub of the wheel' effect as I like to think of it, where you're more aware of what's going on on the outside than the people on the outside. Because you're sitting watching the world go by, being fed information whether it's from the T.V. or visits or just by discussion amongst yourselves. You learn."

(Paul, ex-Loyalist Prisoner)

Another recalled his experience,

"above all I had to lie in bed at night with no-one to discuss things with. I said right there are a couple of things I've gotta do. Firstly I've got to beat this sentence, learn to live in here... Number two, we've got to look at why we're in here... that was one of the biggest traumas of my life. It wasn't overnight, and it was long and hurtful... I had to question, not just what I had done, but why I had done it and who wanted me to do it."

He expanded on the result of this,

"I'm saying to myself, 'hold on a wee minute, I don't know the half of this, they never taught me this at school, this is new 'and then the thoughts which happen, really questioning and searching thoughts."

(Victor, LPA worker, East Belfast)

This often involved the questioning of taken for granted values, especially as many UDA members saw themselves as 'fighting for Ulster'. This man's views summarise the position well,

"I was in there because I was fighting for my country, but see every night there's a man with a crown in his hat shutting your door... it makes you think seriously what it's all about."

(Billy, ex-Loyalist Prisoner, member of LPA)

Few loyalist ex-prisoners who were interviewed claimed to have lost their commitment to 'the cause'. However the political socialisation within prison meant that their commitment was often mediated in a special way. For example the influence of ex-prisoners was apparent in preparing a policy document 'Innocent' which was widely distributed to UDA members in 1985. The main body of the document deals with what people can expect if they are arrested, the procedures within 'holding centres' concerning visits to the doctor, photographs, fingerprints and interview techniques. It also deals with how to conduct oneself while being interviewed and rights to silence etc. However the document also contains several passages which strongly indicate the thinking of those who prepared it. For example, at one point it declares,

"Citizens of our Province which is closely linked to what is supposedly the most democratic society in the free world find themselves the victim of draconian legislation. Legislation which when used in foreign countries, especially Eastern bloc countries is criticised and condemned by British politicians. These same politicians are prepared to see these same laws operate in Ulster! Every person in Ulster should know his basic rights if the situation should ever arise when they are faced with the prospect of being arrested under the PTA (Prevention of Terrorism Act). Remember you do not need to be guilty of anything to find yourself in this predicament."

(Innocent n.d. : 2)

it continues,

"The time was when the Loyalists didn't care what was going on in the interrogation centres. Indeed the stories of brutality etc. related by Republican information sources were regarded as pure propaganda and not to be believed. Others who believed the brutality stories said the Republicans



were only getting what they deserved. The thinking loyalist should have by now re-assessed the situation."

(Ibid: 2)

One of the document's final passages gives a strong indication of contemporary thinking with the UDA,

"The true loyalists of this country are under attack by all sides. Shunned by the ordinary citizens until they require help, ignored by politicians who once used them. Tortured physically and psychologically by the security forces."

(Ibid:4)

Of course not all Loyalist prisoners, or ex-prisoners, adopted these views. Those in Ballymacarrett who did however tended to gravitate to Loyalist Prisoners Aid or other 'welfare' branches within the UDA structure. This political awareness and sense of solidarity was also transmitted to relatives and friends. One women explained,

"My Billy is more certain he is right than when he went in. He hasn't really changed his ideas at all."

(Juliet, East Belfast Resident)

Another,

"he's much more 'political' than he was. When he sees me he wants to know what's going on. What so and so said about this or that. It's hard to tell him because I don't really pay much attention to those sort of things."

(Janet, East Belfast resident)

A third had this to say,

"he's changed a lot since he went in. We had a row at my visit. I told him he was talking like a fenian... going on about socialism."

(Rosemary, East Belfast resident)

It would be wrong to suggest that all (or even the majority), of UDA members supported this 'radical' line of thinking but the views of the more 'radical' thinkers in the UDA did find an airing in the organisation throughout 1984 to 1986. Another example of this can be

found in the following statement from the UDA magazine 'Ulster',

"Some people have told us that as a community group we should 'keep out of politics'. But one of our aims as a community group is to widen the debate from mere constitutional issues to more pressing social issues which many Protestants and Catholics face.

Many of those, including our politicians, who have tried to stifle the political debate, who have tried to claim groups such as ours are 'disloyal' are the same ones who stand by ignoring the needs of the people... politics concerns every aspect of our lives -our personal relationships, the electric bill, power structures, the papers we read, the education we receive and who we receive it with, the dampness in the house - all deeply political.

Community issues are not the preserve of 'commies' or 'rebels', and politics are not the preserve of politicians."

(Ulster, December 1985:2)

There were still many UDA members however who saw themselves simply as 'soldiers'. Their views are well represented by the following statements from UDA members,

"the fact is we feel under pressure. There are different pressures but one is a united Ireland which I feel is being forced on us so the only alternative we have is to defend what we believe in. You feel you're fighting in a war."

(Graham, UDA member, East Belfast)

"I believe we have to fight against Republicanism... everybody in the organisation does. Everybody knows they're trying to push us into a united Ireland... that's the main reason I joined."

(Henry, UDA member, East Belfast)

Some expanded on the reason why they were prepared to fight,

"The Protestant people are the majority in this country but we're treated as a minority. If Catholics want something then they've got good grounds... they go along and say 'we are the minority we want this or that' and the rest of the world turns round and says 'look at that poor minority getting hammered... there isn't one thing since the troubles began that the minority have lost. They haven't given up one thing."

(Geoff, UDA member, East Belfast)

Another had similar views,

"you show me where the Republicans have give a fraction of an inch or anything... the famous loyalist slogan is 'not an inch' isn't it, but it's the republicans who haven't given a fraction of an inch... we've lost our parliament, our police force..."

(Paul, UDA member, East Belfast)

Such 'militaristic' values still had an appeal for many. As one member put it,

"while you're out on the street I suppose there's a sort of romanticism comes into it... great you're fighting for the cause."

(Henry, UDA member, East Belfast)

Another explained,

"I went out of my way to get involved. There was no real pressure put on me... I asked to get in... Then they asked me to do something for the organisation which I agreed to."

(Graham, UDA member, East Belfast)

There have been significant structural changes in the military organisation of the UDA in response to such views. Concerned initially with growing political support and more lately with the Anglo-Irish agreement there has been increased pressure from within the organisation to respond by adopting a more military role. These feelings have been increasingly articulated in the pages of 'Ulster', since the early 1980s. As one statement put it,

"The only way that we can fight to preserve our destiny is to take control of our own affairs."

(Ulster, March 1981:2)

A member of the inner council explained the development in the following way,

"First of all I think that there's greater and greater polarisation between the two communities. The turning point was really the 1981 Republican hunger strike. Since then there's been a growing polarisation and we don't see anything in the foreseeable future to close the gap."

(J.McMichael, interview, UDA, HQ, May 1985)

The UDA leadership initially concluded that 'the Loyalist people want a Loyalist army beyond what they see as established controlled groups'. The Ulster Defence Force (UDF) came into existence as a 'reserve army' to be used in a 'doomsday situation'. They were established from within the UDA as a small 'professional army' which were to be trained in map-reading, target-shooting, tracking, and communication and significantly, political education. The new body was described to me as an 'officer corp' or a 'commando unit'. The reason for this new unit was explained in 'Ulster' in April 1985,

"the Loyalist paramilitaries have realised the need for a tough, well trained and disciplined army to defend Ulster... we have been used by politicians for too long. We are regrouping and reorganising."  
(Ulster, April 1985)

It was later described in this way,

"The Ulster Defence Force was formed in 1982 as part of the UDA's reorganisation programme, comprised largely of young men, led by senior members with ex-army qualifications, this comparatively-new group is a well trained force which many believe is being held in readiness for a potential 'Doomsday' situation in Ulster."  
(Ulster, July/August 1986)

This notion of a 'final conflict' featured in the thinking of several more militarily orientated UDA members in Ballymacarrett. One officer explained his views,

"we're not heading towards reconciliation but away from it... things are moving towards a civil war... people are beginning to accept the police won't beat the Provos. They're also beginning to realise that the police will do what they're told by the Government even if that government is in a conspiracy with the South... people here are feeling cut-off from the establishment that they're given all their loyalty to."  
(Nigel, UDA Officer, East Belfast)

The UDA's military campaign was however headed by another grouping, the Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF). This grouping first came to prominence in 1973 but for many years its exact composition was

unclear. Following the Republican hunger strikes in 1981, the relationship between the UFF and the UDA became clearer. The then UDA commander illuminated the relationship,

"The UFF consist of a group of people who are members of the Ulster Defence Association and they decided that the only solution to the problem is a purely military one. And their attitude is, well to remove active Republicans and active nationalists who are trying to overthrow what exists here in the form of a government. People who are assassinating or bombing Ulster people. The UFF feel they are justified in taking military action against them. Now, if that's the type of action they do stay strictly to, and do bomb and shoot only active Republicans, no way would the UDA disapprove of it. We would have no objection to it whatsoever."

(A. Tyrrie cited in Marxism Today, Dec 1981)

Another leading member explained it this way,

"I don't believe in the use of violence to bring about political ends, but I've quite a number of friends in prison and I certainly wouldn't condemn them or try to judge them or say they were wrong for what they did. They did acts that they believed were for the greater good. They did things that they wouldn't do in a normal society. If they were living in Exeter or Cambridge, the same situation wouldn't arise."

(J.McMichael, cited in F.S.M. May 1987:28)

These views were reinforced by the 'coverage' given by 'Ulster' to UFF activities. The clearest example of this in recent years was when the UFF attempted to assassinate the Sinn Fein President in March 1986.

The next months copy of 'Ulster' justified the shooting as follows,

"Adams has continually - and will almost certainly continue - to support the use of violence and the armed struggle of the IRA. He refuses to condemn any action which is carried out in their name. So what else did he expect, other than to be a legitimate target for those who are bitterly opposed to all the IRA stands for? We feel that in this instance, there is justification for the elimination of a Provisional enemy."

(Ulster, April 1984:2)

It is important to try and establish the extent to which this thinking has permeated the wider community in Ballymacarrett. The same copy of

"I CAN'T UNDERSTAND THE MENTALITY OF ANYONE WANTING TO SHOOT A NICE PERSON LIKE ME!

..... AFTER ALL WHAT HAVE I EVER DONE TO DESERVE IT?"



Ulster carried an interview with a 'UDA Spokesman', and a cartoon showing Adams as the person responsible for the planning of several of the more notorious incidents in the IRA campaign. Both were copied and widely circulated in pubs and clubs in Ballymacarrett. The cartoon is shown in full on the next page. Part of the 'interview' justifying the shooting reads,

"I would agree that sectarian killing is both futile and wrong, but I would not regard the shooting of Adams as 'sectarian'. I would find it hard to swallow that the people who shot Adams did so because he is a Catholic, but rather that he is the leader of a Republican terror-organisation, and therefore a combatant - or 'solider' in that conflict. It is unfortunate that the violence continues in Ulster, but the PIRA holds the key to ending it. As long as the IRA continues to wage war on Ulster Protestants then it is inevitable that the Protestant community feels under siege, and that some young men will go out to do battle with the aggressors."

(Ulster, April 1984:6, hand-circular East Belfast, 1984)

The overall tone of the article was that it is reported with a certain degree of pride in being able to mount the operation so effectively, and that the attack was justified in terms of the person being a known 'republican'. This may be fairly obvious in the case of Gerry Adams but has been a consistent feature of the reporting of UFF assassinations since. For example, after a killing in November 1984, 'Ulster' carried a statement from the UFF,

"Early this morning a unit of the Ulster Freedom Fighters assassinated (named person), an intelligence officer of the fascist-terror organisation - Provisional IRA (named person) posed as a representative for Sinn Fein and attended successive Sinn Fein annual conferences in Dublin. Our campaign to seek out and destroy members of Republican terror-organisations will continue..."

(Ulster, December 1984:7)

This statement demonstrates clearly just how wide ranging and flexible the notion of 'active Republican' can be. It is also notable that in

the shooting of Adams, the UFF had arguably engaged in their greatest ever propaganda act. However there was still a great deal of effort put into justifying the act even within Ballymacarrett.

However the relationship between residents and the UDA in Ballymacarrett is often determined more by day to day events than by spectacular military activity. The relationship is a complex one, because, as this chapter indicates, the UDA in Ballymacarrett is composed of a number of groupings often pulling in contradictory directions. This was complicated still further as the groupings were far from discrete in terms of membership. Michael, the UDA officer, for example, was active in the ULDP and welfare sections of the UDA. However he fully supported the UDA's military role which he saw as necessary, if unfortunate. The hierarchical structure of the organisation also meant that members sometimes found themselves carrying out activities they were neither committed to, nor understood the value of. For example in February 1987, the UDA in Ballymacarrett (along with other areas) helped distribute free food from EEC 'food mountains'. In Ballymacarrett the food was distributed from a local church hall and involved UDA members working closely with local community workers and the Salvation Army. Externally this was another situation which helped legitimise the welfare role of the UDA. Internally however it involved using the resources of the younger UDA members, many of whom were much more committed to the UDA's military role than its welfare or political one. There were also tensions concerning direction with those UDA members who had joined the UDF. Externally they were projected as an 'elite grouping'. Internally however it attracted the younger more military orientated members. While many of these understood, and were highly enthusiastic about the physical aspects of the training, they could not understand why they



had to attend 'political education' classes at which for example, they learnt about Cuchulainn and the specific interpretation of 'Ulster' history previously mentioned in this chapter.

Since its formation the UDA's major task has been to legitimise itself in Ballymacarrett. Two key trends have emerged to do this. Firstly there is that grouping which supports a strong organisation to 'protect' the community in Ballymacarrett, even if at times this meant 'offensive' rather than 'defensive' action. Others in the UDA have become more involved in welfare, political and community actions. It was the contradictions between these two elements which helped 'de-legitimise' the UDA in Ballymacarrett and reinforce their reputation as 'cowboys'. The UDA in Ballymacarrett had many faces and facets. Their activities ranged from community work to sectarian assassination, and from promoting a form of reconciliatory politics to preparing for a 'doomsday situation' and civil war. This manifested itself in the local arena as an organisation often seen to be openly divided and pulling in different directions. So for example those seeking to impose their military activity in the community sought to do so by punishing 'petty criminals' such as burglars and glue-sniffers. This role found little support in East Belfast and any form of alternative justice was largely opposed by local residents. Others ran 'dances' and staffed 'advice centres'. These members, (always the weaker faction) wanted to direct the UDA towards involvement in local issues, such as housing, unemployment, facilities for young people and the elderly. The main problem was that those active in statutory welfare agencies and those working on a volunteer basis, found it extremely hard to differentiate between those UDA members who wanted to hold meetings to make young people aware of their benefits, and those in the UDA who threatened to 'knee-cap' them

for 'glue-sniffing'. Another example of the distrust of those active in local housing associations was given in Chapter Four. The problem was not extenuated by the esoteric political messages coming from the leadership and the grossly simplified 'exoteric' appeal to the mass membership. It is important to understand this in the following chapters which consider the 'political' characteristics of Ballymacarrett and the UDA's response to the Anglo-Irish Agreement.

## PART III

They don't know about us in the Guardian or the Sunday Times. They don't want to know...we're just loyalist extremists. We're never reasonable and we're never recognised. We're just a mass of extremists from West Belfast and they think that stretches from the Mourne Mountains to the Giants Causeway. They think there's a million of us swarming all over the place, smothering all the wee innocent Catholics. But there aren't. There's a handful of us and we're just fighting to survive...

Look at me, do I look like a rich, influential member of the Protestant ascendancy?

\*\*\*\*\*

Tom Allen, a character in Graham Reid's play  
'The Hidden Curriculum'

## CHAPTER SEVEN SURVEY OF BALLYMACARRETT RESIDENTS

This chapter presents the results of the small scale survey of Ballymacarrett residents, which was introduced in Chapter Three. A target sample of 300 residents were randomly selected from the electoral register for the two innermost wards of East Belfast. From this sample of 300, 154 interviews of satisfactory standard were obtained. Those interviews which were unsuccessful can be accounted for as follows, in table 7.1.

TABLE 7.1 REASONS FOR UNSUCCESSFUL INTERVIEWS

Unsuccessful interviews	NO	%
Not at home	17	5.7
Vacant, demolished	11	3.7
Refusal	105	35.0
Institution	2	0.7
Ill or Senile	3	1.0
On Holiday - Away	8	2.6
Successful interviews	154	51.3
Total	300	100

Of the 105 respondents shown as refusals, 96 were unwilling to start the interview, the remaining 9 answered less than half the Likert items. If electors who could not be contacted are excluded from the calculation the response rate was 59.5%.

Likert items

In the questionnaire (see Appendix A) questions 9-33, and 34-65 were Likert items. Here, a statement was put to the respondent, and the person stated how much they agreed or disagreed with it. I followed the system used by the Northern Ireland Attitude Survey (NIAS, based on 1978 responses) and offered respondents an even number of choices, thus excluding the 'uncertain' or 'don't know' categories. This was done in the hope that respondents would opt for either agreement or disagreement.

Social Class, Socio-Economic Status

As Ballymacarrett is a tightly knit working class community traditionally centered around the shipyard it made little sense to classify occupations according to the Registrar Generals Classification of Occupations. I decided to use a classification based on that devised by Blackburn and Mann (1979) when studying the working class labour market in Peterborough. This resulted in the following eight-point classification:

**TABLE 7.2 OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF RESPONDENTS**

1. Registrar General Social Class I, II and III  
non-manual, clerical other than routine, Professional.
2. Skilled not Registrar General Social Class III, but a restricted category including jobs for which apprentice training is available e.g. fitters, turners, carpenters, bricklayers.
3. High Semi-skilled, specialist work without formal training but with a lengthy learning period, e.g. welders, testers, high routine clerical.

4. Medium Semi-skilled, jobs with some measure of precision and knowledge but which can be picked up quickly, e.g. drivers, storeperson with clerical duties, complex machining.
5. Low Semi-skilled, precision of movement but with a negligible learning period, e.g. mates, assemblers, routine machining.
6. Unskilled, neither accuracy or knowledge required e.g. cleaners, labourers.
7. Other Housewife, UDR member, RUC member, retired.
8. Unemployed

#### Reaction to the Questionnaire

At the end of the interview, I noted several details concerning the interview itself. The length of interviews ranged from 12 to 67 minutes. The 'conversational ability' of respondents was 'good' in 51.1% of the interviews, 39% were 'average' and 9.5 were recorded as 'poor'. This compares with 43.5%, 45% and 11.4% respectively for the NIAS in 1978.

One criterion for judging the success of a questionnaire is usually thought to be the attitude of the respondent. This is shown below and again compared favourably with the NIAS. Firstly the attitudes of respondents before the interview.

TABLE 7.3 ATTITUDE OF RESPONDENTS BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

		NIAS results
Attitude	(%)	(%)
Very interested	24.0	21.1
Interested	56.0	54.0
Not very interested	16.0	20.9
Antagonistic	2.0	0.5
Nervous, uncertain	2.0	3.4

Secondly the attitude of respondents after the interview,

TABLE 7.4 ATTITUDE OF RESPONDENTS AFTER THE INTERVIEW

		NIAS results
%	(%)	(%)
No change	73.0	66.0
More interested, helpful	18.0	28.5
Less interested, but still helpful	5.0	2.7
Hurrying to get it over	4.0	2.4
Other	0.0	0.2

### Results

The respondents were randomly selected except that 50% of those selected were women. Of those who completed questionnaires 87 (56.5%) were male and 67 (43.5%) were female. This represents a male response rate of 58% and a female rate of 44.7%. Some basic demographic details

of Ballymacarrett were outlined in Chapter Four.

Added to this can be the age structure of those responding. This can be compared to the 1981 census returns for the Ballymacarrett and Mount wards to give some idea of how representative the response was.

**TABLE 7.5 AGE STRUCTURE OF RESPONDENTS COMPARED WITH 1981 CENSUS**

Age	Sample	Ballymacarrett ward(1981)	Mount ward
18-24	18.4	12.1	11.8
25-29	24.3	5.4	5.9
30-34	13.2	4.9	4.8
35-39	5.9	4.8	4.7
40-44	6.6	4.9	5.3
45-49	9.2	4.9	5.1
50-59	11.8	12.4	12.0
Over 60	10.5	24.2	26.7

As can be seen the sample was slightly over represented at the younger end of the scale and slightly under represented at the older end of the range. This may well be explained by the small sample size and perhaps the unwillingness of some older members of the community to take part in completing the questionnaire. There are also in Ballymacarrett distinct 'clusters' of older residents, (eg sheltered housing), which may well have been missed by random selection based on electoral registers. The occupational classification of respondents was as follows:



TABLE 7.6 OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF RESPONDENTS

Occupational status	No	%
Registrar General I, II and III	2	1.3
Skilled	18	11.7
High Semi-Skilled	10	6.5
Med Semi-Skilled	27	17.5
Low Semi-Skilled	16	10.4
Unskilled	23	14.9
Other	21	13.6
Unemployed	34	22.1
Missing	3	1.0
	n= 154	100%

Those who were unemployed were asked their last job, and the pattern which emerged was as follows:

TABLE 7.7 LAST JOB OF THOSE CURRENTLY UNEMPLOYED

Occupational status	No	%
Skilled	10	35.8
High Semi-skilled	4	14.3
Med Semi-skilled	4	14.3
Low Semi-skilled	4	14.3
Unskilled	6	21.4

There are two key features which emerge from this result. Employment in Ballymacarrett remains based in skilled and semi-skilled, largely male labour. However as can also be seen from the overall

unemployment rate of 22.1% the area has not been immune from economic recession. Furthermore within the unemployed, skilled workers (those whom the anti-imperialist left would describe as a labour aristocracy), have suffered high unemployment rates representing 35.8% of those unemployed.

Another key feature of local social structure in Ballymacarrett was its physical continuity. This has already been referred to in Chapter Four. However to repeat its key features, 52.6% of respondents had lived in East Belfast for more than 25 years, while a further 34.6% had lived there for over 15 years. In addition to this 37.7% of those interviewed had lived in the same neighbourhood for over 25 years, and 26.6% had lived in the same neighbourhood for over 15 years. There was also much evidence to suggest extended kinship patterns remained reasonably intact in Ballymacarrett. Over a third (34.4%) of those interviewed saw relatives, apart from those whom they lived with, on a daily basis. A further 18.8% saw relatives several times a week, while another 34.4% visited relatives weekly. Given this strong physical solidarity one would expect in broad terms a great deal of cultural homogeneity. However it is the variations within this that we shall now examine.

Firstly, it is necessary to establish political support and identity in Ballymacarrett in broad terms. Table 7.7 shows the response to primary national identity in Ballymacarrett. In his attitude survey in 1968, Rose identified the three most significant 'national' labels amongst Protestants in Northern Ireland. The NIAS in 1978 suggests the tri-partite distinction had collapsed. The overall change is illustrated in Table 7.8.

TABLE 7.8 NATIONAL IDENTITY IN NORTHERN IRELAND 1968-78

National Identity	Protestants %	
	Rose (1968)	NIAS (1978)
British	39	67
Irish	20	8
Ulster	32	20

In general terms this was the pattern which emerged in Ballymacarrett,

TABLE 7.9 NATIONAL IDENTITY IN BALLYMACARRETT

National identity	%
British	74.7
Irish	1.3
Ulster	14.9
Sometimes Irish, sometimes British	0.6
Northern Irish	8.4
Total	100 %

It would however be incorrect to suggest that at 23.3%, those claiming an 'Ulster' or 'Northern Irish' identity is insignificant. Furthermore PWC national identity can only be fully understood if we consider the 'reserve position' of those people. National identity for many remains a rejection of what they are not. The unity of this form of identity can be seen if we consider the response to the question of which identity respondents relate to least, as shown in Table 7.10.

TABLE 7.10 LEAST POPULAR NATIONAL IDENTITY

Identity	Respondents (%)
British	0.7
Irish	71.3
Ulster	4.0
Northern Irish	5.3
Anglo-Irish	15.3
Sometimes Irish, sometimes British	3.3
Total	100%

It is the second preference for national identity which begins to reveal the complex nature of national allegiances. The vast majority identifying strongly with the Ulster label. This is shown in Table 7.11 where over 70% chose Ulster as their second identity. There may be several reasons for this. As the previous chapter has shown the promotion of 'Ulster' is most readily associated with the UDA. However it is more likely that 'Ulster' is seen as a 'fallback' position should Britain ever declare its intent to withdraw. (McAuley 1986:17) In 1985 the notion of independence was increasingly being reintroduced onto the agenda in the wake of the Anglo-Irish agreement.

TABLE 7.11 NATIONAL IDENTITY - 2ND CHOICE

National identity	%
British	11.1
Irish	3.9
Ulster	55.6
Northern Irish	26.8
Anglo-Irish	1.3
Sometimes Irish, sometimes British	1.3
Total	100%

In Ballymacarrett, the great majority adopted a British identity as their first choice; and an Ulster identity as their second choice. Table 6.12 shows an analysis of the socio-economic composition of those who expressed preferences for a national identity. The overall trend that upper-class Protestants are more likely to accept a British national identity, while the lowest socio-economic groups are more attached to a Ulster allegiance (Moxon Browne 1983.7) can be confirmed by Table 7.2. It also clear is that an allegiance to an 'Ulster' or 'Norther Irish' identity is almost equally distributed within both the semi-skilled and unskilled groupings. The commitment to a 'British' identity is highest amongst skilled workers.

TABLE 7.12 NATIONAL IDENTITY BY OCCUPATION

	(%)				
	Skilled	High Semi Skilled	Med Semi Skilled	Low Semi Skilled	Un- Skilled
British	83.3	50.0	77.8	68.8	73.9
Ulster	11.1	30.0	11.1	18.8	18.8
Northern Ireland		20.0	7.4	12.4	7.3
Sometimes Irish/ Sometimes British	5.6				
Irish			3.7		
Total (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

The NIAS survey found a general similarity between national identity and party support. Its main findings are reproduced in Table 7.13. In Ballymacarrett the differences were even less clear cut. As Table 7.14 indicates an almost equal number of DUP and OUP supporters saw their primary national identification as British.

TABLE 7.13 FIRST CHOICE NATIONAL IDENTITY AND THE FOUR MAIN POLITICAL PARTIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND (NIAS).

Party	%British	%Irish	%Ulster	%Other
Official Unionist	71.1	4.6	20.9	3.4
Democratic Unionist	59.5	5.4	34.5	2.6
Alliance	42.9	28.6	11.4	17.1
Social Democratic & Labour Party	10.7	76.2	4.8	8.3

TABLE 7.14 FIRST CHOICE NATIONAL IDENTITY AND PARTY POLITICAL IDENTITY IN BALLYMACARRETT.

Party	%British	%Irish	%Ulster	%Northern Irish
Official Unionist	78.0		14.6	7.3
Democratic Unionist	78.8	1.3	16.3	3.8
Alliance	50.0		25.0	25.0

The similarity between the profiles indicates that it is not national identity which differentiates between DUP and OUP support in Ballymacarrett. As we shall see such differences are located in age profiles, socio-economic status, and key attitudes and perceptions of the party's ability. The similarity in supporters national identity however partly explains the antagonism between the DUP and OUP at the local level. Both are seeking support from the same constituents.

The Democratic Unionist party were clearly the most strongly supported political party in Ballymacarrett with almost twice as many identifiers as the Official Unionists. The actual question put to respondents was, 'Of the following list of political parties which do you feel closest to?'

TABLE 7.15 PARTY POLITICAL IDENTIFICATION IN BALLYMACARRETT.

Political Party	(%)
Democratic Unionist	57.1
Official Unionist	29.3
Ulster Democratic Loyalist Party	2.1
Alliance	8.6
Others	2.9
Total	100.0

If the 'Alliance Party' is taken as 'Unionist', 85% of those identifying with a political party supported one of the three major parties whose primary goal is the continuation of Northern Ireland's constitutional position within the U.K.

This does not transfer directly into support for the 'political solutions' to the conflict proposed by those parties. Table 7.16 shows the most acceptable solution to those in Ballymacarrett.

TABLE 7.16 BEST CHANCE OF A SOLUTION TO THE 'TROUBLES IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Solution	(%)
Integration	38.3
Devolution - power sharing	20.9
Devolution - non power sharing	20.7
Independence	9.7
United Ireland	1.3
Don't know	9.1
Total	100.0



From this it can be seen that 11.0% support policies which would change Northern Ireland's status within the United Kingdom, while 9.1% of respondents could not offer any solution to the conflict. It should also be noted that the figures indicate that some people in Ballymacarrett vote, or at least identify with political parties whose policies do not align with their own personal options for 'solving' the political stalemate in Northern Ireland.

There was considerable variance amongst party identifiers as to the most acceptable solution, as shown in Table 7.17.

**TABLE 7.17 PARTY IDENTIFICATION AND THE MOST ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION.**

Solution	Official Unionists(%)	Democratic Unionist(%)
Integration	43.9	41.3
Devolution power sharing	17.4	27.8
Devolution-non power sharing	19.2	18.6
Independence	9.8	11.3
United Ireland	0.0	0.0
Don't know	9.8	1.0
Total	100.0	100.0

One of the key features appears to be a considerable support for the continuance of direct rule from Westminster. This is at variance with the overall results of the NIAS where support for direct rule in Northern Ireland stood at 15.8% (Moxon-Browne 1983:85) It is also notable that over one quarter of DUP identifiers contemplated some form of 'power sharing' as a solution, which does not fit neatly with the overall position of the DUP, either at a local level or within the wider framework of their politics.

Another common feature of political perspectives in Ballymacarrett was the general antipathy to any suggestion of a United Ireland. The questionnaire gave respondents an opportunity to respond to the most popular set of reasons given for opposing an all-Ireland state. The first item was linked to the suggestion that in a United Ireland the 'Protestant way of life would be lost'. The second item suggested that in a United Ireland the standard of living of those residing in the north would fall. The next item related to the idea that in a United Ireland the Roman Catholic Church would be dominant. The final item focused on the sense of 'British identity' and suggested that in a United Ireland, this British identity would be lost. Finally respondents were asked which of the above constituted their major objection to a unified Irish state.

**TABLE 7.18 REASONS FOR OPPOSING A UNITED IRELAND**

Reason	% agreeing very strongly
Protestant way of life would be lost	65.2
Drop in living standards	50.4
Fear the power of the Roman Catholic Church	43.7
Loss of British identity	81.5

When asked to identify main reasons for opposing a United Ireland the results given were as follows:

TABLE 7.19 MAIN REASON FOR OPPOSING A UNITED IRELAND.

Reason	%
Protestant way of life would be lost	14.1
Drop in living standard	6.7
Fear the power of Roman Catholic church	18.5
Loss of British identity	60.7
Total	100.0

Again it is possible to consider this in terms of what party identifiers regarded as their major objections to a United Ireland.

TABLE 7.20 PARTY IDENTIFICATION AND THE MAIN OBJECTION TO A UNITED IRELAND .

Reason	OUP(%)	DUP(%)
Protestant way of life would be lost	17.5	15.0
Drop in living standards	7.5	3.8
Fear of power of Roman Catholic Church	32.5	15.0
Loss of British identity	42.5	63.8
Total	100.0	100.0

Examination of these figures in tables 7.18, 7.19, and 7.20 shows that by far the biggest objection was the fear of the loss of 'British identity'. Given the strength of argument put forward by the anti-imperialist left in Ireland, that much of Protestant working class consciousness is related to the protection of economic privilege, it is surprising how little concern there is regarding living standards in Ballymacarrett. Their objections centre on a much wider ideological perspective surrounding the loss of 'identity'.

So far this chapter has attempted to outline the political

identity and national consciousness of those living in Ballymacarrett. As has been seen, there was a reasonable degree of overlap regarding both political identity and nationality between those identifying with both the DUP and the OUP. It is clear however that the majority of voters identify with the Democratic Unionist Party, and it is important to identify the reason for this support.

One possible explanation which may be given is that there is a strong correlation between religious belief, membership of the Free Presbyterian Church and support for the DUP. Religious affiliation and beliefs play a much larger role in everyday life in Northern Ireland than in the rest of the U.K. Rose indicated the extent to which religion was taken seriously in Northern Ireland when he found that 7% of Protestants went to church more than once a week, and that 39% were weekly church goers. (Rose, 1971:264) The comparable figures for the NIAS were that 17.4% attended church more than once a week, while 72.4% attended once a week. The figures for Ballymacarrett are shown in Table 7.21.

**TABLE 7.21 CHURCH ATTENDANCE IN BALLYMACARRETT**

Frequency of attendance	(%)
More than once a week	11.0
Once a week	13.6
Less than once a week	1.3
Less than once a month	33.8
Never	40.3

Religiosity, as measured by church attendance is considerably lower in Ballymacarrett than the Northern Irish average. Another indication of

this was the response to the question 'is religion becoming more important to people in Northern Ireland'. A majority, 66.7%, of respondents believed that it was not becoming more important, while only 7.2% of those interviewed agreed strongly with the statement. Of those interviewed however 98.0% identified with one of the Protestant churches. The two major Protestant churches in Northern Ireland are the Church of Ireland which accounts for 35.6% of Protestants and the Presbyterian Church which had a membership of 46.5% (Moxon Browne 1983:89) These were also the two major denominations in Ballymacarrett, although Congregationalists had a higher representation than would be expected probably because of the location of a large Congregationalist church in Ballymacarrett.

**TABLE 7.22 STRENGTH OF PROTESTANT DENOMINATIONS IN BALLYMACARRETT**

Denomination	(%)
Church of Ireland	26.5
Presbyterian	38.4
Free Presbyterian	6.0
Methodist	12.6
Congregationalist	10.6
Other	4.0
None	2.0

What is clear that while the membership of the Free Presbyterian church in Ballymacarrett stands at 6.0%, the DUP support stands at 57.1% The point has been widely made of course that 'Paisleyism' is a much wider movement than membership of the Free Presbyterian Church. As the previous chapter has indicated many of those active in the DUP in Ballymacarrett were not involved primarily because of religious

conviction. Membership of the Free Presbyterian Church in Ballymacarrett however, usually resulted in identification with the DUP; 88.9% of Free Presbyterian voted for the DUP. As Table 7.23 shows, however, the DUP had support from across the spectrum of Protestant denominations in Ballymacarrett. DUP support also remained firmly located across the class fractions of the PWC in East Belfast. This can be seen in Table 7.24 where DUP identifiers were strongly represented in both the skilled and semi-skilled classes. The Official Unionists on the other hand gained over a quarter of their support from unskilled workers. This may well be explained by the

**TABLE 7.23 PARTY IDENTIFICATION AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP IN BALLYMACARRETT**

Church Identification	Party	
	OUP (%)	DUP (%)
Church of Ireland	31.7	23.8
Presbyterian	29.3	40.0
Free Presbyterian	0.0	10.0
Methodist	17.1	12.5
Congregationalist	14.6	10.0
Other	4.9	2.5
None	2.4	1.2
Total	100.0	100.0

TABLE 7.24 OCCUPATION AND PARTY IDENTIFICATION IN BALLYMACARRETT

Occupation	Party	
	OUP (%)	DUP (%)
Skilled	2.6	16.5
High Semi-Skilled	2.6	10.1
Medium Semi-Skilled	23.1	16.5
Low Semi-Skilled	7.8	13.9
Unskilled	25.6	1.3
Other	23.0	12.7
Unemployed	<u>15.3</u>	<u>29.0</u>
Total	100.0	100.0

traditional deference vote within the PWC to Official Unionism. DUP support was also made up of 16.5% from a skilled manual background and 29% of unemployed. One of the major differences in party support in Ballymacarrett is age. The age profile of the DUP was almost the opposite of the Official Unionists. The DUP had a much higher proportion of its support in the younger age group, while the Official Unionists had a higher proportion in the older age groups. This is shown in table 7.25.

TABLE 7.25 AGE STRUCTURE OF OFFICIAL UNIONIST AND DEMOCRATIC UNIONIST SUPPORTERS IN BALLYMACARRETT.

Age-group	OUP(%)	DUP(%)
Under 24	10.3	22.5
25-34	12.9	46.3
35-44	12.8	10.0
45-59	43.5	12.6
Over 60	20.5	8.6
Total	100.0	100.0

It can be noted for example that while 64% of OUP support was located in those over 45 years old, the equivalent figure for DUP identifiers was only 21.2. Conversely, while the Official Unionists can win only 23.3% of their support from the under 34 age group, 68.8% of the DUP support was located in this younger age-group. This had wide reaching consequences, as the DUP were able to call on many enthusiastic young workers. The DUP's much younger age profile may also partly explain their reputation for 'getting things done'.

The chapter will now consider the perspectives of DUP supporters in detail and seek to identify now how they differ from Official Unionist supporters. The first area considered will be reactions in Ballymacarrett to British government policies. The British government has administered Northern Ireland since 1972 under a system known as 'direct rule'. A Secretary of State for Northern Ireland is thus responsible for almost all the functions and responsibilities of the former Northern Ireland government. This system has operated continuously except for the period of five months in 1974, when the devolved, power sharing Assembly was in existence. There have since



1972 been three attempts at internal settlement and a new form of devolved government (Sunningdale, the convention and the Atkins initiative). At the time of the interviews the Northern Ireland Assembly was in its final months of operation. It was a minimalist plan, aimed at 'acceptance' and without any mention of power-sharing. The assembly was elected in October 1982, but only the Unionists took their seats. Because of DUP and OUP opposition there was little possibility of reaching the second stage, which would have involved some form of devolved government including all the political parties in Northern Ireland.

High on the political agenda also was the examination of the 'broader dimensions... (and) the totality of relationships between the two islands'. The process began on 21st May 1980, following a summit meeting in London between Margaret Thatcher and Charles Haughey. The next meeting was that in December, which acknowledged that substantial progress had been made in many areas, including energy, transport, cross-border economic development and security. It was decided that senior officials should undertake joint studies regarding new institutional structures, security matters, and economic co-operation. The whole process was taken further in November 1981, when the new Taoiseach, Garret Fitzgerald, and Margaret Thatcher announced the establishment of the Anglo-Irish Council. The first meeting of a new Anglo-Irish Governmental Council occurred during January 1982, and it met several times during the next 2 years.

The summit however was under pressure from organised Unionist opposition. In December 1980, Ian Paisley launched his 'Carson Trail' in opposition. The 1981 republican hunger-strike had strained Anglo-Irish relations. Throughout this time the New Ireland Forum, which was composed of the three major political parties in the Irish

Republic and the SDLP met. It produced a report in May 1984 and suggested three main constitutional structures. These were a federal/confederal state, a system of joint authority between Dublin and London, and a unitary state. The overall tenor of the report favoured the latter. Both the Official Unionists and the Democratic Unionists rejected the Forum Report, publishing their own perspectives in 'Devolution and the Northern Ireland Assembly - The Way Forward' (UUAP, 1984) and 'The Unionist Case - the Forum Report Answered, (Allister, n.d.). The assurance by Mrs. Thatcher in November 1984 that none of the three major options was under active consideration did little to convince Unionists. The broader PWC reaction will be discussed in Chapter eight. Within Ballymacarrett the level of hostility and distrust of the British government was reflected in the results for Table 7.26 which shows responses to the question 'The British Government does not really care what happens in Northern Ireland so long as there is not too much civil unrest'. The vast majority agreed with the statement, 37% of those asked agreeing very strongly.

**TABLE 7.26 THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT DOESN'T CARE WHAT HAPPENS AS LONG AS THERE ISN'T TOO MUCH CIVIL UNREST**

Attitude	(%)
Agree	27.9
Strongly Agree	20.1
Very Strongly Agree	37.0
Total:	85.0

There were important variations by party identification. While 29.3 of Official Unionist supporters agreed very strongly with the

statement, the equivalent figure for DUP supporters was 50.0%

Another example of the strength of opposition to Anglo-Irish relations can be seen in the responses to the proposition that in any political solution to Northern Ireland the Irish Government should be consulted. It is worth noting that responses to this question were compiled three months before the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement at Hillsborough Castle on 15th November 1985. The results are shown in Table 7.27.

**TABLE 7.27 IN ANY POLITICAL SOLUTION TO NORTHERN IRELAND THE IRISH GOVERNMENT HAS TO BE CONSULTED.**

Attitude	(%)
Very Strongly Disagree	56.5
Strongly Disagree	12.3
Disagree	16.2
Total:	85.1

Again the strength of feeling against the proposition was stronger amongst DUP supporters (72.5%), than Official Unionist identifiers (51.2%). This can be verified by the response to another question, suggesting that 'the British and Irish Governments should continue to meet to discuss Northern Ireland'. Over half of those responding disagreed very strongly with the proposition as Table 7.28 indicates.

TABLE 7.28 THE BRITISH AND IRISH GOVERNMENTS SHOULD CONTINUE TO MEET TO DISCUSS NORTHERN IRELAND.

Attitude	(%)
Very strongly disagree	51.3
Strongly disagree	12.3
Disagree	19.5
Total:	83.1

There were again differences between DUP identifiers, 62.5% of whom disagreed very strongly, and Official Unionist supporters, 46.3% of whom disagreed very strongly with the proposition. As such there are clear differences in the strength of opposition expressed by OUP and DUP identifiers in Ballymacarrett. However there did appear to be considerable confusion by Ballymacarrett residents when it came to suggesting any positive proposals concerning a political solution. One notable result was the position concerning some form of power-sharing government. In general terms a very small majority (50.3%) were in favour of the proposition that 'any political solution will have to include arrangements for power-sharing'. It may again be useful to consider the support for power sharing in terms of party support. As can be seen from Table 7.29 the majority of both DUP and OUP identifiers were opposed to any form of power-sharing. However there were considerable numbers within both parties who were prepared to at least contemplate some form of power sharing with nationalist political parties.

TABLE 7.29 PARTY IDENTIFICATION AND 'POWER-SHARING'

Attitude to 'Power sharing'	OUP (%)	DUP (%)
Very Strongly Disagree	27.5	30.0
Strongly Disagree	12.5	7.5
Disagree	12.5	22.5
Agree	42.5	30.0
Strongly Agree	0.0	3.8
Very Strongly Agree	<u>5.0</u>	<u>6.2</u>
Totals:	100.0	100.0

Another related result was that there was almost total unity (95.5%) for the proposition that the Irish government should remove its constitutional claim over Northern Ireland. The vast majority of respondents felt that the Irish government had no role to play at the governmental level, in the future of Northern Ireland. Opposition to the development of Anglo-Irish agreement was found throughout both Official Unionist and Democratic Unionist supports but was much more firmly located in DUP support. However the confused position was again illustrated by the responses to what those in Ballymacarrett thought should replace direct rule. A large majority of those interviewed (83.8%) thought it right that since they were the majority Protestants should have the last word in the affairs of Northern Ireland. There was however a wide range of opinion as to whether 'a return to the old Stormont system offered the best chance of a solution'. A majority (57.7%) believed that it did, but a considerable minority (42.3%) disagreed. The break down of party support for the idea was as follows.

**TABLE 7.30 PARTY SUPPORT AND A RETURN TO STORMONT SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT**

Attitude to a return to a Stormont system of Government	OUP(%)	DUP(%)
Very Strongly Disagree	0.0	3.9
Strongly Disagree	2.5	11.7
Disagree	15.0	29.9
Agree	30.0	31.2
Strongly Agree	22.5	3.9
Very Strongly Agree	30.0	19.4
Total	100.0	100.0

The commitment to a return to the Stormont system was stronger amongst OUP identifiers. Given the age composition of DUP and OUP support in Ballymacarrett, it is possible that this stronger commitment is because many OUP supporters remember a Stormont government while many DUP identifiers do not.

Another area where differences in party support emerged was in the field of 'law and order'. As the previous chapters have shown the use of emergency legislation, the relationship between paramilitaries and the community and the position of Loyalist prisoners were all high on the agenda in Ballymacarrett. Respondents were under no illusion of the capabilities of loyalist paramilitary groups. Most believed that under certain circumstances there would be an upturn in violence headed by loyalist paramilitary groups. So, for example 91.4% of respondents thought that 'if a united Ireland ever came about loyalist paramilitaries would be as much of a problem as the IRA'. There was not a strong tendency for respondents to regard loyalist paramilitary

members as 'soldiers' or politically motivated in the same way as many UDA members regarded themselves. Just over one third (34.8%) believed the government should restore political status for paramilitary members who had been imprisoned. A substantial number, 38.9%, of DUP supporters agreed with a reintroduction of political status, while only 27.5% of OUP identifiers were in favour.

A large majority of respondents were in favour of the separation of loyalist and republican prisoners in Northern Ireland's jails. The differences in support between DUP and OUP respondents were again marked. Over half (53.8%) of DUP supporters agreed very strongly with separation. The equivalent figure for OUP supporters was 12.8%. The relationship between DUP supporters and loyalist paramilitary group was again seen to be ambiguous when we consider DUP supporters' views on capital punishment. Over three-quarters of all respondents (76.6) believed that capital punishment should be reintroduced for paramilitary members found guilty of murder. By far the bulk of support came from OUP identifiers, 95.1% of whom thought capital punishment should be reintroduced. However within DUP supporters 71.4% supported its reintroduction. There were also differences concerning the use of 'supergrasses' in Northern Ireland. The OUP support was almost split equally on its legitimacy. DUP supporters however were strongly opposed to their use with 73.8% disagreeing with the use of supergrasses as illegitimate as Table 7.31 shows.

There was overwhelming support from both DUP and OUP identifiers for the reintroduction of trial by Jury, with 79.4 of OUP supporters in

TABLE 7.31 SUPERGRASS SYSTEM IS LEGITIMATE

Attitude	OUP(%)	DUP(%)
Very strongly disagree	17.5	38.8
Strongly disagree	7.5	12.5
Disagree	27.5	22.5
Agree	22.5	10.0
Strongly Agree	7.5	3.7
Very strongly agree	17.5	12.5
Total	100.0	100.0

TABLE 7.32 TRIAL BY JURY SHOULD BE REINTRODUCED IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Attitude	OUP(%)	DUP(%)
Very Strongly Disagree	0.0	5.0
Disagree	5.1	1.3
Disagree	15.4	20.0
Agree	33.3	30.0
Strongly Agree	12.9	11.3
Very Strongly Agree	33.3	32.4
Total	100.0	100.0

favour and 73.8% of DUP identifiers supporting the idea.

There was clearly a range of political attitudes within Ballymacarrett while there is a basic consensus on basic issues, such as the continuance of the Northern Irish state, the outcome of talks between Dublin and London and security. On other matters such as the use of supergrasses, however, viewpoints vary considerably. On these issues



many respondents in Ballymacarrett felt much closer to the DUP than to the Official Unionist. The DUP are often seen to be willing to do something as opposed to the mainly middle class official Unionist party. One of the basic divisions is age. Another may be the political self identity of those in Ballymacarrett. For example 70.5% of Official Unionist identifiers described themselves as 'Unionists' and 29.3% as 'Loyalists'. With DUP identifiers however this was reversed; 66.3% described themselves as Loyalist and 33.7% as Unionists.

The self description Unionism is of course bound up with self perception of being part of the British nation. For Loyalists however there is a willingness to place the interests of those who live in Northern Ireland above the United Kingdom as a whole. This can be illustrated by the responses to two propositions put to respondents. The first was that if they 'had to choose between loyalty to 'Ulster' and loyalty to the British Government, Loyalists would choose Ulster. A large majority (70.0%) of DUP identifiers agreed very strongly with this, while only 39% of OUP supporters did so, as shown in Table 7.33.

**TABLE 7.33 LOYALISTS SHOULD CHOOSE ULSTER RATHER THAN THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT.**

Attitude	OUP(%)	DUP(%)
Very strongly agree	39.0	70.0
Strongly agree	24.4	16.3
Agree	36.6	12.5

Another indication of how Loyalist identity differs to a Unionist one can be seen in Table 7.34 which shows the results when respondents were asked to consider the proposition that if Britain withdrew then

Northern Ireland should claim independence rather than join the Irish Republic. While the majority of both OUP and DUP identifiers agreed with this, support was much stronger in the DUP where 87.5% very strongly agreed.

**TABLE 7.34 IF BRITAIN WITHDREW NORTHERN IRELAND SHOULD CLAIM INDEPENDENCE**

Attitude	OUP(%)	DUP(%)
Very strongly agree	40.0	87.5
Strongly Agree	17.5	6.3
Agree	30.0	6.3

Deeply inherent in the concept of loyalism is the idea that force may be justified to achieve a desirable goal (or to prevent some other group achieving theirs). This was readily identifiable when OUP and DUP supporters were asked which tactics they regarded as legitimate (see Table 7.35)

**TABLE 7.35 WHICH TACTICS DO YOU CONSIDER AS LEGITIMATE TO MAINTAIN YOUR BRITISH IDENTITY**

Tactic	OUP(%)	DUP(%)
Electoral Politics	98.7	98.8
Civil Disobedience	68.8	63.5
Protest marches	37.9	61.5
Strikes	23.4	57.5
Rioting	4.7	45.8
Armed conflict	14.4	48.9
Civil War	9.6	52.8

Thus while 69% of official Unionist identifiers and 63% of DUP supporters regarded civil disobedience as legitimate, the disparity between the groups widened as they progressed towards civil war on the scale. The identification of DUP supporters as loyalists and their perception of the DUP as the party most willing to take 'action' was to be increasingly important in the realignments of Unionist politics in Ballymacarrett after November 1985. In general terms this chapter has highlighted how both OUP and DUP identifiers share the same ideological and political parameters. However, within these parameters both OUP and DUP supporters construct different attitudes to common problems. They also construct different attitudes to the means by which these problems may be resolved.

## CHAPTER EIGHT TWO CASE STUDIES: HOUSING AND THE 1985 LOCAL ELECTIONS

The previous chapters have considered the different ideological perspectives of those active in the Democratic Unionists and the Ulster Defence Association in Ballymacarrett. This chapter will outline how such ideological differences manifest themselves in the politics of everyday life in Ballymacarrett. Two areas will be considered, the first concerns the politics of residence in Ballymacarrett, the second local party politics in the form of the 1985 local council elections. The chapter will also draw some distinctions between the 'public' and 'private' political domains in Ballymacarrett.

The first part of the chapter will discuss the relevance of physical segregation in Ballymacarrett, and how this partly accounts for the continuance of inequalities in access to political, economic and welfare issues. In the widest sense, segregation refers to the overall organisation of social life. As Chapter Four indicated, it is involved with forms of interaction, avoidance, the construction and strengthening of a group identity and the way in which social, economic and political activity is structured. Such themes have been expanded upon within the context of Belfast by Boal (1974, 1975, 1978, 1980), and Boal, Poole and Murray (1976) and Boal and Douglas (1982). Such works have tended to lean on the measurement of the empirical features of segregation. Consequently, there has been a lack of discussion of the results of segregation in social, political and economic terms, or a reluctance to discuss the 'social meaning' of sectarian division.

It is possible to identify another approach to the social relations of physical segregation. Urban structure may also be seen as a factor in class formation or fragmentation (Harvey 1975, 1987). The major argument from such writers is that it is the relations of production and consumption which structure residential space. As Harvey explains, capitalist development has to,

"Negotiate a knife edge path between preserving the exchange values of past capital investments in the built bulk environment and destroying the values of these investments in order to open up fresh room for accumulation. Under capitalism there is a perpetual struggle in which capital builds a physical landscape appropriate to its own condition at a particular moment in time, only to have to destroy it, usually in the course of a crisis at a subsequent point in time."

(Harvey 1978:124)

The statement may marginalise the degree to which sectarianism is itself deeply embedded in the relations of production and consumption in Northern Ireland. However it is important to stress that physical segregation is not merely dependent on the dynamics of indigenous groups. Local capital has been in severe decline in Northern Ireland since 1945. As Chapter two has indicated, since the end of World War Two, monopoly capital greatly increased control over production on an international scale. The logic demanded by the increased accumulation by the new monopoly capital, resulted in new industrial sites being developed around the edge of Belfast and the abandonment of the inner city. Belfast's physical structure remained almost untouched until the early 1970s. Subsequently there was widespread physical redevelopment in the wake of Belfast's resurrected urban motorway. Planning blight rapidly spread to inner-city working class areas, both loyalist and nationalist, and the decline was compounded by the rapid population movements described in Chapter Four. At this juncture the rapid politicisation of the PWC undermined any acquiescence to the

government. There was in many FWC districts a growing awareness that problems such as poor housing conditions were created, at least in part by the policies of the Belfast Corporation (Weiner 1975). In Belfast from the early 1970's there was an interpellation of the inner city crisis and the crisis of the legitimacy of the state. This led to the direct intervention of the British state in the day to day management of the crisis. One major result was that powers over housing were centralised in the form of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE). Planning powers were allocated to the Ministry of Development which subsequently became the Department of the Environment (DOE). Currently the DOE (NI) has responsibility for land use planning, roads, conservation, water and sewage. The NIHE remains, in theory, a semi-autonomous body, its funding coming from loans from central government on its revenue account.

In response to this reorganisation there was a rapid expansion in the number of community groups in Belfast. Since then, community groups, and groups articulating specifically housing issues, have remained an important feature of FWC communities. Importantly it is through such housing groups and committees that the FWC often articulate specific class issues, involving the class bias of Belfast's urban planners or the meekness of local politicians in challenging the needs of capital. There are however clear limitations to such community action. Sectarianism, or the pressure to find accommodation with it, means that any overt articulation of working class demands is often limited. In the case study which follows, both class and sectarian perspectives are articulated by Ballymacarrett residents. Such views exist not to the mutual exclusion of the other, but concurrently.

The main response of the state to housing conditions in inner-city

Belfast has been in the form of housing redevelopment and in the renovation of housing which has been declared as unfit. Throughout the latter part of the 1970's and 1980's housing redevelopment has been coordinated and structured in a series of redevelopment areas. This has been complemented by a series of Housing Action Areas (HAAS) which are intended to improve housing which is of poor quality but not deemed to have reached the critical level of 'unfitness'. The growth of community organisations in Belfast in the 1970s concerned with housing paralleled the development of such groups elsewhere. As Barker pointed out, at the time,

"the 'local amenity movement' in Britain is a wide ranging, diverse and overlapping collection of local voluntary groups who seek to take an interest in some aspect of their home surroundings, their neighbourhood, village town or area... Those who have joined a 'community action' group or a residents association of some kind have done so in the hope of improving their lot by public political pressures on the authorities"  
(Barker 1976:7)

Much resident group activity in Ballymacarrett arises from conflict between council house occupiers and the landlord, in this case the NIHE. Such activity is reasonably widespread. Some indication of this is given by the size of the umbrella group for housing committees in East Belfast, the Amalgamation of Housing Associations, which comprises 22 groups. Residents in inner East Belfast share a common housing experience and landlord. A shared dissatisfaction over housing provision and discontent over rising rents, heating provision and the standard of redevelopment work have all provided the basis for mobilisation in Ballymacarrett. In some areas this has resulted in widespread support for community action, the lobbying of local councillors and demonstrations against the state as resource providers.

Such issues are local concerns. This has been turned into action

in a variety of ways. For such pressure to be successful, communities or their representatives are in conflict with decision makers and the providers of such resources, in this case the NIHE. The bargaining position of community groups upon local political machines is dependent firstly upon the strategies adopted by community groups and secondly the receptivity of councillors and the possibility of winning the support of a majority on Belfast City Council. There is obviously (or at least there should be) a two way interaction between community organisations and local political representation. In Ballymacarrett, important ties are often formed by the same individual working between community organisations and other groups, sometimes paramilitary organisations but more often a local political party, especially the Democratic Unionist Party.

Furthermore the degree of success of local community groups is obviously relative to the degree to which they can influence and manipulate the local system. This in itself is partly dependent on the strength and level of organisation of the community group. It is also dependent upon the level of legitimation credited to them by local residents, local political organisations and politicians. The different strategies adopted by community groups range from the collaborative to the confrontational. As Chapter Five has indicated, DUP councillors are much more likely to endorse the full range of these strategies compared with their Official Unionist counterparts. There was also a strong local feeling that most DUP councillors, because they lived in the area, often in Redevelopment or Housing Action areas, were 'part of the community' and better understood and were more sympathetic to complaints over housing and local resources. This feeling was strengthened because the ex-chairperson of the East Belfast Amalgamation of Housing Associations had become a DUP



councillor for the area, and was still the secretary of his local housing association. As one person active in community groups in Ballymacarrett put it,

"the politicians all through the years, they promise a lot but they don't come across with much... the one exception is Alan (DUP councillor). He's always done his best and delivered the goods"

(Martin, Committee member, Tower Street HAA)

while another had this to say of another DUP councillor,

"Colin isn't a bad fella. Before he became involved in the DUP he was one of the hardest workers around here when he was working with housing groups... he still spends a lot of time working for us. To me the politicians are worse than useless cause they use groups as a platform, but Colin's the best of a bad bunch."

(Paul, Committee member, Lord Street HAA)

Community groups and community action arose in loyalist areas of Belfast, as elsewhere in the United Kingdom, because of a growing awareness of the failure of local interests to be properly represented in the political system.

In this sense housing, housing associations and community groups in Ballymacarret represent the clearest example of the loyalist workers in conflict with capital. It is however uncommon for such conflicts to be direct or head to head. Both seek to negotiate the apparatus of the state to influence political decision makers. The confrontation is of course unequal. The NIHE who represent the state's property interests have more straightforward access to the formal channels of decision-making. Community groups, who are forced to use lobbying as their major tactic, are mainly reactive and rarely have the ability to command a direct response from the state. On the other hand, capital can both lobby and offer tangible benefits in the form of new jobs, buildings etc. However builders and property developers, even state property developers in the shape of the NIHE need planning permission. They also need be involved in public

consultation. It is at this juncture that community groups in East Belfast seek to influence events. Such participation is itself controlled by the state and limited to such imitative participation exercises as surveys, public meetings, the public display of plans, maps, models, and the distribution of explanatory statements concerning Redevelopment Areas. Nonetheless such exercises have politicised many activists in Ballymacarrett. As one person explained,

"In 1974 we formed the Ballymacarrett Housing Association... since then we've had our moments... they (NIHE) don't always do what we want or ask, but sometimes there's good consultation... we've learnt a lot. In 1974 we all thought that when the Housing Executive showed us a plan we all thought we had to accept it, but in the last few years we've learnt we can oppose it."

(Edward, Committee member, East Belfast Amalgamation of Housing Associations)

Another described a similar process when she said,

"when we first had a meeting, when we first formed the Albertbridge Road Tennants Association we took all they said in. They offered us to put back one house for every six that was there. Now we'd tell them where to go... but then we didn't know any better."

(Stephanie, Committee member, East Belfast Amalgamation of Housing Associations)

While another said,

"we've found that anything we've been able to do for people in the area concerning housing we've done it for ourselves... the only way of getting things done is by forming yourself into committees and finding out for yourselves."

(Martin, Committee member, Tower Street HAA)

One local housing committee member described the following situation,

"There were 382 houses demolished in this neighbourhood and only 97 were put back, which is very small... we were one of the first (housing associations) in East Belfast so we accepted it, but now we are saying to others, 'no-way', make sure they promise to give us back what we want or they won't knock our houses down."

(Edward, Committee member, East Belfast Amalgamation of Housing Associations)

Such concerns overlapped with a more general concern regarding the breakdown of the community in Ballymacarrett. This in itself motivated many of those active in housing associations as the following statement illustrates,

"The place has gone down the hill badly. People got depressed looking at the blocked up houses and the dampness and all, so that when the chance came and the (NIH) Executive offered them a house they took it no matter where it was. Out of desperation they took these houses... but more and more people are trying to get back onto the (Newtownards) Road especially from the likes of Ballybeen, Tullycarnett, places like that. Women living in those places still do all their shopping on the road. You see it in the shops and the local papers, people looking for swops, trying to get back to the Newtownards or Albertbridge Roads."

(Greta, East Belfast resident)

Another resident put it more simply,

"East Belfast is wrecked... everybody's been forced to move out of the area into Ballybeen or Tullycarret because there isn't enough room for them where they used to live."

(Roger, East Belfast resident)

Such views meant that the number of houses being replaced (referred to as 'put back rates') was high on the agenda for many housing community groups, as the following illustrates,

"If you don't fight the Housing Executive for what you want then they go ahead and build the type of houses they want... their architects will sit down and draw up these lovely wee plans with model people and model trees that look lovely... then they build them at the expense of getting rid of three quarters of the people in the area who have lived there all their lives and their people before them lived there all their lives. That's why I got involved."

(Edward, Committee member, East Belfast Amalgamation of Housing Associations)

Another put it this way,

"what we need in Ballymacarrett is to keep people as neighbours... people were used round here to just walking out of one house and into another. The big door (front door) was never closed, but now all the doors on all the estates are closed... they're destroying all the neighbours."

(Stephanie, Committee member, East Belfast Amalgamation of Housing Associations)

The following comment was also typical,

"What I'm afraid of and what a lot of people in East Belfast are afraid of is the community in East Belfast as it was 15 or 20 years ago is getting smaller and smaller. There's not a quarter of the people left there was then... the Housing Executive would have built their houses and kept all the streets they knocked down. Kept the new houses in their old streets, like terraced rows... "

(Martin, Committee member, Tower Street HAA)

Even the following Committee member of one housing association who was broadly supportive of the NIHE policy in the area was critical of 'put-back rates',

"everybody knows they (NIHE) can't house everybody that was in the area, the main reason being the old houses were all kitchen houses... two up, two down with no bathroom and the toilet was outside... nobody should have to have an outside toilet and everybody should have a bathroom which is what they're doing. Because of that they can't put back the same amount of houses... but they plan all these things but they never dream that its necessary to ask the opinion of the people in the area... just wee things, like the type of doors and the type of working kitchens... they just don't come and consult people... they could probably get away with it if they put more houses back they could definitely do that... if they ever talked to people here they'd know that's what they wanted."

(Paul, Committee member, Lord Street HAA)

One example of how such perspectives came together in Ballymacarrett surrounded Redevelopment Area 54 (RDA54). The development area covered housing which was well established by the 1890's. Indeed the area had in fact changed little since the 1900's with the exception of some housing which was built in the immediate World War II period to replace houses destroyed by the blitz. The 1980s saw a rapid decline in the infrastructure of the area, with an increase in bricked up and derelict housing. The area however still contained a large number of community facilities, including two churches and a Gospel Hall, a working mens club, and a girls club, where a full time worker organised activities for 10-20 year old girls. The area contained 372

houses, 294 of which were occupied. Of the dwellings 93% had been declared as unfit, 52% of residents occupied dwellings with no bath, and 33% occupied dwellings with no hot water. The original NIHE proposal was to clear the area to provide Ballymacarrett with an open 'green' recreation area. This led to widespread protests not only about the destruction of the local community but also that the 'put back' rates would be still further reduced. Protests from residents and co-ordinated action with other housing associations in Ballymacarrett eventually led to the NIHE conceding, and providing housing in the area.

In Ballymacarrett members of the PWC have over the past 15 years consistently struggled for the right to be consulted in the design and management of state housing. This process has to some extent involved the state incorporating such protests by channelling such resistance into a more controllable form. Housing committees however do represent one form of PWC articulation of class issues. There were several further examples of this from community activists on housing issues. As one person put it,

"What they keep trying to do is to tell us what we want. Like they say wouldn't it be nice if we had a few benches here, and a wee park and a few trees. Half the time the politicians, especially the Official Unionists, go along and say 'yes' 'yes' wouldn't that make the district lovely. But that's not what people want. Most people round here just want a neighbour next door who they know, they want more people who used to live here not open landscaped areas as they're called... the young people only vandalise them anyway."

(Edward, Committee member, East Belfast Amalgamation of Housing Associations))

another gave a specific example,

"The DOE told us they were going to make a green area of Hunt Street, Hind Street, that area and we opposed it very strongly and they shelved it, and said they'd use it for houses... they need to put more houses back... to keep people together."

(Stephanie, Committee member, East Belfast Amalgamation of Housing Associations))

The following statement by a committee member of RDA also demonstrated this perspective,

"The first people to get out are the young, especially if they can afford a mortgage in Bangor or Castlereagh... but it's the old folk... they can't move... they're dependant on public sector housing. So what do the Housing Executive do? They're building all these three bedroom houses and putting old age pensioners into them and that's wrong... a lot of people around here got me to go along to the Official Unionist candidate and complain. Do you know what she said? 'But it's improving Belfast'. They don't give a damn about the working class people. All they're worried about is how the place looks."

(Martin, Committee member, East Belfast Amalgamation or Housing Associations)

Such issues highlight what many residents regard as the class bias of Belfast's planners and state housing agency. They also focus on the level of acquiescence to 'harmful' redevelopment plans by local politicians, especially the official unionists.

There are, however, clear limitations to an expression of class issues by community action in Ballymacarrett. Sectarianism, or the pressure to find an accommodation with it, means any overt articulation of working class demands is severely restricted. In discussing the relationship between PWC communities and the state, played out within the area of housing redevelopment, the role of sectarian division must also be discussed.

As Chapter Four indicated the main physical sectarian division in Ballymacarrett is where the 'Catholic' Short Strand meets 'Protestant' East Belfast. This can clearly be seen in map 8.1 which shows the position in detail on the Ballymacarrett - Short Strand interface. Both sides of this interface have been subject to a process of physical segregation, involving the movement of both Protestant and Catholic families away from the outskirts of their own regions towards their respective core areas. Following this there was a sequence of

desertion of houses, vandalism of these houses and dereliction. Such a pattern was common on sectarian interfaces throughout Belfast. Redevelopment in Ballymacarrett partly occurred within this context.

One of the first major scenes of redevelopment in Ballymacarrett affected the Short Strand, more than any Protestant core district. The construction of the Bridge End flyover and the major roads serving it resulted in the demolishing of six streets which had been occupied by about 2,000 mainly Roman Catholic residents. As a consequence most of the inhabitants moved to the large Catholic estates in the west of the city.

The results of the building of the flyover also began to concern "Protestant" Ballymacarrett however. This community was experiencing its own diaspora, with a rapid outflow of people, especially the young, largely to estates on the eastern fringe of the city, as well as growth centres such as Bangor and Antrim. Due largely to physical violence, this population movement was most readily observed at the immediate interface areas. One result was that in the Bryson Street, Newtownards Road interface, houses which were being vacated by Protestants were reoccupied by Roman Catholic families. With the context of the 'politics of territory', this was projected as the loss of housing belonging to 'Protestant Ballymacarrett' 'to the other side'. This gave rise for the first time to talk of an attempt to 'de-Protestantise' East Belfast. This was compounded by the further demolishing of 'Protestant' houses around Madrid Street and their replacement by another feeder road to the flyover. This issue was partly responsible for explaining the development of housing groups in Ballymacarrett. As one loyalist newspaper put it,

"Thousands of homes could be built on the flattened wastelands of Protestant areas. They should certainly materialise before the (Housing) Executive gets its greedy hands on further loyalist districts and thus completes the plan to de-Protestantise the capital city."

(The Orange Standard, Nov 1983:7)

In Ballymacarrett there is widespread suspicion, especially by those living on the Short Strand interface, that those living in the Short Strand intended to expand their community eastwards at least as far as Templemore Avenue. Redevelopment was perceived as one way in which the residents of the Short Strand could achieve this goal. It is for this reason, that many housing groups are particularly concerned with 'put back' rates. That is the number of existing houses which are replaced after redevelopment. These are often seen as adversely affecting loyalist areas, as the following quotation, discussing the 'put back' rates throughout Belfast explains,

"Nothing similar has happened in the Republican areas of Belfast, where the vast house building schemes have been initiated and special care taken to ensure that re-development areas such as the markets, Short Strand, Lower Falls and the 'Bone' area have had the same number of houses put back into them after redevelopment."

(Orange Standard, Nov, 1983:6 emphasis added)

One local housing activist had this to say,

"In Protestant areas like this, the Newtownards or Albertbridge Road they only put back three or four (houses) for every ten they take away... it's even worse on the Shankill where they only put about two back. On the Falls they put ten back for every ten they knock down. In the markets on the Short Strand its the same, about eight or ten put back... its obvious they're trying to get the Prods out, to make them move out to Tullycarnett and places like that."

(Edward, Committee member, East Belfast Amalgamation of Housing Associations)

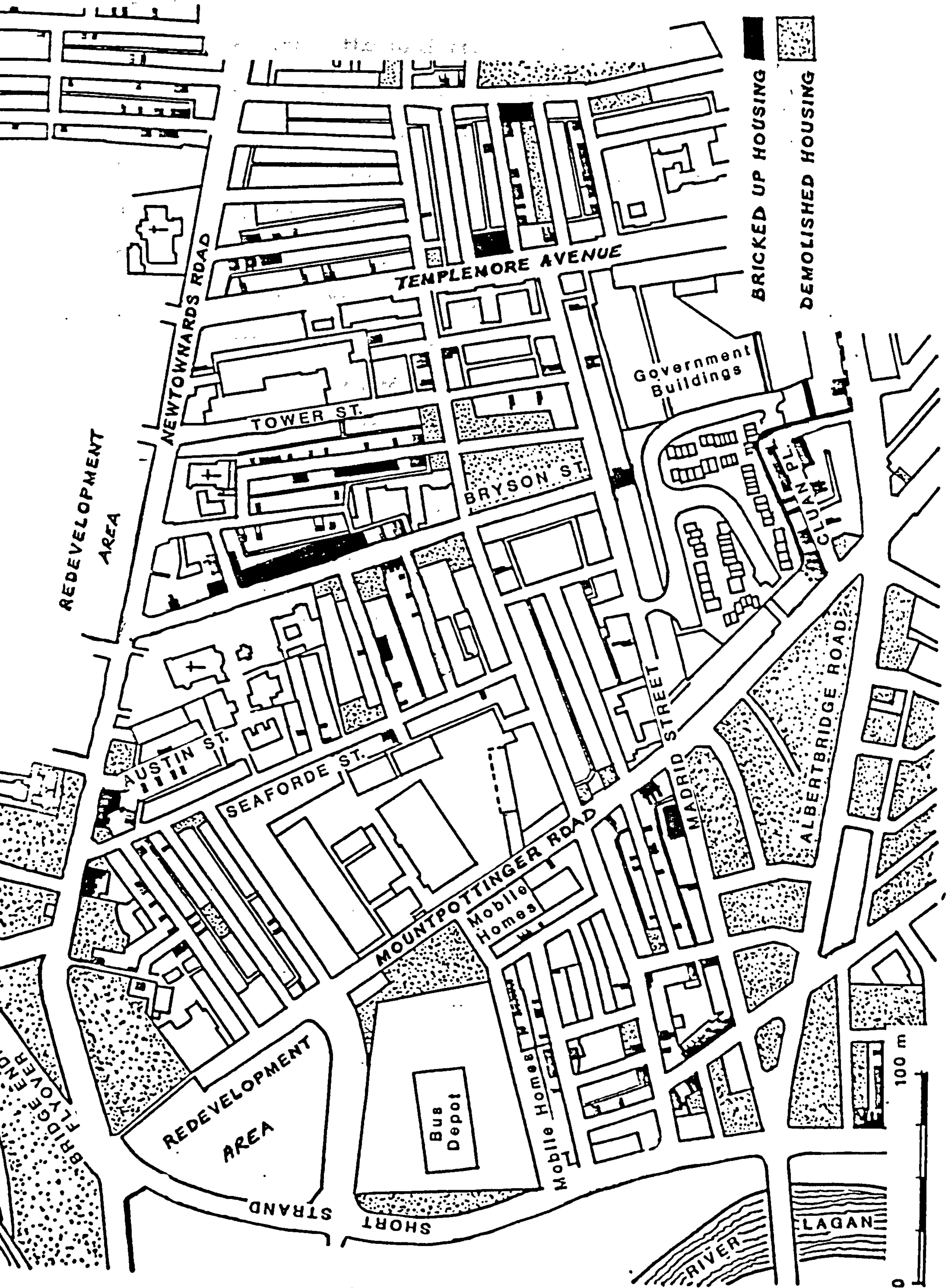
In understanding the role of housing action groups in Ballymacarrett this notion of 'de-Protestantisation' plays a leading role. The politics of residence involves two major relationships. Firstly, as



has been outlined, the activities of housing associations reflect a negotiation of class forces involving the management of state housing and the break-up of traditional communities. Secondly, however, housing associations also represent an attempt to negotiate sectarian space in Ballymacarrett. Often this involves an acute awareness by residents of physical segregation at the micro level, and the significance of strictly drawn demarcation lines and divisions. It also involves the attempt by the State to use physical space to control, or at least make more manageable, sectarian divisions. As has been previously noted one of the major sectarian 'flashpoints' in Ballymacarrett is the Lower Albertbridge Road/Woodstock Road - Short Strand interface. Part of the DOE redevelopment plan for this area involved the widening of the Lower Albertbridge Road to a dual carriageway. Although the plan suggested the whole road be widened, the only part of the road actually upgraded was along the immediate sectarian interface. To reinforce this physical space on either side of the Albertbridge Road dual carriageway, the DOE has undertaken a programme of 'landscaping'. This has involved, for example, the provision of walled flower beds, bench seating and enclosed areas. The redevelopment on this (Protestant) side of the Albertbridge Road was to be comprised of totally non-residential facilities such as commercial, industrial and recreation buildings. This led to widespread protests from local housing associations, and eventually these plans were replaced by an old peoples' home, sheltered housing and Albertbridge Congregationalist Church which had previously been located on the Short Strand side of the Albertbridge Road. Overall these redevelopment initiatives were justified by the DOE and the NIHE as serving traffic planning, road improvement and environmental needs. However many activists in the Protestant community saw these

decisions merely as a way of imposing a physical barrier isolating the Short Strand from the surrounding community. Such a strategy would not be uncommon in the context of Belfast. As one commentator noted in his study of redevelopment in Protestant West Belfast, while there was general opposition to the upgrading of roads, which threatened the community and the infrastructure of the Shankill Road, in fact some welcomed the proposed new motorway "as being a useful military barrier between themselves and the Catholic Unity Flats" (Weiner 1980:63). Another opposed the plan because he recognised that "the (elevated) motorway would separate the Protestant and Catholic communities in West Belfast permanently" (Tom Donnally, SDLP representative cited in Weiner 1980:67). There are some parallels with the situation in Ballymacarrett. In particular, development on the 'Catholic' side of the Albertbridge Road (RDA26 and RDA27) was totally residential, again fuelling Protestant housing association groups' discontent concerning accusations of 'de-Protestantisation' and low 'put-back rates'.

There are two further main sectarian interfaces surrounding Short Strand - those on the Bryson Street/Madrid Street interface and the main Newtownards Road interface. Bryson Street is a long residential street. It is important because it marks the consolidation of sectarian divisions in Ballymacarrett. Up to the time of large scale population movements of the early 1970s the streets around Bryson Street had been mixed. Today the area to the east of Bryson Street is exclusively 'Protestant', while the western side are exclusively 'Catholic'. There was a considerable spread of opinions, however most Protestant residents supported the Northern Ireland H.E. closure of the roads at the Bryson Street - Beechfield Street - Madrid Street crossover (see Map 8.1) as they felt this offered protection to the Protestant community, although this in turn was challenged by several



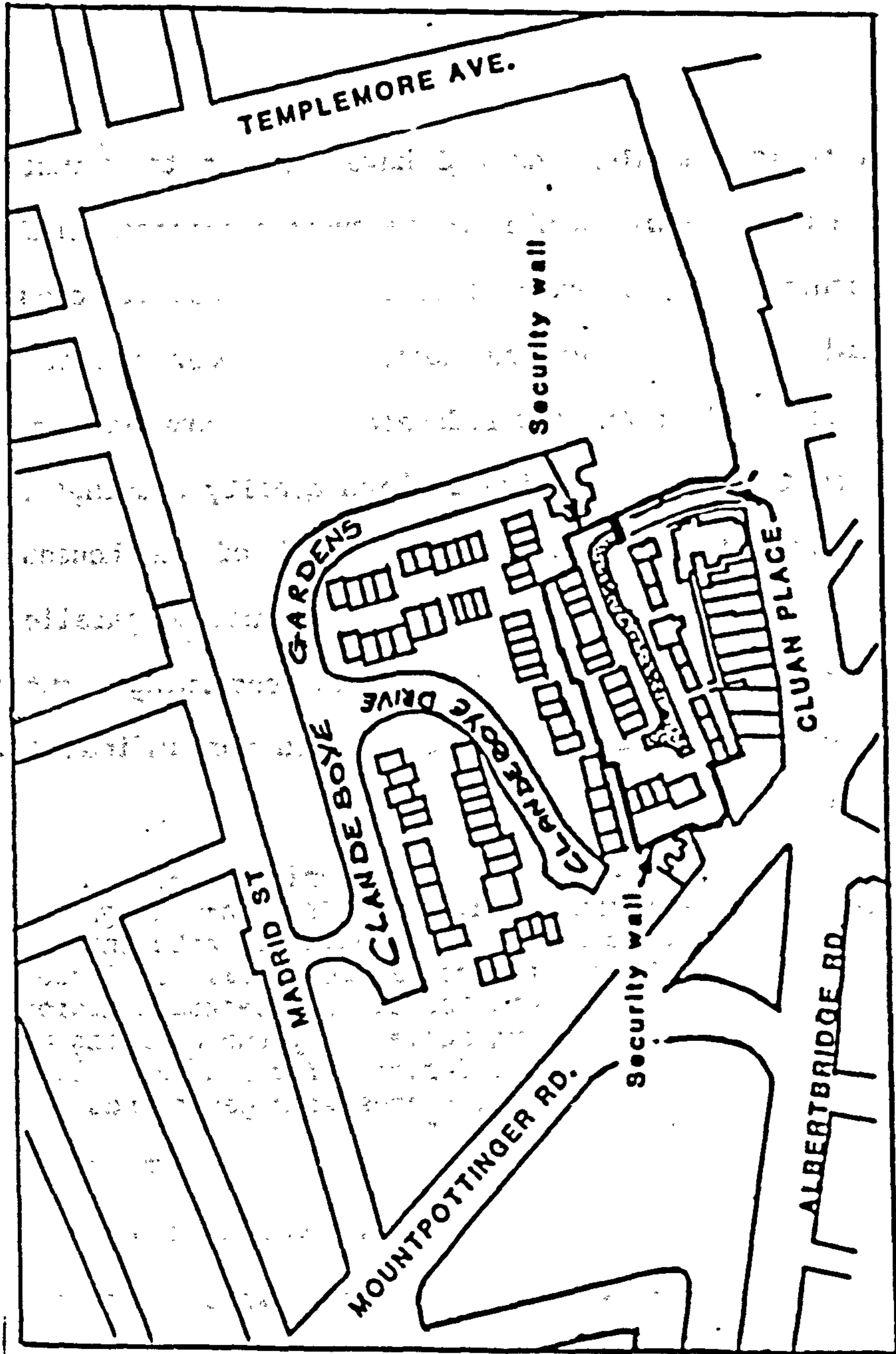
residents.

In broad terms the NIHE and DOE have sought to structure the interface in a manner which would reduce overt sectarian conflict and allow the 'security forces' easy access. Those most affected on the Protestant side of the interface formed the Tower Street Housing Association. Initially plans for redeveloping the area were presented to residents as the 'latest design in high quality housing' arranged in a small courtyard system and with the back of the houses facing Bryson Street (as opposed to terraced housing running parallel). It was only when this led to further complaints concerning a cut in put back rates that another reason emerged. This was indicated in the Tower Street HAA Action Plan.

"In considering the problem of screening to Bryson Street it is felt that by allowing 'Special Design' terraced rows of houses and flat units to back onto Bryson Street, the courtyards can be totally enclosed and the building line retained to an acceptable degree, the screening effect being achieved by the building mass itself. These... 'special design' single aspect flat units forming the ends of terraces with gable ends fronting on to Bryson Street."

(NIHE 1980:16)

It would be incorrect to suggest that most working class protestant residents did not openly support a scheme, which involved overt segregation of the communities in Ballymacarrett. Many perceived a direct threat from the Short Strand. However much of redevelopment was presented to residents, either in terms of a maximisation of land use or in terms of improved traffic flow and improved traffic planning. As a result of this several of the streets on the Short Strand side were made one way. As one local housing activist put it: "the plans for RDA Tower Street have as much to do with motor cars as I have to do with the man in the moon" (Martin, Committee member, Tower Street HAA). Housing associations as representatives of the PWC



MAP 8.2

in Ballymacarrett often focussed on the quality and cost of housing in East Belfast. Such groups cannot be viewed however simply as a response to working-class demands for improved living conditions. They also reproduced sectarian ideology and values and the attempt to defend sectarian physical and social space. Neither focus excluded the other. Both groups and individuals were capable of viewing housing issues in class terms, in straightforward sectarian terms, or a mixture of the two. This can be demonstrated by the following case study of Cluan Place.

The physical and social position of Cluan Place must be considered in relation to the newly developed Clandeboye Estate in Ballymacarrett. The detail of the sectarian geography of the area can be seen in Map 8.2. Cluan Place has several important features. It is a 'Protestant' street on the 'wrong' side of the sectarian division of the Albertbridge Road, as such it represents an outpost of loyalist Ballymacarrett into the Short Strand. This position remained secure before redevelopment, because the existence of a bus and tram station and a small industrial estate created a physical space between the two communities. After redevelopment, Cluan Place became a cul-de-sac which did not lead directly into the Short Strand but which was also isolated from the core Ballymacarrett residential area. This needs some further explanation as there is no overt reason why the Protestant residents of Cluan place should choose to live in an isolated position on the wrong side of the physical sectarian divide. This is particularly true because the arrangement means they are separate from the rest of the Protestant community in Ballymacarrett. One possible explanation is that those living in Cluan Place experience a greater sense of security, as they are less likely to be exposed to the events which affect the rest of the Protestant

community, in Ballymacarrett. There is theoretically less likelihood of a physical invasion in Cluan Place as there is no direct route of escape to the attacker. What follows demonstrates this is far from the case.

The initial redevelopment plans for the area proposed building a new housing development in the former industrial area around the north of Cluan Place. It was proposed that this new estate be 'mixed' and this was accepted by both communities as it was unlikely to alter the existing territorial balance. The new estate was to form an area of integrated housing between the 'Protestant' streets on the south and the 'Catholic' area to the north. Partly because the population movements outlined above, the overwhelming demand for housing came from the Short Strand in order to relieve its severe housing congestion. Once it became obvious that they would be in a minority, many Protestants who were offered houses in the new development refused to take them up. Clandeboye estate became almost exclusively Catholic, occupied largely, although not exclusively, by former occupants of the Short Strand. This radically affected the perceptions of the Protestant community. Although there was no physical 'takeover' of streets, the development of Clandeboye estate was perceived as an expansion into Protestant working class territory by Catholics. In particular those living in Cluan Place saw themselves as the last bulwark against a take over of the area. They especially regarding the development of Catholic housing into the former neutral area of the tram and bus station as an overt example of expansionism by the Short Strand. There was widespread resistance to the new development articulated by both DUP and UDA representatives as well as local community activists and housing associations. The resulting compromise by the planners meant that the Clandeboye estate

development was halted at Cluan Place, where an eight foot 'environmental wall' was built to segregate the two communities.

Since the creation of the wall, however, a constant claim from those living in Cluan Place has been that they have been under physical attack from those on the Short Strand side of the wall. As one woman resident explained,

"they're making it hell for us, throwing stuff at us every night. No-body could stick it. They want us out. But there's no way they're shifting us."  
(Victoria, Cluan Place resident)

while another claimed that,

"Its like Flanders field. My husband was sitting out the back the other day and a bit of iron that they'd filed just missed him."  
(Helen, Cluan Place resident)

Almost all the residents of Cluan Place told similar stories. What is of major importance is not that such missiles, usually stones, bottles, bricks, were directed at Cluan Place from the Short Strand but how this was interpreted by those living in Cluan Place. Most residents perceived such incidents as part of a conspiracy to remove them from their homes. As one resident said,

"What they are trying to do is to force the Protestants out so that this will become a republican district."  
(Mary, Cluan Place resident)

Another claimed,

"they're trying to get us out so that they can take over this whole end of East Belfast."  
(Fiona, Cluan Place resident)

These views were reflected in the UDA magazine 'Ulster', when it claimed,

"The residents of Cluan Place are being forced out of their homes by well-orchestrated acts of intimidation."  
(Ulster, July/August 1985:27)

Despite a recognition of such widely held views by the UDA, the residents did not turn directly to them for protection. The residents



committee rather approached the RUC to increase patrolling and local loyalist politicians in an attempt to force the Housing Executive to raise the existing wall. This campaign continued from 1983 to 1985 without success. By the summer of 1985, there was obvious tension between those living in Cluan Place and their political representatives. One person explained,

"I thought that they (politicians) would have done a lot more but they only began to show their faces after we got in the news and in the press. In fact the day Peter Robinson arrived the residents chased him and those that were with him."

(Fiona, Cluan Place resident)

Another had this to say,

"Living in Cluan Place has made me see a lot of things I never thought about before. Like the politicians are all talk. They promise you everything in public, they'll sort the whole thing out and then they drop you like hot bricks."

(Adele, Cluan Place resident)

The RUC also found themselves under criticism. The main response from the police revolved around the idea that the missile throwing represented "acts of individual vandalism rather than any organised attempt to enforce a population move" (Alex, RUC officer). They also argued that to increase police patrols to a more regular basis would increase the possibility of attack on such patrols. Such attitudes held little weight with those living in Cluan Place. As one person said,

"the only thing they tell us to do is to board up our windows and the type of grills to put up on our windows to stop them getting smashed"

(Mary, Cluan Place resident)

Another claimed,

"The RUC aren't giving us any protection. The best advice they could give me was to move. I ask you what are you supposed to say to that."

(Fiona, Cluan Place resident)

It was only after the residents had become totally frustrated with both their local political representatives and the police that they approached the UDA. Even then they did so reluctantly. As this resident explained,

"A crowd of us met round our house one night. Somebody suggested that we go up and see X from the UDA, but people didn't really want that. In the end we did contact him, because nobody else was doing anything."  
(Adele, Cluan Place resident)

Finally the approach was only made because one of the local UDA officers was known personally to several people living in Cluan Place. The UDA reacted enthusiastically issuing a statement which claimed,

"that should these cowardly attacks continue, (the UDA) will have no other recourse but to ensure that Cluan Place will be defended by every possible means available."

(Hand circular to Cluan Place residents reproduced in  
Ulster July/August 1985:27)

The UDA's links with residents of Cluan Place remained tenuous. Originally they had been quite close because a loyalist paramilitary leader had lived in Cluan Place before he was assassinated. With his death such links had been eroded. In fact, the local housing committee had made a definite effort to exclude paramilitary representatives. One committee member explained the relationship as follows,

"I think we made it very clear at the beginning that we didn't want paramilitary involvement. If we needed them we told them we would come for them. When the committee was formed they tried to take it over. They tried to take over the office bearers, the Chairman, Treasurer and things like that. We all got together and met them and told them we didn't mind if they wanted to be on the committee representing some area of housing groups but we certainly weren't going to let them get into the office seats."

(Fiona, Cluan Place resident)

Another recalled the same events, and how local residents excluded paramilitary representatives from the local housing committee,

'The night of that meeting I suppose we were quite devious... we all met that night early on in X's house. We thought it was the only way... and we worked out who would vote for who and who would stand for what. When we arrived at the meeting the paramilitaries were all there and I thought, 'Christ we're going to be outnumbered here'. When it came to the elections Y was chairing so things worked well. Not one of them even got on the committee... they knew damned well we had fixed it."

(Adele, Cluan Place resident)

However, by 1985 many residents had clearly reached the point where they felt the UDA were needed. Those residents however, perceived a very limited role for the UDA. This demonstrates some of the community's ambivalence towards the UDA. Residents sought to invoke the UDA muscle to protect them from attack but this did not mean that they were prepared to fully support the UDA. As Mary, someone who fully endorsed making contact with the UDA explained,

"We need the UDA to back us, we've been fighting a losing battle... things are getting worse... the thing I wouldn't ask the paramilitaries to do is to help control the young people round here. I'd be afraid they'd be too vicious and I don't approve of kneecapping and things..."

(Mary, Cluan Place resident)

Those living in Cluan Place who contacted the UDA saw the paramilitaries' role in terms of 'crisis management'. The UDA could legitimise their role only in terms of protectors of the community and then only because the residents perceived the RUC as having failed to do their job properly. UDA members were extremely willing to take on the role of protectors, especially as direct confrontation with the Short Strand had receded throughout the 1980s. It is important to note however that this was the only legitimate role for them. This was to become increasingly obvious as Ballymacarrett responded to the Anglo-Irish agreement.

In August 1986 the East Belfast Amalgamation of Housing Associations had further mixed news from the Northern Ireland Housing

Executive. The decision was finally taken to increase the boundary wall between Thistle Court and Bryson Street. However there was increasing concern from within the housing associations at delays in the building of new houses just off the Albertbridge Road. As their spokesperson put it,

"The NIHE must give a firm commitment that this scheme will go ahead regardless of what financial restrictions may be faced in the next financial year. The people of this area have waited long enough and had too many promises broken."

(East Belfast News, August 21 1986)

Housing and the politics of residence are important focuses within Ballymacarrett. Such issues reflect the fragmented response of the Protestant working class to the crisis. At one level there is a clear expression of class issues, and the attempt to protect their working class community. Residents seek to find expression over their dissatisfaction with housing provision and local conditions. At another level the 'politics of residence' represents an expression of sectarianism, an overt concern with the 'de-Protestantisation' of Ballymacarrett and an attempt to maintain physical boundaries and divisions. These perspectives are not exclusive, and responses can reflect a mixture of both class and sectarian consciousness. Housing issues and housing associations also reflect an attempt by Protestant workers to influence control within the public arena. There is of course a much more public face to politics in Ballymacarrett and it is this which will now be considered, in the form of the 1985 local government elections.

Like all local government elections this must be seen in the context of wider political issues. The major Unionist concern at the time was the developing relationship between the British and Irish governments.

Throughout the early 1980's there had been a series of meetings between the Irish and British Prime Ministers. In November 1981 the decision was made to form an Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Council. This was to involve regular meetings between the British and Irish Governments at ministerial and official levels where matters of 'common concern' would be discussed. In 1982 Anglo-Irish governmental relations were put under pressure from the Falklands war and it was 1983 before the next Anglo-Irish summit occurred. That year also saw the formation of the New Ireland Forum in Dublin.

The Forum was inspired by the SDLP. Its major momentum came from Catholic and Nationalist political parties in an attempt to set an agenda to achieve Irish unity by consent and to assure Northern Protestants that their identity and interests would be protected in a new Ireland State. The New Ireland Forum Report was published in May 1984. One of the Reports major recommendation was that,

"The particular structure of political unity which the Forum would wish to see established is a unitary state, achieved by agreement and consent, embracing the whole island of Ireland and providing irrevocable guarantees for the protection and preservation of both the Unionist and Nationalist identities. A unitary state on which agreement has been reached would also provide the ideal framework for the constructive interaction of the diverse cultures and values of the people of Ireland."

(New Ireland Forum Report, May 1984, paragraph 5.7)

The Report also proposed a Federal/Confederal state and a system of joint authority as options as to how Unionist and Nationalist identities could be accommodated in a new Ireland. The leadership of both Unionist parties reacted strongly to the New Ireland Forum Report. The Official Unionists published their own proposals in a paper called 'The Way Forward' while the Democratic Unionists' response was published in 'The Unionist Case: The Forum Report Answered'. Two further papers 'Opportunity Lost' by the Official

Unionists and 'Ulster the Future Assured' by the Democratic Unionists were published, all of which were obviously critical of the Forum Report. Both the official Unionists and Democratic Unionists focused on the proposal of joint authority. As the Official Unionists put it,

"It is in the provocative nature of the introduction of joint authority that the real danger lies. Unionists would see it as a first step to a United Ireland. The sight of Irish policemen on Northern Irish streets would inevitably produce a tremendous reaction. The direct involvement of Irish officials in governing Northern Ireland would be a source of great resentment. The tensions thus created would be readily exploited by terrorist organisations on both sides of the divide in Northern Ireland and the joint authority government would then be faced with trouble on two fronts which it could not conceivably cope with."

Further,

"It is a measure of the Forum's lack of understanding of Northern Unionism and, therefore, a clear demonstration of the way in which it tackled its task, that it would put forward such a nonsensical 'solution' to the problem. It is simply unbelievable that any serious student of Northern Ireland would imagine that such an idiotic scheme could work."

(P. Smith Opportunity Lost 1984:4)

The Democratic Unionists also criticised joint authority (referred to as joint sovereignty). As their paper put it,

"In proposing Joint Sovereignty, in relation to which the consent of Northern Ireland has neither been sought nor given, its sponsors side-step their previous commitment to attaining consent by pretending that Joint Sovereignty does not really alter the British Citizenship of those in Northern Ireland who desire that citizenship, but, without prejudice, affords to those who do not the alternative of Irish citizenship. Indeed some would even take the Ulster Unionist to be such a fool as to expect him to believe that joint sovereignty would strengthen the British 'guarantee' to Northern Ireland by adding to it the 'guarantee' of the Republic of Ireland that the British connection will continue. This is a palpable lie and deceit. Joint Sovereignty unalterably reverses Northern Ireland's constitutional affiliation as part of the United Kingdom and delivers it out of the United Kingdom irretrievably half-way to an All-Ireland Republic; and this without the least consent of the people of Northern Ireland."

The document then explained DUP fears in detail,

"Given the overt breach of the Constitution Act which would be involved in instant and openly declared Joint Sovereignty, it seems more likely that the exercise of shared and joint authority will evolve by degrees. This strategy would be followed till the point where Joint Sovereignty becomes a tangible reality. The key to the gradualist scenario is to be found in the infamous Anglo/Irish process whereby All-Ireland harmonisation is to be perfected over a period of time. What started with the Dublin summit declaration of 8 December, 1980, of a joint London/Dublin examination of the 'totality of relationships within these islands', has moved through Joint Talks to Joint Studies to Joint Action and will assuredly move by Joint Institutions to Joint Sovereignty...

When Dublin has thus surreptitiously been entwined in exercising authority, jointly with London, in every facet of Ulster life, the Joint Sovereignty that had then evolved in practice would be formalised in law and treaty as the penultimate step to an All-Ireland State. It matters not whether it is achieved by decree or degree, for the concept is an anathema to the Unionist people of Northern Ireland."

(Allister, et al, 1984: Section 3, paras 6 and 8)

Both the OUP and the DUP declared their absolute opposition to an Irish dimension, and in response called for some form of devolved government. Their opposition marked a slight coming together of the Unionist leadership in their opposition to the Forum Report. Unionist fears seemed largely to be dispelled however when the British and Irish governments next met at a summit meeting in November 1984. Reacting to the Forum Report proposals Margaret Thatcher declared,

"I have made it quite clear - and so did Mr. Prior when he was Secretary of State for Northern Ireland - that a unified Ireland was one solution that is out. A second solution was confederation of the two states. That is out. A third solution was joint authority. That is out. That is a derogation from sovereignty. We made it quite clear when the (Forum) Report was published."

(cited in Fortnight No.210:7)

Such comments were received with dismay by the government of the Irish Republic. One leading southern magazine under the headline "Out! Out! Out!", described it as the "Collapse of Anglo-Irish Relations" (Magill, December 1984). Another commentator described the meeting in

these terms, the

"... Summit, once hailed as a new dawn in Anglo-Irish relations turned out to be a complete rout for the Dublin government. Margaret Thatcher completely, frankly and, in her view, realistically rejected even the spirit of the New Ireland Forum Report."

(Toolis 1984:4)

Thatcher's statement was welcomed by the Unionist leadership. Throughout early 1985 both Paisley and Molyneaux had made approaches to John Hume and the SDLP to take their seats in the Northern Ireland Assembly. It represented an attempt by the Unionist leadership to move the agenda away from any Anglo-Irish dimension back to a Northern Ireland context. Thatcher's statement seemed to dispel all the worries within unionism concerning an increasing Anglo-Irish dimension. Their main focus was internal to Northern Ireland and their major worry was the expected growth in electoral support for Sinn Fein and the fear that they would become the majority representatives of the Catholic electorate. As Peter Robinson put it, there were several important 'realities' to consider,

"First there is the Thatcher reality, accepted and agreed by Dr. Fitzgerald in the communique after the last Chequers summit. This is that Northern Ireland shall remain part of the United Kingdom as long as that is the wish of its people. We all know what that means but let me spell it out.

Any structures set up in Northern Ireland will recognise Ulster as an entity within the United Kingdom. This must be accepted without any burning of the edges, without circuitous and circumventive small print or surreptitious language. In constitutional law this principle is a legitimate and honourable ordinance, a self-evident trust, and incontrovertible reality. They call it the right to self-determination.

(Robinson 1985:5)

The Official Unionists also believed increasingly that any wider Anglo-Irish dimension was no longer a reality. They put their emphasis on the proposals contained in 'The Way Forward', highlighting three proposals, 'a form of partnership in a devolved administration',



'a bill of rights' and 'an acknowledgement by Unionists of the legitimacy of the Irish identity and tradition'. The following statement by the Official Unionist general secretary explained their position at the time,

"So the door was opened and Nationalists might reasonably have been expected to try and push it a little further. In fairness, the Irish Government warmly praised our publication, but the leadership of the SDLP behaved as if it hadn't happened and tied themselves instead to the strategy which came a cropper at the Thatcher/Fitzgerald summit"

(Millar 1985: 6 emphasis added)

In Ballymacarrett several political activists remained suspicious.

As one DUP councillor argued,

"The reassurance by Margaret Thatcher worries me. Because if you can watch them coming in your front door you're not watching them at the back door. Since the Forum you've got Hurd and Fitzgerald meeting each other. That worries me... "

(Alan, DUP councillor)

Another DUP councillor explained his concern,

"We aren't being told what's going on. Dublin wants some security input. They want to control the RUC and disband the UDR and to have an input into the courts. The reality of what's going on is being hidden."

(Colin, DUP councillor)

Such voices of dissent however were in a small minority.

For most any possibility of Anglo Irish political cooperation had been completely deflated by Thatcher's statement. As the Belfast Newsletter put it,

"Dublin's influence is likely to be almost totally excluded from the affairs of Northern Ireland."

(June 8th 1985, Editorial)

This can be clearly seen by the manifestos of both the major unionist parties for the May 1985 local government elections. It was the political development of Sinn Fein which was seen as the major target of both parties. In a personal message from James Molyneaux to

voters, priority was given to organising a concerted policy of opposition to Sinn Fein. Under the banner headline 'Put Sinn Fein out of Business', Molyneaux declared,

"The IRA continue to wage war with impunity, seeking to destroy the democratic process by physical and political aggression. We reject the 'armalite and ballot paper' strategy of Sinn Fein. We want to put Sinn Fein out of business."

(Ulster Unionist Party election literature)

The Official Unionist manifesto stated their priorities even more clearly,

"Without apology, we see security as the paramount issue in this election.

Ulster goes to the polls once more against a background of murder and destruction, with the architects of violence masquerading as a democratic party.

By their votes the people of Ulster must show that the Sinn Fein strategy cannot work!

In truth the primacy of politics can never be established or sustained in an atmosphere of war - and we are at war."


(The Ulster Unionist Party. Election Manifesto, May 1985)

The overall tone of the manifesto can be judged by listing the sub-headings to its main sections: 'The Threat to Democracy', 'An End to Direct Rule', 'The Northern Ireland Assembly', 'Practical Partnership', 'Keeping Ulster British'. It is only in the final section that any mention is made of the Anglo-Irish process. Even then, the Official Unionists claimed success for all but halting the process,

"The Ulster Unionist Party in Parliament was widely credited for Mrs. Thatcher's firm rejection of the principal proposals of the Forum Report last November.

.... We believe our endeavours were responsible for a postponement of a meeting between Mrs. Thatcher and the Prime Minister of the Irish Republic last February."

**THE I.R.A. ARMY COUNCIL**



**OR YOUR NEXT DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**PUT SINN FEIN**  
**OUT OF BUSINESS**

**VOTE**  
**ULSTER UNIONIST**  
**ON 15th MAY**

**KEEP ULSTER BRITISH**

ILLUSTRATION 8.1

it added,

"As this campaign opens we face a welter of speculation as to when the two Premiers will meet and what they will discuss..."

Summits cost lives and we invite you in this election to underpin our demand for an end to summitry."

(The Ulster Unionist Party Election Manifesto, May 1985)

Such concerns were however seen as secondary. It was Sinn Fein who were the main target. The OUP printed thousands of glossy posters portraying Sinn Fein's president, Gerry Adams and one of its leading officials Danny Morrison as members of the IRA council (see page opposite). The poster asked the question, "The IRA army council - or your next District Council?" and in bold letters carried the slogan "Put Sinn Fein out of business" - the OUP campaign theme. As one leading official unionist put it,

"We believe Sinn Fein must be branded with the stamp of illegality. We believe the continued activity of Sinn Fein is an assault on the democratic process which weakens and undermines society."

(Millar cited in The Guardian 12/5/85)

The themes recurred throughout official Unionist election literature. The Pottinger 'team' stated 8 major principles, the first three of which were 'maintenance of the union', a 'defeat of terrorism', and the call for a 'devolved government' which rejected 'any form of special privileges for those opposed to our British citizenship' (i.e. non-power sharing devolved government). The more general OUP campaign literature again put 'security' and 'fight against Sinn Fein' at the top of the manifesto, when it declared,

"Ulster lives and breathes by the ballot box but we must never take democracy for granted: eternal vigilance remains the price of freedom. We believe freedom and democracy in Northern Ireland are under greater fire now than at any time in the past 15 years.

Provisional Sinn Fein and the IRA Army Council - which are one and the same - operate under cover of the law to bring the law into contempt..."

Sinn Fein must be proscribed and all those who serve as a front for terror branded with the stamp of illegality and unacceptability."

(Ulster Unionist Party, Keeping Ulster British, Election Manifesto, May 1985:2)

The Democratic Unionist Party also targeted Sinn Fein under the headline,

'The Battlelines are Drawn, Democracy V Sinn Fein'

they declared,

"The IRA front-men of Sinn Fein will be seeking to abuse their position in Councils to support and advance the IRA campaign of murder and destruction. They must be challenged whenever they raise their heads. The Democratic Unionist Party stands ready to meet the challenge thrown down by the apologists for murder. Our record clearly shows that we have the ability and experience to ensure that the representatives of the gunmen, who come to this election with the ballot box in one hand and the armalite in the other are devastated and humiliated."

(Ulster Election Bulletin, May 1985:1)

Another section of the election address read,

"In many areas Sinn Fein candidates, who believe in politics by day and guns by night, will be attempting to gain a strong foothold in the local council... it is absolutely vital therefore that there is a strong uncompromising team of DUP councillors elected... to confront spokesmen for murder and to prevent them from using the council chambers as a platform for their lying propaganda."

(Ulster Election Bulletin, May 1985:1)

In a personal message to voters in East Belfast, Ian Paisley put it in even more straight forward terms,

"In the forthcoming local government election the determination of the Ulster people will again be measured in terms of the total DUP vote compared to the total Sinn Fein vote... Anything less will be pounced upon by our enemies and portrayed as a weakening in Unionist resolve. Accordingly I ask all who supported me in the European Election to ensure that they record their vote for the DUP candidates in the local Government Election. I also appeal to others who share our desire to humiliate Sinn Fein to join us in amassing an overall DUP vote of such proportions that Sinn Fein will be totally swamped. Let us determine to deal Sinn Fein another mortal deflating body blow."

(East Belfast Post, May 9, 1984:5)

In a further election bulletin the DUP declared,

"The merchants of murder must receive their answer in clear and unmistakeable terms. Ulster needs at this time men and women in the local councils who can and will stand up to the IRA front men - men and women who will not shirk their responsibilities or run away when the going gets tough. We need councillors who will stand firm and speak out for the long suffering law abiding people of the province. The DUP has proved that it is the only party which can be trusted with the task of smashing Sinn Fein."

(East Belfast Election Bulletin, May 1985:1)

The DUP literature again reinforced the idea that they were the only party which could be trusted and that the Official Unionists were not sincere in the battle against Sinn Fein. The election bulletin continued,

"Alas, recently the Official Unionist councillors in Coleraine Borough Council refused to back a DUP motion to ban Sinn Fein. Banning Sinn Fein is one way to put them out of business."

(Ulster Election Bulletin, May 1985:1)

In the same way as the Official Unionist election literature, it was only after they had targeted the political development of Sinn Fein, that the DUP made any mention of a 'sell out to Dublin'. The following identifies the DUP position clearly,

"Since 1980 when Mrs Thatcher initiated the Anglo-Irish process with Charles Haughey there have been ongoing talks about the future of Northern Ireland. These talks about our future have been behind closed doors and against the will of the people of this province. In spite of assurances from the Government that the constitutional position of Northern Ireland is safe, talks with Dublin continue. What is the point of such talks if as the Government says there is nothing to talk about? The answer surely is that there is treachery afoot."

(East Belfast Election Bulletin, May, 1985:3)

Again the DUP literature sought to set them apart from the Official Unionists,

"We (the DUP) cannot follow their complacent line advocated by the Leader of the Official Unionist Party who publicly stated that 'the union is in safe hands' and that there is 'no need for Unionist to get alarmed'

and appealed for a cool approach. How can we remain cool and unalarmed when our very heritage and freedom is at risk."

(Ulster Election Bulletin, May 1985:2)

For the DUP the answer was quite clear,

"On May 15th, the back stabbing British Government and its officials must be given the answer. The DUP is seen as the barrier to the successful delivery of a United Ireland deal. A massive vote for DUP candidates will be a timely warning across the bows of Government that we will resist stoutly any summer summit sellout."

(Ulster Election Bulletin, May 1985:2)

Elsewhere the DUP manifesto called for: the creation of jobs by helping 'small local industries instead of fly by night multinationals' 'increased funding of education, health and social services'. The manifesto also called for local opinion polls to be taken on the opening of council facilities on Sundays. In a notable difference from the Official Unionists, they also promoted more rights for prisoners - administrative separation and definite sentences for those detained at the Secretary of State's pleasure. Despite some clear differences - such as the DUP's emphasis on being the only party voters could trust and the restatement of economic policies outlined in Chapter Five - essentially the agendas set by both the Official and Democratic Unionists were remarkably similar. Sinn Fein's decision to field a large number of candidates and to take their seats if elected prompted both Unionist parties to make 'smashing Sinn Fein' (DUP) and 'putting Sinn Fein out of business' (OUP) their number one campaign issue. Both parties gave a low priority to the 'Anglo-Irish process'. Both assumed that the process was not advancing and the Thatcher government was insensitive to Dublin's commitment in the Forum Report.

Given the similarity in their manifestos it is important to try and identify the main differences between the Official and Democratic

Unionists campaigns in the 1985 local election. Some of the more obvious differences were in the type of candidates who were standing and the electioneering strategies involved. All three DUP candidates lived in Ballymacarrett. One was a serving councillor with a reputation for being highly active. The other two candidates, standing for the first time were both employed by Harland and Wolff, and each was involved with their local housing association. DUP activists made much of this. At one pre-election meeting a DUP East Belfast committee member explained one of the major differences,

"Take this area. You've got a woman from Carryduff, standing under a false address on the Cregagh Road, a man from Shandon Park and a man from Sandy Row, all standing for the Official Unionists in Pottinger. With us (the DUP) you've got A who works in the shipyard, B comes from the Newtownards Road and C comes from Jocelyn Avenue... thats why the DUP have growing support in East Belfast... because we're local and get in and mix amongst the people. That's why you should vote for the DUP".

(David, DUP member, election meeting May 12th 1985)

Election workers emphasised on the doorstep constantly how DUP candidates were 'part of the community' and that they were 'ordinary people'. As well as the general literature the DUP produced for the election, they also produced a series of leaflets specific to each electoral area. In Pottinger, one side of these was taken up by the general DUP manifesto. The other side of the leaflet however showed photographs of each of the candidates and gave detailed biographical notes stressing their links with East Belfast. In comparison, the Official Unionist material was less well produced and gave no personal details of the candidates. The pivot of the DUP election campaign was their ability to mobilise a large number of election workers. These workers spent a great deal of time in close personal contact with voters. Workers saturated small physical districts in Ballymacarrett, to distribute literature and to promote the virtues of the DUP. Most



often they were asked questions comparing DUP candidates with those of the OUP, and most often campaign workers sought support for all 3 DUP candidates in no particular order. The emphasis was on encouraging the elector to 'vote DUP -1 2 3' (first three preference votes) and there was little advice given to transfer votes to Official Unionist candidates. The emphasis on the 'DUP team' was made easier because all three candidates had a high profile in Ballymacarrett. The DUP campaign workers were also mainly young and extremely enthusiastic. Given the age-profile of DUP party support, outlined in earlier Chapters, this is easily understood. DUP campaign workers also called on houses regardless of party affiliation. In contrast OUP workers only called on the homes of known supporters. There was however little overlap between the two sets of campaign workers. There was a clear, if unwritten, demarcation, the DUP concentrating on the innermost wards and the OUP on the more suburban outer wards. It is also noteworthy that not all DUP workers were party members or were experienced in such matters. Although the official DUP emphasis was on 'the team' several workers had been recruited because they knew individual candidates well or had worked with them on community issues. One such campaigner was Victor, the UDA's prisoner welfare worker. As he explained,

"I've known Colin for years, we went to school together, we fought each other on the way to and the way back from school, we've played football up and down the entry in our time. Now I'm no great fan of a lot of people in the DUP as you know, but Colin is basically a decent fella and I think he'll do a good job if he gets in."  
 (Victor, LPA worker)

The fact that Colin had been extremely active in community work was important in his support. At one point he gave an example of his relationship with the local community,

"People came here before I was a councillor and they'll still come here if I'm not... I once tried to give up

some years ago... to be honest it came to a sticky patch in my marriage... I was out every night in the week, so I stopped. People were coming to the front door and I was having to say 'sorry I can't really help you'. Then one Sunday night an old woman came to the door with the tears tripping her and I couldn't turn her away... I got the Housing Executive emergency services out and fixed her up... two days later her sister came to me and said 'can you help'... then it was somebody else... and before I knew it the whole thing had started again."

(Colin, DUP councillor)

The attempt here is not to romanticise inner city working class life, rather to identify forms of party support for the DUP which are not available to the OUP. The DUP strategy was to focus on local issues and to stand candidates who were well known in tightly-knit working class communities. The DUP campaign culminated the night before the election with a motorised cavalcade around Ballymacarrett, with all the candidates in attendance, and with many workers on the ground calling from house to house.

In general, the major features of the election were the wide spread support for Sinn Fein and secondly the controversy over the introduction of identification requirements before voting. The average turnout was low and there was a clear swing in the popular vote away from the DUP towards the OUP. The former collected only 155,353 first preference votes to the latter's 188,174. The breakdown of the party vote in Belfast in 1981 and 1985 can be seen in Table 8.1.

**TABLE 8.1 BREAKDOWN OF PARTY VOTES IN BELFAST IN 1981 AND 1985  
LOCAL ELECTIONS**

	1981		1985	
	FIRST PREFS.	SHARE OF VOTE (%)	FIRST PREFS.	SHARE (%)
Official Unionists	30685	23.7	28165	24.4
D.U.P.	33433	25.8	23052	19.9
SDLP	18227	14.1	16479	14.2
Sinn Fein	-	-	18077	15.6
Alliance	17164	13.2	13286	11.5
Workers Party	4927	3.9	4432	3.8
Other Unionist	8727	6.7	10058	8.7
Independents	16409	12.7	2098	1.8
Valid Poll	129638		115647	
Turnout	55.9%		53.2%	

In Belfast the overall vote for the DUP was disappointing, 5.9% down on the 1981 figure. As one defeated DUP candidate put it,

"The prods just did not come out, Big Ian is going to be disappointed. He was predicting a miracle."  
(Pauline Wittley cited in The Irish News 17/5/85)

In Pottinger however although the turnout was only 48.95% the DUP polled extremely well. The DUP took 49.2% of the first preference votes compared with 26.3% for the OUP. The DUP had two candidates elected on their first preference votes and their third on the second count, as can be seen in Table 8.2.

TABLE 8.2 RESULT OF POTTINGER ELECTORAL AREA - FIRST PREFERENCE VOTES  
1985 LOCAL ELECTION

Electorate 25,084 (6 seats)

Valid Vote 11,848

Quota 1,755

Name	Party	No of Votes	% of first preference votes
M. Clarke	Official Unionists	1,999	16.9
F. J. Cullen	Workers Party	303	2.6
S. J. Dempsey	Labour and Trades Union	218	1.8
R. Ireland M. Empey	Official Unionists	1,117	9.4
D.W. Ervine	Progressive Unionists	394	3.3
M.J. Jones	Alliance	1,019	8.6
F. Leslie	Democratic Unionists	2,224	18.8
C. Maginness	SDLP	340	2.9
J. O'Donnell	Sinn Fein	566	4.8
J. Stewart	Communist Party	61	0.5
J. Walker	Democratic Unionists	1,153	9.7
S. Wilson	Democratic Unionists	2,454	20.7
		11,848	100.0
<b>ELECTED</b>			
<b>FIRST COUNT</b>	M. Clark	OUP	
	F. Leslie	DUP	
	S. Wilson	DUP	
<b>2ND COUNT</b>	J. Walker	DUP	
<b>7TH COUNT</b>	R. Empey	OUP	
<b>8TH COUNT</b>	M. Jones	Alliance	

When the voting returns are examined it is clear that the transfer votes from F. Leslie and S. Wilson went directly to J.F Walker to allow him to be elected on the second count. It is also clear that there was not a high level of transfer between DUP voters and OUP candidates, the second Official Unionist not being elected until the seventh count. The tactic of emphasising a team approach and encouraging supporters to vote 'DUP-123' seemed to have paid off for the DUP in Pottinger.

By far the most far-reaching consequence of the election for unionism was the immediate post-election pact signed by leaders Jim



ILLUSTRATION 8.2

## A Message to the Ulster People from Jim Molyneaux and Ian Paisley

### Why We Must Put Sinn Fein Out Of Business

Ulster lives and breathes by the ballot box. But the democratic process demands that all participants adhere to the rules.

Constitutional parties seek their objectives by way of peaceful persuasion. However, they are all bound by the freely expressed wish of the people.

Sinn Fein IRA know no such constraint. By their own admission murder is the cutting edge of their political philosophy. They would force the people into submission!

That is why, on the 17th of May, we formed a pact to isolate and ostracise Sinn Fein representatives in our Council chambers.

Today we reaffirm our determination that the Sinn Fein presence in our District Councils cannot and will not be tolerated, and renew our pledge to thwart their attempt to subvert and destroy the democratic process from within.

In our endeavour we are confronted by a duplicitous Government and a hostile press.

The Secretary of State declines any dealings with Sinn Fein but expects the elected representatives of the Ulster people to treat with them. Ministers refuse to meet Council delegations which include Sinn Fein Councillors but at the same time sanction their appointment to Boards responsible for the education and welfare of our people!

Such duplicity cannot be accepted. Such double standards cannot endure.

Our local government laws were not designed to meet the situation which now obtains. Nonetheless, in answer to Mr. Hurd's challenge, we shall take recourse to law and explore every legal avenue or loophole in aid of our campaign.

*If nothing else, that campaign will accentuate our demand that the law be changed.*

Of course we will be told that our campaign is ill-conceived or even counter productive. Certainly the Government is hoping for a cooling off period pending a return to normal business.

But there is nothing normal about the Sinn Fein presence.

Already the Chairman of Fermanagh District Council has endorsed the IRA's "armed struggle" whilst his counterpart in Omagh has publicly confirmed the circumstances in which he considers the murder of his own Council employees would be justified.

This fight with Sinn Fein therefore is literally of life and death importance.

Our reverence for life, and our respect for Ulster's dead, makes acquiescence impossible and unthinkable.

We have joined forces in a battle in which, for us, there is no discharge. As Unionists we know that if this battle is not won then the whole war is lost.

*Jim Molyneaux*

*Ian R. K. Paisley*

Molyneaux and Ian Paisley and pledging unity in the council chambers to oppose Sinn Fein's newly elected councillors. As they put it,

"We are rock solid on the Union and to the maintenance of the same, we stand pledged. We stand united in the face of the common foe and repudiate Dublin interference in Ulster affairs..."

As far as Sinn Fein is concerned we are pledged, as all our councillors utterly and totally to oppose them at every opportunity. We have a massive mandate to do this.

There will be no fraternising with these godfathers of gunmen, bombers and murderers...

We call on all those within Northern Ireland who believe in the ballot and reject the bullet to renew their effort and to achieve a solution to our problems firmly within Northern Ireland. We dedicate ourselves afresh to that task."

(J. Molyneaux and I. Paisley cited in Belfast Telegraph 17.5.85)

The full statement is reproduced on the opposite page. Not everyone in Ballymacarrett was convinced by the merits of the unionist pact. As one of the newly elected DUP councillors put it,

"In the long term we've got to look to our own (DUP) resources because we can't depend on the Official Unionists to keep up the kind of pressure that's needed. It's a pit... if legal ways could be found I've no doubt the OUP would support it but I'm not sure there are any foolproof legal ways."

(Alan, DUP councillor, May 1985)

Another DUP councillor aired similar views when he said,

"I'm fairly cynical because I don't think the Official Unionists ever intended to have a pact that works. One of the marks of Official Unionism has been that they want to keep up their respectability and any pact that is going to deal properly with Sinn Fein involves losing respectability and taking risks. I can't think of anybody in the OUP that's prepared to take risks of any sort."

(Colin, DUP councillor)

The DUP's 1985 election campaign in Ballymacarrett illustrates the extremely complex relationship between the parliamentary party and its grass roots support. The DUP in East Belfast consistently upheld the

strength of their 'loyalty' and 'steadfastness', particularly in comparison with local Official Unionist representatives. The DUP in Ballymacarrett also consistently defended the rights of the PWC especially on housing issues and community matters. Moreover success in community work and housing issues provided the DUP with increased support and people prepared to work for, and stand for election, for the DUP. Much of the success of the DUP in Ballymacarrett was because they could successfully transcend both the public and private spheres of politics. It is also because they can successfully redefine the agenda so that private politics is subsumed into the public arena.

The period following the 1985 local elections saw a regrouping of unionism. This was met with confusion and some anger by local DUP representatives in Ballymacarrett. Although they were prepared to support the pact to defeat Sinn Fein in the council chambers, they remained hostile to local Official Unionist representatives. The pact however did provide the momentum for the reconstruction of unionist hegemony. This was to assume extreme significance within a very short time.

## CHAPTER NINE THE PROTESTANT WORKING CLASS AND THE ANGLO-IRISH AGREEMENT

The previous chapters have considered the politics and ideology within the community of Ballymacarrett. This chapter illustrates how local politics and institutions are linked with institutions and politics at the level of the Northern Irish state. This is examined through the Unionist response to the Anglo-Irish Agreement. In particular this chapter highlights those activists in Ballymacarrett already introduced and the roles they played in the campaign against the Agreement.

The newly elected representatives to Belfast City Council had a much more immediate problem than the developing framework between the British and Irish governments however. The major concern of Ballymacarrett's Unionist councillors was to make effective their campaign of opposition against the newly elected Sinn Fein representatives. In the eighteen unionist dominated councils throughout Northern Ireland, OUP and DUP councillors adopted a joint series of tactics to isolate Sinn Fein within the council chambers. The main tactics of Unionist representatives was to attempt to prevent Sinn Fein councillors from speaking at meetings, and from being elected to the standing orders and sub-committees where most of the major council business took place.

It was Craigavon council who provided the vanguard of the unionist opposition. They voted to suspend all future meetings. Throughout Northern Ireland unionist controlled councils followed their example, suspending monthly meetings and refusing to carry out council affairs. In Belfast, however the unionist pact was immediately threatened when a majority of OUP councillors opposed a DUP motion to suspend council meetings. For the DUP this was further evidence of



the duplicity and weakness of the Official Unionists. As one Pottinger DUP councillor put it,

"Look at them (Pottinger Official Unionists) a few weeks ago, they were running round East Belfast telling everyone they were going to crush Sinn Fein. D for example, she's just a blue-rinse Tory. There's no way she's going to crush anybody."

(Alan, DUP councillor)

Another DUP councillor saw the official unionist claims as a pretence.

He expressed it as follows,

"I think the Official Unionist has always been loath to get involved in any active politics, especially if it's confrontational. I'm quite happy to do it... the Official Unionists won't distance themselves too much. They may deplore what's going on but they won't distance themselves too much. That comes back to the hypocrisy of them. They know what they told the voters and they know what the people feel but they've never had the guts to translate that feeling into action."

(Colin, DUP councillor)

Craigavon council continued to take the lead in unionist protests. They set up a special committee, excluding Sinn Fein members, which was to conduct the majority of council business. At this stage the campaign entered a new phase. Unionist tactics were declared illegal by the High Court in Belfast, which deemed the expulsion of Sinn Fein councillors as unlawful and void (Connolly and Knox 1988:90). Another tactic promoted by unionist members of Craigavon council was to ask all councillors to sign a declaration denouncing violence. When all the non-unionist members of the council refused to sign they were expelled from council chambers. Again this decision was challenged in the courts and again it was declared illegal.

For six months after the local government elections it was this campaign against Sinn Fein councillors which provided much of the momentum for unionist politics. It represented a slight regrouping within unionism. The allegiance of both OUP and DUP councillors to each other was an inherently unstable one. Local councillors remained

divided over tactics and long standing tensions emerged. In Ballymacarrett, DUP councillors remained suspicious of their OUP counterparts, both in terms of their commitment to 'action' and their willingness to represent 'ordinary people'. These themes were to re-emerge during the campaign against the Anglo-Irish agreement.

By late 1985, however, the exclusion campaign against Sinn Fein members had become marginal to mainstream unionist concerns. On 15 November Mrs Thatcher and Dr Fitzgerald met at the third of a series of meetings of heads of government in the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Council. The two premiers signed a formal and binding agreement, whose major aims were to be 'promoting peace and stability in Northern Ireland; helping to reconcile the two major traditions in Ireland; creating a new climate of friendship and co-operation between the people of the two countries; and improving co-operation in combatting terrorism'. Much has been written concerning the actual wording and discourse of the agreement (cf Kenny 1986: 96-104). Most of the initial focus was on 'article one', which concerned the constitutional status of Northern Ireland. In general, the Agreement was regarded by unionists as an extremely thinly disguised form of joint sovereignty between Dublin and London. Despite British government assurances, unionists believed that the Dublin government was to be given a major and executive role in the intergovernmental conference.

It is difficult to express unionist reaction. Bew and Patterson perhaps understate it as one of 'shock and dismay' (1987:49). The most articulate statement of unionist disbelief came from Harold McCusker MP in the House of Commons, and is worth reproducing at length.

"The agreement deals with my most cherished ideals and aspirations. On three occasions in the week prior to the signing of the agreement, on the Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, I stood in the House, having been told in essence by foreign journals what the agreement contained, and it was denied to me that an agreement existed, or had even been reached.

I went to Hillsborough on Friday morning... I stood outside Hillsborough, not waving a Union flag - I doubt whether I will ever wave one again - not singing hymns; saying prayers or protesting, but like a dog and asked the Government to put in my hand the document that sold my birthright. They told me that they would give it to me as soon as possible. Having never consulted me, never sought my opinion or asked my advice, they told the rest of the world what was in store for me.

I stood in the cold outside the gates of Hillsborough castle and waited for them to come out and give me the agreement second hand. It is even more despicable that they would not even send one of their servants to give it to me. I had been told three hours before that it would be brought out to me. At 2.45.p.m., 15 minutes after the press conference had begun, I asked a policeman whether he would bring me the declaration that betrayed everything that I had ever stood for. A senior police officer went into Hillsborough Castle, asked for the document and brought it out to me.

I felt desolate because as I stood in the cold outside Hillsborough Castle everything that I held dear turned to ashes in my mouth."

(cited in Kenny 1986:103)

The overall theme of these views was also expressed by Colin, the Pottinger DUP councillor who put it this way,

"Previously the whole problem was Sinn Fein and the council. That was the main problem. Previously the Protestant people have believed they have two enemies, now they believe they've three. First is the enemy without - the southern government, the second is the enemy within - the Nationalist community within Northern Ireland. Now we have more enemies - the Northern Ireland office, the British Government and most especially Margaret Thatcher."

(Colin, DUP councillor)

While Alan had this to say,

"it's been very traumatic, all the certainties that we had in life have been taken away and we've been left in a quandary. First of all whether we are British, whether or not we have any friends or whether or not we are about to be sold into a United Ireland."

(Alan, DUP councillor)

The following statement captures the overall mood within Unionism well.

"By 15th November 1985, the British and Irish Governments had thus created a deep sense of foreboding in the majority Unionist community in Northern Ireland. Something terrible was about to happen - something so terrible that majority leaders could not be consulted because both governments knew that Unionist rejection was a certainty. What was about to happen was so terrible that extra troops were on standby to fly to Northern Ireland on short notice and contingency plans had been made to cope with a general strike in the Province. What was about to happen was so terrible that the British government was letting it be known that Mrs Thatcher, the 'Iron Lady' had determined to 'face down' majority Unionist opposition in the Province just as she had already faced down the Argentinians and striking miners. And when the Agreement finally came, to unionists it was, indeed, terrible."

(P. Smith n.d.:6)

Unionist hostility was quickly manifested and precipitated a huge rally at Belfast City Hall on November 23 1985, which was attended by anything up to 280,000 people. It was Ian Paisley who came to the fore at this public forum, his rhetoric and style dominating the other main speaker James Molyneaux. For some this raised the spectre of loyalist unity a la 1974. As these commentators put it,

"The situation on the streets is plainly deteriorating and the likelihood of an all out confrontation - whether by gradually escalating disorder or by an indefinite strike like that of 1974 - is increasing."

(Hadden and Boyle, Fortnight 5/12/ 1986:9)

However while loyalist protests continued they did not progress as a unified force. Deep rooted division within Unionism meant that Unionist solidarity was extremely superficial. The remainder of this chapter will discuss this factionalism in the context of the first two years of the campaign against the Anglo-Irish agreement. In particular it will discuss the role played by those activists in Ballymacarrett who have already been introduced.

Essentially there were three core elements to the Unionist

response. The campaign against the Anglo-Irish agreement was organised at the national level, at the local government level and on the streets.

Politically, Unionist reaction highlighted several key issues. Connolly and Loughlin identify three specific areas of Unionist protest: the involvement of Dublin in the offices of Northern Ireland; the process by which the agreement was arrived at, which excluded the Unionist community; and finally the 'undemocratic' nature of the agreement, foisted upon the 'Unionist people'. (Connolly and Loughlin 1986:55). It was this 'undemocratic' nature of the agreement which provided the initial focus of Unionist reaction. The leadership called for a referendum to be held, arguing that this should be on the same basis as the devolution referendums in Scotland and Wales in 1978. Unionist representatives further promised to 'reconsider their roles' in both the N.I. Assembly and local councils. Unionist demands for a referendum were ignored by the British government. In response the Unionist leadership called for the resignation of all 15 Unionist MPs at Westminster to force a 'mini-general election' in Northern Ireland. Unionists further claimed that the subsequent results should be regarded as a 'referendum'. The resulting by-elections were held on 23 January 1986 where the OUP and DUP stood agreed candidates on a joint manifesto, part of which stated,

"This election is not about sending a representative to the House of Commons, our MPs got the endorsement in June 1983. This election is about one issue - the Anglo-Irish agreement."

(Unionist Election Bulletin, Jan 1986:1)

It is slightly difficult to fully assess the election results as a referendum. Only 15 out of the 17 seats were contested and supporters of the agreement were in several cases only given the opportunity to vote for 'Peter Barry', a fictitious candidate put forward by

# 'A CALL TO ACTION'

*By Jim Molyneux and Ian Paisley*

The Anglo Irish Agreement gives the Dublin Government a real say in Ulster's affairs while your own elected representatives are excluded and ignored.

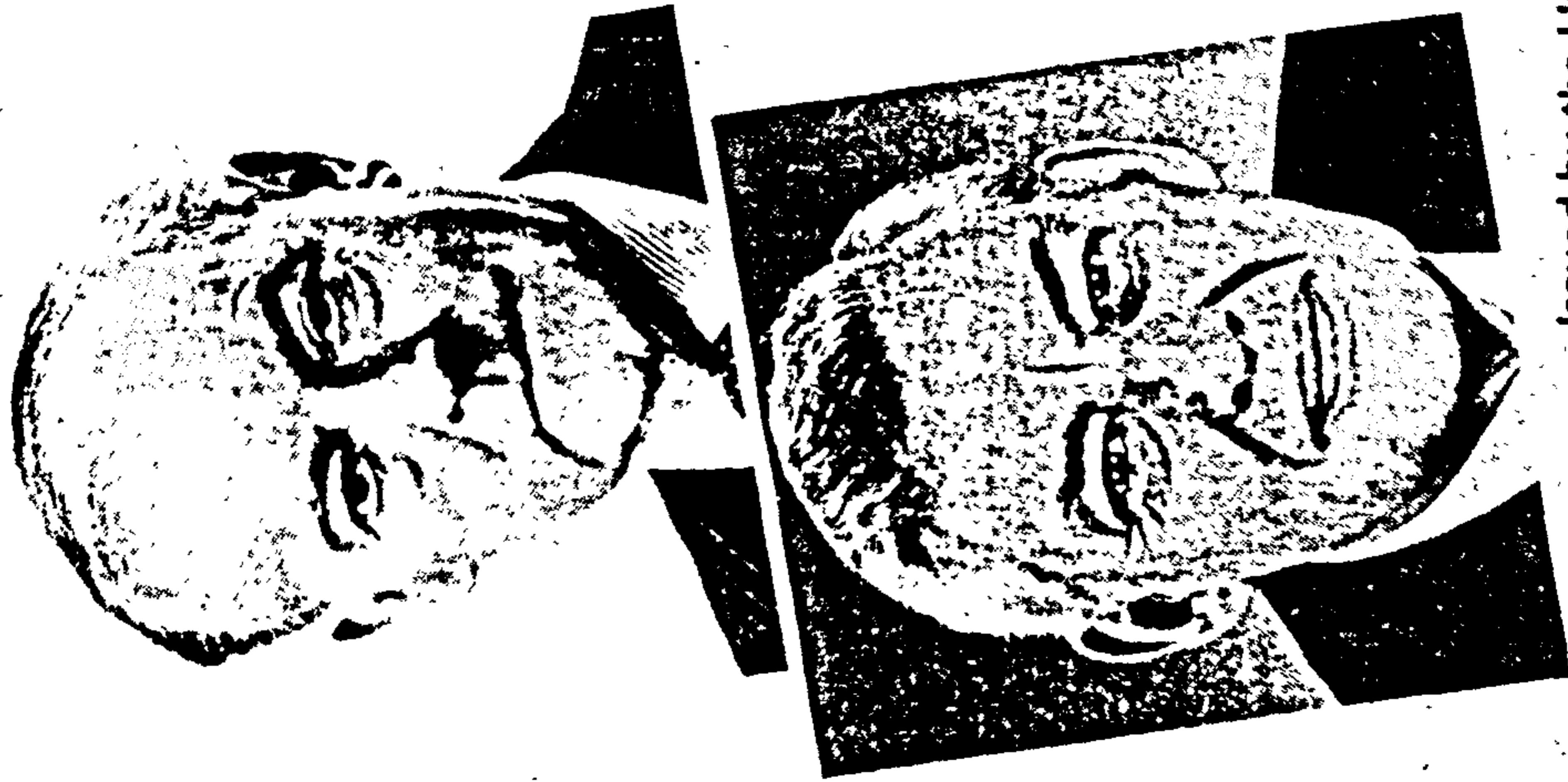
Under Joint Authority Dublin's Minister for Northern Ireland, Peter Barry has been set up over us as an equal with Tom King. Together they are intent on forcing Ulster down the Dublin Road.

The people of Ulster have rightly and emphatically said 'NO'. On 23rd January 418,230 constitutionalists voted against the Agreement.

Yet at our meeting on 25th February the Prime Minister rejected the mandated and reasoned case which we presented on your behalf. By reaffirming her Government's commitment to the implementation of the Agreement she said 'NO' to the Ballot Box and spurned consultation in favour of confrontation.

It is now up to us all to demonstrate beyond doubt that we will not be trampled on in this manner and that in no circumstances will we ever accept Dublin Rule.

Next Monday is your opportunity to do so, by joining in a Massive Province-wide DAY OF ACTION AND PROTEST. We are asking you to play your part in sending an unmistakable signal to Westminster that Ulster means business.



Issued by the Unionist Joint Working Party, Parliament Buildings, Stormont.

Unionists to make the by-election possible. Overall however Unionist candidates obtained 418,230 votes, around 44% of the electorate.

The results were used as a justification for an intensification of the anti-agreement campaign. The Unionist leadership, under the name of the 'Unionist Joint Working Party', issued a 'Call to Action'. They claimed it was,

"up to us all to demonstrate beyond doubt that we will not be trampled on in this manner and that in no circumstances will we ever accept Dublin Rule."

it continued,

"Next Monday is your opportunity to do so, by joining in a Massive Province-wide DAY OF ACTION AND PROTEST. We are asking you to play your part in sending an unmistakable signal to Westminster that Ulster means business."

(Hand-circular, East Belfast, 1/3/1986)

Much of the post strike commentary concerned the level of violence and intimidation and the fact that the RUC had failed to keep many roads open, or had co-operated with pickets (Holland and Taylor, 9/3/1986, N.I. Justice and Peace Commission, Report No.1). That there was open intimidation, threats and some more serious incidents with vehicles being burned and police officers stoned is beyond doubt. In some districts of Belfast including the Shankill Road and Ballymacarrett the police found themselves under sporadic gunfire from loyalists. However it would be incorrect as several commentators have done to suggest a high degree of co-ordination between these events (News Letter 4/3/1986). In East Belfast, for example, most of the violence was conducted by gangs of young people most of whom had only tangential contact with the paramilitaries. That is not to say that they could have operated without the tacit support of the UDA or that the UDA in Ballymacarrett was unaware of what was happening. However, the paramilitaries in Ballymacarrett did not orchestrate or coordinate

such events. The 'politics of violence' and its specific context in Ballymacarrett will be discussed later. What is of importance here is that the 'Day of Action' exposed severe contradictions within the 'Unionist solidarity' movement. Divisions quickly emerged both within and between the two major Unionist parties, and importantly between political unionism and the paramilitaries.

The UDA had made it clear from the signing of the agreement that unlike 1974, this time they expected Unionist politicians to take the lead in any protests. The UDA's strategy remained based on the 'doomsday scenario' outlined earlier and the UDA demanded it should be the politicians who would declare when this point had been reached. Before the 'Day of Action' both of the Unionist party leaders had publicly committed themselves stating that there would be no road blocks or intimidation of those wishing to go to work. In the face of the resulting widespread complaints about intimidation the RUC openly criticised both party leaders. The next big Unionist 'show piece', the anniversary rally against the agreement in November 1986, was also marked by street protests and violence. As a result the Unionist leadership decided to exclude paramilitaries from any further involvement in protests and specifically from involvement in the next mass action on 11 April 1987.

There were several dimensions to this split. The long-standing divide between the Official Unionists and loyalist paramilitary groups re-emerged. Such differences have been widely documented. The 3rd March protests also exposed divisions between the UDA and the DUP.

As in 1974 there was an implicit recognition that if the anti-agreement campaign was to succeed it would require the total commitment of a broad Unionist class alliance, not only Protestant workers, but also petty bourgeois and middle class Unionists. Paisley



had made this explicit just before the 'day of action', when he wrote,

"On Monday we do mean business. I am making an appeal to all sections of the community. There are people in this community who agree with what we are doing but do not want to play a part in any action. They are prepared to take the benefits that will come as the result of a successful campaign, but they are not prepared to make any sacrifices to assist that campaign. I know that it is the common people who will bear the burden of the action, but I say to the middle classes and to the upper classes of this province 'You cannot, Pilate like, wash your hands of all responsibility and receive from the community the benefits of its labours without also shouldering your responsibility at this time.'"

(Protestant Blue Print Vol I, No.33)

Elsewhere Paisley outlined his vision of the result of such unified resistance.

"There will be total and absolute withdrawal of consent from (her) government in Northern Ireland. The entire population will be mobilized and there will be a massive campaign of civil disobedience... The machinery of government is in the hands of the Ulster people - civil servants, government offices, government officials, the police force. All these people as well as the man on the street will cease to co-operate and when they do Margaret Thatcher will not be able to govern Northern Ireland."

(cited in Newsweek, 16/12/1985)

What Paisley was attempting to do was to reconstruct Unionist hegemony under his control. In the early days of the protests he appeared to be succeeding. As one commentator explained,

"If the agreement accomplished anything initially it was to unite Unionism as it had not been united for nearly 20 years. Even during the Sunningdale experiment constitutional unionists were divided, with the UPNI helping to form the Executive whilst the other Unionists tried to bring it down."

(McGimpsey 1987:8)

or as Bew and Patterson put it,

"Although the history of Protestant politics and ideology is replete with divisions on democratic and class issues, on the national question, even in its more humane and liberalised post-Forum form, there is no significant intra-Unionist division. The liberals and neanderthals make common cause."

(Bew and Patterson 1987:45)

It was clearly believed that as in the UWC strike it would be the paramilitaries who would provide the 'cutting edge' of Unionist protests. Key elements within the UDA however, quickly excluded themselves from the direct control of the Unionist leadership. The UDA's indisposition to the Unionist leaders was based on recent experiences with loyalist politicians, particularly those involving loyalist prisoners (see Chapter Six). It was also partly a result of the attempted political reorganisation within the UDA since the '1977 strike'. Signs of such disillusionment emerged as early as January 1986 and can clearly be seen in the following statement,

"In view of... the lack of a real plan to deal with the constitutional crisis we find ourselves in, we, the Ulster Nation, are entitled to ask what our Politicians have been doing since last November and where they are going? While they dither, others wait with increasing impatience, and concern."

(Editorial, Ulster, Jan 1986)

In the immediate aftermath of the 'Day of Action', the UDA had made their lack of confidence in the unionist leadership overt,

"What we lack is a clear and decisive leadership and a co-ordinated plan of action."

In an extremely thoughtful statement the spokesperson continued,

"Of course there are those who will not lend themselves to unconstitutional tactics and have already set limitations to their resistance and the time will come when a split will develop. But the split will not, as many believe, be a parting of the Official Unionists and the DUP. It will cut across both parties and almost every other loyalist organisation. Loyalists will divide on the issue of how far they are prepared to go."

(J. McMichael, Fortnight 24 March 1986:5)

The campaign against the Anglo-Irish Agreement could only be maintained as a defensive political move. Unionist unity could only remain intact as long as the Protestant working class believed that the campaign and the unionist political leadership would be effective in representing their interests. Within a few months of the agreement

being signed it became clear that the UDA were determined to act in an autonomous manner. Unionists, and Paisley in particular, were forced to look elsewhere for the organisation of mass ranked loyalists. It soon became clear that this role would be filled by another organisation, the 'Ulster Clubs'.

The origins of the Ulster Clubs predate the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, in the Loyalist Action Committee formed in July 1985 to co-ordinate protests against the re-routing of Orange Order parades. From this committee grew the United Ulster Loyalist Front (UULF) who organised at a local level through the 'Ulster Clubs'. The leadership of the Ulster Clubs was strongly impregnated with the values and attitudes of traditional unionism as they were expressed at the peak of the struggle against Home Rule before World War One. In an attempt to recreate the old Unionist Alliance the Ulster Clubs leader Alan Wright played directly on the Unionist heritage as the following illustrates,

"(We) need to have what Carson had which was a people's army to make this country totally ungovernable to bring this government to its knees... Ulster men and women are not prepared to let Dublin have a say at all in Northern Ireland. The price we are being asked to pay is 2,500 deaths, 18 thousand maimed and Dublin involved in every decision which is pro-nationalist, anti-loyalist. That price is far too high and we are not prepared to sit idly by any longer and pay that. We will take whatever steps are necessary. Carson had his army. Thank God it wasn't needed. I believe Ulster needs that one united effort and if force is necessary we must prepare now."

(Alan Wright, Fortnight 10th February 1986:5)

The Ulster Clubs were instrumental in organising mass rallies, demonstrations and mass pickets. They declared they would,

"embark upon a province wide recruitment of men willing and prepared to take direct action when required."

(News Letter, 11 November 1986)

The Ulster Clubs played a major role in the realignment of Unionist opposition, but by doing so further weakened the Unionist alliance. Politically the Ulster clubs represented the more reactionary elements of the provinces business community. In particular Wright was supported by the rural petty bourgeoisie. The Ulster clubs also attracted elements of the old Unionist Alliance whose social and political influence had been steadily undermined since 1969, such as the Orange Order whose traditional role had been the maintenance of the Protestant community. The Ulster clubs also took up the defence of 'Protestantism', one of their central demands being an end to the erosion of their 'Protestant heritage'. As such there was a considerable overlap between support for, and activists in, the Ulster clubs and the rural element of the DUP. Both were small town based and put a strong emphasis on religious tradition and their Protestant heritage. Hence the Ulster clubs had a membership of around 10,000, but were poorly supported in Belfast and almost non-existent in Ballymacarrett.

There was another major difference between the Ulster clubs and the UDA. The Ulster clubs had suggested that if necessary the opposition campaign would have to be taken to its logical conclusion. That is, if Northern Ireland was to be forced out of the union it should claim the right to political self determination and declare a unilateral declaration of independence. It was expressed by Alan Wright as follows, when he claimed,

"The right to self determination for the Ulster people, to maintain the union as long as its in our best interest, to combat the encroachment of Irish nationalism, and to unify the talents, abilities, and resources at our disposal."

(Fortnight 10th February 1986:4)  
emphasis added

Such a view was a long way however from the UDA's concept of a negotiated independent Ulster. As the campaign against the Anglo-Irish Agreement continued it became apparent that the UDA would have an important role to play. It also became apparent that their role would not be as Unionism's 'boot-boys', that the UDA were increasingly seeking to develop a political role. Under the leadership of several key members of the UDA's inner council a small group came together to promote their own policy in the aftermath of the Anglo-Irish agreement. It was this grouping that UDA activists such as Robert and Victor in Ballymacarrett were sympathetic to. The major intellectual output of the group was a document called 'Common Sense'. Politically it can be regarded as a direct descendant of the UDA's previous policy document 'Beyond the Religions Divide'. The core of the proposals rested on the formation of a devolved government in Northern Ireland based on a form of power-sharing. Places on the governing executive would be allocated in proportion to the number of votes each party received. Elsewhere the document claimed the desired wish would be that when the constitutional issue was settled, political divisions would manifest themselves around "social and economic" doctrine rather than Unionist versus Irish Nationalist or Catholic versus Protestant" (Common Sense 1987:7) Another part of the document expanded on this ideology,

"There is no section of this divided Ulster community which is totally innocent or indeed totally guilty, totally right or wrong. We all share the responsibility for creating the situation either by deed or by acquiescence. Therefore we must share the responsibility for finding a settlement and then share the responsibility of maintaining good government."  
(Common Sense 1987:2)

Launching the document, a UDA spokesperson claimed that adopting such policies would allow politicians to be released from

"the treadmill of border politics and tackle the real enemies of social deprivation, economic recession, unemployment and housing."

(cited in the Belfast Telegraph 29th January, 1989)

Elsewhere one of the documents authors argued,

"with an agreed written constitution - something there has never been - politics would no longer be dominated by the border, and would gradually develop into issues on economic and social issues."

(J. McMichael, Fortnight, April 1987:14)

Common Sense stated a clear alternative,

"the pragmatic alternative to co-determination is to fight a bloody civil war and let the victor dictate the rules by which we live."

it concluded,

"the most dangerous thing to do, and unfortunately the most popular would be to do NOTHING."

(Common Sense 1987:8, emphasis in original)

Of major importance regarding UDA thinking and the Commonsense document was that it marked a clear statement to both the OUP and DUP that the paramilitaries were not under their control. Throughout the early phase of the anti-agreement protests, both Paisley and Molyneaux had indicated that it was they who were keeping the paramilitaries in check. The production of 'Common Sense' confirmed that the UDA regarded themselves as an autonomous grouping and that their concept of independence was far removed from that of the Ulster Clubs. In fact much of the momentum of commonsense came from increasing hostility towards the Unionist leadership in general and Ian Paisley in particular. The following statement captures this feeling well,

"It can safely be said that in the last ten years not one constructive idea has emerged out of Paisley's lead. Indeed his 'political tactics' and 'know how' amount to little more than huffing and puffing... Paisley has never actually led our people anywhere but has merely voiced and reflected their fears and opinions. He is merely the politics of reaction, coupled with blood

thirsty threats of things to come should the English ever betray Ulster to Eire."

(Ulster, May 1987: 4)

Such feelings were widely held as the following statements from UDA members in Ballymacarrett indicate,

"The problem with the leadership is that everybody agrees they oppose the agreement but nobody can agree how they're going to defeat it."

(Nigel, UDA officer)

"The problem is loyalist politicians, all of them, can play silly buggers because they don't have to suffer the consequences. It's all much of a game to them... it's always the same... you can write down what they're going to say before they say it."

(Michael, UDA officer)

The influence of Common Sense on mainstream Unionism was considerable. At best the Unionist campaign against the Anglo-Irish Agreement was making little advancement. At worst it had ground to a complete standstill. In an attempt to revitalise the campaign, the two main party leaders commissioned their deputy leaders, Peter Robinson and Harold McCusker and the chief executive of the OUP, Frank Miller as a 'Task Force'. Its ordinance was to assist the leadership in drawing up plans for a continuing campaign. They were also to examine where any consensus lay amongst Unionists. The formation of this 'task force' amounted to a recognition of several crucial features of contemporary Unionism. Firstly, the campaign had manifested itself in an entirely negative manner, epitomized by the slogan 'Ulster Says No'. Secondly, the report admitted the campaign had lost much popular support. This will be further discussed below. Thirdly it recognised that the trump card of the Unionist Alliance - a prolonged strike, marshalled by the UDA - was not theirs to play.

The first part of the report was published as 'An End to Drift' in July 1987. It dealt with alternatives to the agreement. Implicit in the report was a recognition of its encumbrance to 'Common Sense'.

As Wilson put it, "The UDA plan had broken the ice and demonstrated that no Unionist looking to an accommodation with 'the minority' need look over their shoulder for a paramilitary challenge" (Wilson, 1987:7) The 'End to Drift' report itself put it this way,

"Many, in addition to the UDA would clearly be prepared to contemplate SDLP participation in the government of Northern Ireland provided the SDLP agreed to forfeit the role of the government of the Irish Republic as custodians of the national interest."

(An End to Drift, 1987:)

The report's endorsement of 'power sharing', although it never used the term, brought its authors into direct confrontation with the party leadership. Molyneaux remained sympathetic to integration, but his party remained increasingly divided between those supporting this policy and those supporting devolution. Such divisions had existed for several years. However the disagreements over tactics and Unionism's faltering campaign had reopened old divisions. In particular the campaign for equal citizenship emerged, led by OUP politician Robert McCartney, blaming the 'devolutionist dinosaurs' for unionism's failed campaign, and claiming that the solution would be for full integration and that 'British' political parties be allowed to organise in Northern Ireland (cf McCartney 1986, B. Clifford 1985, 1986, A Clifford (ed) n.d.)

Paisley meanwhile continued to condemn any notion of power sharing,

"In the midst of Ulster's turmoil certain people are now advocating as the only way forward seats in any future government of Northern Ireland as of right for republicans whether SDLP or Sinn Fein. In other words, the old power sharing of Brian Faulkner and the Sunningdale agreement in another guise. Let me make it crystal clear the DUP will have none of it."

He made his position clear when he warned,

"Talk of compromise by some Unionists is the talk of surrender."

(cited in Fortnight, September 1987:7)



The party leaders did however reluctantly accept the report's recommendations and in late 1987 entered into a series of talks with the British government to explore the possibility of some alternative to the Agreement.

There was another major dimension to Unionist political protests, the Unionist leadership also targeted local councils for increased protest action. In fact the council chambers were seen as the flagship of Unionist protests because, after the closure of the Northern Ireland Assembly, the councils were the only forum where Unionists had any political control.

Unionists sought to develop the tactic of council adjournments and suspensions that they had originally used to protest against the presence of Sinn Fein councillors. Such tactics produced little practical effect. Despite the adjournments, the main functions of the council were still working as normal - leisure centres and parks remained open, refuse collections were still made, births, deaths and marriages were still being registered, the work of the Cemeteries Department carried on and the councils 13 permanent community centres were still being funded. All of this was possible because the Town Clerk had been vested with the authority to run such affairs.

The protest entered a new phase however in early 1986 when a new district rate had to be struck. This lay beyond the jurisdiction of the Town Clerk, requiring the authorisation of a full council meeting. In the light of this the Alliance Party took the Unionists to court over both the adjournment policy and the legality of the huge 'Ulster Says No' banner which had been erected across the front of the Belfast City Hall. In both instances the court found in favour of the Alliance Party: that the banner was illegal because of the lack of

# TRAITORS ONE & TRAITORS ALL

☆☆☆☆

At this crucial time Unionist Solidarity is essential. Sadly, two Official Unionist Councillors, both representatives of Castle Ward, acting in concert with three other quisling members of the Official Unionist Party have betrayed the Unionist cause. Their action must be looked at in the same light as that of the infamous Col. Lundy who was prepared to hand the garrison over to the Roman hordes of the Papist Monarch James II.

To find enough words to express adequately the revulsion most Loyalists have for such useless garbage would require the resources of the world's largest library and the use of an abundance of dictionaries. Only then would it be possible to highlight the disgust and contempt which the vast majority of Unionists have for such carpet-baggers. Some of the words which might be used are those which Ulster people normally reserve for hypocritical political mavericks — twisters, shysters, tricksters, scabs, curs, swine, lice, vermin, rats, turn coats, deceivers, apostates, renegades, collaborators, quislings, fifth columnists, deserters, blacklegs, rebels, reprobates, blackguards, scoundrels, cheats, liars, undesirables, chisellers, imposters, defectors, double dealers.

If we were to refer to such despicable people as being disloyal, unfaithful, saboteurs, or traitors that would not adequately describe the malevolence of these self seekers who have used the Unionist Party to achieve public office thereby satisfying their craving for publicity, position and honours. They are egotists whose loyalty is to themselves.

**Call With, Write To, or Telephone any or all of the Despicable Five.**

**MARGARET CROOKS**

1 Orpen Park, Finaghy, Belfast BT10 0BT. Tel: Bel. 611998

**JOHN CARSON**

20 Cardy Road, Greyabbey, Co. Down BT22 2LT. Tel: G'abbey 410

**ALFRED REDPATH**

15 Waterloo Gardens, Belfast BT15 4EX. Tel: Bel. 771061

**WILLIAM CORRY**

45 Hawthornden Road, Belfast BT4 3JJ. Tel: Bel. 653393

**DOROTHY DUNLOP**

9 Knockdene Park North, Belfast BT5 7AA. Tel: Bel. 656076/59150

**DON'T DELAY — CALL TODAY**

Contemptible	Conspirant	Cowardly	Dastard	Renegade
Abhorrent	Odious	Rabbit	Useless	Ebriated
Reprobate	Riff raff	Oaf	Nauseous	Despicable
Spurious	Ragged	Offensive	Litigant	Polecat
Oblique	Yellow	Kaleidoscope	Obnoxious	Abominable
Nefarious		Substandard	Peccant	Twister
				Hypocrite

**REMEMBER — Don't delay, call today... and tomorrow... and the day after... and...**

Remember the Despicable Five  
Traitors one & Traitors all  
The traitors in the City Hall.

ILLUSTRATION 9.2

planning permission; and that the adjournment policy was illegal because Unionist councillors were being derelict in their duties. The court ruling had a further consequence. It meant that the tactic of transferring responsibility to the Town Clerk to authorise ongoing expenditure was no longer possible. This had serious consequences. It meant that the Town Clerk was unable to renew tenders, and by April he had warned that both oil for heating council buildings and fuel for council vehicles were near exhaustion. Another serious outcome was that money could not be issued to the various community and voluntary groups funded by Belfast City Council. The situation was only resolved in the short term when the Northern Ireland Office announced that the DOE had sent an official to work as an 'ipso facto' commissioner to release cheques and sign tender renewals.

The situation however was far from resolved. Unionist councillors were faced with increased pressure from the courts including the possibility of a £25,000 fine. Faced with this, five Official Unionist councillors (including three from East Belfast) broke ranks, and went against party policy and voted with Alliance, Sinn Fein, the SDLP and the Workers Party to resume 'normal business'. Reaction from other Unionist councillors especially the DUP was fierce and immediate. In a hand-circular distributed throughout Ballymacarrett, the 'despicable five' were described as follows,

"If we were to refer to such despicable people as being disloyal, unfaithful saboteurs, or traitors that would not adequately describe the malevolence of these self-seekers who have used the Unionist Party to achieve public office thereby satisfying their craving for publicity, position and honours. They are egotists whose loyalty is to themselves."

(Hand-circular, East Belfast, April 1986)

Belfast City council business was still far from normal. A new Lord Mayor, Sammy Wilson from the DUP was elected in June 1986, and under this new momentum Unionist councillors took part in a wide range of disruptive tactics. Officially Belfast City Council had abrogated its adjournment policy, although only a very limited amount of business was being discussed. As Connolly and Knox explain,

"Cognisant of possible future court action a limited number of items were dealt with from council agenda and proceedings were deferred, normally without reference to the Anglo-Irish Agreement; ostensibly not an adjournment policy. A general purposes and finance committee was established to carry out a general review of the entire committee structure of the council with a view to denying Sinn Fein seats."

(Connolly and Knox 1987:93)

This new tactic meant that the huge backlog of work which had built up during the adjournment phase could not be dealt with. In turn, this meant that by August 1986, the government had, for a second time, to appoint an official to authorise expenditure. Central to this was again the issue of the funding of community groups. The crisis focused on Belfast, partly because of the legal action by the Alliance Party, and partly because of the size of the grant aid allocated by Belfast City council (£460,000 for 1985/86: Belfast City Council Reference Guide). The grants which had been issued to community groups in April were due to expire in October, again raising the spectre of job losses. Again there was overt tension between Official and Democratic Unionist councillors, the latter demanding that cuts be made. However privately some members of the DUP were sceptical about the benefits of this tactic and that job losses were not what they expected or wanted. One of these was Colin from Ballymacarrett. East Belfast Community Centre for example employed 50 people all of whom were likely to be made redundant if the grants were not forthcoming. As a councillor Colin was coming under pressure from those arguing

that if the Unionist councillors continued with their protests it would be ordinary members of the PWC who would suffer. Colin was himself sympathetic to such views, and made this clear when he said,

".... the whole protest is going nowhere. It's not affecting the Northern Ireland Office and we're certainly not going to smash Sinn Fein by refusing them car parking tickets at the City Hall. The only people it's affecting are people round here, ordinary Protestant people."

(Colin, DUP councillor)

The Unionist pact came under even greater pressure when official Unionists in North Down Council voted to 'resume normal business', arguing that the adjournment campaign had run its full course. In an effort to hold the anti-agreement pact together, both Unionist leaders wrote to their councillors urging unity, and informing them that the North Down defectors had been expelled from the Official Unionist Part. However as the Belfast Telegraph noted,

"The apparent unanimity hides a deep unease within the Unionist ranks that the situation is being allowed to drift by the parties, by the political leaders, and by the Government."

(Editorial, Belfast Telegraph, 2nd September 1986)

Outside Belfast councils reacted in different ways. In October, 1986, the government had to intervene in Castlereagh Council to maintain services. The DUP responded by calling a special council meeting to overturn the decision. However within a few weeks the OUP had reversed this decision and issued contracts for council work. Relationships between the two parties were becoming openly hostile towards each other.

By the end of 1986 local government protests against the agreement entered their final phase. The Executive of the Official Unionist Party proposed mass resignation of councillors. As a tactic it had already been approved by the DUP. Response to the idea from councillors was extremely patchy. As several councillors pointed out

there were severe weaknesses in the tactic. If resignations caused a council to be left with a quorum it could still co-opt other members. If however resignations left a council without a quorum then the government could appoint commissioners. Such a tactical decision however did not arise. Official Unionist councillors rejected the tactic and voted not to resign.

The two parties were now openly divided. Official Unionist councillors in Castlereagh, Lisburn, Antrim and Coleraine resumed normal business, in opposition to the DUP in each council. In Belfast Official Unionist councillors dropped the adjournment policy and opted for what they called an 'abstentionist strategy'. This involved non-attendance at council and committee meetings except where 'vital issues' were at stake. DUP councillors decided to attend only one meeting in three to register their attendance and withdraw. They also placed written resignations with Ian Paisley which he could use at any time he saw fit. The overall Unionist policy was at best in disharmony, at worst, in complete disorder.

The Unionist leadership made one desperate attempt to consolidate the protest campaign at a local political level. On the direction of both party leaders, councillors undertook a new approach of using a quarter penny in the pound rate to fund the campaign against the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Even this, however, could not disguise the schisms within Unionism. In early 1987 Official Unionists agreed that councils should only meet twice a year, to record their discontent. This proposal was rejected by the DUP. This was the second major strategy proposed by the OUP which had been repudiated by the DUP. Divisions became acute when Belfast City Council struck its new district rate for 1987/88.

By March 1987, the joint campaign had run its course. The declared objective of the protest was 'bring local government to a standstill'. Unionist protests continued but without co-ordination or effect. As the protest lost its momentum, its declared aims became more and more diluted. Once the protest entered a confrontational phase, involving illegal tactics the OUP was always likely to concede ground. The DUP in general were willing to continue with such protests. However given their special relationship with their electorate they were increasingly under pressure from their own supporters. In particular their electorate in places like Ballymacarrett, believed that such protests were damaging to the 'ordinary people' of loyalist Belfast.

Overall Unionists had chosen a difficult arena within which to challenge the agreement. Northern Ireland's councils have extremely limited powers, which meant that Unionist councillors never had the leverage to make the government reconsider the Agreement. For this reason many thought the best hope of bringing down the Agreement was to challenge it on the streets. It is this to which we shall now turn, specifically to the events in East Belfast.

Ballymacarrett like other Unionist communities in the city reacted strongly to news of the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Feelings of betrayal were widespread, as was the expression that the Anglo-Irish agreement was the 'thin edge of the wedge' towards an all-Ireland. As Peter Robinson put it "The Anglo-Irish Agreement has pushed us into the window ledge of the union" (cited in Moloney and Pollak 1986:390). This view was widely felt in Ballymacarrett as the following statements indicate,

"There's no doubt that this is all designed to weaken Unionism and the Unionist position. We are now no longer as 'British' as people in other parts of the UK.

The agreement has made us second, third or even fourth class British citizens."

(Alan, DUP councillor)

"The thing I fear most is that the crow-bar has been pushed into the crack and that we're on our way out of the union. The lever being used to widen the crack is the Anglo-Irish Agreement."

(Brian, DUP councillor)

"There were quite a few people didn't trust the British government before the Anglo-Irish Agreement. But they were seen as heretics. I was shouted down at a council meeting one night because I called X an English man sitting up in his castle dictating to us. I was told they were our ministers and they wouldn't betray us. The same people who were shouting at me are now standing beside me at protests."

(Colin, DUP councillor)  
emphasis added

"It's the beginning of a process that will 'Irishise' Northern Ireland from the inside and that gradually the whole status of Northern Ireland will change. The Irish tradition will be played up and up and up and the loyalist role will be put down, down, down."

(David, DUP Branch member)

"The south has established a beach head in Northern Ireland. They couldn't get a Federal or a 32 county Ireland - but they've got better than that. What they've got now is joint authority. They've got a daily say in the governing of Northern Ireland and they don't even have to pay for it. The British government pays for it all.

(Frank, DUP, Branch member)

An indication of how the Anglo-Irish Agreement affected attitudes in Ballymacarrett can be obtained from tables 9.2 to 9.15. These are drawn from a panel study in which the same respondents were reinterviewed as the original sample. They show the changes in attitudinal means for these respondents between 1985 and 1986. In all 124 people responded to the follow up questionnaire, eleven of whom were excluded because they had changed their party affiliation between the two surveys. It is worth noting that in 1986 all of these respondents identified with the DUP. Previously 4 had supported the OUP, while 7 had expressed no party affiliation. What figures do show



are the responses of OUP identifiers and DUP identifiers who replied to both questionnaires. Attitudes were measured on the same 6 point scale as for the original sample (see Table 9.1). The mean scores on a number of key questions can be compared below,

TABLE 9.1 ATTITUDE SCALE

	Strongly				Very Strongly
					Agree
1	Disagree	3	Agree	5	
Very	2	Disagree	4	Strongly	6
Strongly				Agree	
Disagree					

TABLE 9.2

The British Government does not really care what the outcome is in Northern Ireland as long as there isn't too much civil unrest

<u>Party</u>	<u>1985</u>	(mean scores)	<u>1986</u>
OUP	4.56		5.00
DUP	5.19		5.51

TABLE 9.3

Since they are a majority it is only right that Protestants should have the last word of how Northern Ireland is to be ruled

<u>Party</u>	<u>1985</u>	(mean scores)	<u>1986</u>
OUP	4.88		5.08
DUP	5.06		5.16

TABLE 9.4

In any political solution to Northern Ireland the Irish  
Government has to be consulted

<u>Party</u>	<u>1985</u>	(mean scores)	<u>1986</u>
OUP	1.80		1.57
DUP	1.74		1.66

TABLE 9.5

The British and Irish Governments should continue  
to have high level meetings at which Northern Ireland  
should be discussed

<u>Party</u>	<u>1985</u>	(mean scores)	<u>1986</u>
OUP	1.95		1.50
DUP	1.88		1.46

TABLE 9.6

The Irish government should remove its  
constitutional claim to Northern Ireland

<u>Party</u>	<u>1985</u>	(mean scores)	<u>1986</u>
OUP	4.89		5.54
DUP	5.66		5.80

TABLE 9.7

The best chance of a solution to the situation is to  
return to the old Stormont system of Government

<u>Party</u>	<u>1985</u>	(mean scores)	<u>1986</u>
OUP	4.63		4.63
DUP	3.87		3.90

TABLE 9.8

Any political solution to Northern Ireland's problems  
will have to include an arrangement for Catholics  
and Protestants to share power

<u>Party</u>	<u>1985</u>	(mean scores)	<u>1986</u>
OUP	2.90		3.42
DUP	2.89		2.88

From the above tables a number of key trends emerge. Overall there was an almost uniform 'hardening' of positions within Ballymacarrett. There were however differences between the two sets of party supporters. While both OUP and DUP identifiers felt that the British government didn't really care about Northern Ireland, this was more strongly felt amongst DUP supporters. This was consolidated in the wake of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. The significance of this will be discussed later. As tables 9.4 to 9.6 indicate both DUP and OUP supporters were extremely resistant to any involvement by the Irish Government. This attitude was also clearly intensified after November 1985. As table 9.7 indicates, Protestant working class OUP supporters more strongly advocated a return to a devolved Stormont system of government, than did DUP identifiers. This tendency remained constant across the two samples. Official Unionist identifiers were also more willing to contemplate the notion of 'power sharing' in 1986. DUP

supporters were less willing to tolerate the concept although there was no noticeable change between 1985 and 1986 (table 9.8).

One important set of attitudes concerns the possibility of independence for Northern Ireland. This can be seen in tables 9.9 to 9.11.

TABLE 9.9

If Britain withdrew, Northern Ireland should  
claim independence rather than join with the Irish Republic

<u>Party</u>	<u>1985</u>	(mean scores)	<u>1986</u>
OUP	4.77		5.27
DUP	5.50		5.81

TABLE 9.10

Northern Irish Protestants and Northern Irish Catholics  
have more in common with each other than with the  
people of the Irish Republic

<u>Party</u>	<u>1985</u>	(mean scores)	<u>1986</u>
OUP	3.66		3.76
DUP	3.67		3.89

TABLE 9.11

If they had to choose between being loyal  
to the British government and 'Ulster'  
Loyalists would choose Ulster

<u>Party</u>	<u>1985</u>	(mean scores)	<u>1986</u>
OUP	5.02		5.35
DUP	5.55		5.64

All three tables indicate a higher degree of willingness to contemplate independence, although it should be noted that table 9.9 proposes the notion of independence as a 'fall back' position should Britain withdraw. This is important because in the period immediately after the Anglo-Irish agreement independence was reintroduced on to the agenda. As indicated earlier many Unionists saw the Anglo-Irish agreement as the first step on a road to a United Ireland. There was also a widespread and increasing feeling amongst Ballymacarrett residents that any change in the status of Northern Ireland would lead to an increase in loyalist violence. This is seen in Tables 9.12 and 9.13.

TABLE 9.12

British withdrawal from Northern Ireland without  
the consent of all parties involved would lead to  
an increase in violence by Loyalists

<u>Party</u>	<u>1985</u>	(mean scores)	<u>1986</u>
OUP	5.00		5.35
DUP	5.50		5.64

TABLE 9.13

If a United Ireland was ever to come about the  
Loyalist paramilitaries would be at least  
as much of a problem as the IRA are today

<u>Party</u>	<u>1985</u>	(mean scores)	<u>1986</u>
OUP	4.85		5.19
DUP	5.09		5.15

This must be considered alongside the wider set of options which Ballymacarrett residents saw as being legitimate to defend the British

way of life in Northern Ireland.

**TABLE 9.14**

Justifiable actions to defend the British  
way of life in Northern Ireland  
(% supporting)

Option	OUP SUPPORTERS		DUP SUPPORTERS	
	<u>1986</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1985</u>
Electoral Politics	100.0	(98.7)	98.4	(98.8)
Civil Disobedience	73.1	(68.8)	88.5	(63.5)
Protest Marches	73.1	(37.9)	86.9	(61.5)
Strikes	53.8	(23.4)	65.6	(57.5)
Rioting	19.2	( 4.7)	54.1	(45.8)
Armed Conflict	15.4	(14.4)	62.3	(48.9)
Civil War	15.4	( 9.6)	62.3	(52.8)

Table 9.14 compares responses for the same group in 1985 and 1986. There were still clear differences in the tactics supported by OUP and DUP supporters. One final observation of significance is the view concerning the role of the security forces. Here there was a clear movement away from outright support for the security forces, itself locked in the notion that the security forces and Unionists were 'on the same side' toward a more critical stance.

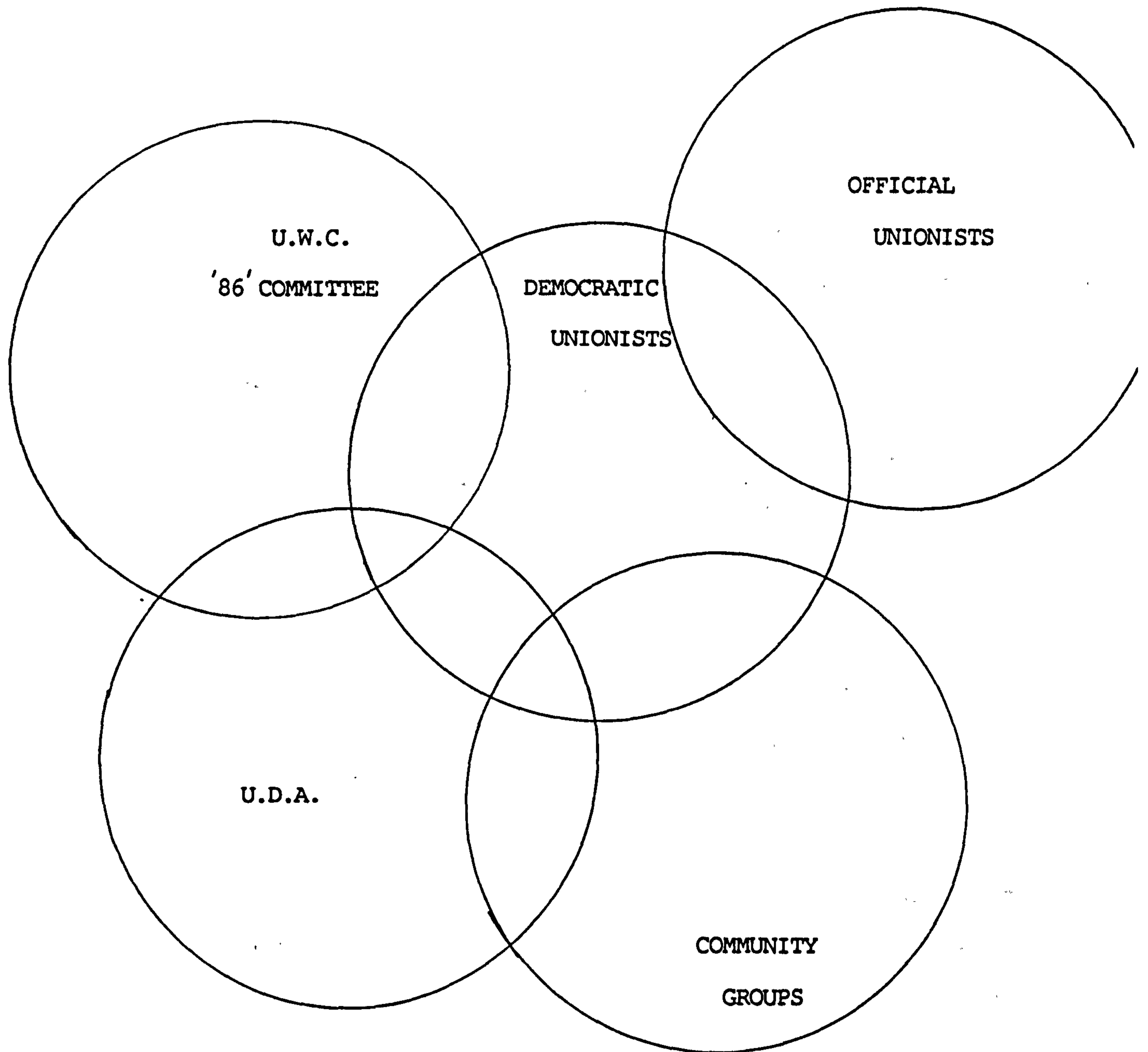
**TABLE 9.15**

The Security Forces are doing their job well

<u>Party</u>	<u>1985</u>	(mean scores)	<u>1986</u>
OUP	4.51		3.62
DUP	3.98		3.59

Some of the differences in attitude mean scores are small but given that the PWC are often seen as homogeneous such differences are significant.

Overall the existence of such views as those above, meant that in Ballymacarrett as elsewhere, the initial reaction to the agreement was marked by a concentration of political forces. Initially this took the form of ad-hoc groupings to co-ordinate protests and demonstrations. The main responsibility for organising this fell on local councillors of the DUP and OUP. There was also involvement by the UDA and members of the Ulster Workers Council '86' committee. This latter organisation was an attempt to reconstruct the workplace grouping which had successfully co-ordinated the 1974 UWC strike. In 1986 however it fulfilled a more limited role. Its base remained located in what remained of Northern Ireland's engineering industry. In particular its 40 strong council membership was based in Ballylumpford power station and in Ballymacarrett most of its membership was drawn from Harland and Wolff. Not all factions within the ad-hoc co-ordinating committee however met with each other regularly or on an equal footing. From the beginning, for example, OUP councillors were happy to meet with DUP representatives or with those working in local community groups. Local OUP representatives however were reluctant to meet with or co-ordinate action with local paramilitary members. This was not just a matter of crude class divisions or personalities. The DUP/UDA grouping were committed to 'direct action' such as organising 'flying pickets' to harass government ministers. The OUP representatives in Ballymacarrett were estranged from such ideas. Although some individuals cut across it, the general pattern of interaction between the groups involved followed the pattern shown in Fig 9.1 below.



**FIG 9.1 INTERACTION BETWEEN GROUPS INVOLVED IN ORGANISING PROTESTS AGAINST THE ANGLO-IRISH AGREEMENT IN BALLYMACARRETT**

Another tension originated from the continued suspicion on the part of DUP councillors concerning the commitment of their counterparts in the OUP. As the DUP councillor put it,



"The two parties have come together. I have no doubt that there are a lot of people in the Official Unionists who would love to have some way out of having to take direct action... the differences are still these. Our willingness to take direct action is much greater than theirs. When it comes to action we've been the ones who've done it. They may have sat down and planned it with us but they've sat back and waited for us to go out on the streets."

(Colin, DUP councillor)

Another DUP councillor expressed the differences between the two parties as follows,

"The Official Unionists still see themselves as the Tories of Ulster politics and believe the British government would never do anything to harm Ulster, never do anything to harm us. I believe they were suffering from an illusion and it's been proved to them. They still believe the illusion, that Maggie Thatcher is going to say some day that these people would be right. There's no way they'll go out there and challenge Thatcher. No way they'll take action."

(Alan, DUP councillor)

It was against this background that protests in Ballymacarret were organised. Most of the early protests, such as the rally at the Belfast City Hall on November 23 1985, were organised centrally. It was only by the time of the 'Day of Action and Protest' on 3 March 1986 that the co-ordinating group in Ballymacarrett had become effective locally. The group centred on several DUP activists who originated a plan to lead a march to Belfast City Hall to meet up with several other groups. The plan immediately caused dismay with several of the group's members and particularly with OUP councillors, because under new legislation all such demonstrations had been declared illegal. The situation was partly resolved on the suggestion of one of Ballymacarrett's DUP councillors. This was to stage a 'mock funeral' to symbolise the 'death of democracy' in Northern Ireland since the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Apart from its political significance, the idea of a 'funeral' was more acceptable to

the OUP as funerals were exempt from the newly introduced legislation. It was still the DUP who took the leading role in the demonstration. All of the DUP's councillors in East Belfast attended, most of whom took turns to carry the coffin along with other members of the DUP East Belfast branch. In contrast few of the OUP representatives in Ballymacarrett attended, only one of whom marched at the head of the parade. Although several UDA members attended the march there were no leading members present and the paramilitaries took little to do with its overall organisation of the mock funeral. Most UDA members were involved elsewhere on picket lines and at the mass demonstration outside Harland and Wolff shipyard gates. In fact the UDA's resources in Ballymacarrett were at full stretch, as they were also committed elsewhere to helping local community groups and in 'welfare' work such as providing food for old age pensioners. Part of the reason for this was the UDA leadership's wariness of the Unionist leadership and partly it was because they were trying to fulfil the different facets the UDA had tried to adopt since 1974. In Ballymacarrett this meant that on the Day of Action most UDA members were given a free rein by the local command.

It was however the increasing violence during and following the 'Day of Action' which most clearly identified the contradictions within Unionism. This was most readily seen in Ballymacarrett in the campaign against members of the RUC. This mainly took the form of attacks on the homes of RUC officers many of whom for security reasons lived in loyalist areas of Belfast. Throughout early 1986 the RUC had been increasingly involved in a number of large scale street confrontations with loyalists. Most of these in fact were not in Belfast but centred on Portadown where there were continuing loyalist protests against the rerouting of Orange Order parades (Routledge,

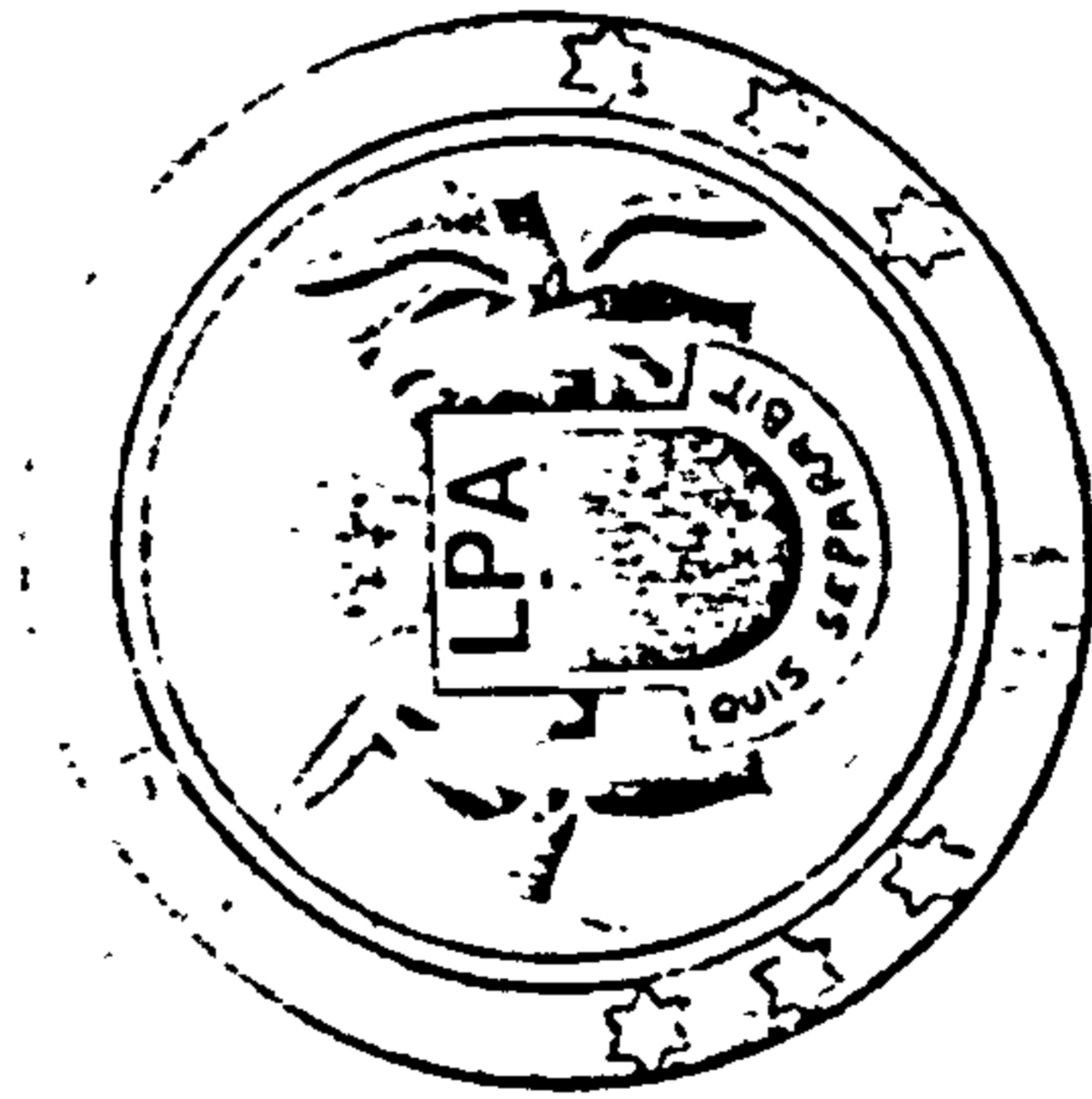
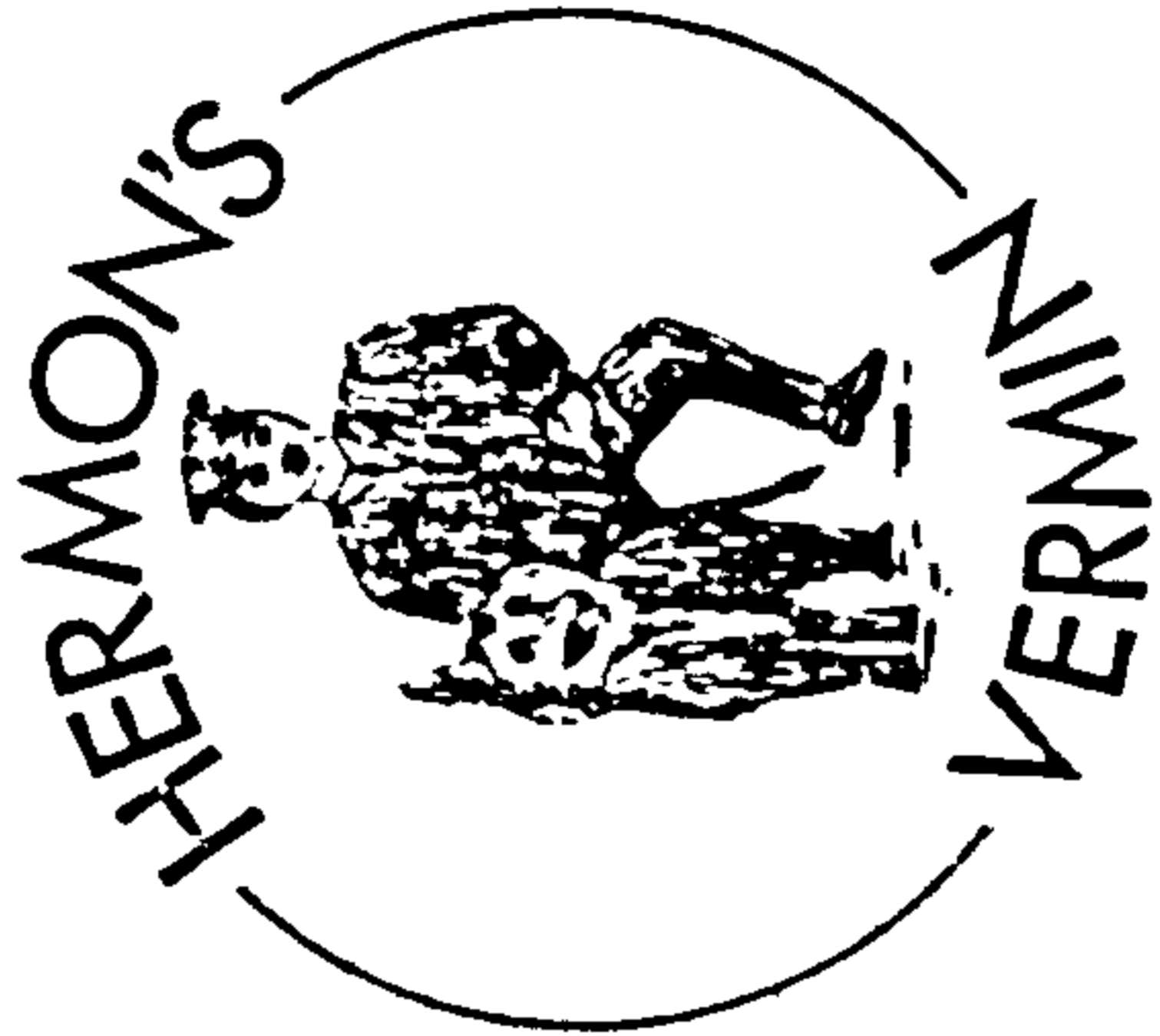
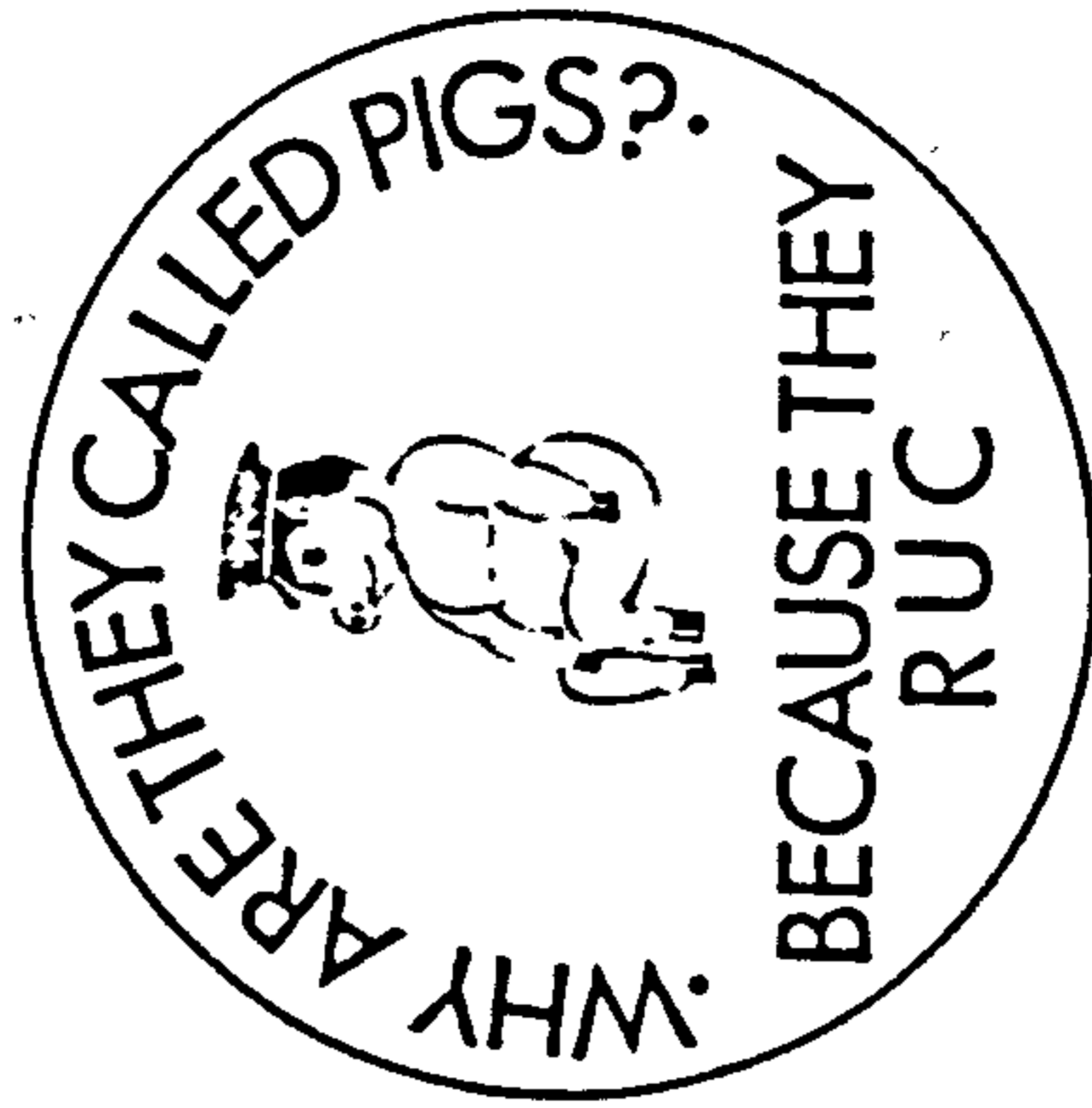


ILLUSTRATION 9.3

1986:18). The demonstrations had begun before the Anglo-Irish Agreement. During the summer of 1985, the banning of a number of Orange Order parades had precipitated street protests, rioting and confrontations with the RUC. The protests continued during 1986 against both the Anglo-Irish Agreement and the re-routing of the 12th July Orange demonstration away from the 'Tunnel', the main Catholic area of the town. On several occasions the protests had degenerated into rioting and in the most serious of the incidents a loyalist protester, Keith White, had been killed by a plastic bullet fired by an RUC officer.

One result was that the sporadic attacks which had been taking place on the homes of RUC officers in loyalist areas became more widespread, and continued to increase in frequency. As Ryder says "the attacks reached epidemic proportions at the end of the month after the Secretary of State banned an Apprentice Boys march through Portadown" (Ryder 1989: 328). In Ballymacarrett attitudes towards the RUC could be seen in some of the graffiti which appeared throughout the area,

"RUC paid in punts"

"RUC were (sic) green uniforms"

"RUC-gardi - walk hand in hand"

"RUC submit to Thatchers Treachery"

"Hermon is a traitor"

Moreover there were several badges in circulation describing the RUC as 'Hermon's Vermin' and describing them as 'Pigs' (see opposite page). Attacks on Police homes continued, forcing the RUC to set up an emergency housing unit at its Headquarters in Belfast. By the end of 1986 there had been 564 reported incidents and 120 families had been forced to leave their homes (Ryder 1989:330). The situation was

not eased when the Unionist leadership placed advertisements in the local newspapers calling for the RUC to stage a 'Curragh like revolt'. The message claimed the Anglo-Irish Agreement,

"radically alters the role of RUC officers, who were employed and who took an oath to 'truly serve' our Sovereign. Now you are being asked to serve a second master - the Government of an Irish Republic which spawned the provisional IRA and which still harbours the murderers of so many of your gallant colleagues - and all within the framework of a code of conduct to be dictated by Dublin.

(Joint statement signed by I. Paisley and J. Molyneux

reproduced in Protestant Blue Print Vol1, No.34  
7/3/1986)

The Police Federation responded by appealing to Unionist politicians to use their influence to halt attacks on RUC homes. The appeal drew an immediate condemnation of all such attacks by the Official Unionist leader, James Molyneux. No such condemnation however was forthcoming from the DUP, although Peter Robinson the deputy leader said he 'regretted such attacks'. For some this could be seen simply as another example of the DUP's more aggressive stance and the continued use of a rhetoric which sanctioned violence. (Smyth 1987:172-180, Moloney and Pollak, 1986: 390-402).

This is however too simplistic a construction of the relationship between the DUP and the Protestant working class. This can be explained more fully if we consider the role of the DUP in Ballymacarrett during this time. As elsewhere in the city there were several police homes 'burnt out' in East Belfast. There were also many cases (largely unreported in the press) of stoning and confrontations between the RUC and youths in Ballymacarrett. The DUP representatives in Ballymacarrett steadfastly refused to condemn such events. A clear statement of this was given by the DUP councillor when he said,

"The police are being used to enforce policy many of them don't agree with. The trouble is if you can't get at Tom King or Maggie Thatcher its the poor police officer on the ground who suffers. I'm sorry we've reached this position. I wouldn't condemn it because I understand the anger and frustration."

(Alan, DUP councillor)

While another DUP councillor put it this way,

"where we differ from the Official Unionists is that we (the DUP) have condemned the lot. We say that it's wrong for the police to fire point blank plastic bullets as it is for loyalists to throw petrol bombs at policemen's homes. The Official Unionists have only condemned one side and said it is wrong for ordinary loyalist people. The O.U.s are supposed to take the same attitude as us to the Anglo Irish Agreement. The differences become clear when people go out and defy 'Dublin Rule' and it turns to violence."

(Colin, DUP councillor)

This viewpoint was confirmed by another prominent DUP member,

"The Officials say that violence is wrong. I say it's totally justified. I think that's a consistent point of view. Its hypocritical to say smash the Anglo-Irish Agreement but when you defy it people criticise you for doing it."

(David, DUP Branch member)

It is important to try and understand the reasons for such perspectives among activists in Ballymacarrett. There were two clear themes underlying these perspectives. Firstly many were convinced that the republican violence had paid off, resulting in the formulation of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Such a view was widespread.

As one DUP member put it,

"Maggie Thatcher signed the Anglo-Irish agreement because she doesn't want another bomb in Brighton, or wherever they have their next conference."

(Frank, DUP Branch member)

While one paramilitary member said,

"I think the Brighton bombing hardened it all up and Thatcher said 'Oh no we don't want anymore of this in England'. So we ended up with the Anglo-Irish Agreement."

(Robert, UDA member)

The other strong underlying theme was that the RUC were being used politically to enforce the Anglo-Irish Agreement. As this DUP councillor put it,

"The RUC are being used as a battering ram to force Barry's laws down the throats of the Ulster people."  
(Brian, DUP councillor)

Again this feeling was widespread as the following statements indicate,

"The police are having a rough time. They're being used as pawns... The last thing the British government wants is to have to send British soldiers in to enforce the Agreement... they don't want British soldiers killed... it's unpopular in England. They don't mind Policemen getting burnt out of their homes, or shot, or kicked about the streets. After all they're just 'paddies' the same as the rest and provided the police are kept in the front line the government's happy."  
(Alan, DUP councillor)

Another DUP representative put it like this,

"Policemen have a duty to the local communities they live in and not let themselves be used... the police are willingly or unwillingly being used by their political masters and the Chief Constable."  
(Colin, DUP councillor)

While another said this

"there's nowhere for us to go. It's Maggie Thatcher causing the violence on the streets at present. It's O.K. for her to say we should accept it (Anglo-Irish Agreement), but the fact that she's got to try and get the police to make it work shows what people round here think."  
(George, DUP Branch member)

The strength of such views is indicated in table 9.15. The perspective was far from universal, however, particularly amongst local community workers. This was partly the consequence of the DUP led campaign in Belfast council, described earlier, which threatened community workers' funding, which had alienated the DUP from this support. In particular Colin, the DUP councillor whose background was in community work was subject to individual criticism. Others simply

believed that the campaign against the RUC was misplaced. As one resident put it,

"At the minute I feel very angry towards the DUP. I mean we all know there's a bad element in the police... but to hit the ordinary policeman who's just being paid to go out and do a day's work isn't right."  
(Stephanie, East Belfast resident)

Another community worker had this to say,

"... they (DUP) are glad of the RUC protecting us but they won't come out and condemn it... There's a lot of violence around the street. It's made a lot more work for us... there's been a lot of policemen's houses burnt... they're (DUP) lucky we're not near an election because the people won't vote for them... people have lost faith in their politicians."  
(Harry, community worker, East Belfast)

As the campaign continued those feeling a lack of guidance by politicians intensified, especially as the campaign appeared to many to be failing. At least one DUP councillor recognised this when he said,

"You've got all the signs of people being totally disillusioned with political life saying 'you politicians are really irrelevant'... to an extent I agree with them. We've asked people to do all the political things and we are no further on."  
(Brian, DUP councillor)

Another argued,

"In fact we've been told it doesn't matter what you do... you'll not change this agreement. People are saying there must be another way... the agreement came about as a result of violence, you haven't been able to get rid of it through politics... maybe violence is the way to get rid of it."  
(Alan, DUP councillor)

This view was supported by the DUP councillor who had closest links with the UDA in Ballymacarrett, when he said,

"I admit I associate with the paramilitaries... Don't get me wrong. I know they're no angels. I've told X (local commander) that most people round here think the UDA's a bunch of gangsters. But if constitutional politics fail they'll end up talking with the paramilitaries."  
(Colin, DUP councillor)



The growing feeling of disillusionment with loyalist politicians was not eased by the relative failure of the Day of Defiance on 11 April 1987. The UDA were excluded from its organisation. Directly following the day the UDA issued a statement calling for the resignation of the Unionist leadership describing them as the 'tired old men of Ulster politics'. It claimed that the Unionist leadership had,

"presided over the gradual defeat and humiliation of the loyalist population, and indeed, if they had been part of a government in power their term of office would be seen by all to have been a disastrous one."

of Ian Paisley it said, he

"is an empty vessel - full of air, yet empty. His mind is sterile and barren. He offers our people nothing... it is obvious to all that Paisley, in the midst of our greatest crisis since 1912, knows not what to do."

(Ulster, May 1987:5)

By the summer of 1987 any semblance of a unified Unionist campaign against the Anglo-Irish agreement had evaporated. The lack of confidence in the political leadership to co-ordinate an effective response gave rise to conditions which legitimised an increase in sectarian killings and violence. Although several individuals in both the UDA and DUP in Ballymacarrett remained on good terms the co-ordinating committee described earlier dissolved in acrimony.

It is important to try and outline the overall pattern to the initial reconstruction and later disintegration of Unionist hegemony. It was the DUP at both the national and local levels who best articulated PWC reaction to the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Unlike the bulk of the Official Unionists, the DUP have constantly questioned the policy of relying on the British Parliament to guarantee the constitutional position of Northern Ireland. It is a common view amongst DUP members that it has been the actions of the DUP in the

past, and particularly the action of Ian Paisley which has stopped Westminster 'selling out' Ulster into an All-Ireland. The DUP were thus able to present the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement as a continuity of these views and another example of Westminster's attempted treachery, as the following statement indicates,

"Whereas the British Government, in an elaborate play on words, has maintained that the Agreement has not altered the constitutional status of Northern Ireland, in that, whatever else has changed, we are still part of Her Majesty's dominions, the plain truth is the status of Northern Ireland has been changed by the Hillsborough Agreement."

(Allister 1987:45, emphasis in original)

The signals to DUP supporters were clear. The PWC could not rely on promises made by the British Government. As Millar (1978) has pointed out any obligation by Ulster loyalists to the Westminster parliament is conditional. In broad terms the DUP regarded the Anglo-Irish Agreement as a 'default' on the government's promises and therefore they could absolve their duty to obey the law. They expressed it as follows. The DUP,

"reaffirms the party's total and undivided commitment to stepping up the campaign of opposition to the Agreement which has effectively established joint authority over this province. Democracy has been rejected by the Prime Minister. The next step is up to her and the Northern Ireland Office. They know the terms and conditions on which we will talk. We will not be going back on them. The government must agree to stop implementing the agreement while a round table conference is convened. If the government persists in forcing this undemocratic and unworkable agreement down the throats of the Ulster people against their wills then the consequences will be upon their own heads. The Ulster Unionist people are not turning for the price of acquiescence is the destruction of Northern Ireland as part of the United Kingdom."

(Protestant Blue Print, Vol 1 No.35, 14/3/86, emphasis added)

It was this perspective which legitimised DUP organised protests against the Agreement. The DUP at both the national and local level were also able to continue to portray the Official Unionists as

'weak', particularly as several of their representatives were unwilling to carry out protests in Belfast City council or in street protests.

The DUP were to the front in such protests. The DUP has always been more willing to undertake actions which are on the brink of, or even outside of constitutional politics. DUP councillors and activists in Ballymacarrett organised a wide range of action, such as street demonstrations, 'flying pickets', parades and 'Days of Protest'. In part the level of success of these activities was irrelevant. It was the DUP who appeared to be taking action to 'defend Ulster against its enemies'. Another factor was the self projection of the DUP as unified. Even if they disagreed with party policy DUP representatives were unlikely to articulate this in a public arena. The OUP, however, even after the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement appeared divided. The Official Unionist party has always been a coalition of factions. Since direct rule, when they lost political power and control of patronage there has been much internal dissent concerning political direction. In Ballymacarrett their unwillingness to take part in protests was ruthlessly exposed by the DUP.

In the initial wake of the Anglo-Irish Agreement Unionist hegemony did reconstruct around the DUP. However important elements of the PWC, particularly those represented by the UDA excluded themselves from the process. As the protests continued and were seen to be ineffective against the Agreement, there was an increasing articulation from within the PWC that they were suffering at the hands of the Unionist political leadership. Two years after the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement Unionists at all levels remained extremely hostile to any wider role of the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental

Council. Because of this, Unionism at a national level was able to maintain some semblance of a common purpose. At the local level in Ballymacarrett no such deception was possible. Here the fragmented response of the Protestant working class to the crisis, meant the fragile cross class unity could not be maintained.

## CHAPTER TEN CONCLUSION

This thesis has identified the politics and ideology of a section of the Protestant working class in Belfast. In particular it has outlined the politics and ideology of those active in the Democratic Unionist Party and the Ulster Defence Association in the PWC community of Ballymacarrett. Ideology marks out the framework of thought in Northern Irish society by which protestant workers make sense of, and give meaning to, their social and political worlds. Such ideas do not occur at random or in an isolated manner. Rather such ideas are linked within a definite discursive space. This provides the Protestant working class with the orientations and parameters within which they think, express themselves and legitimise political action. These parameters enable protestant workers to make sense of, and interpret, the events and the relationships around them. It is these frameworks which impose a certain logic in looking at the world and which structure and confine the concepts, ideas and language used by the Protestant working class.

Social and political thought is not open ended. As the thesis has indicated there is a diverse range of views within the Protestant working class. These views however, no matter how widespread the thoughts and concepts involved, and no matter how diverse the language within which they are expressed, remain restricted by the cultural world in which they exist. Every person constructs his or her own particular world view. They do so out of the range of ideas to which they are exposed. This 'range of ideas' however is itself limited. Such ideas fall into broader collective patterns which are diffused throughout society. While it is impossible to map out the entire variety of individual perspectives it is possible to indicate the broad contours of social thought which dominate the Protestant working

class world. This was clearly seen in Chapter Four which outlined the main reference points in recent history by which many Protestant workers construct their analysis of the Northern Irish conflict.

Northern Irish society has, since the outbreak of the current phase of the conflict, experienced complete destabilisation of political and ideological relations. The hegemony of the Unionist ruling class has been broken and internal contradictions have clarified and intensified. This has allowed Protestant workers to intervene directly in the political struggle. Much of this intervention has remained confused and contradictory. It is possible to identify four central concepts which comprise Protestant working class ideology: community, national identity, sectarianism and class identity. There are both positive and negative elements to this ideology. The main positive function of ideology is to provide the major categories, concepts, images, ideas and language by which people make sense of their social and political worlds. Individuals thus develop a certain consciousness of place and the world in which they exist. There is also a negative function to ideology, in that all such perspectives are highly selective, excluding those 'facts' which do not 'fit' neatly into the world view under construction. Both these positive and negative features of loyalist ideology have been encountered throughout the thesis.

What is necessary is to account for the internal construction of 'loyalism' as an ideology, and the logic which shapes its contemporary direction. To construct 'loyalism' in its popular form must involve charting the limits and boundaries of that ideology, how it imposes on what is being included and what is omitted from the formulation of this ideology. As Chapters One and Two have indicated many Marxists writing from an anti-imperialist perspective have sought to compare

the ideology of Protestant workers against a template of 'pure class consciousness'. This is the analysis articulated by Bell, Farrell, Sinn Fein, the 'Troops Out' and 'Time To Go' movements and most of the revolutionary groupings in Britain. Such analyses have become intertwined with, and been determined by, traditional nationalist perspectives on Ireland. The following statement explaining Unionist reaction to the Anglo-Irish Agreement encapsulates these positions well,

"The temptation for Socialists (here) watching the scenes of sectarian violence is to take a (similar) line of a plague on both your houses. That would be a tragic mistake for two reasons. For all the criticisms that can be made of the IRA they are engaged in confronting the British state, not butchering Protestant workers...Secondly it is vital socialists place the blame not on those fighting the sectarian set-up which the British ruling class created and maintains in Northern Ireland.

The IRA are fighting a system which denies decent homes for Catholics, allows Orange marches to terrorise their streets and bars them from jobs in Shorts and elsewhere.

The UFF, UDA, Peter Robinson and Ian Paisley are fighting to maintain every piece of that Sectarian state.

Of course the price for these sectarian divisions is paid by all workers in Northern Ireland...Protestants and Catholics suffer but figures show Catholic workers suffer far more...unity cannot be built without clearly opposing the British state and the set up its troops prop up."

(Socialist Worker, 23 August 1986)

The passage is far from unique. It is representative of those who see imperialism as central to the Northern Irish crisis. It is important to identify the basic tenets contained within the short passage. Firstly it offers support, even if it is critical support, for the IRA in their struggle against British Imperialism. Secondly it argues that the Northern Irish state is artificially created, based on sectarianism, and therefore impossible to reform. Thirdly, British

troops are seen as the main obstacle to an All-Ireland State being created. Fourthly, and following on from the previous points, there can be no progressive action which does not challenge the British State. Fifthly, Protestant working class resistance is seen as based on marginal privilege. Finally it projects complete unity within unionism, or certainly between the unionist leadership and loyalist paramilitary organisations. As this thesis has indicated, there is no necessary unity of purpose or common ideology between paramilitary and party political organisations within working class unionism.

A more serious objection is that such an analysis projects Protestant working class consciousness and ideology as stable and homogeneous, that there is a unity of ideological thought between those active in the political organisations of the Protestant working class. To properly construct Protestant workers' ideology must involve some attempt to account for their everyday values, everyday beliefs and everyday conceptions of the world. Protestant working class ideology is fragmentary, internally contradictory and built on the incomplete forms of thought which ordinary people use to make sense of their everyday lives. Thus to explain certain key events, such as the housing issues referred to in Chapter Eight, Ballymacarrett residents draw on several related ideas. They may seek to explain such events by drawing on sectarian ideologies (a confrontation with republicans from the Short Strand), or class ideologies (the provision of better homes for working class people), or community ideologies (the attempt to maintain Ballymacarrett as a traditional community) or even national ideologies (the de-Protestantisation of Northern Ireland). Ballymacarrett residents may draw on any or all of these to explain the position 'housing' occupies in their social world. It is within these frames of thought



that everyday political calculations and decisions are made.

It is this terrain of 'common sense' ideas which is profoundly structured by ideology. People in Ballymacarrett, as elsewhere, are not logical or consistent over long periods in their political thinking. What is consistent is the set of ideas to which people return, in this case Unionism, or at least anti-united Ireland. This 'common sense' political thinking is made up of historical reference points, incomplete borrowings from a variety of ideas, diluted or confused ideologies, prejudices, inherited wisdom, ideas and values. It is this which enables working class supporters of the DUP on the one hand to talk about upholding 'democracy', while on the other refusing to work with elected Sinn Fein councillors. It also explains how they can simultaneously promote stronger 'law and order' policies and campaign against 'Thatcherite cuts'.

The reproduction of 'common sense' ideas in Ballymacarrett also helps explain the success of the DUP in the area. One of the major appeals of the DUP is its promise to defend 'Ulster', in whatever is its current hour of need. In the context of this thesis this is best seen in the reaction to the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. The evidence for this 'defence' is based on reference to strong links with the past. Particularly those elements of Irish history which have been selected to form the coherent self conception suggested in Chapter Four. It is this direct link into this strong collective identity and the broad sets of ideas within the community, which explains the DUP success. It also partly explains the political failure of the UDA. In trying to construct a new independent identity they are working directly against the self conception and 'common sense' ideology of the Protestant working class. As Chapter Five has shown, support for the UDA in Ballymacarrett is conditional, best seen

in terms of 'crisis management'. Within the context of everyday values and beliefs in Ballymacarrett it is the DUP who are best able to articulate social and economic issues, most notably housing and benefit work.

How can such a perspective explain other aspects of FWC ideology, such as sectarianism? Gramsci (1971: 323-343, 419-425) has argued that there are two types of ideology, 'philosophy' and 'common sense'. The relationship between them is extremely complex. Philosophical thought can diffuse into everyday wisdom, and common sense belief can sometimes achieve philosophical consistency. Gramsci further argued that attention must focus on those ideologies which influence the thought and action of the mass of the people. It is this which helps form mass consciousness and provides ideas and categories within which 'spontaneous' social thought occurs. By adopting this perspective as a starting point it is possible to shift the focus away from a highly systematised political doctrine towards an analysis of the way in which political ideas are absorbed into 'common sense' and practice. It is in this way we can begin to understand the role of sectarianism in FWC ideology. Sectarianism must be regarded as part of an ideology which has the capacity to shape and re-shape 'common sense'.

The formulation of sectarianism is one clear example of the relationship between philosophy and ideology. The relationship between philosophy and common sense is always in Gramscian terms, ultimately political. To be effective, ideas must be organised. To be organised it is necessary to formulate how ideas circulate, how thought is produced and how the circulation of such ideology is controlled. Central here are the relations of power, force, consent and the combination between them. All ideology operates on the political terrain. Here it is necessary to introduce some notion of

the institutional domain of politics, the operation of government, political institutions and the state. This too is culturally specific. Political relationships are not confined to conventional politics. What is defined as political at any given point, what is included or excluded, what is seen as legitimate or illegitimate is ideologically constructed. It is only if we accept this that local politics in Belfast can be placed in their proper context. As Chapter Eight indicated, local government has little real power in Northern Ireland. Even so, its basic elements, elections, political parties and political programmes are important because they reinforce ideologically constructed boundaries to politics including their sectarian element.

One of the major strengths of adopting such an approach is that it clearly avoids the wider forms of historical materialism, adopted by those anti-imperialist analysts who conceptualise political action as a reflection of material interests. The traditional Marxism of the Irish left reduces PWC ideology to a wholly dependent status, a deliberate conspiratorial 'cover up' for class interests. Gramsci has made the weakness of this position clear when he said,

"Politics in fact is at any given time the reflection of the tendencies of development in the structure, but it is not necessarily the case that these tendencies must be realised. A structural phase can be concretely studied and analysed only after it has gone through its whole process of development and not during the process itself, except hypothetically...From this it can be deduced that a particular political act may have been an error of calculation on the part of the leaders of dominant classes...Mechanical historical materialism does not allow for the possibility of error, but assumes that every political act is determined, immediately, by the structure, and therefore as a real and permanent (in the sense of achieved) modification of the structure"

(Gramsci, 1971:420)

Gramsci was concerned with establishing the autonomy of the political as a dimension which was not reducible to economic material

interests. Classes for Gramsci carried their own world view which influenced their actions and their view of material interests. Hegemony had to be actively produced. This involves not only the ability to coerce a subordinate class to conform, but also the ability to exercise a special type of power: to frame alternatives and to win and shape consent, so that the legitimacy of the dominant class seems natural, spontaneous and normal. The DUP in Ballymacarrett can be seen in these terms. Though they often presented themselves as unified, there were clear contradictory elements: there was one DUP for the politically motivated members, one for its religiously motivated members. Although it has not been dealt with in detail in this thesis, there were also clear differences between the rural following of the DUP and its urban support.

If we accept that Gramsci is correct when he argues that ideologies have the organisational capacity he projects, it becomes necessary to ask by what mechanisms this takes place. Following Althusser it is possible to argue that ideology is a system of representations, of myths and concepts which are endowed with a historical existence and a role in a given society (Althusser, 1969). Althusser further suggests that ideology is not a question of a consciously held set of beliefs but rather ideologies are 'systems of representations' which work in a structured manner. Ideology works unconsciously through the acceptance of certain values as pre-given and 'obvious'. In this sense ideology provides Protestant workers with their core values and the pre-suppositions by which they make sense of, and organise their everyday lives. These structures work internally and recruit members of the PWC into accepting a particular world perspective. To fully explain this it is necessary to return to Althusser and introduce that category he called 'the subject', a

category in which we all exist as social beings. This is of course a socially constructed category. The precise mechanism of recruitment he called 'interpellation', whereby a person is both named and positioned. Individuals thus recognise that they are being addressed, and submit themselves to the consequences of this positioning.

There are clear examples of this process of 'spontaneous identification' throughout the thesis. For example those activists in both the DUP and UDA introduced in Chapters Five and Six. DUP members often referred to the 'people of Ulster'. Strictly speaking this is all the people of the old nine-county province of Ulster. In theory DUP members use it to refer to all the citizens of the Northern Irish state. In reality however it refers to the Unionist population of Northern Ireland. The situation is however even more complex. UDA members also often referred to the 'Ulster people'. For some this merely meant the same as the DUP. For others however it was used to refer to everyone living in Northern Ireland, for example when appealing to the nationalist population to help form an independent Ulster state. However in practical terms such a discourse excludes the nationalist population. They too are subject to a process of spontaneous identification, the discourse of which is more likely to make reference to the North of Ireland or the six counties. When someone speaks of the 'Ulster people' Unionists automatically recognise their place within that discourse and the sorts of characteristics that discourse involves. Most members of the PWC can recognise themselves as the potential authors of such statements. In an interpellation like the 'people of Ulster' Unionists recognise clear principles of unity. This unity is constructed to include certain ideas and to exclude others.

It is this particular formulation of an interpretation which gives unionism its appearance of unity when viewed from the outside. An example of this was in the immediate post Anglo-Irish Agreement period which was rejected many times on public platforms in the name of the 'Ulster People'. Such an interpellation both identifies and sets limits. It does not include those nationalists and republicans who rejected the agreement nor any unionists who may have accepted it. The words Ulster People clearly set the criteria for inclusion and exclusion, which themselves are dependent on discursive criteria and ideological location. If this theme is developed it is possible to identify more clearly the ideologies which unify unionists. The concept of interpellation has been advanced by Laclau (1979). In considering ideology he moves away from the standard Marxist conception of particular ideologies as an expression of certain classes or class factions. Different classes share the same ideological and linguistic parameters. Different ideologies cross and are sometimes structured around the same concepts but can take different meanings from them. One of the essential features of Unionism is that it is essentially 'anti' in character. It is anti-all Ireland, anti-republican, it may be anti-Catholic. As a positive ideology this manifests itself as 'Britishness' or a 'British identity'. Central elements in Unionist ideology have no necessary 'class belongingness'. Many of its central concepts such as 'the people', 'democracy', 'anti-all Ireland' do not belong to any one class or ideological discourse. The position of such terms in discursive formations cannot be reduced to crude class terms. These ideological terms are multi-discursive, the ideology of 'Britishness' mobilises across class, gender, urban and rural divisions. They have become articulated in the Unionist bloc which developed Northern Irish

society in a particular social and economic direction underpinned as it was by a specific alliance of class forces. Certain political groupings dominate certain areas of political discourse. Again this could clearly be seen in the Unionist response to the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Unionists constantly referred to it being the first step, or the thin edge of the wedge to a united Ireland. Such discourse aroused all the different fears held by the factions of the Unionist bloc, and initially mobilised a unified reaction.

Loyalism as an ideology located in the Protestant working class consists of the ideologies of several class factions. The core of a serious analysis of PWC politics must involve the notion of ideological dominance and subordination within loyalism. Hegemony operates through ideology, it is not universal nor pre-given to sustain the rule of a particular class. It must be won, reproduced and sustained. There are several key ideologies within loyalism. Loyalist ideology is constructed so as to draw on class, community, sectarianism and national identities. All these are subordinate to the dominant ideology of 'Britishness'.

Hegemony can never totally absorb the working class into the dominant order. Society is not one-dimensional. At a given point Unionist hegemony may be strong and cohesive, at another point it may weaken. The Protestant working class has consistently 'won space' from the dominant culture. Many of their institutions have been negotiated over time. This is seen in the form of the PWC community or neighbourhood where the PWC has won space for their own form of life. It is within such spaces that the PWC have come to exert the 'informal social control' which defines the behaviour and attitudes which are appropriate for groups which live in them. It is against this background that the origins of the DUP and the UDA as the main

organisations representing the PWC must be seen. The class identity of the PWC is never settled or fixed. The balance of class forces remains open. This forms the basis of a negotiated version of the dominant system within which the PWC exist, where

"dominant values are not so much rejected or opposed as modified by the subordinate class as a result of circumstances and restricted opportunities"

(Parkin, 1971:92)

The reproduction of divisions within Northern Ireland's working class is not restricted to sectarian relations. There are other forms of division, such as those based on gender, age and employment patterns. It is however sectarianism which is the crucial form of relationship of domination and subordination which divides the working class. It also gives rise to a range of experiences for both Protestant and Catholic workers. The experience of being working class is still relevant to Protestant workers. There are clear examples of this throughout the thesis. Capitalism and sectarianism have disorganised the working class in Northern Ireland. In their response sectarian consciousness does not negate class awareness or vice-versa. They co-exist within the same ideology.



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 Church and State (BICO)  
 Combat (UVF)  
 Equal Citizen  
 Irish Militant Monthly  
 Irish Political Review (BICO)  
 Irish Socialist Press (Irish Socialist League)  
 Lobster  
 New Ulster (Ulster Society)  
 Orange Standard (Orange Order)  
 Outwrite (Women's Magazine)  
 Outta Control (Belfast Anarchist Group)  
 Protestant Blue Print (DUP)  
 Scope  
 Socialist Republic (Peoples Democracy)  
 Socialist View (World Socialist Party)  
 The Irish Communist (BICO)  
 The New Protestant Telegraph (DUP)  
 The Northern State (Workers Association)  
 The Voice of Ulster (DUP)  
 Ulster (UDA)  
 Ulster Defiant (Ulster Clubs)  
 Women's News/Irish Women's Magazine  
 Workers Weekly (Workers Association)  
 Young Unionist (OUP)

**NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES**

East Belfast Annual  
 East Belfast News  
 East Belfast Post  
 Fortnight  
 Magill (Dublin)  
 New Society  
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 New Statesman  
 Newsweek (USA)  
 The Belfast Telegraph  
 The Belfast Newsletter  
 The Guardian  
 The Independent  
 The Irish News (Belfast)  
 The Irish Times  
 The New Nation  
 The Shankill Bulletin

A P P E N D I X

FOR  
OFFICE USE  
ONLY  
( ) ( )

SECTION A

- Q1 SEX 1. Male 2. Female
- Q2 MARITAL STATUS 1. Married 2. Single  
3. Widower/Widow 4. Separated
- Q3 AGE 1. Under 21  
2. 22-35  
3. 36-50  
4. Over 50
- Q4 Occupation  
(Please give as full a description as possible)
- 4(a) If unemployed  
How long since last full time job  
What was last full time job
- Q5 Where did you complete your full time education  
1. At Secondary/Intermediate School  
2. At Technical School  
3. At Grammar School  
4. At Public/Boarding School  
5. At College of Education  
6. At Polytechnic/University  
7. No Secondary Education
- Q6 How long have you lived in East Belfast  
1. 0-5 years  
2. 6-10 years  
3. 11-15 years  
4. 16-20 years  
5. 21-25 years  
6. Over 25 years
- Q7 How long have you lived in this neighbourhood  
1. 0-5 years  
2. 6-10 years  
3. 11-15 years  
4. 16-20 years  
5. 21-25 years  
6. Over 25 years

( )

( )

( )

( )

( )

( )

( )

Q8 How often do you see any of your relatives, apart from those who also live in the house

1. Daily
2. Weekly
3. Several times a week
4. Monthly
5. Less than once/month
6. Never

( )

SECTION B

SHOW CARD

1. British
2. Irish
3. Ulster
4. Northern Irish
5. Anglo Irish
6. Sometimes Irish, sometimes British
7. Other

( )

Q9 Which of these terms best describes the way you think of yourself

( )

Q10 Which would be your second choice

( )

Q11 Which of these terms are you least likely to call yourself

( )

Q12 Would you say that the way you live your life has got more in common with

1. The people in England and Wales
2. The people in Scotland
3. The people in the Irish Republic

( )

SHOW CARD

1. Unionist
2. Loyalist
3. Alliance
4. Socialist
5. Nationalist
6. Republican
7. Don't know
8. None

( )

Q13 Which of the following would you say best describes your political position concerning Northern Ireland

If 1 or 2 go to Questions 14

If 3 to 8 go to Question 19



SECTION C

I AM NOW GOING TO READ A NUMBER OF STATEMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN MADE ABOUT THE SITUATION HERE. I WOULD LIKE YOU TO TELL ME HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT EACH ONE, WHETHER YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE AND HOW STRONGLY. THE ANSWERS WILL BE TREATED IN THE STRICTEST CONFIDENCE, SO PLEASE BE FRANK. THERE ARE NO CORRECT ANSWERS AND NO INCORRECT ONES, I AM SIMPLY INTERESTED IN WHAT YOU THINK, YOUR OWN OPINION.

SHOW CARD

1. VERY STRONGLY DISAGREE
2. STRONGLY DISAGREE
3. DISAGREE
4. AGREE
5. STRONGLY AGREE
6. VERY STRONGLY AGREE

Q14 As a Unionist/Loyalist I object to a United Ireland because I fear that the Protestant way of life would be lost

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. (

Q15 As a Unionist/Loyalist I object to a United Ireland because I fear my standard of living would go down

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. (

Q16 As a Unionist/Loyalist I object to a United Ireland because I fear the power of the Roman Catholic Church

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. ( )

Q17 As a Unionist/Loyalist I object to a United Ireland because I fear I would lose my BRITISH identity

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. ( )

Q18 Which is your main objection

1. Protestant way of life
  2. Drop in living standard
  3. Power of Roman Catholic Church
  4. Loss of British identity
- (

NOW SOME MORE STATEMENTS, PLEASE TELL ME IF YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE

Q19 The British Government does not really care what the outcome is in Northern Ireland as long as there isn't too much civil unrest

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. (

- Q20 Since they are a majority it is only right that Protestants should have the last word on how Northern Ireland is to be ruled
1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. ( )
- Q21 In any political solution to Northern Ireland the Irish Government has to be consulted
1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. ( )
- Q22 British withdrawal from Northern Ireland without the consent of all the parties involved would lead to an increase in violence by Loyalists
1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. ( )
- Q23 If they had to choose between being loyal to the British Government and loyal to 'Ulster', Loyalists would choose Ulster
1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. ( )
- Q24 The Irish Government should make abortion and divorce legal in the Republic
1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. ( )
- Q25 Northern Irish Protestants and Northern Irish Catholics have more in common with each other than with the people of the Irish Republic
1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. ( )
- Q26 If a United Ireland was ever to come about the Loyalist paramilitaries would be at least as much of a problem as the IRA are today
1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. ( )

SECTION D

Q27 In the long term, which of these do you think offers the best chance of a solution to the problems of Northern Ireland

SHOW CARD

1. Being much more closely tied in with Great Britain
  2. A more independent form of Government within the United Kingdom
  3. A move towards a completely independent Northern Ireland state
  4. Being more closely tied into the Irish Republic
  5. Some form of independent federal Ireland
  6. Don't know
  7. Other - state what
- ( )

Q28 Which of this list would you see as the least likely solution to the Northern Ireland problem

SECTION E

THERE HAVE BEEN VARIOUS STEPS SUGGESTED WHICH THE BRITISH AND IRISH GOVERNMENTS MIGHT TAKE IN ORDER TO HELP BRING ABOUT A SOLUTION TO THE CURRENT SITUATION HERE PLEASE TELL ME WHETHER YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING AND WHETHER STRONGLY OR SLIGHTLY

Q29 The Irish Government should remove its constitutional claim to Northern Ireland

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.

Q30 The British Government should restore 'political status' for some offences in Northern Ireland

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.

Q31 The British and Irish Governments should continue to have high-level meetings, at which Northern Ireland should be discussed

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.

Q32 The Irish Government should agree to extradition, that is to hand over to the authorities in Northern Ireland people accused of politically motivated crimes here

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.

Q33 The British Government should implement a policy of separation of 'Loyalist' and 'Republican' prisoners in Northern Irish goals

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.

SECTION F

Q34 Which of these political parties in Northern Ireland do you feel closest to

SHOW CARD

1. Official Unionist Party
2. Democratic Unionist Party
3. Ulster Democratic Loyalist Party
4. Progressive Unionist Party
5. Vanguard Unionist Party
6. The Workers' Party
7. Northern Ireland Labour Party
8. Social Democratic and Labour Party
9. Sinn Fein
10. Alliance
11. None
12. Other \_\_\_\_\_ Please state

Q35 Have you voted for any of these parties in the last 10 years

Q36 Have you voted for any of these parties in the last 5 years

Q37 If you had been living in England, Scotland or Wales during the last election which party would you have voted for

SHOW CARD

1. Conservative
2. Labour
3. Liberal
4. Social Democratic Party
5. Scottish/Welsh Nationalist
6. Other (state )
7. None
8. Don't know

SECTION G

I WOULD NOW LIKE TO ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

Q38 Could you tell me to which church you belong

1. Roman Catholic
2. Church of Ireland
3. Presbyterian
4. Free Presbyterian
5. Methodist
6. Congregationalist
7. Other (state )
8. None
9. Atheist/Agnostic
10. Don't know/refuse

Q39 On average how often have you been to church over the last year

1. More than 1/week
2. 1/week
3. Less than 1/week
4. Less than 1/month
5. Never

IF YOU THINK OF THE PEOPLE YOU KNOW IN EACH OF THE FOLLOWING GROUPS, WHAT PROPORTION WOULD YOU SAY ARE THE SAME RELIGION AS YOURSELF

Q40	Close Friends	1. All	SHOW CARD	( )
Q41	Neighbours	2. Most		( )
Q42	Relatives by marriage	3. Half		( )
Q43	People you work with	4. Less than half		( )
		5. None		( )
		6. Don't know		

SECTION H

AND NOW A FEW MORE STATEMENTS ABOUT NORTHERN IRELAND, AGAIN I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHETHER YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE AND HOW STRONGLY

Q44	The best chance of a solution to the situation is a return to the old Stormont system of Government	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	( )
Q45	Capital punishment should be reintroduced for those paramilitaries who have been found guilty of murder	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	( )
Q46	Local politicians should put more emphasis on 'bread and butter' issues rather than the constitutional issue	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	( )
Q47	Trial by jury should be brought back for all cases in Northern Ireland	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	( )
Q48	If Britain withdrew, Northern Ireland should claim independence rather than join with the Irish Republic	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	( )
Q49	It is a good idea to mix Protestant and Catholic children in the same school	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	( )
Q50	Any political solution to Northern Ireland's problems will have to include an arrangement for Catholics and Protestants to share power	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	( )
Q51	The 'supergrass' system is a legitimate method to convict terrorists	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	( )

SECTION I

SHOW CARD FINALLY, SOME MORE QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR GENERAL VIEWS,  
AGAIN I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHETHER YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE  
AND HOW STRONGLY

- |     |   |                       |                                |                              |                  |            |                   |              |     |
|-----|---|-----------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------|-----|
| Q52 | The Trade Unions have too much power  | 1.                    | 2.                             | 3.                           | 4.               | 5.         | 6.                | ( )          |     |
| Q53 | The Welfare State should gradually be run-down  | 1.                    | 2.                             | 3.                           | 4.               | 5.         | 6.                | ( )          |     |
| Q54 | The 11-plus examination should be abolished   | 1.                    | 2.                             | 3.                           | 4.               | 5.         | 6.                | ( )          |     |
| Q55 | Income tax should be increased in order to strengthen the National Health Service                                 | 1.                    | 2.                             | 3.                           | 4.               | 5.         | 6.                | ( )          |     |
| Q56 | There is too much talk today about women's liberation   | 1.                    | 2.                             | 3.                           | 4.               | 5.         | 6.                | ( )          |     |
| Q57 | Abortion should be left to the individual conscience  | 1.                    | 2.                             | 3.                           | 4.               | 5.         | 6.                | ( )          |     |
| Q58 | Religion is becoming more important to people in Northern Ireland   | 1.                    | 2.                             | 3.                           | 4.               | 5.         | 6.                | ( )          |     |
| Q59 | Nationalised industries should be 'sold off' to private owners  | 1.                    | 2.                             | 3.                           | 4.               | 5.         | 6.                | ( )          |     |
| Q60 | The security forces are doing their job well  | 1.                    | 2.                             | 3.                           | 4.               | 5.         | 6.                | ( )          |     |
| Q61 | A bill of rights should be introduced in Northern Ireland as soon as possible                                     | 1.                    | 2.                             | 3.                           | 4.               | 5.         | 6.                | ( )          |     |
| Q62 | Unemployment is usually the fault of the individual   | 1.                    | 2.                             | 3.                           | 4.               | 5.         | 6.                | ( )          |     |
| Q63 | In general working people are fairly treated by their employers   | 1.                    | 2.                             | 3.                           | 4.               | 5.         | 6.                | ( )          |     |
| Q64 | If you think of the people in the neighbourhood in which you live, would you say that you know                    | 1. nearly everyone    | 2. quite a few people          | 3. only two or three of them | 4. hardly anyone |            |                   | ( )          |     |
| Q65 | Which of the following do you regard as justifiable actions to defend the British way of life in Northern Ireland |                       |                                |                              |                  |            |                   |              |     |
|     | SHOW CARD   | 1. Electoral Politics | 2. Peaceful civil disobedience | 3. Protest Marches           | 4. Strikes       | 5. Rioting | 6. Armed Conflict | 7. Civil War | ( ) |