Learning to Win: An Examination of Counterterrorism in Northern Ireland

by

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Introduction

The goal of any counterterrorism strategy is to be “effective.” But what does that truly mean? What makes some counterterrorism measures “effective,” while others fail miserably? How can we measure effectiveness? How do governments choose counterterrorism strategies, and why are they sometimes unable to pursue the most effective course of action? The research presented in this thesis will begin the process of answering these questions through a detailed comparative analysis of two time periods drawn from the conflict in Northern Ireland. Through a two-part analysis, I will examine the effectiveness of specific counterterrorism policies, and ascertain whether the government’s ability to effectively update information and adapt to changing circumstances was constrained.

The existing body of literature on counterterrorism seems to suggest that there is no “silver bullet” when it comes to combating terrorist organizations. I concur with this assessment, and acknowledge that historical cases of counterterrorism demonstrate that successful strategies in one situation may be entirely catastrophic in another case. However, my analysis of counterterrorism measures in Northern Ireland suggests that effective counterterrorism strategies do share several key components. I will test the validity of these effectiveness factors by conducting analyses of significant counterterrorism measures undertaken by the government during each of my selected time periods. I acknowledge that my contribution to the literature is somewhat limited, as I have focused on only two time periods within one country, but (as I will discuss in my case study selection section) I believe that these
cases provide sufficient strategic, organizational, and political variation for the development of a useful starting point for future research.

After analyzing each counterterrorism policy within the context of my effectiveness framework, I will test the validity of the criteria through a quantitative analysis of the patterns of terrorist activity in the year following each specific measure. Although my focus will be primarily on the number of terrorist attacks in the year following implementation, I have also included data on the number of annual fatalities from terrorist activity.

Through my examination of two time periods in Northern Ireland, I will assess validity of my established effectiveness criteria, and discover whether “effective” policies are actually followed by a decline in terrorist attacks. I will then assess the factors that influence a state’s ability to adapt to changes in the status quo, and to utilize lessons from experience or historical examples. I will examine internal factors, resource constraints and audience costs as possible determinants of a state’s ability to implement policies that meet the criteria discussed above.

In order to ensure the accuracy of these assessments, I will also consider unrelated factors that might cause the terrorist organizations in question to escalate or de-escalate their violent activities. Given that I have selected a few specific examples of counterterrorism, it is necessary to briefly address any extenuating circumstances that may have influenced terrorist activity.
1. Building the foundation

Before beginning the process of analyzing the questions discussed above, I will discuss the existing knowledge on each of my main topics, and establish the definitions of these concepts that will be used throughout the rest of this document. The primary focus of my study is not the way in which terrorism is defined, but it is critical to my argument to explore the existing body of literature on the topic. Before beginning any discussion of counterterrorism policy, it is essential to at least briefly address the scholarly debate surrounding the search for a comprehensive definition of terrorism.

For the purposes of this thesis, I will primarily utilize the definitions and criteria of terrorism established by the authors of the Global Terrorism Database (GTD1 and GTD2). My data on terrorist attacks in Northern Ireland is drawn largely from this database, so it is logical to utilize the same understanding of terrorism.¹ The definition established in GTD1 describes terrorism as “the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion or intimidation.”² GTD1 catalogues terrorist incidents between 1970 and 1997 (with the exception of 1993). I have also used data from GTD2, which examines international terrorist activity between 1998 and 2004. GTD2 does not establish a set definition, but rather utilizes a “configurable approach

¹ These data are supplemented by data from the TWEED terrorism database and the Conflict Archive on the Internet (CAIN).
² START Global Terrorism Database (Methodology) http://209.232.239.37/gtd1/methodology.htm
covering several definitions of terrorism." \(^3\) In order for an incident to be included in GTD 2, it must conform to three necessary criteria, as well as at least two out of three sufficient criteria. The necessary criteria for inclusion are as follows:

1. The incident must be intentional; the result of a conscious calculation on the part of a perpetrator.
2. The incident must entail some level of violence (includes property violence)
3. There must be subnational perpetrators (the database is limited to acts of non-state terrorism).
   - At the time of the incident the perpetrator must not be exercising
   sovereignty. \(^4\)

All of the above conditions must be satisfied, as must be two out of three of the following criteria:

1. The act must be aimed at attaining a political, economic, religious, or social goal. In terms of economic goals, the exclusive pursuit of profit does not satisfy this criterion.
2. There must be evidence of an intention to coerce, intimidate, or convey some other message to a larger audience (or audiences) than the immediate victims.
3. The action must be outside the context of legitimate warfare activities, i.e. the act must be outside the parameters permitted by international humanitarian

\(^3\) START Global Terrorism Database (Differences between GTD 1 and GTD 2) http://www.start.umd.edu/start/data/gtd/gtd1_and_gtd2.asp
\(^4\) GTD 2 Codebook Draft 1.0 (May 2007): 9
law (particularly the admonition against deliberately targeting civilians or non-combatants).  

As I have used data from both of these compilations, it is critical that my understanding of terrorism utilize both of the definitions discussed above. However, as is evident by the somewhat more generalized nature of the GTD2 criteria, my data on attacks between 1998 and 2004 may be slightly more comprehensive than the data on attacks between 1970 and 1997. I have examined a number of scholarly articles and analyses of the earlier time period, and have determined that the slight shift in definitional criteria for inclusion will not impact my analysis in a significant way. It is simply worth noting here that GTD2 provides a somewhat more flexible and comprehensive definitional boundary.  

As my discussion of the literature defining terrorism will demonstrate, these criteria also represent (in my view) one of the most comprehensive definitions of terrorism currently available. The flexibility of the GTD2 definition, in particular, allows for an examination of a wide variety of violent incidents, and does not impose unrealistic constraints on one’s understanding and analysis of the topic.  

Although I will be confining my analysis to the definition and criteria established by the GTD, it is important to note that the debate surrounding the task of establishing a comprehensive definition of terrorism continues among scholars and policymakers. The following section will be devoted to a brief discussion of the controversy and conflict surrounding the search for a universal definition of terrorism.  

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5 GTD 2 Codebook Draft 1.0 (May 2007): 9-10
2. Defining and Understanding Terrorism

Terrorism is one of the oldest military strategies currently in use, and it has been utilized under a tremendous variety of cultural, political, social, and economic circumstances. Terrorist goals and demands demonstrate a similarly astonishing breadth and variety. As the existing literature demonstrates, there is also no definitive psychological archetype of a terrorist. The astounding diversity of ideology, strategy, and composition of terrorist organizations has made it essentially impossible for scholars and policymakers to agree upon a single understanding or definition of terrorism. This section will serve to outline and discuss some of the major threads of this extraordinarily complex debate.

Harmon (1992) provides a clear example of an emotionally motivated, somewhat knee-jerk definition of terrorism. He acknowledges that there “may not be a perfect definition,” but argues that “there is a good one.” Harmon defines terrorism as “the deliberate murder, maiming, and/or menacing of the innocent to inspire fear for political ends.” The use of the word “innocent” lends an almost religious tone to Harmon’s definition, and emphasizes his belief that terrorism is a “matter for moral judgment” rather than political analysis. Harmon elaborates upon the definition of “innocent,” and categorizes a wide range of individuals as meeting the criteria he establishes. His definition seems to imply that there is little difference between acts of terrorism and insurgency, and ignores the possibility that some of the individuals he describes would be considered “fair game” under international laws of war.

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Harmon’s definition has limited utility, but it does provide something of a bridge between the scholarly understanding of terrorism and the somewhat propagandistic descriptions frequently utilized by policymakers. This rhetoric has become far more prominent in the years following September 11, exemplified most clearly by President Bush’s “Axis of Evil” speech. Political and emotional motivation and pressure frequently lead policymakers to define terrorism in an entirely negative and illegitimate light. These definitions are generally at odds with the somewhat more neutral, analytical assessments provided in most of the scholarly literature on the topic.

There appears to be general consensus among scholars as to the concept of “propaganda by the deed.” Although this particular term is not employed in every article, its implications appear in most definitions. This concept suggests that terrorist attacks are conceived with the goal of influencing a wider audience than the immediate victims. Harmon’s definition hints at this, but does not develop it in a significant way.

Another school of thought emphasizes the political nature of terrorism, as well as the strategic choice to target civilians or noncombatants. Goodwin suggests that terrorism is “the strategic use of violence and threats of violence by an oppositional political group against civilians or noncombatants, and is usually intended to influence several audiences.”7 Hoffman (2006) presents a similarly based definition, arguing that “terrorism is the deliberate creation and exploitation of fear through

violence or the threat of violence in the pursuit of political change.”

This political emphasis is closely echoed by the 2007 State Department definition of terrorism, which describes it as “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents.”

Ganor (1998) also falls into this school of thought, suggesting that terrorism is “the intentional use of or threat to use violence against civilians or against civilian targets, in order to attain political aims.”

Still another school of thought widens the definitional scope of terrorism to include violence that is not necessarily politically motivated. Crenshaw (1981) defines terrorism as “the premeditated use or threat of symbolic, low-level violence by conspiratorial organizations.”

Bergesen and Lizardo (2004) provide a somewhat similar definition, emphasizing the “political, social, or religious purpose” generally associated with acts of terrorism. Bergesen and Lizardo also maintain that terrorism must be directed at non-combatants.

The majority of these definitions acknowledge the idea that terrorism is generally intended to influence the behavior or sentiments of a larger audience or

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audiences than the immediate victims. However, each definition emphasizes the “terror” aspect of terrorism to a different degree. All of the scholars discussed above suggest that terrorism is intended to influence a wider population, but only some of their definitions actually suggest this influence is equivalent to fear. Hoffman focuses exclusively on the “deliberate creation and exploitation of fear,” while Carr and Turk go into even greater detail. Both of these scholars suggest that the creation of fear through violent attacks is geared towards eliminating the will and support base of the opposition.

Della Porta (1995) differs from the scholars discussed above in her selection of a definition of terrorism. She defines terrorism “as the activity of those clandestine organizations that, by a continued and almost exclusive use of illegal forms of action, aim to attain their political goals through profound transformation of state institutions.”12 This definition does not emphasize the violent aspect of terrorism, but rather the illegality of it. Additionally, this definition certainly implies a larger overall goal of terrorism, but does not stress the concept of propaganda by the deed. Unlike Hoffman, Carr, Turk, and Harmon, della Porta does not suggest that the creation or exploitation of fear is an inherent aspect of terrorism. She also does not explicitly restrict terrorist action to the targeting of civilians or non-combatants.

Essentially all of the threads of this debate at least mention the deliberate or strategic aspect of terrorism; there are hardly any descriptions of the concept that present terrorism as random or unplanned. Although definitions such as Harmon’s

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tend to disregard a rational perspective of terrorism, some of the other definitions provide a useful starting point from which to examine the rational, strategic, and/or logical roots of terrorism.

Very few of these definitions, including the ones provided by GTD, are designed to include state terrorism. In general, state terrorism has not received extensive attention in the literature, perhaps due to the fact that even government assessments of terrorism do not include a category for state terrorism (see the U.S. State Department definition above). My analysis will not directly address the concept of state terrorism, so I will not focus on it here. However, as this thesis is largely focused on state counterterrorism, it is important to note that even the most repressive state actions are rarely categorized as terrorism. The repressive, violent counterterrorism measures taken by the governments in my selected cases have been sharply criticized, but have generally not been referred to as state terrorism.

3. Defining and Understanding Counterterrorism

A comprehensive definition of counterterrorism is, if possible, even more elusive than a universal understanding of terrorism. Counterterrorism is a central focus for policymakers and scholars, but it is extremely difficult to locate a definition distinguishing it from counter-insurgency, police action, or another type of government initiative. Depending on the circumstances, any of the measures listed above could be classified as counterterrorism. A significant portion of the existing literature on this topic does not provide any definition whatsoever of counterterrorism, focusing instead on specific anecdotal examples.
Because of the numerous possible manifestations of counterterrorism, most studies of this topic discuss one or a few examples, and use these anecdotes to glean statistical, formal, or theoretical models. My analysis is similarly limited, as I am focusing on only two time periods within one case. However, as I will discuss below, there are very few existing explorations of the relationship between organizational learning and counterterrorism. In addition, the majority of counterterrorism studies focus almost exclusively on analyzing the effectiveness of counterterrorism strategies. The existing research does not present a detailed analysis of the influence of resource constraints, audience costs, and regime type on a state’s ability to adapt towards a more effective policy. Of these variables, regime type has received the most attention in the counterterrorism literature, but it has not been related directly to organizational innovation.

For the purposes of this thesis, I will define counterterrorism as any government action directly intended to decrease the capabilities, motivations, or legitimacy of a designated terrorist organization. This definition aligns logically with the criteria I have developed for determining the effectiveness of specific counterterrorism policies.

4. What makes Counterterrorism effective?

As the above discussion demonstrates, any effective counterterrorism strategy is likely to involve a significant number of fairly complex elements. However, I have utilized the existing research, as well as my own studies, to develop three criteria for effective counterterrorism. I will test the validity of these criteria by conducting an
in-depth analysis of a number of specific counterterrorism policies. There is certainly still disagreement among scholars regarding the importance and validity of these criteria, but my research suggests that these three concepts were crucial elements of the successes and failures of counterterrorism in Northern Ireland.

A. It is critical to target motivations, as well as capabilities

If my hypothesis is correct, counterterrorism measures that simply target a group’s physical capabilities are not sufficient. There remains a considerable amount of debate on this topic within the existing research, but a number of compelling studies demonstrate that pure targeting of capabilities generally leads to only a short-term decline in the violence. The longevity of the conflict in Northern Ireland provides ample evidence for the argument that well-structured, financially stable terrorist organizations have the capacity to regenerate and improve their capabilities for violent actions.

There is a school of thought that emphasizes the importance of targeting terrorist capabilities, and rejects the notion that counterterrorism policies must also target the underlying motivations and justifications of the terrorist organization in question. Frisch (2006) develops a detailed case study analysis of the conflict in Israel between 2000 and 2005. He proposes that the effectiveness of Palestinian terrorism has begun to decrease, and argues that this “decrease was not due to lack of motivation but rather to sharply reduced Palestinian capabilities as a result of
effective Israeli offensive and defensive moves against Palestinian organizations.”

Although Frisch makes an important point, he focuses on a somewhat limited sampling of the motivating factors behind terrorist behavior. He addresses the concepts of “relative deprivation, vengeance, outbidding or motivation to spoil a peace process” as potential motivators of Palestinian terrorism. However, these motivations are only discussed as factors inducing existing organizations to launch specific attacks. He argues that counterterrorism targeting capabilities limits the capacity of terrorist organizations to act, even though these motivations remain.

Frisch’s analysis is conducted over a short period of time, and does not sufficiently address the possibility that the continued presence of these motivations could create a strong incentive for terrorist groups to work towards increased capabilities.

While counterterrorism measures that attack terrorist capabilities may be somewhat effective over the short-term, longer-term analyses suggest that terrorist groups frequently have the capacity to regain and/or improve their capabilities. As Frisch acknowledges, this type of counterterrorism measure can be categorized as an offensive military action, usually repressive in nature. Abdelaziz Testas (2004) uses a cross-sectional regression model based on terrorist activity in 37 Muslim countries to determine that this type of repressive tactic is negatively associated with terrorism.

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14 Frisch, 844
during the immediate aftermath, but has a positive correlation over a long period of

time.\footnote{Abdelaziz Testas, “Determinants of Terrorism in the Muslim World: An
260.}

My argument is not intended to suggest that governments should refrain from
attempts to reduce the capabilities of terrorist organizations. However, I argue that
it is critical to combine this type of action with a concentrated effort to negate the
motivations that induce individuals to join terrorist organizations, and that create
justifications for terrorist attacks. Abrahms (2008) argues that “people participate in
terrorist organizations not to achieve their official political platforms, but to develop
strong ties with fellow terrorists.”\footnote{Max Abrahms, "What Terrorists Really Want: Terrorist Motives and
entirely outweigh the importance of group ideology or political goals, Abrahms’
argument raises important questions regarding the utility of simply attacking
capabilities. Abrahms points out that terrorist organizations may place survival as a
group at the top of their list of goals; if this is the case, a simple attack on capabilities
will only serve to harden the group’s determination to survive.\footnote{Abrahms, 102}

The “strong ties” discussed by Abrahms also provide one of the most
important motivating factors for individual members of terrorist organizations.
Crenshaw (1981) describes “a pattern of mutual reassurance, solidarity, and
comradeship,” through which “the members of a group reinforce each other’s self-
righteousness, image of a hostile world, and sense of mission." Crenshaw argues that this intense group cohesion contributes to the development of vengeance as a powerful motivation for continued terrorist action. Government policies that result in the death of terrorists may provide a powerful impetus for other members of the organization to seek vengeance. This aspect of terrorist motivation is not addressed by Frisch, but provides a strong argument against government policies that target the capabilities of an organization. Although this type of policy may cripple an organization’s operational capacity for some period of time, Crenshaw’s analysis suggests that it may simply fuel the organization’s determination to regain that capability in order to exact vengeance. This argument coincides with the statistical results obtained by Testas; purely military government policies may decrease terrorist activity in the immediate aftermath, but this type of lull is not sustainable.

In order to determine whether or not the counterterrorism measures I have selected meet this condition, I will examine public polling data regarding perceptions of government actions, as well as the statements and actions of the targeted terrorist organization. These data will permit me to determine whether the government successfully attacked the justifications and motivations of the terrorist organization. Public perceptions of government legitimacy will be useful for this, particularly among the population that the terrorist organizations claim to represent. Additionally, I will attempt to discover whether there was a shift in terrorist rhetoric or strategy in response to a government policy. This type of shift indicates that the government

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18 Crenshaw (1981), 393
may have undermined the stated motivations and public justifications of the group as a whole, as well as of individual members.

Shifts in membership in the terrorist organization would also provide some insight as to whether the government had actually managed to damage motivation and ideology, in addition to physical capacity. However, there is very little publicly available information regarding membership shifts in terrorist organizations in Northern Ireland. There have been numerous government estimates, as well as some information from the groups themselves. However, information provided by the organizations may well overstate membership in order to intimidate the government, and state estimates are not regularly updated. When the information is available, I will certainly discuss whether there were any major changes in membership levels within the targeted terrorist organization.

B. Wedge strategies are necessary, but not always sufficient

Although internal fragmentation does not necessarily mean the end of a terrorist organization, “decisive defeats are rare in the absence of…factors such as organizational disintegration.”19 Terrorist organizations throughout history have frequently experienced internal disagreement with regards to ideology, strategy, leadership, and tactics.20 Wedge counterterrorism strategies, or “divide and rule”

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20 This certainly occurred in Northern Ireland, usually because a sub-group was dissatisfied with the main group’s willingness to at least consider negotiating with the government. Another major cause of fragmentation has been conflicting positions on
strategies, present states with an opportunity to create or exploit these divisions by offering terrorists a way out of extremist organizations. This type of strategy is particularly effective when there is already a certain degree of discontent and conflict within the terrorist organization. Wedge strategies may also be used to appeal to moderate elements within terrorist organizations, thus isolating hard-line, extremist members. Although the prospect of a small, cohesive, violent group may be alarming, this type of situation may allow states to pursue aggressive counterterrorism while retaining legitimacy. If the state has made a clear, public attempt to redress the concerns of moderates and gain their support, the public will be far less likely to criticize a policy that targets the remaining members of an organization.

Additionally, the data show that small splinter groups in Northern Ireland have been unable to maintain the levels of violence perpetrated by their parent organizations. My assessment of terrorist activity in Northern Ireland suggests that allowing for the development of extremist splinter groups may actually be beneficial in the long run. The data discussed in the case study chapters demonstrate that groups emerging as a result of wedge strategies frequently do not have the capacity or public support to maintain high levels of violence.

Della Porta argues that wedge strategies were absolutely critical in the Italian government’s struggle to combat domestic left-wing terrorism. A relatively large number of individuals did take advantage of this “compensations” program, which

the utility of violence, particularly against civilian targets. For an excellent discussion of organizational fragmentation, see: Goldie Shabat and Francisco José Llera Ramo, “Political Violence in a Democratic State: Basque Terrorism in Spain,” in Terrorism in Context, 410-469.
“hastened the crisis in terrorist organizations.”

The repentance legislation enacted during this period exacerbated pre-existing group tensions, and provided numerous members of terrorist organizations with an opportunity to distance themselves from their former colleagues.

As cited above, Crenshaw (1991) makes a similar point regarding the importance of group disintegration. However, Crenshaw points out that organizational fragmentation, while frequently essential, is not the only factor accounting for the decline of terrorist organizations. She establishes three main criteria to account for the demise of terrorist groups: government response to terrorism, the strategic choices of the terrorist organization, and its organizational resources. All of these criteria certainly bear some relation to wedge strategies, but Crenshaw’s argument highlights the fact that wedge strategies alone are not always sufficient. Counterterrorism policies should certainly be formulated with wedge strategies in mind, but the success of these measures may be highly dependent on specific circumstances.

This sentiment is also echoed by della Porta in her discussion of left-wing terrorism in Italy. Della Porta emphasizes the importance of wedge strategies, but includes the caveat that the repentance legislation was only truly effective when militants began to believe that defeat was imminent and unavoidable. Until this was the case, the existence of repentance legislation often served to strengthen group solidarity bonds against those individuals who chose to cooperate with the

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21 Della Porta, 119
22 Crenshaw, 80
government. For the majority of terrorist organization members, “only when they
could not avoid recognizing defeat was it possible for a new orientation in the
antiterrorism legislation to facilitate their leaving the organizations.”
Marks (2007) also underlines the importance of wedge strategies in his discussion of Sri Lanka. He
maintains that, had the Sri Lankan government employed wedge strategies early in
the conflict, “what became a profound threat to the security of the state would likely
have remained a law-and-order problem.”

The historical evidence certainly suggests that terrorist organizations are more
likely to fail (or at least lose some of their capacity to launch attacks) when they are
experiencing organizational fragmentation and disintegration. Several governments
have successfully exacerbated or imitated these dynamics by opening avenues of
negotiation with moderates, or by offering compensations to terrorists who turn
against their organizations. Additionally, government policies that offer legitimacy
and influence to moderate members or supporters of terrorist organizations have a
similar effect. As my discussion of the Downing Street Declaration (1993) will
illustrate, this type of conciliatory policy permits moderates to exert a surprising
degree of influence on their terrorist allies. Because of this, I believe that wedge
strategies should at least be closely examined and considered by any government
facing a terrorist adversary. Because this type of strategy is only effective under a
particular set of circumstances, state counterterrorism should aim to exploit and

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23 Della Porta, 155
24 Thomas A. Marks, “Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam,” in
_Democracy and Counterterrorism: Lessons From the Past_, ed. Robert J. Art and
exacerbate any existing discontent or conflict within terrorist organizations. Wedge strategies are by no means the only component of effective counterterrorism, but they are certainly an important element.

In Northern Ireland, wedge strategies have generally manifested in the context of appeals to moderates, rather than as the specific repentance legislation described by Della Porta. This is likely due to the fact that most of the terrorist organizations in Northern Ireland are (or have been) closely linked to political parties. In this situation, it is frequently easier to provide members of the political parties with the incentives and legitimacy to exert influence on terrorist colleagues.

In order to determine whether the government in my case is employing wedge strategies, I will examine the public and terrorist response to the policy, as well as any available government descriptions of the measure’s goals. Wedge strategies may include a military element, but are marked by an accompanying appeal to moderates or disgruntled members of the organization.

C. Address the underlying conditions and grievances of the population “represented” by the terrorist group

In most cases, terrorist organizations claim to represent the interests or desires of a larger population. This is particularly relevant when discussing the situation in Northern Ireland, as the various manifestations of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) have each at one point claimed to be the true voice of the Republican movement. The same may be said of the Loyalist organizations, all of which claim to represent the interests of the Protestant and unionist communities.
As my case studies will demonstrate, both Republican and Loyalist paramilitaries claimed that their violent actions were necessary in order to protect the physical safety and collective interests of a specific population. This was particularly easy for the PIRA during the period from 1969-1974, as the organization was able to point to numerous failures on the part of the British security forces to protect the Catholic population. Both the Irish police force and the British troops lost a great deal of legitimacy as a result of policies that appeared to unfairly target a specific population. One of the most prominent examples of this is “Bloody Sunday,” during which members of the British military utilized exceedingly brutal methods to break up a civil rights march. The events of the day, coupled with the levity with which the British government treated the incident, catastrophically damaged relations between the British troops and members of the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland.

The PIRA demonstrated on numerous occasions that it could operate as a police force and de facto government, thus gaining at least a measure of legitimacy among a community that was alternately ignored or oppressed by the government. Although the Catholic community in Northern Ireland may have thoroughly disapproved of PIRA tactics, history has shown that it is extremely difficult to entirely repudiate a group that offers at least some slight improvement in security and quality of life.

Loyalist terrorist organizations were largely unable to claim that the Stormont and British governments were inflicting oppressive policies on the Protestant population. However, the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and the Ulster Defense Association (UDA) were able to justify their actions throughout the early years of the
Troubles by pointing to the numerous Republican attacks against Protestant civilians and government employees. The Loyalist organizations tapped into the fears and anger of the Protestant population by exacting revenge against Republican groups, and by offering far more extensive protection than the British security forces. Additionally, the Loyalist organizations utilized the controversies of the 1990s peace process to gain legitimacy among Protestants and unionists who were dismayed by the British government’s seeming willingness to negotiate with Sinn Fein, and the developing role of the Republic of Ireland.

Given the importance of public legitimacy and support for terrorist organizations, government counterterrorism policies should at least attempt to address the concerns and grievances of the population in question, rather than simply targeting specific terrorist groups. The ideologies espoused by both Republican and Loyalist terrorist organizations are echoed to varying degrees throughout the populations they purport to represent. As Crenshaw points out, terrorism occurs as a result of underlying preconditions, as well as in response to specific precipitants. If the larger preconditions (such as the grievances of a minority population) are not addressed, it seems unlikely that states will be able to halt the cyclical pattern of terrorist violence.

5. Constraints on Policy Selection and State Adaptation

Organizational learning has long been a part of scholarly analysis of corporations, and more recently, governments. A few scholars have begun to apply this concept to the operations of terrorist organizations, but scholarly analysis of
organizational learning within the context of counterterrorism remains fairly limited. However, as I will discuss below, it is extremely difficult to develop a quantitative measure of organizational learning. In order to address this problem, I will focus my analysis on a selection of variables that may affect a government’s ability to select and implement effective counterterrorism policies. My selection of variables is drawn from John Child’s (1997) strategic choice theory. This theory was originally developed as a means of analyzing the dynamics of the business community, but I believe that it has a high degree of relevance to the subjects of government learning and counterterrorism.

Child argues that internal and environmental determinants interact to either constrain or enable effective decision-making and policy selection. Child discusses two examples of internal determinants; “action determinism” and “political process.” In general, action determinism refers to the absorption and interpretation of new information within the framework of a pre-determined mind-set. This concept is generally used in reference to individuals within organizations, but can be applied to the entire group through the concept of “political process.” The political process theory posits that “limitations…not arising from outside the organization” are “derived from its internal politics.” As a detailed discussion of cognitive theory lies outside the scope of my analysis, I will focus my discussion of these variables on the

26 Child, 50
27 Child, 51
role of pre-existing organizational norms and perceptual frameworks, as well as examining any internal political dynamics that might impact policy selection.

Child argues that environmental determinants are a critical aspect of organizational learning and policy selection because “the environment presents threats and opportunities for the organization which establish the parameters of choice.”

28 Child also stresses the importance of the organization’s perception of the environment in which they are operating, as a strong perceptual framework may significantly alter the strategies and policies selected by the organization. This analysis is particularly relevant to my examination of Northern Ireland, as the British government experienced a significant shift in perception between the two time periods I discuss. Child outlines two categories of environmental factors, namely economic variables and social variables. I have adjusted these variables slightly in order to construct my analysis, in which I will focus on resource constraints and audience costs. These variables closely resemble those described, but are somewhat more suited to an analysis of the government in that they permit for analysis of issues such as public support and political agendas.

Within the framework of my effectiveness analysis, I will be able to examine any correlations between the constraints mentioned above and the effectiveness of counterterrorism policy. These variables may prevent or facilitate the implementation of specific policies; it may be possible that the state is learning, but unable to utilize effective policies because of political pressures or resource constraints. Although I cannot directly operationalize organizational learning, the use of these variables will

28 Child, 53
allow me to at least assess the factors that influence a state’s ability to innovate and implement new policies. This effectiveness analysis will facilitate this study, as I will be able to determine whether government policies were improving over time. In light of the fact that I will not be able to provide a quantitative analysis of organizational learning, I have included a theoretical discussion of the existing research on the topic here. This literature review is an attempt to demonstrate the importance of organizational learning, while addressing some of the problems it poses as a variable in social scientific analysis.

There is considerable disagreement among scholars when it comes to defining organizational learning and developing a distinct set of metrics with which to evaluate it. In their 1988 classic article on the topic, Barbara Levitt and James March posit that “organizations are seen as learning by encoding inferences from history into routines that guide behavior.” They proceed to define routines as including “the forms, rules, procedures, conventions, strategies, and technologies around which organizations are constructed and through which they operate.” These rules are supported and enhanced by belief structures, “frameworks, paradigms, codes, cultures, and knowledge.” Jackson applies these concepts to terrorist organizations, and determines that organizational learning may be defined as “a process through which members of a group acquire new knowledge that can be applied in strategic management.”

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30 Levitt and March, 320
decision-making, tactical planning or design, and operational activities.”31 This
definition is closely related to the one proposed by Danny Miller, for whom
“organizational learning is the acquisition of new knowledge by actors who are ready
and willing to apply that knowledge in making decisions or influencing others in the
organization.”32

Rita McGrath presents yet another perspective on organizational learning.
McGrath discusses organizational learning in the context of innovative capacity and
managerial oversight in corporations. Although her analysis does not extend to states
or counterterrorism efforts, her article raises important questions about the constraints
faced by groups that may be trying to learn. Her data directly challenges “the
assumption that groups tend to learn more effectively when goals and tasks are
clearly specified.”33 Her data suggests that groups are more likely to learn effectively
when individuals have the freedom to adjust goals and assume new roles without
bureaucratic interference. This argument ties in closely with my analysis of the
constraints that may impede or facilitate state implementation of effective divide and
rule strategies. McGrath also emphasizes the importance of exploration and desire to
actually obtain new knowledge. Her argument is consistent with several cognitive
psychology assessments of learning, which state that individuals (and in this case,
corporations) frequently interpret new information in such a way that it corresponds
with a pre-existing worldview. Additionally, individuals and groups may not seek out

31 Brian A. Jackson, “Organizational Learning and Terrorist Groups”. RAND
working papers. RAND, RAND; National Institute of Justice: 3.
32 Miller, 486
33 Rita Gunther McGrath, “Exploratory Learning, Innovative Capacity, and
new knowledge, because of the risk that this new information might interfere with pre-existing notions and policies.\textsuperscript{34}

Bennett and Howlett address another set of problems that affect the utilization of organizational learning as a variable. They provide a detailed review of the research on organizational learning, and emphasize the fact that scholars have yet to reach a consensus on one definition. Bennett and Howlett identify several types of organizational learning, and argue that different types of learning occur at different levels within the state. According to their analysis, state officials, policy networks, and policy communities may all learn, but the learning of each entity has a different effect on the potential for policy change.\textsuperscript{35} Bennett and Howlett also argue that it is extremely difficult to quantify the concept of learning, because one can rarely state with certainty that a policy change occurred as a result of learning. While learning may certainly be present when policies change, groups also change policies in the absence of learning, and learning is likely occurring in the absence of policy change. Although Bennett and Howlett suggest that additional research and study of this concept is necessary, they acknowledge that it may be impossible to successfully operationalize “learning.”\textsuperscript{36}

Miller and Jackson’s definitions pertain most directly to a discussion of counterterrorism and terrorism in the context of organizational learning. However, when discussing case studies, I believe it is important to modify both of these

\textsuperscript{34} McGrath, 120
\textsuperscript{36} Bennett and Howlett, 290
definitions slightly. I will be using historical evidence and data to assess whether or not organizational learning was constrained, so I will modify these definitions to include the caveat that organizations must actually use the new information gained, rather than simply have the capability or the willingness to do so.

Louise Comfort also applies certain aspects of organizational learning to her analysis of government responses to terrorism. She proposes a model of auto-adaptation, which she describes as a learning strategy through which organizations develop “a cumulative assessment of changing conditions that warrant reconsideration of risk and reformulation of strategies that shift responsibilities for action according to need and capacity.” Comfort’s analysis of this learning process includes a number of factors, including information search, information exchange, “sensemaking,” and adaptation. 37 Comfort also spends a considerable amount of time discussing the importance of crisis decision-making and analysis. Although Comfort does appear to use some of the principles of organizational learning in her analysis, her focus is not primarily on counterterrorism. Comfort uses these principles to analyze government response to a crisis (caused by a terrorist attack or another equally extreme event), and focuses on recovery from a crisis and future risk-management within the community. She does not directly address the role of organizational learning during counterterrorism campaigns.

Although her analysis does not pertain directly to my topic, Comfort’s article provides potentially useful guidelines with which to set up criteria for organizational

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learning, whether within a state or within a terrorist organization. In addition, Comfort’s analysis brings in the agency-level concerns that are certainly a part of organizational learning during a counterterrorism campaign. Comfort emphasizes the importance of inter-agency communication and information sharing, a critical aspect of successful counterterrorism.

As Jackson points out, “organizational learning by terrorist groups has always been an element of the study of terrorism.”38 However, this is not the case when it comes to analyzing counterterrorism tactics, and the relationship between state counterterrorists and sub state terrorist organizations. Although there is considerable literature on the subject of various counterterrorism tactics and historical examples, the concept of organizational learning does not seem to have entered the debate in a significant way. The concept of organizational learning is implied in some of the literature through a discussion of state adaptation to a changing environment, but I was unable to find much literature that analyzed tactics of counterterrorism in the context of organizational learning.

Scholars have devoted considerable attention to the debate as to whether or not terrorist organizations have the capability and/or desire for innovation and learning. There is certainly evidence on both sides of this debate, as different terrorist groups employ varying degrees of innovation and development depending on their particular strategic and tactical environment. However, as Jackson argues, the debate surrounding terrorist innovation rests primarily on an analysis of the results of

38 Jackson, 4
terrorist actions, rather than the “learning processes they go through to attain them.”\textsuperscript{39} Jackson suggests that application of organizational learning hypotheses to terrorist organizations could potentially resolve the debate, and will certainly provide new insight into the study of terrorist groups.

**Methodology**

*Case Study Method*

I will test my hypotheses regarding counterterrorism effectiveness and constraints on government learning through the use of Bennett and George’s model of comparative case analysis. Bennett and George categorize case study research into six different types, each of which demands a slightly different methodology and contributes to the existing body of research in a different way. My case analysis essentially falls into the “theory-testing” model, which assesses the “validity and scope conditions of single or competing theories.”\textsuperscript{40} However, it is important to note that my analysis is limited by the fact that I have focused on only two time periods within one country. The research presented in this thesis may provide a useful starting point for future research, but is not extensive enough to conclusively prove or disprove the theories discussed.

The two time periods I have selected allow me to conduct a “controlled comparison,” which Bennett and George describe as “the comparison of “most similar” cases, which...are cases that are comparable in all respects except for the

\textsuperscript{39} Jackson, 4

\textsuperscript{40} Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005), 75.
independent variable.”

Both of the time periods I have selected include effective and ineffective counterterrorism policies, and examples constraints on policy selection and organizational learning. However, these variables were present to varying degrees within each time period. By assessing the counterterrorism policies in the context of my effectiveness criteria, I hope to discern the extent to which the government was gaining an understanding of the conflict. This analysis will be strengthened by a discussion of the impact of internal factors, resource constraints and audience costs.

As Bennett and George point out, case studies are generally “much stronger at assessing whether and how a variable mattered to the outcome than at assessing how much it mattered.” Thus, I will not be able to determine with absolute certainty the relative importance of the strategic choice variables. However, I will be able to determine whether or not the governments in my cases were limited in their selection of counterterrorism measures as a result of internal political constraints, finite resources and/or the potential for public disapproval.

Case Study Selection

In the next sections of this article, I will discuss Northern Ireland in 1969-1974, as well as during the period from 1990-2005. Because my analysis includes only two case studies, I recognize that the wider implications of my thesis may be somewhat limited. However, through a rigorous analysis of these two cases, I hope to

\footnote{Bennett and George, 81}

\footnote{Bennett and George, 25}
introduce aspects of successful counterterrorism that may be useful in future study of the topic.

I selected Northern Ireland as a case for a number of reasons. Lindsay Clutterbuck suggests that terrorism in Northern Ireland has made a “seminal contribution to the development of terrorism in the twentieth century.”43 Terrorism in Northern Ireland has developed over an extended period of time, and offers numerous examples of many of the modern terrorism and counterterrorism tactics that are still in use today. The long-term presence and historical significance of terrorism in Northern Ireland makes this case a natural one to select in an analysis of counterterrorism. Additionally, this case has gone through numerous cycles involving the presence of right-wing terrorist organizations and a changing role of the British military. The terrorist groups in Northern Ireland have undergone considerable shifts and restructuring in response to changing government tactics. As a result, this case provides ample information about the presence of organizational learning (or at least organizational innovation).

Because of the lengthy history of terrorism and counterterrorism in Northern Ireland, I selected two distinct time periods around which to focus my analysis. I chose the time period of 1969-1974 because it encompasses the resurgence of the IRA as a terrorist organization, as well as the transformation from a peaceful civil rights movement to a sudden and bloody escalation of violence in Northern Ireland. In addition, this period is representative of British and Stormont counterterrorism

policy as it was conducted until at least the 1980s. During this period, British counterterrorism focused almost exclusively on repressive legislation and military action. This period represents a series of extremely static policies, and a general lack of innovation on the part of the government.

The second time period I chose (1990-2005) encompasses the peace process of the 1990s, as well as the recognition of Sinn Fein as a legitimate political player. The PIRA, as well as three Loyalist groups, agreed to ceasefires during this period. By comparing periods that had completely different results, I hope to determine the deciding factors that led to oppositional approaches to the same conflict.

This case has developed over an extended time period, allowing for numerous examples of both successful and failed counterterrorism measures. The long-term nature of this case will also allow me to examine when and why governments and terrorist organizations attempted to learn, and the environmental factors that render them more or less likely to do so.

During both of the selected time periods, the government was frequently battling more than one terrorist organization at a time. The terrorist organizations themselves were also in direct conflict with each other as well. Both periods feature constant competition between groups espousing opposing ideologies and goals, and a willingness to target the government as well as each other. This characteristic adds an interesting element to the analysis, as an assessment of effectiveness must account for more than just a single state and a single terrorist organization. It also allows for analysis of situations in which states successfully deter or eliminate one organization, but make no headway with another. In other words, application of a tactic used
successfully against one group may not have the same results when used against a different organization. The implication of this is that states (as well as terrorist organizations) must be able to maintain a clear understanding of both organizations, and must maintain separate competitive learning trajectories, especially if the groups in question use drastically different methods.

These separate competitive learning trajectories do not occur in separate vacuums, meaning that terrorist organizations and the populations they claim to represent are certainly aware of government policies towards other groups. This is particularly important if government measures against one organization (or minority population) appear disproportionately harsh when compared to the policies directed at other organizations. This apparent government bias has played a significant role in the cases I will examine. In Northern Ireland, Loyalist paramilitaries were not targeted by the government with the same severity or speed used against Republican organizations. The Catholic minority, on the other hand, frequently complained of being relegated to second-class status, thus permitting the PIRA to exploit pre-existing religious and economic tensions.

The use of cases that share a history and a consistent political context allow me to gain a clearer idea of the actual effect of the effectiveness and constraint variables I have chosen. Nationalist terrorist organizations in Northern Ireland have long described themselves as ruled by a foreign power (Britain), while Loyalist organizations perceive the Republic of Ireland as a foreign entity. The central goals and grievances on both sides of the conflict have remained consistent throughout history, facilitating an examination of time periods with distinct outcomes.
Quantifying the Dependant Variable

In order to assess the validity of my effectiveness analysis, I will include a discussion of the patterns of terrorist activity in the year following each selected counterterrorism measure. This will allow me to strengthen my analytical argument when discussing any correlations between counterterrorism effectiveness and the constraint variables discussed below. In order to further support my argument, I will also include data reflecting the number of fatalities from terrorist attacks over the same time period. This will enable me to account for particularly large or deadly attacks, without ranking them in the same way as low-scale attacks with few or no fatalities. This will also permit me to discuss why terrorist organizations might choose to respond to certain counterterrorism measures with a single, large-scale attack, or with a series of smaller, less deadly attacks.

The use of terrorist attack data to assess the effectiveness of counterterrorism measures has been accepted by a number of scholars. In fact, this is one of the most commonly used tools to discuss the consequences and results of counterterrorism policies. Frisch focuses on Israeli fatalities from Palestinian terror attacks in order to assess the relative importance of capabilities and motivations. Although I disagree with his time period selection, the use of fatalities from terrorist attacks as a measure of counterterrorism effectiveness is extremely logical. Testas and several other scholars utilize the frequency and number of terrorist attacks in a similar way. Fatalities and attack data represent the main quantitative measures of counterterrorism effectiveness. By combining these quantitative measures with the analytical criteria
discussed above, I hope to provide a well-rounded assessment of counterterrorism effectiveness in Northern Ireland.

*Independent Variables*

As I have already addressed the model from which I have drawn the following variables, I will not discuss it in detail here. Instead, I will briefly explain the ways in which I intend to determine whether the variables below were present during each of the time periods examined in this thesis.

*Internal Constraints*

For the purposes of this analysis, internal constraints will be defined in two ways. First, I will assess the presence of internal constraints through an analysis of any pre-existing organizational norms or perceptual frameworks. The existence of such frameworks may constrain or enable the government’s ability to effectively adapt to new information and to pursue the best course of action. In order to determine whether or not such a framework existed, I will examine records of government meetings and debates; these records should provide an accurate representation of the ways in which the government was thinking about the conflict during each time period. Additionally, I will examine public statements and actual policy output in order to discover whether the government appeared to make any changes to the pre-established understanding of the conflict.

*Resource Constraints*

In order to assess the resource constraints facing the government during each time period, I will conduct an analysis of the economic situation within Britain, and
examine the ways in which these issues affected the political discourse. I will
analyze GDP data, public polls and news sources to determine what resource
constraints the government was dealing with at the time that counterterrorism
measures were implemented. I will examine the extent to which the government
prioritized the economic situation at the expense of other policies, and discuss any
political consequences that may have resulted from the situation.

Audience costs

As my analysis is focused entirely on a democratic regime, the role of
audience costs is extremely important. In my discussion of audience costs, I will
address both the public audience and the political audience. I will examine public
polling data relating to the conflict in Northern Ireland and to the general perceptions
of the government in power. In addition to this analysis of public attitudes, I will
discuss any notable political factors that may have increased or decreased the
government’s ability to pursue effective policies in Northern Ireland. These factors
include controversial policy debates, the presence of a strong opposition, and other
sources of government division and conflict.
Chapter One

Introduction

The period from 1969 to 1974 is regarded as a critical moment in the development of the Troubles. This chapter will examine some of the most significant counterterrorism measures of this time period within the context of the analytical framework developed in the introduction. Section 1 of this chapter will provide a brief discussion of the historical context out of which the Troubles emerged, followed by a review of counterterrorism before the Troubles in Section 2. In Section 3, I will discuss the development of the Northern Irish civil rights movement, and the outbreak of violence that led to the introduction of British troops in 1969. Section 4 will briefly address the development and role of the major terrorist organizations that were active during this period. In Section 5, I will apply the hypotheses developed in the Introduction to a selection of counterterrorism measures utilized by the Stormont and British governments. The validity of these hypotheses will be tested in Section 6 through an examination of patterns of terrorist activity during this time period. Finally, Section 7 will address the internal and external constraints that may have impeded or enabled counterterrorism policy selection.

A note on terminology

In the scholarly work on this topic, the word “unionist” is generally used in reference to individuals and organizations that support the continued existence of Northern Ireland as a part of the United Kingdom. However, the term unionist is not generally associated with violent campaigns or terrorist activity. Unionist organizations and individuals that hold more extreme positions on the necessity of
Northern Ireland’s presence within the United Kingdom are generally described as Loyalist. Although unionists and Loyalists have united to take action against independence and reunification on several occasions, it is important to note the ideological and strategic variances between these two groups.

Similarly, non-violent proponents of self-determination, Northern Irish independence, and reunification with the Republic of Ireland are defined as nationalists. Organizations such as the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) and other groups with similarly hard-line goals and strategies are considered part of the Republican movement. While not every member of the Republican and Loyalist movements supports the terrorist activity of the paramilitary organizations, membership in these movements suggests a firmer ideological stance on the constitutional status of Northern Ireland, and less willingness to compromise on that position.

1. Historical Background

Due to the longevity and policy variation of the conflict in Northern Ireland, there is an extensive body of literature focusing on numerous aspects of this struggle and its history. This section will set the stage for my discussion of counterterrorism during the Troubles rather than providing an all-encompassing historical study of the conflict. As a result, there will certainly be events and policies that I do not address. This section will, however, provide a general background on the development of terrorism in Northern Ireland, as well as a brief assessment of the fundamental roots of the conflict.
Parker points out that “Britain has been Ireland’s principal national security threat since the Twelfth Century Norman incursions of Robert Fitzstephen and Richard, Earl of Pembroke.”

These early conflicts were closely followed by Henry VIII’s 1542 declaration that “the King of England, His Heirs, and Successors be Kings of Ireland…for ever…united and knit to the imperial crown and realm of England.” These historical events demonstrate England’s long-lasting determination to bring Ireland under the control of the British crown. However, as Mulholland points out, this was far easier said than done.

Ironically, the foundations of modern Irish Republicanism were not born within the context of a wholly Catholic movement. The 1798 rebellion of the United Irishmen featured an astonishing degree of unity between Catholic and Protestant organizations. This level of cooperation has rarely been seen since that period, largely due to the sectarian tensions that developed as a result of the partitioning of the country. I will devote more attention to the development of the IRA in the following section, but it is worth noting here that the Provisional IRA traces its origins to the Catholic Defenders who participated in the 1798 rebellion.

Although Britain’s intentions towards Ireland were made clear very early on, it was only in 1801 that Ireland and Britain officially became a single, united kingdom. The 1801 Act of Union dissolved the Irish parliament, which became

instead a small part of the United Kingdom Parliament. As the nineteenth century progressed, “the tenuous alliance between Catholics and Protestants in the United Irishmen” collapsed, leading to a number of violent clashes between the Catholic Ribbonmen and the largely Protestant Orangemen.\textsuperscript{47} These clashes frequently occurred as the result of sectarian marches that transformed into riots when the opposing group arrived. Mulholland describes the way in which these clashes spread through Northern Ireland, particularly in Derry and Belfast. These two districts would later become the central battlegrounds of the Troubles. This pattern of marching and violence in the nineteenth century would be resurrected with the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s-1970s, and in the clashes between the PIRA and Loyalist organizations.

During this period, there were several failed attempts at uprisings, most notably the Fenian rebellion of 1867. The Fenian Brotherhood, an American precursor to the IRA, developed after a significant number of Irishmen fled to the United States to escape government retaliation for revolutionary actions. The American Civil War provided an ideal opportunity for many of these individuals to gain military experience and knowledge, as well as the necessary resources to form a well-structured organization with the goal of combating British control of Northern Ireland. The modern wings of the Irish Republican Army (particularly the PIRA) trace their roots and ideology directly to this Fenian Brotherhood. Shortly after its

\textsuperscript{47} Mulholland, 10
inception, the Fenian Brotherhood developed roots in Ireland under the nomenclature of the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB).  

Although the Fenian Brotherhood and the IRB were closely linked, these two organizations experienced a dramatic split early in the life of the IRB. Clutterbuck suggests that the divisions between the organizations were exacerbated by a Fenian plan to rescue Richard Burke (an important member of the group) from prison. The attempt was unsuccessful, and the explosives used by the Fenians damaged nearby houses, resulting in the deaths of at least six people.  

The IRB condemned this use of explosives, and announced that they would no longer cooperate with the Fenian Brotherhood. Around this time, another group was emerging in the United States, a group that had begun to question the IRB’s emphasis on the idea of a traditional armed uprising in Ireland. Clan na Gael (United Irishmen) approved of the idea of using force, but remained unconvinced that conventional military force was the way to achieve Irish independence. This attitude towards the utility of conventional force would be adopted by the IRB after the failed Easter Uprising of 1916.

During this period, the IRB continued to develop an identity apart from that of the Fenian Brotherhood. The leaders of the IRB created a carefully organized underground government, and established the Irish Volunteers as the military wing of this government. Townshend argues that the formation of the Irish Volunteers allowed for mass participation in the IRB, and suggests that this military wing was

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48 Lindsay Clutterbuck, “The Progenitors of Terrorism: Russian Revolutionaries or Extreme Irish Republicans?” Terrorism and Political Violence 16 (2004): 159
49 Clutterbuck, 160
created in response to the formation of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF). In 1916, the IRB staged the now-famous Easter Uprising in Dublin. This failed revolution was met with a swift and harsh response by the British authorities. A number of IRB leaders were arrested, and many of them were executed shortly after the rebellion. Whether in spite of or because of the harsh British response, the Easter rebellion garnered tremendous support and sympathy for the nationalist cause. The executed leaders were portrayed as valiant martyrs, and their deaths inspired mass enlistment in the Irish Volunteers. Bowden describes the Easter Uprising and its aftermath as “superb propaganda for the Republican cause…What remained of the administration’s legitimacy perished with this act.”

The failure of this rebellion also provided the impetus for radical reorganization and innovation within the Irish Republican Army. This restructuring and ability to innovate certainly played a significant role in allowing the IRA to withstand (in various forms) government counterterrorism measures over the next sixty years.

The Easter Uprising demonstrated to Republican leaders that the IRB could not survive unless the general mentality and structure of the group was transformed. The mass arrests of IRB leaders nearly caused the demise of the highly centralized organization, and the failure of the rising made it abundantly clear that the IRB did not have the military resources to defeat the government forces. The IRB needed to

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52 Bowden, 11.
prepare for a protracted conflict, rather than for a single great battle. The Easter Uprising had been planned and executed within a framework of traditional military interactions, and the IRB had attempted to behave like a conventional army. Michael Collins and the other surviving IRB leaders recognized that this strategy was somewhat irrational in the circumstances, especially given the fact that the British military possessed an unequivocal conventional advantage. In order to negate this massive gap in capabilities, the IRB needed to transform the nature of the conflict.

In pursuit of this goal, the IRB abandoned the idea of a traditional mass rebellion, and pursued a campaign of unconventional guerilla warfare. As the intelligence director for the organization, Collins established a tremendously effective intelligence network, and refocused IRB military efforts into a program of selective assassination. By 1919, the Irish Volunteers had become the Irish Republican Army (IRA), and the group had begun to “fuse the national revolution with the tradition of local violence.” As the conflict progressed and changed, the IRA began to employ new technologies and tactics to great effect. Throughout the Troubles, remotely detonated bombs became something of an organizational specialty, and assassinations remained central to the group’s strategy as well.

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were marked by the development of a debate surrounding the question of home rule, and the development of organizations devoted to the implementation of both positions. While the Republican cause was largely represented by the Irish Republican Brotherhood (later

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53 Bowden, 16,19
54 Townshend, 323
the Irish Republican Army), the unionist position found a voice in the Ulster Unionist Council (UUC). The unionist Orange Order was founded much earlier (1790s), but this group was fairly ineffective for much of the nineteenth century. Boyce argues that unionist politics were extremely complex during this period, and that the adherents to this ideology did not immediately form a cohesive, unified group. The UUC was founded in 1905 with the goal of unifying the many local unionist groups devoted to the prevention of home rule in Ireland. However, Boyce argues that this ideological and functional unity did not truly exist until 1914, nine years after the formation of the UUC and two years after the formation of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF). Boyce points out that the original goal of organizations like this was to “defeat Home Rule for all Ireland,” not just for the North. However, as Boyce discusses, the focus of the UUC slowly shifted to the North during the first quarter of the twentieth century. Although the UVF disappeared for a number of years, this organization reemerged with a vengeance during the latter part of the Troubles, and remained active throughout much of the 1990s peace process.

Conflict (both verbal and violent) over the question of Home Rule continued through 1920, when the Government of Ireland Act bestowed self-government on Dublin. The Irish Free State was established in 1922, comprising twenty-six counties with a Catholic majority. However, the Government of Ireland Act, as well as the

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55 Mulholland, 21
56 Townshend, 317
58 Boyce, 12
Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921, also partitioned Ireland, leaving six northern counties under British control. Although Northern Ireland remained a part of the United Kingdom, the treaty established a devolved Northern Irish Parliament at Stormont. Michael Collins, the erst-while guerilla leader, advocated strongly for this treaty, and was assassinated by members of the IRA shortly after it was signed. The IRA experienced severe fragmentation as a result of the treaty, contributing to the escalation of the Irish Civil War in 1922-1923. In the years following the civil war, terrorist actions against the Dublin government declined significantly, as both unionist and nationalist organizations turned their attention to Northern Ireland and even to Great Britain. Although conflict continued in Northern Ireland after the conclusion of the Civil War, “there was relatively little involvement by the British government…in the affairs of the Northern Irish government” until the beginning of the Troubles during the 1960s.

2. Counterterrorism before the Troubles

My analysis will focus primarily on the later periods of this conflict (1969-1974 and 1990-2005), but it seems appropriate to include a brief discussion of government measures during the build-up to the Troubles. As I will discuss below, a number of the counterterrorism measures adopted during the Troubles were direct descendents of earlier strategies. Until the 1980s and 1990s, the British and Stormont

60 Boyce, 21
governments pursued a fairly consistent program of repressive legislation, frequently emphasizing emergency military powers, internment, and the imposition of curfews on the Catholic population. These measures had only short-term success in limiting the violence in Northern Ireland, and the continued usage of such policies during the Troubles suggests a distinct lack of learning on the part of the British and Northern Irish governments.

In the years surrounding the Government of Ireland Act and the Anglo-Irish Treaty, the British and Northern Irish governments adopted two measures that provide significant insight into government attitudes towards the conflict during the Troubles. In response to the escalation of IRA violence, the British government enacted the Restoration of Order in Ireland Act (ROIA) in 1920. This Act was designed to eliminate some of the difficulties presented by liberal institutions in combating terrorism. In addition to reaffirming the powers outlined in the Defense of the Realm Act, the ROIA “gave power to try cases of murder by Courts-Martial and enabled competent Military Authorities to hold Military Courts instead of Inquests.”

This Act was originally intended to hand over even more power to the military authorities, but “aversion to martial law pushed the government into what was surely a worse alternative, covert counterterrorism.” This Act represented a departure from the liberal principles of the British, and did little to destroy the motivations of the IRA or to address the larger problems underlying the conflict. As Townshend points out, this Act was a purely repressive tactic, and did nothing to gain the support

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63 Townshend, 347
of the Irish population or undermine the legitimacy of the IRA. The ROIA was devoid of initiatives to ease the economic difficulties of the Irish population, and was, at best, a short-term political solution.

The Special Powers Act (SPA) of 1922, established by the new Northern Irish government, transferred some of the military’s power to the government, and replaced the courts martial with a civilian tribunal. However, the SPA retained a number of the provisions established by the ROIA, giving the government and the police force essentially unlimited power to take action against the population. The legislation was originally justified as the only means to restore order to Northern Ireland, and remained a central aspect of governance in the region until 1972. Throughout this period, numerous amendments were added to the original SPA, further limiting the rights and legal recourse of the minority Catholic population.

While these provisions may have served as a short-term deterrent of republican violence, the legislation only increased the motivations and passion of the IRA and supporters of the organization. Additionally, the widespread use of these policies against the entire Catholic population of Northern Ireland further undermined any remaining scraps of government legitimacy. Donohue argues that the SPA soon became a device through which to “prevent the public expression of republican ideals,” rather than as a means of maintaining order and peace. She points out that between 1922 and 1972, the provisions of the Act were used frequently against

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64 Townshend, 347
66 Donohue, 1093
republican and nationalist organizations, but were rarely employed to curb the actions of loyalist groups.

Although the 1922 SPA did have a negative effect on levels of IRA violence, this effect was by no means permanent. The number of attacks declined in the immediate aftermath of the implementation of the SPA, but this legislation and its uses became one of the central grievances of the 1960s civil rights movement. Additionally, the rise of the Provisional IRA during the 1960s is attributable in part to the ways in which the SPAs were employed by the government. The laxity with which loyalist violence was addressed, especially when compared with the harsh measures enacted against republican violence, created a set of circumstances in which the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) was perceived as thoroughly prejudiced. As a result, members of the Catholic minority turned (often reluctantly) to the protection and assistance offered by members of the PIRA.

Like many of the other counterterrorism initiatives discussed here, the 1922 Special Powers Act (SPA) and the 1939 Prevention of Violence Act (PVA) were the direct ancestors of the 1973 Emergency Provisions Act (EPA) and the 1974 Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA).67 The SPA and the PVA included provisions allowing for increased military powers, internment without warning or warrant, and the imposition of widespread curfews. Additionally, these Acts were amended numerous times, permitting unwarranted search and seizure, censorship, and bans on

organizations, parades, meetings, and other gatherings.\textsuperscript{68} The 1939 Prevention of Violence Act was implemented as a direct response to an extensive IRA bombing campaign and declaration of war against Britain. Much like the other legislation mentioned above, the Prevention of Violence Act was justified through the argument that it was a temporary measure designed to restore order to the region. However, like its predecessor, the PVA was not rescinded until 1973, when both of these Acts were simply replaced by the EPA and the PTA.

The other main period of significance leading up to the Troubles was World War II. Northern Ireland faced tremendous economic difficulties, particularly with regard to industry and housing. These difficulties were only exacerbated by the constant specter of conscription. Although the government repeatedly rejected conscription measures, the issue was taken under consideration multiple times, particularly during the Brooke administration.\textsuperscript{69} The hardships and controversies of the war did nothing to ease the pre-existing tensions between the unionist and nationalist movements. Barton argues that unionists perceived the Catholic minority as “instinctively pro-German and anti-British; ever willing to aid and abet the enemy; a community whose grievances were not as great as they protested.”\textsuperscript{70}

Although Stormont and Westminster did make some efforts to address the concerns of the Catholic minority, the vast majority of government policies appeared to benefit the Protestant majority. Additionally, the economic and social instability of

\textsuperscript{68} Richardson, 84
\textsuperscript{70} Barton, 59
the period made it more difficult for the government to expend significant resources on the concerns of a minority population. Barton’s analysis of this period highlights the tremendous political and public pressure experienced by both the Stormont and Westminster governments. During this period, leaders of the Stormont parliament were generally interested in maintaining a solid support base among members of their unionist base than in going out on a political limb to gain the support of the minority. As I discussed in the Introduction, audience costs represent a critical constraint on government counterterrorism policy, particularly in democratic nations. The difficult social and political context during this period created a situation in which it was far easier to lose the support of the majority than to acquire it. This variable will be addressed in greater detail at the end of the chapter as it relates to the period between 1969 and 1974.

3. From Marching to Violence:

By the mid 1960s, Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland had become increasingly polarized. Interviews conducted with residents of the northern counties suggest that numerous Catholics felt marginalized and discriminated against, particularly when it came to obtaining housing or employment.\(^{71}\) In response to these concerns, several groups, including Republican elements and members of Communist organizations, officially launched the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) in January 1967. Although the Civil Rights movement was inspired by

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both the American and British civil rights organizations, members of the NICRA were never able to formulate a single coherent ideology. Each group involved saw the goals of the Association in a slightly different light, and hoped to use the standard of civil rights to their advantage.\textsuperscript{72} Because such a wide variety of groups had come together to form the NICRA, it was extremely difficult to develop one goal or philosophy that was perfectly representative.\textsuperscript{73}

The Irish civil rights movement was best characterized by the numerous marches that took place in 1968 and 1969. These marches were frequently met with overt hostility by Loyalist organizations, particularly after the Northern Irish government at Stormont began to pass reforms that addressed some of the concerns of the civil rights activists. Loyalist organizations frequently organized “meetings” along NICRA routes, and these encounters often descended into violence.\textsuperscript{74} Tensions between the NICRA and the RUC also worsened significantly after the Stormont government banned demonstrations; the NICRA continued to execute a program of civil disobedience through marching, and refused to be deterred by the police force.\textsuperscript{75} The confluence of these factors resulted in several violent clashes in 1968 and 1969, most notably during the NICRA Derry march on October 5, 1968. Like the marches discussed above, the Derry march involved a confrontation with a Loyalist group, and dissolved into chaos when the RUC blockaded the route and beat many of the marchers. The police action was captured on film, and the Stormont government was

\textsuperscript{72} Bob Purdie, \textit{Politics in the Streets: The origins of the civil rights movement in Northern Ireland} (Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 1990), 129.
\textsuperscript{73} Munck, 217-218
\textsuperscript{74} Purdie, 135
\textsuperscript{75} Purdie, 134
forced to admit that the RUC had acted with excessive force. The violence in the province continued to increase, culminating in the Battle of the Bogside in August of 1969. The “Battle” began on August 12, during the annual Apprentice Boys Parade in the Bogside, and quickly escalated after confrontations between the Protestant marchers and Catholic crowds. The rioting and violence in Derry continued over the next three days as the RUC hopelessly attempted to gain control of the situation. When it became clear that the RUC and the Northern Irish government could not bring about a cessation of hostilities, British security forces were sent in to establish order.

4. Terrorist Organizations

The longevity of the conflict in Northern Ireland has permitted the rise of numerous militant organizations within both the nationalist movement and the unionist movement. These violent organizations are usually referred to as Republican and Loyalist, respectively, in order to differentiate them from the overarching ideologies of nationalism and unionism.

On the Republican side of the conflict, the Irish Republican Army (in its numerous manifestations) remains the oldest and most consistently active terrorist

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organization during the battle over independence. The early historical development of the IRA has been discussed above, so this section will focus on the more recent developments within the organization.

The period leading up to the Troubles featured increasing fragmentation within the IRA, culminating in a bitter debate over the issue of abstentionism and the utility of violence. Until this point, Sinn Fein (the political wing of the IRA) had refused to participate in the Irish, Northern Irish, and British parliaments. Cathal Goulding, the IRA chief-of-staff during this period, argued strongly in favor of abandoning this policy of abstentionism, and suggested that the IRA begin to explore political, rather than violent means of expressing their grievances. Goulding carefully garnered support among delegates to the IRA convention of 1969, but a significant minority vehemently opposed this policy shift. These dissenters simply walked out of the convention, and immediately began the process of establishing the Provisional IRA. Although it began as a minority group, the PIRA grew exponentially and became the primary representative of the Republican cause. Goulding’s faction became the Official IRA, but support for this organization quickly dwindled as the PIRA gained power and recognition. The OIRA remained somewhat active during the early years of the Troubles, but most of the republican attacks during this period were carried out by the PIRA. The OIRA declared a ceasefire in 1972, and was fairly irrelevant as a terrorist organization after 1974.

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79 Moloney, 71
80 Moloney, 71-73
Although my study of republican terrorism will focus primarily on the various manifestations of the IRA, it is important to note that there certainly were other militant republican organizations during this period. These included the smaller and less active Irish National Liberation Army (INLA), founded in 1974, and comprised primarily of OIRA members dissatisfied with the ceasefire.

A similar variety of militant Loyalist organizations developed at different stages of the protracted hostilities in Northern Ireland. As discussed above, unionist and Loyalist organizations frequently trace their ideological and operational roots to the Orange Order of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. However, it was not until the establishment of the Ulster Unionist Council (UUC) and the Ulster Volunteer Force that a unity of purpose and ideology began to emerge. Much like the IRA, loyalist organizations were somewhat inactive between the Irish Civil War and the outbreak of the Troubles in 1969.

The Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and the Ulster Defense Association (UDA) were by far the most active loyalist organizations during the time periods I have selected. Like the PIRA, these organizations have now accepted ceasefire agreements, but both organizations were key players in shaping the dynamics of the conflict up until that point. The UDA was created in 1971, and, since its creation, has been responsible for more civilian deaths than the PIRA. Although this organization declined significantly in the 1980s due to internal corruption and fragmentation, it reemerged as a formidable opponent to the peace process in the

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1990s. The UDA is also frequently referred to as the Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF); technically, the UFF is the armed wing of the organization.

The first Ulster Volunteer Force was created by the UUC in 1912, and the group served as one of the main adversaries of the IRA during the years leading up to the Anglo-Irish Treaty. The UVF also managed to gain a fairly high degree of support from members of the British government during this stage of the conflict. However, the organization essentially disappeared after the civil war until a new organization by the same name was created in 1966. The 1966 UVF claimed to be a direct descendent of the original UVF, and promptly declared war on the IRA.\(^2\)

There is some disagreement among scholars as to whether or not these two generations of the UVF actually had any organizational ties. The UVF has far less member strength than either the UDA or the PIRA, but has carried out a number of significant attacks. The group focuses on selective assassinations, but has also utilized tactics of indiscriminate killing on occasion.

My primary focus is on attacks carried out by these groups in Northern Ireland. However, the PIRA was fairly active in the rest of the United Kingdom as well, particularly during the 1990s. Where relevant, I will briefly discuss terrorist actions in the United Kingdom.

5. Effectiveness of Counterterrorism during the Troubles

\(^2\) Silke (1998), 333
I have selected four counterterrorism actions to focus on in the period between 1969 and 1974. These are the Falls Curfew (1970), Internment (1971), Bloody Sunday (1972), and Operation Motorman (1972). Within the context of these measures, I will discuss the effect of the introduction of British troops in 1969, and provide a brief discussion of the implementation of direct rule in 1972.

In this section, I will briefly outline the salient details of each counterterrorism measure, and I will apply the criteria established in the Introduction to each of the policies. If my hypotheses are correct, “effective” counterterrorism strategies will include the following characteristics:

1. The measure will attack the motivations of a terrorist organization; targeting capabilities is insufficient.

2. The measure will include an attempt to isolate extremists from moderates by offering incentives for cooperation, and by assisting moderates to gain legitimacy within the “represented” population.

3. The measure will include (or be accompanied by) an effort to address the underlying grievances of the population the terrorist organization claims to represent.

If my hypotheses are correct, counterterrorism measures that meet these criteria are more likely to be followed by a decline in terrorist activity over the year following implementation. However, all of the counterterrorism measures I will address in this section occurred over a fairly short period of time. This makes it somewhat difficult to determine the exact correlation between specific acts of counterterrorism and the subsequent shifts in terrorist activity. I believe that I have
sufficiently accounted for this issue by dividing my study of Northern Ireland into two periods with dramatically different counterterrorism approaches. The period of 1969-1974 was primarily marked by a continuation of earlier government policies. The British government had already utilized curfews and policies of internment, particularly during the years immediately following the Irish Civil War of 1922. The policies implemented during this period were fairly consistent with each other, and with earlier measures. The establishment of direct rule represents the sole exception, as this marked the British government’s first real attempt to defeat the PIRA through political maneuvering, rather than repression. However, establishment of direct rule and the subsequent secret negotiations were quickly followed by Operation Motorman and the Prevention of Terrorism Act, both of which represented a return to more repressive, short term strategies.

The slight overlap between the effects of individual counterterrorism measures should not significantly hinder my analysis, as this type of overlap reflects the reality and complexity of the situation. Counterterrorism does not occur in a vacuum; interactions between governments and terrorist organizations are extremely dynamic and fluid. Particularly in a protracted struggle, terrorist actions and government counterterrorism are informed and influenced by earlier interactions and pre-existing patterns of conflict.

The Falls Curfew (1970)

83 Donohue, 1091
The Falls Curfew was implemented between July 3 and July 5, 1970, after an outbreak of violence in East Belfast. This counterterrorism policy represented yet another manifestation of the measures outlined in the SPA of 1922, and demonstrated consistency with pre-existing government attitudes towards the conflict.

My description of the events surrounding and comprising the Falls Curfew is taken primarily from Robert White and Terry Falkenberg White (1995). These events had a significant impact on the dynamics of the Troubles, not least because the British army killed Catholic civilians for the first time since the arrival of the troops in 1969. Although some of the details are unclear, it seems that a mob, comprised primarily of Protestants, attacked a Catholic enclave on June 27, 1970. Since 1969, British “peacekeeping” troops had been present in Northern Ireland, and the Catholic community appealed to them for assistance and protection. However, the British army was either unwilling or unable to intervene, causing the PIRA to take action. In the ensuing altercations, several individuals were killed, leading to a military intervention approximately one week later. On July 3, 1970, the British military raided a number of Catholic homes in the Lower Falls neighborhood of West Belfast. These actions were met with outrage and rioting by the Catholic community, not to mention a shootout with the PIRA. These clashes resulted in the deaths of four civilians, prompting an even greater expression of rage by the community. In order to quell the violence, the British military placed the entire Lower Falls neighborhood under a thirty-six hour curfew, refusing to allow anyone to leave their homes during

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84 White, 346
85 White, 346
that period of time.\textsuperscript{86} The Falls Curfew and the events preceding it were perceived by many members of the Catholic community as confirmation of the collusion between the British military and Protestant paramilitary groups.\textsuperscript{87} Although the implementation of this curfew was later declared illegal, it had a profound impact on the dynamics between Catholics and the British military during this period.

\textit{Did the Falls Curfew attack terrorist motivations?}

The answer to this question is no. The curfew was an attack on PIRA capabilities, especially given that one of the primary goals of the military was to raid suspected IRA homes in search of weapons. Additionally, the thirty-six hour lockdown certainly made it far more difficult for the PIRA to execute a retaliatory strike. However, the violence of June 26-July 3, and the subsequent curfew served as an incredibly useful justification for further PIRA violence.

The IRA had been in some disarray throughout the 1960s, and had lost a tremendous amount of support from the Catholic community. In fact, graffiti proclaiming “IRA: I Ran Away” was a common sight in Belfast and Derry during this period. This loss of faith in the IRA was combined with a sense of optimism and hope inspired by the arrival of the British troops after the violence of August 1969. The Catholic community was eager for a defender in the absence of the IRA, and the security forces represented an escape from the domination of the loathed Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC). Although there was some doubt as to whether these good

\textsuperscript{86} White, 346
\textsuperscript{87} White, 347
relations would last, much of the Catholic community expressed great enthusiasm at the prospect of no longer depending on a terrorist organization for protection.  

The collapse of this honeymoon cannot be entirely attributed to the Falls Curfew and the events surrounding it. However, there is little doubt that the lax British response to the violence in the Short Strand destroyed any lingering hope that the Catholic community could trust its safety with the troops. With the disinterest and/or incompetence of the British troops clearly established, the PIRA had every reason to develop a role as an unofficial police force. A member of the PIRA, when interviewed about the events, acknowledged that the outbreak of violence and the inaction of the troops had directly impacted the continued survival of the organization.

“It was very significant. On our way over to the [Short] Strand that night there was a lot of Brits and peelers [police] just sitting outside the area. Did they allow that battle to develop to sicken the Protestants and Catholics? A lot of people joined the Republican Movement after St. Matthews. It finished the business of IRA equals ‘I Ran Away.’ If trouble had not broken out the IRA was dead.”

The support garnered by the PIRA after the violence in the Short Strand was only increased after members of the military raided homes in the Lower Falls, and, in the ensuing riot, killed four civilians. The deaths of the civilians, and the repressive actions of the military “made the [PIRA’s] violent strategy seem unavoidable, appealing, and even necessary to many West Belfast Catholics.” After a distinct lull in Republican terrorist activity, the Falls Curfew provided the PIRA with the perfect

88 Munck, 226
89 Interview with former Belfast IRA member Dr. Anthony McIntyre, cited by Moloney, 90
90 Moloney, 91
opportunity to discredit the British military with the rest of the Catholic community. Thus, the strategic choices of the military before and during the Falls Curfew actually increased the motivations of the PIRA to take violent action, as well as providing the terrorist organization with a socially acceptable justification.

*Did the Falls Curfew include wedge strategies or an attempt to appeal to moderates?*

This counterterrorism effort was a clear example of an exclusively military strategy, lacking any sort of positive incentives for moderates. The curfew was imposed upon an entire neighborhood, and the military was held responsible for the deaths of four civilians. Although two PIRA members were killed during the altercation with the Protestant paramilitaries, the fatalities caused by the British military were all clearly non-combatants.

Even if moderate nationalists could have been persuaded to cooperate with the military, the implementation of the Falls Curfew negated the legitimacy of moderate or peaceful strategies. Within the space of a week, the Catholic neighborhoods in Belfast experienced violent interactions with both Protestant paramilitaries and the British army. Numerous homes and businesses were destroyed, and the inhabitants of the Falls Road area were prevented from acquiring food or other necessities during the thirty-six hour lockdown. This experience did little to legitimize the arguments of moderates who suggested cooperation with the British military. In addition, this counterterrorism operation offered little to no possibility for such cooperation; the policies pursued during this July weekend were directed at subduing and punishing an
entire neighborhood,\textsuperscript{91} and ignored the possibility that not every individual in the Lower Falls was a member of the PIRA.

\textit{Did the Falls Curfew address the underlying causes of the conflict, or the grievances of the “represented population?”}

Like the curfews of 1922-1924, the Falls Curfew was justified on the grounds that it was absolutely essential to the goal of re-establishing a “state of order” in the area.\textsuperscript{92} This measure was, by definition, a temporary policy designed to gain control of a neighborhood, and to punish the PIRA and supporters of the Republican movement. Short-term counterterrorism policies may be necessary during periods of violent escalation, but they must be accompanied or quickly followed by a concerted effort to address the roots of the violence. The continued implementation of short-term counterterrorism policies contributes to the cyclical nature of terrorist conflict. In addition, the Falls Curfew sparked an increase in popular violence, not just in terrorist activity.

Until the military began to conduct raids in the Lower Falls, the general population had been an unwilling participant in these altercations. However, the apparent bias of the security forces prompted an outbreak of rioting in the neighborhood, leading to an even stronger repressive response. In order to quell the violence in the Lower Falls, the security forces quickly deployed three thousand

\textsuperscript{91} White, 346
\textsuperscript{92} Donohue, 1093
troops, imposed the curfew, and continued to conduct raids and arrests.\textsuperscript{93} None of
these actions demonstrated any interest in determining why the troops were being met
with such a dramatic expression of fury.

Rather than suppressing both Republican and Loyalist paramilitaries in the
aftermath of the Short Strand violence, the British military “followed the lead of the
Loyalist paramilitaries and attacked the Northern Irish Catholic community.”\textsuperscript{94} The
actions of the British military before and during the Falls Curfew did nothing to
alleviate the growing concern of Catholics that they were being relegated to a second-
class status. Although the curfew was lifted on July 5, there was no attempt to
address the concerns or grievances of the Catholic community in the weeks and
months following these events. Rather, the policies of this period convinced even
moderate Catholics and republicans that there was some sort of “collusion between
the security forces and Loyalist paramilitaries.”\textsuperscript{95} Even leaving aside the curfew
itself, the refusal of the British military to intercede on behalf of Catholics in the
Short Strand conveyed a clear message to the Catholic population; their safety was
simply not as important as other issues in the province. It is unclear whether the
military’s excuse of being stretched too thin was truthful, but perceptions mattered far
more than reality in this case.

\textit{Internment (1971)}

\textsuperscript{93} Moloney, 90-91
\textsuperscript{94} White, 347
\textsuperscript{95} White, 347-348
Like the Falls Curfew, the internment program of 1971 was adopted and justified based on the precedent of earlier policies. Between May 1922 and December 1924, shortly after the passage of the SPA, over seven hundred individuals were imprisoned on the grounds of suspected republican activities or sympathies.\textsuperscript{96} In spite of the concerns of the military regarding the sufficiency of available intelligence and resources, the Stormont and British governments decided to revive the policy in response to the steady increase in both Republican and Loyalist violence.\textsuperscript{97} The PIRA, now fully organized and functional, had spent the first half of 1971 implementing a powerful offensive campaign against the British security forces and civilian targets. The number of PIRA attacks had increased significantly, providing the Ulster Defense Association (UDA) with the perfect opportunity to escalate their own attacks.\textsuperscript{98}

Internment without trial was implemented on August 9, 1971. The policy was originally directed solely at supporters of the nationalist movement, and there were numerous allegations of prisoner abuse and harsh interrogation techniques.\textsuperscript{99} Internment policies remained in place for approximately four years, during which time 2,060 suspected republicans were interned, as well as 109 suspected loyalists.\textsuperscript{100}

\textsuperscript{96} Donohue, 1092
\textsuperscript{98} O’Duffy, 107
\textsuperscript{100} Steve Wright and Dave Webb, “Multivariate Time Series Approaches to Analysing The Northern Irish Conflict: Lessons for Future Sub-State Conflict
These numbers provide compelling evidence that internment was primarily aimed at destroying the support base of the Republican movement. This argument is further strengthened by the fact that internment of suspected Republicans occurred for two full years before the first suspected Loyalist was imprisoned. Some of this was due to the fact that Republican attacks greatly exceeded Loyalist terrorist activity during this period, but the data do demonstrate that the UVF and the UDA were by no means passive bystanders in the conflict during this period.

Shortly after the implementation of internment, the British government conducted an investigation into the abuse and torture allegations discussed above. The conclusions of this report indicated that the security forces had “discharged their onerous duties with the utmost restraint” despite numerous provocations. As I will discuss in the following sections, the events of internment and the reaction of the British government infuriated Republicans and nationalists on every part of the spectrum, and led to a dramatic increase in terrorist violence.

**Did Internment attack terrorist motivations as well as capabilities?**

As in the case of the Falls Curfew, the answer to this question is definitively, no. When announcing his intention to use this policy, Brian Faulkner (the Northern...
Irish prime minister) clearly stated that a reduction in violence was the primary impetus behind the internment program.\textsuperscript{103} However, this measure clearly failed to limit even the capabilities of either Republican or Loyalist organizations. Terrorist attacks increased dramatically following the start of internment, and remained high as the arrests continued. This was largely due to the abysmal state of British intelligence during this period, and the well-organized intelligence systems of the targeted terrorist organizations (particularly the PIRA). The lists from which the security forces were operating were both out of date and incorrectly focused. Of the thousands who were rounded up during the successive internment “swoops,” the vast majority were political activists with no connection to terrorist organizations, or individuals who had been interned years before and were no longer active.\textsuperscript{104} The security forces did manage to arrest some members of the OIRA, but this group represented far less of a threat than the PIRA during this period.\textsuperscript{105} The intelligence difficulties of the security forces were only exacerbated by the fact that the PIRA had an extremely well developed spy network at this point. The PIRA leadership was thus well aware that internment was about to begin, and was able to warn most members of the organization.\textsuperscript{106}

In spite of the failures of the program, a British commander held a press conference shortly after the first wave of internments, proclaiming that the PIRA had

\textsuperscript{103} Compton, Paragraph 8
\textsuperscript{105} Coogan, 150
\textsuperscript{106} Moloney, 101
“been virtually destroyed.”\textsuperscript{107} This was contradicted in dramatic fashion, as Gerry Adams had organized a simultaneous press conference for Joe Cahill, the PIRA Belfast commander. Standing in a Belfast neighborhood, Cahill explained that the PIRA remained fully functional, and that the offensive campaign would continue.\textsuperscript{108} Cahill was true to his word; as internment progressed, Republican attacks increased as well.

Despite the fact that the internment policy was eventually extended to Loyalists, it seemed clear to Republicans that there was some degree of collusion, whether formal or informal, between the British military and the Loyalist paramilitaries. Many Catholics, nationalists, and Republicans remained convinced of this throughout the internment program, as internment of Republicans began two years before any Loyalists were interned, and because approximately 95\% of internees were Catholics and/or Republicans. However, the trajectory of UVF and UDA attacks after the first Loyalists were interned suggests that this perception was not shared by Loyalist paramilitary organizations.

Both the UDA and the UVF steadily increased their attacks, showing no signs of weakening after the internment of Loyalists began. In purely practical terms, the arrests of one hundred individuals (most of whom were not involved in either the UVF or the UDA) could hardly be expected to cripple these organizations. With regards to motivations, internment represented the first major counterterrorism measure enacted against Loyalists during this period. This provided the UVF and the

\textsuperscript{107} Bowyer Bell, 407
\textsuperscript{108} Moloney, 101
UDA with a new motivation to demonstrate that they had not been negatively affected in any way.

*Did Internment include wedge strategies or an attempt to appeal to moderates?*

While not a wedge strategy in the traditional sense, the internment program embodied the characteristics of a negative wedge. The brutality of the arrests and negotiations could be interpreted as an effort to demonstrate the heavy costs associated with Republican sentiments. Rather than encouraging defection or moderate support through conciliatory methods, the British military pursued a strategy of intimidation and deterrence. However, the military’s attempt to destroy Republican organizations simply contributed to the development of a situation in which the PIRA gained popularity and strength at the expense of the moderate civil rights organizations.

The decision to resort to the internment program actually damaged the legitimacy and power of moderate activists, particularly on the Republican side. Civil rights and political activists had hoped that the government and military would respond to the escalation of violence with immediate political reforms, addressing some of the underlying concerns of the civil rights movement.109 It was suggested that this type of action might force the PIRA to at least consider halting their ongoing offensive, as the organization would no longer possess such a ready-made justification for violent action. However, internment was deemed necessary to restore

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109 Bowyer Bell, 407
calm and order to the area, so the appeals of non-terrorist activists were ignored.\textsuperscript{110} The use of a repressive military strategy, unaccompanied by a political response to the issues raised by members of the civil rights movements, did not exactly inspire confidence in the power of peaceful activism.

Finally, many of the individuals held during internment were, in fact, moderates and non-violent political activists.\textsuperscript{111} As these individuals were not closely tied to the PIRA, they did not benefit from the intelligence gained by the organization, and were unaware that they would be targeted. Among those arrested was Ivan Barr, the chairman of the NICRA.\textsuperscript{112} His imprisonment, and that of other civil rights leaders, made it clear that the British security forces made no distinctions between non-violent activists and terrorists. Even non-violent Republicans were not immune from being targeted, and the arrests demonstrated that individuals with access to PIRA intelligence had a far better chance of avoiding internment. The facts of the internment program drastically diminished any incentives for moderates to remain so. In addition, the arrests of well-known civil rights leaders created an imbalance in the political arena; the literal removal of these moderate voices (however temporary) made it far easier for the PIRA to advocate an unceasing campaign of violence.

\textit{Did Internment include an attempt to address the underlying causes of conflict, or the grievances of the represented populations?}

\textsuperscript{110} Bowyer Bell, 407
\textsuperscript{111} Moloney, 101
\textsuperscript{112} Coogan, 149
The best answer to this question came from Merlyn Rees, who would become the Northern Ireland Secretary of State in 1974. Rees (Leeds, South) argued that internment “alienated the mass of the minority population,” and it only served to heighten the tensions that had existed since the partitioning of Ireland. Internment was clearly a short-term solution, and was in no way intended to address the concerns and grievances underlying the conflict.

Much like the Falls Curfew, the internment program mostly served as an exacerbation of the tensions and grievances underlying the violence during this period. In 1971 and 1972, internment was aimed almost exclusively at Catholics and Republicans, confirming the fears of discrimination raised by the events surrounding the Falls Curfew. This opinion was shared by much of the international community; “internment appeared a vindictive weapon of an arrogant government that had chosen bigoted coercion over necessary concession.” In addition to the discriminatory nature of the arrests themselves, the British military utilized interrogation techniques that were later found to be in violation of the European Convention on Human Rights. These techniques included the following:

- Having a hood placed over the head
- Being forced to stand spread-eagled against a wall for long periods
- Being denied regular sleep patterns
- Having irregular and limited supplies of food and water

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114 Bowyer Bell, 408
115 This list of five interrogation techniques used during the internment program is drawn from Richardson, 86
- Being subjected to white noise

The use of these techniques against civilians, many of whom had no connection to the PIRA, was considered entirely unacceptable by the Catholic and nationalist populations. The combination of internment itself with the use of these interrogation techniques conveyed the impression of an attack against the Catholic and nationalist communities, rather than an attempt to understand their concerns.

The internment policies resulted in an immediate increase in PIRA violence, but the Catholic community and nationalist movement also mobilized against the actions of the British military. Members of the Social Democratic and Labor Party (SDLP) and several civil rights organizations formed a coalition with the goal of launching a campaign of civil disobedience.\footnote{Richardson, 86} The issue of internment became a part of the ongoing civil rights movement, and was one of the main causes of the many marches, protests, and strikes that took place in 1971 and 1972. In fact, the now infamous civil rights march that took place in Derry on January 30, 1972 was largely in response to internment. Bloody Sunday, as this day is still called, represented the death knell of the Stormont government, and catastrophically damaged relations between the security forces and the Catholic community.\footnote{White, 331} Bloody Sunday will be discussed in greater detail in the next section, but it is important to note that the issue of internment was the primary impetus for such a massive expression of protest.

Although some were satisfied with a campaign of marching and civil disobedience, many Catholics and nationalists did turn to the PIRA in order to seek

\footnote{Richardson, 86}
\footnote{White, 331}
revenge or protection. As after the Falls Curfew, PIRA membership grew, allowing the organization to continue launching attacks against the security forces, as well as civilians. Whether peaceful or otherwise, the population that the PIRA claimed to represent mobilized against the actions of the British security forces and refused to accept the use of an internment strategy.

In their attempt to suppress the sectarian violence, the British military implemented a policy that unified and mobilized Catholics, nationalists, and Republicans to an extraordinary degree. Internment “united the nationalist community in opposition to both Stormont and Westminster,” making it far easier for the PIRA to continue escalating their offensive.118 In a parliamentary debate a few months before the implementation of internment, Bernadette Devlin (representative from mid-Ulster and a civil rights activist) stated that current counterterrorism policy had created a situation in which the people of Northern Ireland “feel that they can be shot, that they can be terrified, that they can be terrorized…and that they have no redress.”119 These fears were only worsened by the use of internment policies, which further demonstrated that the security forces were not an effective source of protection.

**Bloody Sunday (1972)**

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118 O’Duffy (1996), 107
On Sunday, January 30, 1972, the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) led a civil rights march in Derry, which was attended by anywhere from five to ten thousand people (accounts differ). The march was intended to be a peaceful one; civil rights leaders such as Protestant MP Ivan Cooper had requested and received assurances that neither the PIRA nor the Official IRA (OIRA) would interfere. In accordance with new regulations, British troops and barricades lined the route of the march, and the Parachute Regiment was on standby. The Parachute Regiment was considered the most aggressive in the British military, and they were given authorization to intervene if “the marchers sought confrontation and riot.”

There is still a great deal of debate as to exactly what occurred on Bloody Sunday. It is generally agreed upon that a number of young men began throwing stones at British soldiers towards the end of the march, and that the Parachute Regiment fired live rounds at unarmed marchers. However, there is still considerable disagreement as to why the soldiers began firing live rounds. The troops present claimed that they were fired upon first by snipers from either the PIRA or the OIRA, who had positioned themselves near the route of the march. The claim that IRA snipers were present at all, let alone that they fired first, has been hotly disputed over the years. Although accusations have since been levied against the IRA for

120 Tony Geraghty, *The Irish War: The Hidden Conflict Between the IRA and British Intelligence* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 55.
121 Geraghty, 55
122 White, 330-331
123 Lord John Widgery, *Report of the Tribunal appointed to inquire into the events of 30 January 1972, which led to loss of life in connection with the procession in Londonderry on that day* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationary Office, April 1972), Paragraphs 36-39.
contributing to the violence, public perceptions of the event at the time categorized Bloody Sunday as an instance of excessive brutality on the part of the British military.\textsuperscript{124}

The extremely negative perception of the British military was primarily due to the fact that, regardless of who fired first, the Parachute Regiment killed fourteen individuals, and wounded thirteen to eighteen more.\textsuperscript{125} In spite of slight variation in the number of wounded reported, all accounts concur that one of the injured individuals died a short while later, bringing the final death toll to fourteen. There is no evidence to suggest that any of these people were armed, and it seemed clear that the members of the Parachute Regiment had essentially targeted anyone who caught their attention in the fleeing crowds. Regardless of whether the IRA was involved at all, the preponderance of the blame for the events of Bloody Sunday was laid on the British Parachute Regiment. The deliberate targeting of unarmed, fleeing demonstrators was perceived as illegitimate and morally repugnant.\textsuperscript{126}

Bloody Sunday preceded one of the most violent periods in the Northern Irish conflict. Republican and Loyalist terrorist attacks increased dramatically in 1972, as did the number of suspected Republicans interned by the British military. It was in the context of this violence that the British government realized that it was time to take action “in response to Catholic grievances rather than in opposition to the

\textsuperscript{124} Geraghty, 63
\textsuperscript{125} Geraghty, 61; White, 331; Moloney, 110
\textsuperscript{126} Geraghty, 61
IRA.” 127 As the discussion of Operation Motorman will demonstrate, however, this determination was short-lived.

*Did Bloody Sunday attack terrorist motivations?*

While Bloody Sunday, by the strictest definition, was not a clear counterterrorism measure, it had a profound impact on the trajectory of terrorist violence. The testimony of the Parachute Regiment as recorded by the Widgery Tribunal made it abundantly clear that the goal of the security forces was to either contain or stop the civil rights march; there was little thought of the effect this might have on Republican terrorist motivations. 128 In fact, these events had a perfectly inverse effect; both the PIRA and the OIRA used Bloody Sunday as justification and motivation for future attacks, and as a recruitment device for the organization. Young people lined up to join the PIRA in particular, no longer satisfied to express their grievances through the avenues offered by the NICRA. 129 This increase in public support and manpower greatly assisted the PIRA and OIRA, and allowed the organizations to continue escalating the levels of violence within the province. 130

It is important to note, however, that the surge in OIRA violence was only a temporary one. The attacks perpetrated by the OIRA in response to Bloody Sunday

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128 Widgery Report, Paragraphs 16-17. 
Note: The Widgery Report was widely believed to be extremely biased towards the security forces, as it essentially cleared them of all blame. This angered Republicans and nationalists, many of whom saw the report as a clear demonstration that the British government was not a neutral arbiter in the conflict.

129 Moloney, 111

130 Richardson, 70
were considered unnecessarily brutal, and contributed to the organization’s decision
to declare a ceasefire within months of Bloody Sunday. The demise of the OIRA as a
terrorist organization facilitated the rise of the PIRA as the primary symbol of
Republican opposition to the British security forces and the Stormont government.
Although the OIRA began its decline during this period, the brutality of OIRA attacks
immediately after Bloody Sunday demonstrated the fury with which Republican
organizations reacted to the deaths of the marchers.\textsuperscript{131}

This rise in Republican violence, and the failure of the security forces to
prevent the attacks, provided the UVF and the UDA with sufficient cover to begin
attacking Catholic “supporters” of the PIRA. Thus, although the actions of the
security forces on Bloody Sunday were only directed at Republican activists, they had
the effect of increasing terrorist motivations on both sides of the conflict. The UVF
and UDA could not argue at this point that the security forces were prejudiced against
Protestants or unionists, but these organizations could point to the dramatic increase
in PIRA and OIRA attacks during the weeks and months following Bloody Sunday.
An OIRA bombing in Aldershot resulted in the deaths of Protestant civilians, as did
the PIRA bombing in Abercorn, which killed two women and injured over one
hundred people.\textsuperscript{132} Within the context of these attacks, an increase in Loyalist
violence was easily justified.

\textit{Did the events of Bloody Sunday include wedge strategies/appeal to moderates?}

\textsuperscript{132} Fraser, 54
The reaction of nationalist moderates to Bloody Sunday serves as the best response to this question. Bernadette Devlin, a well-known civil rights activist and member of the British Parliament, was one of the organizers of the march on January 30, and presented an impassioned condemnation of the security forces at a House of Commons session the following day. In fact, the debate escalated to the point where Devlin physically assaulted Reginald Maudling, the British Secretary of State for Home Affairs.\(^\text{133}\) Devlin’s speeches during this debate demonstrated the extent to which even non-violent activists were infuriated and shocked by the behavior of the security forces. When reproached for having attacked Maudling, Devlin replied, “I did not shoot him in the back, which is what they did to our people.”\(^\text{134}\)

Devlin was not alone in her response to the events of Bloody Sunday. In general, moderates were appalled by the actions of the security forces, not to mention the apparent levity with which the Widgery Report addressed the event.\(^\text{135}\) Within the British House of Commons, several members suggested that the events of Bloody Sunday had created a situation in which moderate, non-violent activists were being driven into “first an unwilling but increasingly determined tolerance and then into support for violence.”\(^\text{136}\) Moderate Republican politicians such as Ivan Cooper continued to speak against terrorist violence, but the fatalities of Bloody Sunday had


\(^{135}\) Richardson, 70

made it abundantly clear that peaceful protest was no longer a legitimate avenue through which to express grievances.

The civil rights movement continued on a much smaller scale following Bloody Sunday, but was never able to regain the momentum and popularity it enjoyed in the 1960s. In the aftermath of Bloody Sunday, the PIRA simply enjoyed a far greater degree of legitimacy than the leaders of the civil rights movement, if only because the PIRA could at least make a plausible guarantee that it would protect Catholic civilians from violence perpetrated by both Loyalist organizations and the security forces. As a result, the civil rights organizations could only stand “on the sidelines, wringing its hands and condemning both the Provisionals and the security forces for the violence.”\(^\text{137}\)

In addition to undermining the legitimacy and influence of moderate activists, the events of Bloody Sunday and the subsequent Widgery Report served to unify the PIRA, the SDLP, and even members of the Irish government in the pursuit of “a united Ireland or nothing.”\(^\text{138}\) While not all of the parties involved supported the use of terrorist violence to achieve this goal, it seems clear that there was a general sense of unity against the continued presence and unchecked operation of the British security forces. Although subsequent bombings by the OIRA and the PIRA damaged the solidarity inspired by Bloody Sunday, this was in spite of the actions of the security forces and the British government, certainly not because of them.

\(^{137}\) Purdie, 247.
\(^{138}\) Moloney, 110
Did the events of Bloody Sunday address underlying concerns and tensions?

A pamphlet published by the NICRA in 1978 asserted that Bloody Sunday essentially marked the death of the NICRA by “driving a large section of the apolitical masses away from the concept of civil rights and into the arms of the men of violence.” As previously discussed, PIRA membership swelled dramatically in the aftermath of Bloody Sunday, whereas support and interest in the civil rights movement quickly diminished. Father Edward Daly, who later became the bishop of Derry made a similar claim to that of the NICRA. He described visiting IRA members in prison, who explicitly stated that “they never would have become involved in the IRA but for what they witnessed, and heard of happening, on Bloody Sunday.” The anger of the Catholic and nationalist population quickly spread to the Republic of Ireland, where a massive crowd besieged and burned the Dublin British embassy two days after the march. In general, the population “represented” by the PIRA viewed the events of Bloody Sunday as further confirmation that the security forces were not serving the function of neutral peacekeepers. Within the framework created by the Falls Curfew and the internment program, there was little incentive for the Catholic community to place any trust whatsoever in the British troops.

139 Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association, We Shall Overcome...The History of the Struggle for Civil Rights in Northern Ireland (Belfast: Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association, 1978)
140 David McKittrick and David McVea, Making Sense of the Troubles (Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 2000), 77.
141 The Gun in Politics, 223
The publication of the Widgery Report in April of 1972 confirmed the negative perception of the security forces, and extended it to the British government. Although the Report did acknowledge that some of the soldiers might have unnecessarily discharged their weapons, Widgery essentially concluded that the blame for the fatalities of Bloody Sunday lay with the organizers of the illegal march.\textsuperscript{142} Within the House of Commons, Frank McManus (Fermanagh and South Tyrone) argued that the Report would have the effect of destroying “any shred of credibility the minority [in Northern Ireland] ever had in tribunals or judicial inquiries set up by this House or this Government.”\textsuperscript{143} These words were certainly proved true by the growth of the PIRA and the further development of the PIRA’s role as a de facto police force.

As the investigation into the events of Bloody Sunday began, the British military was hard-pressed to demonstrate that any of the fatalities were PIRA or OIRA members. In the aftermath of the march, few cared whether or not these groups had been involved due to the indisputable fact that fourteen civilians had been killed at the hands of the British military. At the time, it seemed far less important whether or not terrorist snipers had fired upon the troops; the decision of the British and Stormont governments to ban marches, and the plans of the security forces to stop a civil rights demonstration sent a clear message that voices of the minority were unwelcome and unsafe.

\textsuperscript{142} Widgery Report, Summary of Conclusions
\textsuperscript{143} Frank McManus, \textit{House of Commons Debate} 835 (April 6, 1972): 527
Operation Motorman (1972)

In the immediate aftermath of Bloody Sunday, it became clear that the Stormont government had lost what remained of its fragile credibility, particularly among the Catholic population. As a result, the British government, led by Conservative Edward Heath, began to take steps towards the implementation of direct rule and the temporary abolition of the Stormont government.\(^{144}\) As part of this process, the government proposed “periodic plebiscites on the issue of the border, a start made on the phasing out of internment, and the transfer of responsibility for law and order from Stormont to the Westminster Government.”\(^{145}\) Brian Faulkner, the prime minister of Northern Ireland, refused to accept Westminster control and resigned in protest. Faulkner protested that the abolition of the Stormont government was tantamount to surrendering to terrorist demands, and thoroughly condemned the decision of the Heath administration.\(^{146}\)

This dissatisfaction with the prospect of direct rule was echoed by members of the Ulster Unionist Party and the general unionist community, but divisions within the movement prevented the development of an effective strategy to prevent the passage of the Bill.\(^{147}\) However, the unionist movement did manage to express their dissatisfaction through the orchestration of a massive strike shortly after the decision.

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\(^{146}\) Brian Faulkner, *Speech following the Announcement of Direct rule from Westminster* (March 24, 1972). Conflict Archive on the Internet http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/directrule/faulkner240372.htm

\(^{147}\) Norton, 133-134
to implement direct rule. The strike included approximately 200,000 workers, and essentially brought Northern Ireland to a standstill for two days. During that time 100,000 people also participated in a rally against the abolition of the Stormont government. The policy of direct rule, as well as the attempt to establish a power-sharing government, were met with tremendous hostility among unionists and Loyalists alike.

In general, nationalist and Catholic communities received the establishment of direct rule in quite a different way. The Stormont government had long been seen as a symbol of unionist domination and oppression, and its collapse was greeted with great enthusiasm. William Whitelaw became the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, and quickly pursued secret (separate) negotiations with both Republican and Loyalist terrorist organizations. The PIRA briefly declared a ceasefire in order to allow negotiations to proceed, but this broke down when it became clear that the talks were essentially pointless. Republican and Loyalist organizations increased their attacks, and the groups grew exponentially as it became clear to the population of Northern Ireland that the British government and the security forces could not protect the public or contain the violence.

The implementation of direct rule did represent a shift towards a political resolution of the conflict, but this was short-lived. As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, it would be years before the British government would firmly commit to

148 McKittrick and McVea, 81
149 Moloney, 112
150 The Gun in Politics, 206
151 McKittrick and McVea, 84-85
the pursuit of a negotiated solution. The power-sharing Sunningdale Agreement of 1973-1974 formed the basis for future negotiations, but the British government lacked the political will and resolve to bring this to fruition during this period.

In response to escalating violence in 1969, both Loyalist and nationalist terrorist organizations had established “no-go” areas in parts of Belfast and Derry. These “no-go” areas were barricaded and defended by paramilitaries, forcing the British troops and rival paramilitary organizations to stay out. This permitted the PIRA, OIRA, UDF and UVF to operate openly within their respective neighborhoods, and dramatically undermined the power and effectiveness of the security forces. As violence continued to escalate and peace talks proved fruitless, the British government turned back to short-term repressive counterterrorism and launched Operation Motorman on July 31, 1972. This initiative involved over thirty thousand troops, and was the largest military operation in Northern Ireland during the twentieth century. The troops tore down the barricades and took control of Loyalist and Republican “no-go” areas in Belfast and Derry, hoping to impede ability of terrorist organizations to operate in these neighborhoods. This was temporarily successful, but did not permanently cripple terrorist organizations on either side of the conflict.

During the debates leading up to the implementation of Operation Motorman, the British government directly cited “Bloody Friday” as a critical factor in the

152 Ruane and Todd, 129
153 Norton, 135
154 Richardson, 69
155 Fraser, 58
decision to utilize a military strategy. Two weeks before Operation Motorman began, the PIRA detonated twenty-seven car bombs in Belfast within approximately 3 ½ hours of each other. The attack, which took place on July 21, 1972, killed nine civilians and wounded 130 others, earning the epithet “Bloody Friday.” These attacks, within the context of steadily escalations of violence on both sides, provided the impetus for the British government to launch a full-scale assault on terrorist capabilities.

Did Operation Motorman attack motivations, as well as capabilities?

Operation Motorman was developed and implemented with the objective of eliminating the terrorist safe havens that had emerged in Derry and Belfast. When outlining the policy, William Whitelaw asserted that the primary goal of the British government was to “destroy the capacity of the Provisional IRA to terrorize the community.” Throughout the debate, there was essentially no mention of finding a way to eliminate terrorist motivations. Bernadette Devlin briefly discussed this, but the majority of the participants in the debate focused on the physical elimination of the PIRA, rather than the pursuit of further conciliatory policies. One member went so far as to claim that “the attempt to appease the IRA by talking to it is completely

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157 Whitelaw (July 24, 1972), 1329. Note: This particular debate focused on the activities of the PIRA, as it took place only three days after Bloody Friday. However, Operation Motorman included the elimination of no-go areas held by the UVF and UDA as well.
hopeless for dealing with the current situation.”\textsubscript{158} Although other members did acknowledge the importance of an eventual political solution to the conflict, the general consensus of the debate was that the capabilities of terrorist organizations had to be drastically reduced before any political action could occur.

The debates surrounding Operation Motorman made it abundantly clear that the measure was not designed to undermine terrorist motivations. The attack on terrorist capabilities was temporarily successful, as the security forces did gain control of the “no-go” areas, making it more difficult for terrorist organizations to operate openly.\textsubscript{159} However, as the data demonstrate, the demolition of the “no-go” areas had only a temporary negative effect on PIRA attacks in Northern Ireland, and was followed by an increase in Loyalist terrorism. Additionally, the PIRA responded to the Operation by simply transferring some of its resources to carrying out attacks in the United Kingdom, rather than focusing solely on Northern Ireland.\textsubscript{160}

The British government lauded the measure as an overwhelming success, claiming that the terrorist threat had been dramatically reduced. Despite the fact that government was forced to acknowledge that attacks had not ceased entirely, the general perception of the operation was extremely positive.\textsubscript{161} In light of this assertion of success, the PIRA, UVF, and UDA were under considerable pressure to

\begin{flushleft}
\textsubscript{159} Fraser, 58
\textsubscript{160} See Appendix C for PIRA activity in the UK. Although it only rose slightly in the year following Operation Motorman, PIRA activity increased significantly during the later months of 1973.
\end{flushleft}
demonstrate that terrorist activity remained a relevant aspect of the Northern Irish conflict. Although the capabilities of these organizations may have been somewhat limited, the need to demonstrate their continued presence and active status was only heightened by the implementation of Operation Motorman.

*Did Operation Motorman include wedge strategies/appeal to moderates?*

The debates leading up to the implementation of Operation Motorman included discussions of civilian casualties, and a few members of Parliament did express concern that military action on this scale could undermine the “wider political objective of reconciliation.”¹⁶² However, the events of Bloody Friday appear to have driven away this concern regarding the process of reconciliation, creating a situation in which a political resolution to the crisis was considered secondary to the implementation of a short-term military solution. One of the only direct mentions of moderate activists during these debates came when Angus Maude (Stratford-upon-Avon) described the NICRA as having become “a propaganda mouthpiece for the Sinn Fein and the Provisional IRA.”¹⁶³ This general disregard for moderates was clearly conveyed in the implementation of Operation Motorman. At the time of Operation Motorman, the British government was primarily focused on achieving a military success, rather than on facilitating debate with moderates.

Until the British and Irish governments began discussing the possibility of a power-sharing agreement in 1973, there was little opportunity for moderate nationalists and unionists to develop a strong argument against the use of terrorist violence. Additionally, the rapid collapse of the new Northern Irish Assembly and Executive damaged any legitimacy that moderates gained during the negotiation process.

Operation Motorman was an extremely straightforward strategy, and was by no means an attempt to create fragmentation within the targeted terrorist organizations. As discussed in the previous section, the prevailing theme of the policy debates was a desire to eliminate the resources and capabilities of terrorist organizations. When Paul Channon (Minister of State for Northern Ireland) announced that the operation had begun, he asserted the primary goal of “restoring peace and the destruction of the capacity of the men of violence to terrorise the community.”164 Although Channon did also mention the importance of constructive dialogue, the actual policy implemented in no way distinguished between hard-line terrorists and individuals who might be experiencing discontent or doubts. Like many of the policies utilized during this period, Operation Motorman treated each terrorist organization as a unitary actor, rather than as an entity affected by normal group dynamics.

164 Paul Channon (Minister of State for Northern Ireland), “Northern Ireland,” House of Commons Debate 842 (July 31, 1972): 33
Did Operation Motorman address underlying tensions/grievances of the “represented” populations?

The rhetoric utilized in reference to Operation Motorman suggested that the measure was developed with the well-being and protection of the Northern Irish population in mind. In his announcement of the operation’s commencement, Channon emphasized that the only civilian casualties were individuals who had chosen to ignore the government’s clear warnings about the operation.165 Additionally, Channon claimed that the operation would “restore to the people their normal civil rights” and “free them from the intimidation of terror and the gunman under which they have laboured far too long.”166 While this may well have been an ancillary goal of Operation Motorman, the actual impact of the measure was entirely different.

The debates preceding and following the destruction of the barricades consistently circumvented the question of how the former no-go areas should be policed. The subject of the police force had long been an issue of contention, particularly within the Catholic community. Kevin McNamara (Kingston upon Hull North) raised this issue in the debate immediately following implementation, pointing out that the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) had long been seen as an enemy by the Catholic minority due to biased behavior.167 Additionally, the credibility of the security forces had been badly damaged by the Falls Curfew, internment, and

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165 Channon (July 31, 1972), 32
166 Channon (July 31, 1972), 36
particularly Bloody Sunday. In the immediate aftermath of Operation Motorman, Channon simply ignored the difficult reality that the Catholic minority was unlikely to accept either the security forces or the RUC as neutral peacekeepers.\textsuperscript{168} McNamara raised the same issue a few days later, and pointed out that tensions between the RUC and the Catholic community had contributed significantly to the escalation of violence in 1969. He further argued that community leaders in the no-go areas should be consulted as to how security and police forces might be credibly introduced into these neighborhoods.\textsuperscript{169} Once again, Channon led the argument against this assertion, saying that this would be easily resolved.\textsuperscript{170} Partially as a result of the incertitude and lack of resolve from the British government, tensions between the RUC, the security forces and the terrorist organizations (especially the PIRA) represented one of the most enduring characteristics of the conflict. In many ways, Operation Motorman attempted to eliminate the role of terrorist organizations as de facto police forces without offering an alternative that would be acceptable to the entire population.

6. Data Analysis\textsuperscript{171}

The previous section permitted me to develop an analytical evaluation of counterterrorism effectiveness. In order to obtain a quantitative measure of my

\textsuperscript{168} Channon (July 31, 1972), 42
\textsuperscript{171} Data on Attacks and Fatalities is taken from the Global Terrorism Database, the TWEED terrorism database and the Conflict Archive on the Internet.
effectiveness criteria, I will examine whether terrorist attacks increased, decreased, or remained at previous levels following each counterterrorism measure. The following table codes the counterterrorism measures discussed above, and shows the patterns of terrorist activity following implementation of each policy. With the exception of Operation Motorman, which is discussed in greater detail below, the patterns of attack data appear to follow the patterns predicted at the beginning of this chapter. In this section, I will specifically examine the attack data surrounding Operation Motorman, as the patterns of attack following this measure do not appear to fit properly with my analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Counter-terrorism Measure</th>
<th>Motiv.</th>
<th>Wedge</th>
<th>Larger population</th>
<th>Terrorist Attacks over next year</th>
<th>Terrorist attacks in UK</th>
<th>Fatalities from Terrorist Attacks</th>
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172 Note: there were no PIRA attacks in the UK in the year prior to this attack; the increase in attacks is from zero to one. However, this single attack caused seven fatalities and nineteen injuries, so it is important to note that it occurred.

173 This was the only OIRA attack in the UK during this period. I have included it because it took place in a climate in which the OIRA was conducting an extremely aggressive campaign against the security forces in response to Bloody Sunday.
The graphs in Appendices A, B, and C show the number of terrorist attacks per year, but these counterterrorism measures were not implemented on the first of every year. In order to determine whether attacks increased or decreased after implementation of a given policy, I have measured the number of attacks between the first day of implementation and one year from that date. For example, the graph below demonstrates that PIRA terrorist activity decreased from 1972 to 1973. However, PIRA violence between January 30, 1972 (Bloody Sunday) and January 30, 1973 was significantly higher than PIRA violence between January 29, 1971 and January 29, 1972.176

**Operation Motorman**

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174 Although, OIRA attacks went up by one between 1973 and 1974 (during implementation of power-sharing).
175 There was only one attack in the UK in the year following Operation Motorman, but this attack injured 243 people. Additionally, attacks in the UK did begin to increase significantly within a few months of this one (There were 9 additional attacks in 1973, and 33 in 1974).
176 There were 170 attacks by the PIRA between January 30, 1972 and January 30, 1973. There were only 70 incidents between January 29, 1971 and January 29, 1972. (Global Terrorism Database)
There is one case in the table above that appears to challenge my assertion that the absence of the effectiveness criteria will usually lead to an increase in attack frequency and deadliness. Both PIRA and OIRA attacks declined in the year following the implementation of Operation Motorman, an initiative that did not certainly did not employ the effectiveness criteria. If the effectiveness criteria utilized in this thesis are valid, an unexpected change in terrorist activity suggests the presence of additional factors. I will utilize this section to attempt to identify those factors and discuss how they might have influenced PIRA and OIRA activities.

Based on the analysis in this chapter, it seems clear that Operation Motorman was not the only factor behind the decrease in OIRA attacks in 1972. As discussed previously, the OIRA dramatically escalated both the scale and brutality of its attacks after the events of Bloody Sunday. Although group’s popularity originally rose, the OIRA overestimated the desire of the Catholic population for revenge. The attacks launched in the first months of 1972 disgusted Catholics and Protestants alike, leaving the group with very little popular support.177

Additionally, the PIRA was experiencing a considerable loss of public support. Although the Catholic community had rallied to the organization after Bloody Sunday and the abolition of Stormont, the PIRA had committed a catastrophic blunder on what became known as “Bloody Friday.” Ten days before Operation Motorman, the PIRA launched a massive attack in Belfast using multiple car bombs.178 The PIRA later claimed that this had been a mistake, and that they had assumed

177 Townshend, 335
178 Moloney, 116
that the security forces would be able to defuse some of the bombs. This event was seen as the “unionist equivalent of Bloody Sunday, and it was an unmitigated disaster for the IRA.”

The PIRA lost a great deal of support after this event, and was subjected to increased pressure about the use of excessive violence against civilians. The PIRA appeared to have launched a massive attack simply for the sake of terrorizing civilians, rather than in the name of the Republican cause. Moderate nationalists and even some Republicans quickly distanced themselves from the PIRA and pursued negotiations and improved relations with the unionists. Although this is not officially documented, it seems highly likely that the PIRA would attempt to use more caution in planning attacks after being condemned for Bloody Friday. The organization relied heavily on the support and assistance of the Catholic and nationalist communities, and could not afford to lose all of that support to the British.

Although PIRA attacks in Northern Ireland declined during this period, the group remained highly operational. The group still had sufficient resources to begin launching attacks in the United Kingdom, and continued to carry out attacks against the security forces in Northern Ireland. Operation Motorman certainly did put the PIRA under pressure, but the PIRA still managed to carry out twenty-four attacks during the month of August, even after losing their safe havens on July 31. The decline in PIRA attacks went from 160 in the year leading up to the policy, to 128 in

179 Moloney, 117
180 Moloney, 117
181 Global Terrorism Database
the year following it. While significant, this decline in attack numbers make it quite clear that Operation Motorman was not the perfect counterterrorism measure it was purported to be.

7. Constraints on Government Learning

In this section, I will provide a discussion of the constraints that may have affected the ability of the government to select effective counterterrorism policies during this period. As described in the Introduction, my discussion of internal constraints will focus on an examination of the perceptual framework through which the government viewed the conflict, as well as any internal political dynamics that may have impacted policy options. My discussion of external constraints will focus on the presence of resources constraints and audience costs. As discussed previously, this analysis will not permit the development of a causal connection, but will provide information about any correlations between policy choice and these constraints that may exist.

In terms of British policy towards the conflict in Northern Ireland, the period between 1969 and 1974 featured only one lasting substantive shift. The decision to send in the security forces in 1969 led to the highest degree of British involvement in the conflict since 1920. However, the policies implemented within the context of this role demonstrated a high degree of consistency with the counterterrorism measures pursued by Britain and Stormont during much earlier stages of the conflict. As discussed earlier in this chapter, these pre-existing policies (including internment, etc)

\(^{182}\) Global Terrorism Database
had generated only short-term successes, and clearly did not succeed in putting an end to the violence. This fact alone suggests that the British government was unable to successfully update information and interpret past experiences during this period. In order to begin the process of understanding why ineffective information-updating occurred, I will analyze the internal and constraints that may have impacted these decisions.

*Action Determinism and Political Process (Internal Constraints)*

Since 1920, the British government had defined policy in Northern Ireland in terms of containment.\(^{183}\) In general, this rested upon the belief that a political solution would be necessary in the long run, but that short-term control of terrorist violence was the immediate priority. All of these policies were undertaken with the goal of limiting British involvement in the conflict to the extent possible. This framework remained in place throughout the period from 1969-1974, causing the Heath government to interpret the changing circumstances in Northern Ireland within the context of an antiquated policy understanding.

When comparing the counterterrorism rhetoric throughout the history of this conflict, it becomes clear that very little changed between 1920 and 1974. The governmental rhetoric surrounding the conflict remained much the same throughout this period, with an emphasis on “containment” and the need to maintain “law and order” within the province.\(^{184}\) One slight rhetorical shift did occur, in that discussions

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\(^{183}\) O’Duffy, 103

of repressive counterterrorism during this period did include assertions that a political solution would have to be reached eventually. However, actual policy output demonstrated none of the necessary resolve to implement lasting political changes. In spite of the fact that the British government was now directly involved in the conflict, and discovering the impossibility of developing an easy solution, Heath continued to follow the precedent set by the Stormont government rather than developing a new approach.

The implementation of direct rule certainly represented a new level of British involvement in the conflict, and was originally directed at easing the tensions and controversy surrounding the Stormont government. However, direct rule was only intended to be a temporary solution, and was closely followed by a shift back to short-term repressive policies with the execution of Operation Motorman. Operation Motorman exhibited exactly the same “law and order” attitude that had informed government policy in Northern Ireland for decades.

The establishment of the Sunningdale Agreement and a devolved power-sharing government represented a second attempt on the part of the British government to utilize political counterterrorism, rather than a purely repressive strategy. However, the power-sharing arrangement was not developed with a clear consideration of long-term effects, and the new Northern Irish government was not given sufficient security powers to exert any real political influence. Although the power-sharing government appeared to be a dramatic policy shift at the time,

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185 O’Duffy (1996), 107
187 Norton, 135
subsequent research describes it as “an elaborate containment exercise rather than a thorough reform.”  

Like the other policies adopted during this period, the Sunningdale Agreement was an attempt to quickly resolve a troublesome situation, rather than to develop a truly viable long-term solution.

There certainly were attempts within the British government to move away from the organizational framework discussed above. The parliamentary debates throughout this period provide the clearest examples of these efforts. A few months before the implementation of the internment program (and a year before Operation Motorman), Paul Rose (Manchester, Blackley) insisted that “there must be strong opposition…to the creation of internment camps [and] to the occupation of what might be termed the Catholic ghettos.” Mr. Rose, as well as a few other participants in the debate, also emphasized the importance of “dividing the gunmen from those who genuinely want to see changes and have genuine grievances, not…making the gunmen into martyrs.” Arguments like this certainly demonstrate individual attempts to break out of the “embedded organizational routines” described by Child. However, I argue that the strength of organizational norms during this period was such that arguments along these lines were essentially ignored. During the debate discussed above, the dissenting individuals were quickly drowned out by expressions of confidence in the security forces and affirmations of the established counterterrorism policy. Further examples of this are the debate over policing

188 O’Duffy (1996), 111
190 Rose (1971), 327
191 Child, 51
discussed in the section on Operation Motorman, and the many arguments regarding the causes and consequences of Bloody Sunday.

Records of Cabinet meetings from this period provide additional evidence of the durability of the short-term repressive framework. Even after the failures of repressive policies throughout this period, Cabinet meetings in 1974 still centered on the discussion of repressive counterterrorism legislation. In addition to allowing the continued use of internment programs, the legislation established the right of the British government to prevent individuals suspected of terrorism (or terrorist sympathies) from entering or remaining in Great Britain.\textsuperscript{192} Although concerns regarding civil liberties and the alienation of the Catholic minority were briefly mentioned, these issues were brushed aside in a fairly perfunctory manner with the argument that an immediate end to the violence was the most important goal. Ironically, the policies suggested in this legislation had largely already been proven ineffective.

As I will discuss below, the durability of this framework was largely due to the British government’s perception of the environment in which it was operating. The public opinion data available to the government during this period suggested that the British public was thoroughly uninterested in the conflict, and was unwilling for the government to expend significant resources or energy on Northern Ireland. However, this data was clearly interpreted within the context of the framework discussed above. As the next chapter will demonstrate, British public opinion

\textsuperscript{192} British Cabinet, \textit{Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet} (November 24, 1974), 1-3.
remained fairly consistent in later years, but was interpreted in an entirely different manner by the government. Government understanding of public opinion during the early 1970s was clearly described by Merlyn Rees (who would become the Northern Ireland Secretary in 1974). Rees described British sentiment towards the conflict as follows.

“Would that there was a Western Desert where they [the PIRA and the UDA] could meet and sort things out. There is widespread feeling in this country that it would be just retribution if the two extremes were killing each other, but, in our view, it must be prevented as the bloodbath would involve the innocent.”

I will discuss the state of public opinion in Great Britain in greater detail below, but it seems quite clear that this perception on the part of the government facilitated the continued utilization of the existing framework.

Based on an analysis through the lens of internal constraints, the British government does not appear to have experienced significant innovation or learning during this time period. The government did not respond effectively to the available lessons from past failures. However, the existence of an established perceptual framework was not the only factor during this period. Child argues that “it is not possible to abstract from the environment when considering the strategic choices available to organizational actors.” The following subsections will examine the presence of resource constraints and audience costs, the two environmental variables I have selected. The discussion of audience costs, in particular, is closely related to the utilization of a pre-established counterterrorism framework.

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194 Child, 53
Environmental Factors: Resource Constraints

The time period examined in this chapter featured one of the worst economic downturns in British history. Unemployment within the United Kingdom began to rise in the 1960s, reaching 3.8% by the first quarter of 1972. This represented the highest unemployment rate since World War II, and was accompanied by rising inflation.195 During the 1970s, the average inflation rate was 16%, and it rose to over 25% in 1975.196 These economic difficulties were exacerbated by rising prices of primary commodities and the global oil crisis of 1973-1974.197 During this period, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) concluded that rising demand for oil made it feasible to quadruple the price of the commodity. As a result, real oil prices per barrel rose from $2.52 in 1973 to $7.36 in 1974.198 Numerous government documents during this period focused on the creation of safeguards to avoid a dramatic oil shortage in the United Kingdom. The records of a Cabinet meeting on October 16, 1973, reflect general concern that negotiations with OPEC could break down, leading to a 50% decrease in UK oil imports. The conclusions from this meeting indicate that the Cabinet was extremely focused on enacting precautionary measures, and was deeply concerned about the consequences of an

197 Woodward, 127
198 Woodward, 127-128
breakdown in oil supplies or a dramatic price increase. The Heath government transformed its position on monetary and fiscal policy several times during this period, and ended up selecting several ineffective policies. The government did eventually attempt to correct these errors, but not until 1973, when the situation had already begun to worsen. The British government was able to continue spending in Northern Ireland throughout the crisis, but much of the government’s time and energy was devoted to the development of a monetary policy that would promote recovery from the current “stagflation.”

Despite the lack of existing research on this topic, my analysis shows at least some degree of correlation between the presence of economic difficulties (and thus, resource constraints) and the selection of ineffective counterterrorism policies. Britain did keep spending at comparable levels in Northern Ireland throughout the crisis, but did not devote a sufficient amount of time or attention to the region. This correlation is quite logical, given that the counterterrorism measures utilized during this period did not require a high level of innovation or consideration on the part of the British government. As discussed previously, the guidelines for curfews and internment were already in place, and the British government was comfortably ensconced in the notion that short-term policies were the best option. Selection of

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199 *Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet* (British Cabinet, October 16, 1973), 1-2.  
200 Woodward, 140-141  
201 The term “stagflation” is used to describe any period during which unemployment and inflation are both rising quickly. In general, unemployment is inversely related to inflation, but both were rising dramatically during the first half of the 1970s.
pre-existing policies enabled the British government to direct the greater part of its focus to the economic crisis and other domestic issues.

*Environmental Factors: Audience Costs*

Audience costs within a democracy essentially consist of the role of the public and the role of politics. This section will briefly address each of these issues, beginning with an assessment of public opinion. Although the British public was certainly conscious of the escalating violence in Northern Ireland, the situation in the province was by no means a priority. Opinion polling conducted throughout the 1970s found that the British public was primarily concerned about rising levels of strike activity (prompted by government industry/wage policies) and the developing stagflation situation.\(^{202}\) This high level of interest and concern regarding economic policies was accompanied by significant disapproval of the ways in which the government was addressing the crisis. Throughout this period, approval of economic policies remained consistently below 50%, dropping as low as 22.5% in 1969 and hovering in the low thirties from 1971-1973.\(^{203}\) As these polls demonstrate, the British government was under considerable public pressure to develop and implement monetary policies, which would bring the economic situation back under control. Record levels of stagflation and the loss of workdays due to strikes were far more immediate and troubling to the British public than the fact that sectarian violence in Northern Ireland was on the rise.

\(^{202}\) Woodward, 122

\(^{203}\) Gallup opinion polls 1958-1990, cited in Woodward, 234. The question asked was “In general, do you approve or disapprove of the way the Government is handling the economy?”
During the 1971 House of Commons debate discussed above, Norman St. John-Stevas (Chelmsford) suggested that “English people easily become bored with Irish affairs….There is a trend in British public opinion…which wants to be shot of this problem.” As the economic situation worsened, the British public expressed an increasing desire to lower the number of troops deployed in Northern Ireland. By June of 1974, 59% of British respondents supported the idea of complete troop withdrawal, while only 11% of respondents advocated the deployment of additional troops. The British public remained fairly ambivalent about the future of Northern Ireland, although a plurality consistently favored the idea of encouraging the province to become a part of the Republic of Ireland. Within the context of the government framework discussed above, these data were interpreted as reflecting resentment at being at all involved in the politics of Northern Ireland. As the following chapter will demonstrate, a changed government understanding of the situation in the 1990s resulted in a dramatically different reaction to fairly similar public opinion data.

The Heath government was also embroiled in a number of controversial policy debates during this period. The British government began the process of entering the European Community (EC) in 1970, and the subsequent negotiations and transitional arrangements continued through 1978. The decision to join the EC was fairly controversial within the British government, and led to divisions within both

206 McGarry and O’Leary, 115
207 McGarry and O’Leary, 115
208 Woodward, 125
the Conservative and Labor parties. Additionally, the government was forced to admit that membership would cause some short-term hardships for both the British manufacturing community and the general public. This did little to improve Heath’s already shaky public support. The Heath government was also pursuing increasingly restrictive immigration legislation, which limited rights of permanent residence and the right of entry for dependents.

The most influential (and damaging) policy initiative of this period was certainly the Industrial Relations Act of 1971, a piece of legislation which led to a bitter conflict with the unions, not mention divisions within the Conservative party. Kerr argues that this tension between the government and the unions “was the start of a series of conflicts that eventually proved fatal to the government’s reputation and its tenure in office.” Between 1971 and 1974, Heath was engaged in a prolonged battle with the unions, marked in particular by two national strikes executed by the coalminers (1972 and 1974). The 1972 strike was the first national strike since 1926, and severely undermined the power of the Heath administration. These tensions culminated in the government’s decision to hold a general election in 1974, with the goal of gaining a mandate of support from the British public. However, the declining support of the electorate was clearly demonstrated by this election, in which the

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209 Norton, 139
210 Woodward, 125-126
212 Peter Kerr, Postwar British Politics: From Conflict to Consensus (London: Routledge, 2001), 112.
213 Kerr, 112
214 Woodward, 138, 266-267
Heath government was ousted in favor of Harold Wilson and the Labor party.\textsuperscript{215} These numerous controversies pulled the government in a number of directions, and resulted in the complete destruction of Heath’s political capital.

As the following chapter will demonstrate, the pursuit of drastic and politically risky policies in Northern Ireland was only truly possible for a government with an overwhelming electoral mandate and a high degree of party cohesion.\textsuperscript{216} Heath’s political and economic difficulties made it essentially impossible to pursue policies that did not conform to previously accepted norms.

\textbf{Conclusion}

The three measures of effectiveness presented in this chapter provide a useful framework through which to examine British counterterrorism during this period. With the exception of Operation Motorman, the policies that were ineffective under these criteria were followed by an increase in terrorist activity. Operation Motorman was the only repressive strategy utilized during this period that actually had any sort of impact (however limited) on the capabilities of the targeted terrorist organizations. Unlike the internment program, Operation Motorman actually targeted areas occupied by terrorist organizations, and eliminated the physical barriers that had permitted the groups to operate freely. As the data demonstrate, however, the effect of Operation Motorman was limited to the PIRA, and was extremely short-lived. As a result, it is

\textsuperscript{215} Kerr, 115

\textsuperscript{216} I will discuss Tony Blair’s 1997 electoral victory and subsequent policy selection in the second Northern Ireland case study.
still reasonable to suggest that these criteria provide relevant information about the counterterrorism dynamics of this period.

An examination of the trajectory of counterterrorism policies during this period demonstrates a distinct lack of innovation and learning on the part of the British government. The government continued to pursue pre-established policies, and was unable to utilize the lessons that might have been gleaned from past experiences. While individuals within the government may have been successfully updating information, it seems clear that the British government as a whole was generally unable to do so. The analysis in this chapter is not extensive enough to establish a causal connection, but the research presented demonstrates a clear correlation between a high degree of learning constraints and an inability to successfully utilize the effectiveness criteria.

All three factors were present to a high degree throughout this period, but it appears that internal constraints in the form of a pre-established policy framework had the most direct effect on the ability of the Heath government to learn and adapt. The economic constraints and audience costs discussed in this chapter clearly shaped the way in which the government organized its priorities and enacted policies. However, the presence of an organizationally accepted mindset towards the conflict in Northern Ireland appears to have severely hindered the government’s ability to even address the possibility that additional policy options might be available.
Chapter Two

Introduction

With very few exceptions, the policies of the British government during the period of 1969-1974 only served to increase the intensity and severity of both Republican and Loyalist violence. However, the counterterrorism policies adopted during the 1990s reflected a significant change in the way in which the government approached the conflict. This chapter will examine the effectiveness of four counterterrorism measures taken between 1990 and 2005 through an application of the criteria utilized in the previous chapter, and will then analyze the role played by internal and external constraints (namely, resource constraints and audience costs). Section 1, I will provide a brief discussion of the dynamics of the conflict between 1974 and 1990, and mention significant government policies. In Section 2, I will discuss the major terrorist organizations that were operational during this period. Section 3 will focus on evaluating the effectiveness of each selected counterterrorism measure within the framework of my effectiveness criteria. Section 4 will test the validity of my analysis through an assessment of patterns of terrorist activity, and a discussion of other possible causes of these patterns. Finally, Section 5 will examine the internal and external factors that may have influenced the British government’s ability to update information and select effective counterterrorism policies.

1. Counterterrorism between 1974 and 1990

The counterterrorism measures adopted during the period from 1969-1974 were primarily directed at achieving a short-term cessation of hostilities and violence.
Until the implementation of direct rule, and the 1974 attempt to create a power-sharing government, counterterrorism policy did little to address the larger causes of the conflict. The first attempts to actually analyze and address these issues were abject failures for the most part; the 1972 secret negotiations between the British government and the PIRA quickly collapsed when it became abundantly clear that neither side was prepared to offer any significant compromise on their original demands. Additionally, the power-sharing government of 1974 was brought down within four months by Loyalist violence and protest.

Although these negotiations failed abysmally, they opened the door for the renewal of secret talks in 1975. After the failure of yet another ceasefire (December 1974-January 16, 1975), the PIRA had resumed a normal campaign of violence. However, the rise in PIRA violence sparked strong objections within moderate wings of the nationalist and Republican movements. This likely facilitated the renewal of contacts between the PIRA and the British government, leading to the declaration of an indefinite PIRA ceasefire on February 11, 1975. The PIRA leadership claimed that they agreed to the truce largely because the British government had suggested that the partial or complete withdrawal of the security forces was a legitimate option at this time. Although the government denied ever having made this offer, the fact remains that the PIRA cites it as one of the main factors allowing negotiations to take place at all. This possibility, combined with a

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loss of PIRA support due to war weariness, made the truce appear a somewhat viable option.\textsuperscript{219}

Gerry Adams of Sinn Fein/PIRA and his supporters argued that the overtures of the British government were nothing more than a ruse to stop PIRA violence while government forces improved their intelligence and prepared for an offensive.\textsuperscript{220} It is certainly true that the government did use the nine-month truce to dramatically improve intelligence gathering, surveillance and infiltration of PIRA controlled areas.\textsuperscript{221} Additionally, the announcement of the PIRA ceasefire spurred an increase in Loyalist paramilitary violence. Both the UVF and the UDA viewed the ceasefire as an opportunity to gain an advantage against the PIRA, and promptly launched widespread attacks against Catholics. Although the British government’s policies did briefly calm Republican violence, the government failed to take into account the motivations of Loyalist groups.

The UVF and UDA sought to bring about the collapse of the ceasefire by attacking Catholic civilians in particularly brutal ways. These attacks began to erode the vision of the PIRA as the defender of the Catholic community, and made it far more difficult for the PIRA to maintain a ceasefire.\textsuperscript{222} The stability of the fragile truce was further shaken by the beginnings of a feud between the PIRA and remaining members of the OIRA in October of 1975.\textsuperscript{223} All of these factors

\textsuperscript{219} Ed Moloney, \textit{A Secret History of the IRA} (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2002), 142
\textsuperscript{220} O’Duffy (1996), 113-114
\textsuperscript{221} Kelley, 235-236
\textsuperscript{222} Moloney, 145
\textsuperscript{223} Kelley, 239
combined to bring down the ceasefire in November 1975, and led to an increase in both PIRA and Loyalist violence. Moloney describes the period of 1975-1977 as “arguably the darkest period of the Troubles, nearly two years of slaughter in which the loyalists and the IRA vied with each other in an often indiscriminate sectarian killing game.”\textsuperscript{224} In the period from 1975 through 1977, the PIRA launched 221 attacks, many of them against the military and private citizens.\textsuperscript{225} This represented an increase of 44 attacks from the period of 1973-1974.\textsuperscript{226} The increase was relatively small, but this was largely due to the fact that PIRA capabilities had been severely limited by the ceasefire, leaving the organization unable to immediately escalate to previous levels of violence.

Loyalist attacks continued at high levels following the collapse of the PIRA ceasefire. UDA attacks actually declined slightly during the period from 1975-1977, but remained at higher levels than every previous year except 1974. The UVF, on the other hand, steadily increased their attacks throughout the ceasefire, and over the next two years. During this period, eleven members of the UVF created a group known as the “Shankill Butchers.” This group was responsible for a number of brutal assassinations of Catholic civilians, and killed at least nineteen people between 1975 and 1977.\textsuperscript{227}

\textsuperscript{224} Moloney, 145
\textsuperscript{225} Global Terrorism Database http://209.232.239.37/gtd1/sresults.aspx
\textsuperscript{226} Global Terrorism Database
\textsuperscript{227} Conflict Archive on the Internet (CAIN web service) http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/violence/majinc.htm
The next major attempt to resolve the conflict occurred in 1980, when John Hume (deputy leader of the SDLP) persuaded the SDLP and the government of the Republic of Ireland to endorse a common policy regarding the future of Northern Ireland. This policy contained three general requirements: “the need for the British Government to declare its interest in Irish unity; that any settlement should take an Irish dimension into account; and that the situation should be raised to a new inter-governmental level and considered in the context of closer co-operation between the British and Irish Governments.” Given that Charles Haughey (the leader of the Republic of Ireland government) had until this point advocated for nothing less than full British withdrawal, this represented quite a step forward. This statement of joint policy was shortly followed by the beginnings of Anglo-Irish cooperation between Margaret Thatcher’s government and that of Haughey. These talks began in 1980 and continued through 1982. This level of inclusion of the Republic of Ireland in the formation of policy towards Northern Ireland represented a new step in the process. The Sunningdale power-sharing arrangement had included the “Irish dimension,” but the British and Irish governments had been unable to truly come to terms with their conflicting claims of sovereignty and national possession over the province.

Within the context of these negotiations, the British government briefly attempted to begin the process of devolution again with the establishment of the Northern Irish Assembly in 1982. Although the Assembly was nominally functional

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229 Hennessey, 22.
between 1982 and 1986, the SDLP refused to participate because they found the devolution proposals to be “a dilution of power-sharing and the Irish dimension.”

The Assembly was later boycotted by the Ulster Unionist Party as well, and never actually received any significant degree of executive or legislative power.

In spite of the eventual failure of the Assembly, continuing cooperation between the British and Irish governments led to the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985. This agreement stated that any change in the status of Northern Ireland could only occur if a majority of the Northern Irish population consented, and established further venues for cooperation and discussion between the British and Irish governments. This represented a victory for the SDLP, but was heartily opposed by members of both the Loyalist and Republican movements. Loyalist organizations, as well as slightly more moderate unionist parties, perceived the agreement as a dilution of Northern Ireland’s membership in the UK. The signing of the Agreement led to an immediate increase in membership in both the UDA and the UVF, and these groups maintained a low, but steady stream of attacks throughout the 1980s. In the immediate aftermath of the Agreement, the PIRA also promised a

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231 Hennessey, 23
continued campaign of violence, arguing that the agreement eliminated any true possibility of unification with Ireland.\textsuperscript{236}

Although the PIRA originally repudiated the Anglo-Irish Agreement, the existence of this document contributed to their existing difficulties in justifying a continued violent campaign. The Anglo-Irish Agreement represented, at least to many nationalists, the first step towards a legitimate negotiated settlement. In response to a loss of political and material support, the PIRA and Sinn Fein began conducting negotiations with the SDLP as early as 1988. These negotiations were stalled at various points, but continued in a fairly steady way throughout 1993. By September of 1993, Gerry Adams of Sinn Fein/PIRA and John Hume of the SDLP, had agreed that “Northern Ireland had a right to self-determination, that there could be no internal settlement within Northern Ireland, and that while the consent of unionists would have to be obtained, unionists could not have a veto over what happened.”\textsuperscript{237}

Meanwhile, the British government had re-opened channels of communication with Sinn Fein in 1990, and was actively seeking a means of incorporating Sinn Fein into the legitimate political process. PIRA violence remained fairly high throughout these negotiations, largely because the organizational leadership remained unconvinced that negotiations with the British would actually lead to a viable solution. Additionally, Loyalist violence was continuing at fairly regular intervals throughout the early 1990s. UDA attacks climbed steadily through 1992, and UVF

\textsuperscript{236} Fitzduff, 123
\textsuperscript{237} Fraser, 72-73
attacks (while less consistent) continued as well. Throughout the history of this conflict, attacks perpetrated by Loyalist organizations were usually met with response in kind by Republican groups, and vice versa. The period during the early 1990s was no exception to this rule. Finally, the continued high levels of PIRA violence must also be viewed in the context of the failed negotiations of the 1970s. The PIRA had found itself at a significant disadvantage after the failed truce of 1975, and PIRA leaders had emphasized multiple times in the ensuing months and years that the organization would never again agree to a truce unless the British government provided clear assurance that significant action would be taken.

In spite of numerous setbacks, negotiations continued on all sides throughout this period. After dragging on for several years, talks between the British and Irish governments finally culminated in the release of the Downing Street Declaration of 1993. This Declaration will be discussed in greater detail below, but is generally considered to be the definitive beginning of the current peace process. Although the PIRA and Sinn Fein were not directly involved in the development of this document, the Downing Street Declaration officially began the process of incorporating the Republican perspective into the legitimate and open political discourse.

2. Terrorist Organizations

An examination of this period reveals the longevity of organizations like the PIRA, the UVF, and the UDA. All of these groups remained extremely active in both the terrorist and political arena throughout the 1990s and into the 2000s. The Official

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238 See Appendix E to for exact data on annual levels of Loyalist terrorist activity.
IRA had, at this point, essentially abandoned terrorist violence, choosing instead to focus on the political arena as a means of achieving the organization’s aims. As the historical development of these groups has already been addressed in some detail, it is unnecessary to provide a detailed analysis here. The only main change in the nature of these groups occurred when the UVF and the UDA joined forces to create an umbrella Loyalist organization known as the Combined Loyalist Military Command (CLMC). Both groups continued to carry out attacks under their previously established names, but the CLMC served as a center of political and policy debate. The 1994 Loyalist ceasefire was the result of debate within the CLMC, and was announced by representatives of that organization.\textsuperscript{239}

The rest of this section will focus on an analysis of the three terrorist organizations that emerged during this period. All of these groups were the results of fragmentation within the pre-existing organizations discussed above. These three organizations were the Continuity IRA (CIRA), the Real IRA (RIRA), and the Loyalist Volunteer Force (LVF).\textsuperscript{240} These groups rejected the possibility of a negotiated settlement, and refused to abide by the terms of the 1998 Belfast Agreement.

The Continuity IRA was the first splinter group to emerge, and was actually officially founded in 1986. In 1986, Sinn Fein and the PIRA agreed to drop the long-standing policy of abstention from any participation in the government of the

\textsuperscript{239} Fraser, 74
\textsuperscript{240} Another organization, the Red Hand Defenders (RHC), is widely acknowledged as an alias for the LVF, and possibly for the UDA as well. My data on LVF attacks includes RHC attacks for the period between 1997 and 2005, as these attacks were likely carried out by members of the same group.
Republic of Ireland. Ironically, this same debate had led to the original splintering of the organization in 1969, when Cathal Goulding had proposed an end to abstentionism from the Dail in Ireland, Stormont in Belfast, and Westminster in Britain. In 1986, however, Gerry Adams dramatically scaled down this proposal, suggesting only that the ban on the Irish parliament be lifted, thus retaining the policy of abstentionism for both Stormont and Westminster. Adams also developed a convincing justification for participation in the Irish parliament, claiming that increased engagement in the Republic of Ireland “would translate into more safe houses for the IRA to use, more money, and more recruits.” Although this was not actually the case, this reasoning proved persuasive enough to retain the support of the vast majority of PIRA members.

One small faction refused to accept Sinn Fein’s involvement in the Dail, and broke away from the PIRA to form Republican Sinn Fein (RSF) and the Continuity Irish Republican Army (CIRA). The CIRA was intended to be the military wing of Republican Sinn Fein, but the organization was entirely inactive until 1996. Since 1996, however, the CIRA has been relatively active, utilizing both terrorist tactics and involvement in organized crime in an attempt to derail the peace process.

The creation of the Real IRA (RIRA) represented yet another ideological fragmentation within the PIRA. The Real IRA was created in 1997, when a number

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241 Moloney, 288
243 Moloney, 152
244 Guelke, 37
of dissident leaders resigned from the PIRA Army Council as a result of the PIRA decision to declare a ceasefire and engage in the negotiations that would lead to the 1998 Belfast Agreement.\textsuperscript{245} The RIRA portrayed itself as the true representative of Republican ideals, and maintained that the organization would continue to fight until the ultimate goal of a united Ireland was achieved.\textsuperscript{246} The RIRA has remained extremely small, as the majority of PIRA members chose to follow the leadership of Gerry Adams and to work towards a negotiated solution. However, the RIRA remains a significant organization, largely due to the fact that this group carried out one of the single most deadly attacks in Northern Irish history. The now infamous Bombing of Omagh took place on August 15, 1998, less than three months after Northern Ireland had voted overwhelmingly in favor of the Belfast Agreement (Good Friday Agreement). This attack killed twenty-nine people and injured over two hundred.\textsuperscript{247} This attack, more than anything else, remains the defining characteristic of the RIRA.

Finally, the Loyalist Volunteer Force (LVF) was the primary Loyalist splinter group to emerge during this period. Led by Billy Wright, a UVF commander, dissident within the UVF began to consider the possibility of forming a new organization as early as 1994. Wright was displeased with the UVF decision to declare a ceasefire in 1994, and tensions only grew when the UVF leadership began to consider the possibility of negotiation in 1996. Wright and his followers began to

\textsuperscript{245} Moloney, 479
\textsuperscript{247} Dingley (2001), 451
pull away from the UVF throughout 1996, and eventually collaborated with UDA dissidents to create the LVF. 248

During the period leading up to the Belfast Agreement, the LVF worked towards the destabilization of the peace process, in the hopes that this would prevent any possibility of an independent Northern Ireland or a united Ireland. This group was best known for its campaign of assassinations, which primarily targeted Catholic civilians and moderate unionists. 249 The activities of the LVF were curtailed by the 1997 arrest and assassination of Billy Wright, and the group declared a ceasefire.

The PIRA, UVF, and UDA all committed to ceasefires in the build-up to the Belfast agreement, and the PIRA began to officially disarm in 2005. All three of these organizations were responsible for small breaches of the ceasefires between 1998 and 2005, but violence remained far below the levels of any previous period. The LVF ceasefire has been nominally maintained, but the group has continued to operate under pseudonyms. Violent attacks have significantly declined since the group renewed its ceasefire in 2005, but the LVF is still believed to be heavily involved in criminal activities. The RIRA did commit to a ceasefire in the aftermath of the Omagh bombing (August 15, 1998), but the organization has continued to operate as well. Due to the low membership and popular support, the RIRA has also largely turned to organized crime. The CIRA remains the only Republican terrorist organization that has not declared at least a nominal ceasefire since the Good Friday

249 Silke, 23
Accords/Belfast Agreement. The group is extremely small (less than fifty members), but continues to utilize terrorist violence and organized crime to pursue its goals.

3. Counterterrorism Effectiveness

The years between 1990 and 2005 did not feature the same breadth of traditional counterterrorism measures as the period of 1969-1974. This was due largely to the changing nature of the situation, and a developing understanding on the part of the British government that military intervention alone would not bring a permanent halt to the violence. In spite of the fact that most of the government policies during this period do not immediately appear to be counterterrorism, the effectiveness model developed in the first chapter of this thesis remains applicable. The policies selected for this time period had a direct impact on the dynamics of the conflict, and on the utility of terrorist violence. Additionally, these policies were primarily directed at pressuring and encouraging paramilitary organizations to disarm. In the Introduction, I defined counterterrorism as any measure designed to limit “the capabilities, motivations or legitimacy of a designated terrorist organization.” The policies discussed in this section clearly fall within the framework of this definition. I have selected four policies to focus on from this time period; the Downing Street Declaration (1993), the Framework Documents (1995), the Mitchell Report and the British response (1996), and the Belfast Agreement (1998). I believe that these measures provide a representative sampling of British policies during this period.

I have opted not to examine counterterrorism measures implemented after the 1998 Belfast Agreement, as this time period presents a much more limited
demonstration of counterterrorism in Northern Ireland. Particularly after September 11, 2001 and the start of the Global War on Terror (GWOT), British policies shifted focus away from Northern Ireland and towards the “new” terrorist threat. Additionally, Northern Irish terrorist activity never again reached the levels of the early 1990s, and was largely conducted by small splinter groups or by dissidents of unknown organizational membership. The most significant issues during this period were the continuation of the decommissioning debate (discussed in more detail below), and the actual implementation of the Belfast Agreement. The years from 1998 to 2005 are included on the graphs in the appendix, and demonstrate the relative decline in violence during this period.

**Downing Street Declaration (1993)**

The Downing Street Declaration was the culmination of years of painfully slow negotiation on numerous levels. Although the Hume/Adams talks were not a direct component of the negotiation leading to the Downing Street Declaration, the compromise developed by these individuals certainly provided a basis for the principles outlined in the Declaration. In fact, the principles established during the Hume/Adams talks were directly echoed in the Downing Street Declaration.\(^{250}\) The Declaration itself was the result of lengthy talks between Albert Reynolds (the leader of the Irish government) and Prime Minister John Major of Britain.

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\(^{250}\) Moloney, 284
The Declaration clearly affirmed that the British government had “no selfish or strategic or economic interest in Northern Ireland.” 251 Whether or not this rhetoric was in fact truthful, the presence of this statement in the Declaration clearly demonstrated a high level of responsiveness to the document developed by Hume and Adams in the years leading up to the Declaration. Hume and Adams had agreed that a commitment of this nature on the part of the British government was absolutely essential to the development of a negotiated settlement.

The Declaration further affirmed that the British government would “uphold the democratic wish of a greater number of the people in Northern Ireland on the issue of whether they prefer to support the Union or a sovereign united Ireland.” 252 Additionally, the Declaration adopted the two-fold consent principle designed by Hume, Adams and Alec Reid (a Catholic priest who worked closely with Hume and Adams throughout their negotiations). The two-fold consent principle, as laid out in the Downing Street Declaration, was as follows.

“The British Government agrees that it is for the people of the island of Ireland alone, by agreement between the two parts respectively, to exercise their right of self-determination on the basis of consent, freely and concurrently given, North and South, to bring about a united Ireland, if that is their wish.” 253

This direct acceptance of principles developed by Hume, Adams, and Reid represented the first true attempt to bring the Republican viewpoint into the peace process. This willingness to incorporate the ideas and input of Sinn Fein was

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252 Downing Street Declaration, Paragraph 4.
253 Downing Street Declaration, Paragraph 4.
tempered by a reminder that neither the British nor the Irish government was willing to work directly with any organization or party that supported or engaged in acts of paramilitarism and terrorism.\textsuperscript{254} However, the Declaration clearly extended an invitation to Sinn Fein in the event that this party renounced their support of PIRA violence. After proscribing the use and support of terrorism, the Declaration affirms that “democratically mandated parties which establish a commitment to exclusively peaceful methods…are free to participate fully in democratic politics and to join in dialogue in due course between the Governments and the political parties.”\textsuperscript{255}

The inclusion of this phrase, coupled with the adoption of the Hume/Adams principles, was a clear attempt to encourage Sinn Fein and the PIRA to disarm and engage in peaceful negotiations. However, the authors of the Declaration were extremely careful not to move too far away from the desires and opinions of the unionist movement. The Declaration certainly embraced a number of Republican principles, but also attempted to gain the support of the unionist and Loyalist communities by clearly stating that only a majority vote within Northern Ireland could change the constitutional status of the province. The Declaration vacillated considerably in an attempt to encourage terrorist organizations on either side of the conflict to consider a ceasefire. As I will discuss below, this lack of a clear position actually bewildered and concerned both Republican and Loyalist organizations, leading to a temporary increase in violence before the ceasefires of 1994.

\textsuperscript{254} \textit{Downing Street Declaration}, Paragraph 10
\textsuperscript{255} \textit{Downing Street Declaration}, Paragraph 10
*Was the Downing Street Declaration an attack on terrorist motivations, as well as capabilities?*

The Downing Street Declaration was certainly intended to be an attack on the motivations of both Republican and Loyalist organizations. As I will discuss in my analysis of the data, this initiative appears to be something of an anomaly in my assessment of effective counterterrorism. The Declaration was a direct attempt to calm tensions between Loyalist and Republican terrorist organizations, but it was (at least temporarily) responsible for elevating the motivations of terrorist organizations on both sides of the conflict. This was primarily due to the fact that the authors of the Declaration simply tried too hard to address the concerns of both Loyalists and Republicans. After considerable debate during the months following the Declaration, the targeted terrorist organizations agreed that the Declaration, while extremely imperfect, was at least a step in the right direction.

With the exception of the secret negotiators, members of the PIRA were concerned about the implications of the Declaration, as it appeared to guarantee the Protestant majority the right to determine the future of Northern Ireland. The Declaration did incorporate elements of the policies designed by Adams, Hume, and Reid, but this was unknown to most members of the Republican movement.\(^{256}\) The Declaration affirmed the importance of dialogue between Republicans and Loyalists, and maintained that Irish unity could only occur if those in favor of such an outcome were able to persuade those who did not, “peacefully and without coercion or

\(^{256}\) Moloney, 285-286
violence.”\textsuperscript{257} This type of reasoning sounded entirely unconvincing to members of a movement that had long advocated violence as the only way to obtain their goal.

Upon first examination, the Declaration lacked the substantive, clear political concessions that the PIRA demanded in return for a ceasefire. Sinn Fein sought clarification of the proposals in the Declaration, while the PIRA continued a steady campaign of violence. Although Sinn Fein did eventually reject the Declaration, the party was prepared to accept the document as “a formula for further discussion.”\textsuperscript{258} The Declaration had not given the Republican movement enough, but it demonstrated that the British and Irish governments were open to a number of Republican proposals.\textsuperscript{259} As I will discuss in the following section, the ceasefire endured for eighteen months, but collapsed when the PIRA became frustrated with the actions of the British government. The delayed implementation of the ceasefire and its subsequent collapse suggest that the Downing Street Declaration was, at best, a temporary political peace offering, which had only a limited impact on Republican terrorist motives. The Declaration certainly represented the beginnings of what would be an extremely productive peace process, but did not immediately serve as an effective offensive against PIRA motivations.

The same argument can be made with regards to Loyalist organizations. The British and Irish governments certainly did attempt to reassure Loyalists and Unionists by sending a copy of the Declaration to the Ulster Volunteer Force before it

\textsuperscript{257} *Downing Street Declaration*, Paragraph 7
\textsuperscript{258} Michael Lawrence Rowan Smith, *Fighting For Ireland? The Military Strategy of the Irish Republican Movement* (London: Routledge, 1997), 212
\textsuperscript{259} Guelke, 43
was officially released. An attached document promised that the Declaration was not attempting to push for a united Ireland, and that it did not undermine Northern Ireland’s place in the United Kingdom.²⁶⁰ Although this certainly persuaded some unionists of the Declaration’s merits, Loyalists remained uncertain about the intentions of the British government and the Irish government with regards to Northern Ireland. Loyalist violence continued throughout the first half of 1994 as the UVF and the UDA sought further information about the true meaning of the Declaration.²⁶¹ Loyalist violence closely followed the pattern of PIRA violence in the immediate aftermath of the Downing Street Declaration.

The establishment of the PIRA ceasefire on August 31, 1994 was closely followed by ceasefire declarations from the Combined Loyalist Military Command (CLMC). Although the Downing Street Declaration facilitated the Loyalist ceasefire, the Declaration itself would not have been sufficient in the absence of a PIRA ceasefire. The CLMC, representing both the UVF and the UDA declared a Loyalist ceasefire on October 13, 1994, calling for universal respect of “our differing views of freedom, culture and aspiration,” and resolving to never again permit the political circumstances to “degenerate into bloody warfare.”²⁶² Despite the optimistic tone of

the statement, the CLMC also clearly demonstrated the fragility of the Loyalist ceasefire. The CLMC statement explained that the permanence of the Loyalist ceasefire would be entirely dependant on “the continued cessation of all nationalist/republican violence,” and that the “sole responsibility for a return to War” lay with the Republican organizations.\(^\text{263}\)

\textit{Did the Downing Street Declaration include wedge strategies/appeal to moderates?}

The Downing Street Declaration was one of the few policies adopted by the British and Irish governments that can clearly be defined as a wedge strategy. The text of the Declaration contained a direct appeal to moderates, and was clearly aimed at gaining the support of Sinn Fein. As discussed above, the Declaration proclaimed that any political party that renounced violent actions and operated within the framework of the democratic process would be a welcome addition to future negotiations.\(^\text{264}\) Although Sinn Fein was not mentioned by name in the Declaration, it was clear to all parties involved that this particular provision was intended for the political wing of the IRA. The Declaration marked the first attempt to officially bring Sinn Fein into the negotiations, and gave the party legitimacy as a representative of the Republican movement.

Sinn Fein refused to publicly accept the Downing Street Declaration, but did generate a comprehensive list of concerns after having received clarification from the British government. Rather than entirely rejecting the Declaration, the Sinn Fein

\(^{263}\) Combined Loyalist Military Command Ceasefire Statement

\(^{264}\) Downing Street Declaration, Paragraph 10.
Leadership highlighted their areas of disagreement, and set about urging the PIRA to declare the required ceasefire.\textsuperscript{265} The Declaration did not pull Sinn Fein and the PIRA apart (an effect usually associated with wedge strategies), but it provided Sinn Fein with the necessary political power and influence to exercise a degree of authority over the PIRA. Although it took a significant amount of time, the Sinn Fein leadership was able to at least temporarily persuade the PIRA to pursue Republican goals through non-violent means. The PIRA certainly had no tactical imperative to implement a ceasefire during this period, as the group retained “the guns, the expertise, and the recruits to go on killing.”\textsuperscript{266} In the absence of material constraints, the PIRA simply had to be persuaded that the Downing Street Declaration represented at least a small step towards a solution that would be acceptable to the Republican movement.

The Downing Street Declaration did not have quite as dramatic an effect on Loyalist organizations, but did exacerbate the divide between the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) and the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP). Both parties found certain aspects of the Declaration troubling, but the DUP, led by Ian Paisley took a far more dramatic stance against the compromise proposed by the document.\textsuperscript{267} While the DUP and the UUP struggled to come to some sort of consensus regarding the Declaration, the UVF and the UDA continued to increase their attacks.\textsuperscript{268} The Declaration did not create a significant wedge within the Loyalist movement, but the

\textsuperscript{265} Brian Rowan, \textit{Behind the Lines: The Story of the IRA and Loyalist Ceasefires} (Belfast: Blackstaff House, 1995)
\textsuperscript{266} Guelke, 43
\textsuperscript{267} Boyce (1997), 54-55
\textsuperscript{268} See Appendix E for annual attacks and fatalities
subsequent negotiations and clarifications provided moderates with the necessary ammunition to make a strong argument that the safety of the Union was assured.\textsuperscript{269}

In sum, the Downing Street Declaration represented a clear appeal to moderates within the Republican movement, and granted Sinn Fein unprecedented legitimacy and a place in open political discourse. The effects of the Downing Street Declaration, however, were insufficient to merit a Loyalist ceasefire until numerous clarifications were discussed and the PIRA announced a cessation of hostilities. Although the Republican and Loyalist ceasefires were not implemented immediately, the Downing Street Declaration and subsequent clarifications certainly contributed to their establishment. The ceasefires on both sides were by no means received with unanimous enthusiasm within each movement, and internal tensions began to develop. The pursuit of the Belfast Agreement brought these tensions to a breaking point, leading to the appearance of splinter groups like the RIRA, the CIRA and the LVF. Thus, although the Downing Street Declaration was not the only policy leading to this fragmentation, it certainly contributed to the beginnings of this process.

\textit{Did the Downing Street Declaration address the underlying tensions and the concerns of the “represented” populations?}

The Downing Street Declaration, as the natural successor to the Anglo-Irish Agreement, represented a clear attempt on the part of the British and Irish governments to address the underlying causes of the Northern Irish conflict. While

\textsuperscript{269} \textit{Combined Loyalist Military Command Ceasefire Statement}
the Declaration did include a great deal of ambiguity, the authors of the document did make an effort to address the concerns of the populations “represented” by the PIRA, the UVF and the UDA. The Declaration further developed the “Irish dimension” of the conflict through the adoption of the two-fold consent principle, and suggested that Irish unity was a real possibility.\(^{270}\) Finally, the British government clearly stated that it had no intention of forcing Northern Ireland to remain in the Union, and claimed a complete lack of selfish interest in the region. These assertions directly addressed the concerns of Catholics, nationalists and Republicans (although they still fell short of the demands of the PIRA and Sinn Fein). Although the Protestant majority could still ensure that Northern Ireland remained a part of the United Kingdom, this population no longer had a guaranteed veto over Irish unity. In the event that the nationalists could persuade a majority “peacefully and without coercion,” the British government would respect and facilitate Irish unity.\(^{271}\)

Although these proposals were not substantive enough to meet with the full approval of the PIRA and Sinn Fein, the Declaration clearly resonated with a significant portion of the Northern Irish Catholic population. In a poll taken shortly after the announcement of the Declaration, 87% of Northern Irish Catholics supported the principles outlined in the document.\(^{272}\) Although the Declaration was greeted with enthusiasm by this population, it is important to note that Catholic trust in the British government actually declined slightly after the establishment of the Declaration. In 1993, before the Declaration was made public, 20% of Northern Irish

\(^{270}\) _Downing Street Declaration_, Paragraph 4

\(^{271}\) _Downing Street Declaration_, Paragraph 6

\(^{272}\) Davis, 37
Catholics believed that the British government was acting in their best interests.\textsuperscript{273} By 1994, this number had dropped to 17\%.\textsuperscript{274} This reflects the fact that, while Catholics were hopeful about the contents of the Declaration, they remained unsure as to whether the British and Irish governments intended to take substantive action.

Finally, the Declaration may well have contributed to a gradual shift in Catholic perceptions as to whether or not a united Ireland was a legitimate possibility. In 1993, 71\% of Catholics believed that the unification of Ireland was ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ unlikely. However, this number declined slightly to 67\% in 1994, most likely due to the combination of the Declaration, the PIRA ceasefire, and the start of preliminary negotiations. As the negotiations continued into 1995, 59\% of Catholics believed that a united Ireland was unlikely.\textsuperscript{275} As I will discuss in the next section, this number spiked again after the collapse of the PIRA ceasefire and the temporary breakdown of negotiations. Although Catholics remained somewhat unconvinced that a united Ireland was a real possibility, the general enthusiasm for the Downing Street Declaration can be partially explained by an examination of several other public opinion data collected during this period. While the majority of Catholics did favor the idea of a united Ireland, there was certainly a minority voice advocating for continued membership in the United Kingdom. Additionally, the

\textsuperscript{273} Economic and Social Research Council, \textit{Northern Ireland Social Attitudes Survey} (1993)
\url{http://www.ark.ac.uk/sol/surveys/gen_social_att/nisa/1993/website/}

\textsuperscript{274} Economic and Social Research Council, \textit{Northern Ireland Social Attitudes Survey} (1994)
\url{http://www.ark.ac.uk/sol/surveys/gen_social_att/nisa/1994/website/}

\textsuperscript{275} Economic and Social Research Council, \textit{Northern Ireland Social Attitudes Surveys} (1993-1995)
Declaration offered the opportunity for democratic self-determination, which a majority of Catholics supported even in the event that Northern Ireland opted to remain part of the United Kingdom.\footnote{Economic and Social Data Service, \textit{Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey} (1998). http://www.esds.ac.uk/findingData/snDescription.asp?sn=4229
Note: this question was not added to the survey until 1998, which is why there are no data before this year. However, in 1998, 60\% of Catholics claimed that they would “happily accept” the wishes of the majority, even if the people of Northern Ireland never voted to become part of a united Ireland. These data suggest that the highest priority of the Catholic population during this period was to simply obtain the right to democratic self-determination.}

The Declaration made a similar attempt to appeal to the Protestant and unionist populations. Reynolds promised that the Irish government would make every effort to eliminate aspects of the Irish state that could be interpreted as posing a “real and substantial threat to [the Unionist] way of life and ethos.”\footnote{\textit{Downing Street Declaration}, Paragraph 6} The Taoiseach also attempted to reassure the Protestant and unionist communities that the Irish government would not attempt to force unity on Northern Ireland, and that the Republic of Ireland would accept any democratic decision on this topic. Finally, Reynolds promised that, in the event of a united Ireland, Protestant rights and quality of life would not diminish in any way.

The British government made similar assertions, attempting to reassure the Protestant and Unionist communities that there would be no attempt to force Northern Ireland into a state of unity with the Republic of Ireland. Additionally, the British government clearly stated that any future arrangement would include “institutional recognition of the special links that exist[ed] between the peoples of Britain and
Ireland. By reaffirming the existence of these “special links,” the Declaration reminded Protestants and Unionists that the establishment of self-determination did not necessarily entail the severing of all connections between Northern Ireland and the United Kingdom.

In the immediate aftermath of the Declaration, the Protestant community remained extremely divided. Approximately 43% of Northern Irish Protestants supported the Declaration, a far more limited demonstration of support than that expressed by the Catholic population. This lack of public consensus closely reflected the intense political debates then occurring between the UUP and the DUP over the merits of the Declaration. Although the Declaration appeared to confirm the power of the Protestant majority, a number of unionists were disturbed by the lack of commitment to Northern Ireland expressed by the British government. Despite the assurances offered by Reynolds, the increasing role of the Irish government was interpreted by some unionists as a means of forcing Northern Ireland into a united Ireland. Unionists and Loyalists explained that their doubts emanated from the alienation created by the Anglo-Irish Agreement, and the fear that this Declaration represented a nationalist “peace offensive” with the goal of bringing about a united Ireland.

During the years leading up to the Declaration, Northern Irish Protestant trust in the British government declined from 40% in 1991 to 29% in 1993. This number

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278 *Downing Street Declaration*, Paragraph 9
279 Davis, 37
continued to fall in the aftermath of the Downing Street Declaration, as Protestants became increasingly unsure about the implications of the peace process. Due to the high levels of division within the Protestant community, the Downing Street Declaration cannot be described as an entirely successful attempt to address the concerns of the population “represented” by the Loyalist terrorist organizations. However, the Declaration was not a complete failure in this regard, as nearly half of the Protestant community did express at least some measure of support for the proposals. The pressure exerted by this portion of the Protestant community became even more relevant after the PIRA ceasefire declaration on August 31, 1994. Although Loyalist organizations remained hesitant about giving up their violent struggle, the approval of this percentage of the Northern Irish Protestant community made it extremely difficult to ignore the possibility of peaceful action.

**Collapse of the Ceasefire (1996)**

The collapse of the PIRA ceasefire itself was not a manifestation of government counterterrorism policy. However, the PIRA leadership blamed the British policies in this period for rendering a continued ceasefire utterly untenable. This section will address those policies in greater detail, and provide an analysis within the framework of the three established effectiveness criteria. I will separately address the effectiveness of the Framework Documents (February 1995) and the British policies surrounding the report of the International Body on Arms

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Decommissioning (January 1996). These policies will be examined within the context of their role in the collapse of the PIRA ceasefire.

**The Framework Documents (February 1995)**

Within the context of the ceasefires, the British and Irish governments began to work towards the establishment of all-party talks. These negotiations culminated in the release of *A New Framework for Agreement* and *A Framework for Accountable Government in Northern Ireland* on February 22, 1995. The Framework documents suggested the construction of a three-stranded peace process, which would include the establishment of institutions within Northern Ireland, as well as the establishment of cooperative “North/South” and “East/West” institutions. As these titles indicate, the North/South institutions would be designed to facilitate cooperation and dialogue between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, while the East/West institutions would achieve the same purpose for the governments of Ireland and Britain.\(^{282}\) The *Framework for Accountable Government in Northern Ireland* laid out the necessary criteria for the establishment of new governmental institutions, focusing on the development of accountability and the participation of both communities.\(^{283}\)

The Framework documents also made a clear attempt to reassure unionists, nationalists, Loyalists and Republicans by establishing processes through which the

http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/fd22295.htm

http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/fd22295b.htm
British and Irish governments would enact the proposals developed in the Downing Street Declaration. The Irish government announced its intention to amend the Irish Constitution in order to eliminate any “territorial claim of right to jurisdiction in Northern Ireland contrary to the will of a majority of its people.”284 This provision of the Irish Constitution had long been resented by members of the unionist and Loyalist movements, and its proposed removal represented a clear attempt to ease the tension between Northern Irish unionists and the Republic of Ireland.

In similar fashion, the British government reiterated its own neutrality on the Northern Ireland question, and promised to formalize this position by either amending or replacing the 1920 Government of Ireland Act. This proposal was directed primarily at gaining the support of nationalists and Republicans, many of whom had remained somewhat skeptical of British neutrality statements up to this point.

**Did the Framework Documents attack terrorist motivations as well as capabilities?**

Like the Downing Street Declaration, the Framework Documents represented a direct attempt to weaken the motivations and justifications employed by both the PIRA and the CLMC. The Irish government made a concerted effort to improve relations between the Republic of Ireland and the Loyalist movement, while the British government focused on demonstrating true neutrality to skeptical Republicans and nationalists. An examination of the Republican and Loyalist responses to the Documents reveals a relatively consistent lack of enthusiasm, and a general

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284 *A New Framework for Agreement*, Paragraph 21
expression of concern regarding the ambiguity of the proposals. Nationalists and Republicans did express a slightly greater degree of interest in the Documents, seeing within them an opportunity to work towards greater Irish involvement in the Northern Ireland question. However, Republicans remained concerned that the British government was not truly committed to remaining neutral. Although promises of neutrality had been given several times, British officials continued to reassure unionists and Loyalists by asserting firm support of the Union. This type of statement undermined the developing trust between the Republican movement and the British government.

Both main Unionist political parties (UUP and DUP) expressed outrage and disgust when the Framework Documents were released, arguing that the Documents created “an all-Ireland structure with executive power, which will be a precursor to a united Ireland.” The UVF and UDA expressed similar concerns, but actually argued against the somewhat extreme responses of the UUP and DUP, saying that these parties were not giving the peace process a legitimate chance.

Although both Republicans and Loyalist organizations expressed significant concerns regarding the contents of the Framework Documents, neither movement seriously considered the abandonment of their ceasefires. The Framework

288 Cash, 209-210
Documents did not please these organizations, but clearly facilitated the creation of a situation in which ideological battles could be fought in the political arena. Even as they expressed their concerns regarding the proposals in the Framework, the PIRA, UVF and UDA reaffirmed their commitments to the ceasefires, and resolved to “pursue political progress through democratic means.” This continued faith in the political process suggests that the Framework Documents were at least able to prevent the development of stronger terrorist motivations.

Did the Framework Documents include wedge strategies/appeal to moderates?

Unlike the Downing Street Declaration, the Framework Documents did not constitute a direct wedge strategy. Given the fact that both the PIRA and the CLMC had (for the most part) carefully enforced their declared ceasefires, the authors of the Frameworks had little motivation to isolate or alienate members of these organizations. In fact, the Documents lauded the ceasefire declarations on both sides of the conflict, and encouraged both groups to continue working towards their goals within the context of the political process. However, the Frameworks did contribute to the developing tensions within both the Republican and Loyalist movements. Members of each movement harbored significant concerns regarding the true implications of these documents, and continued to express objections to the prolongation of the ceasefires. Eventually, these dissidents would be responsible for the emergence of the CIRA, the RIRA, and the LVF. Like the Downing Street

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289 Fitzduff, 127
290 A New Framework for Agreement, Paragraphs 3-4
Declaration, the Frameworks were not the only cause of this fragmentation, but they certainly facilitated the process. The very existence of extremist dissidents within each terrorist organization made it inevitable that the proposals in the Frameworks would widen the divide between the main body of the organization and these smaller groups.

The Frameworks did include a continued effort to gain the support of moderates on both sides of the conflict. By constructing a set of guidelines for the development of Northern Irish governmental structures, the Frameworks attempted to assure the main political parties of a continued active and influential role in the politics of Northern Ireland. Additionally, the guidelines for new Northern Irish political institutions outlined a structure in which every constitutional party would play a role proportional to their electoral strength.\(^{291}\) This provision strengthened the offer of participation extended to Sinn Fein in the Downing Street Declaration, and attempted to reassure unionists that they would still retain a significant degree of political influence under any new system.

These proposals backfired to a certain degree, especially within the unionist political parties. Members of the DUP and the UUP argued that the British government was attempting to undermine the authority of the Northern Irish political system by explicitly outlining the necessary characteristics of any new institutions.\(^{292}\) However, moderates within the UUP (as well as members of the CLMC) were able to utilize the Frameworks as a starting point for continued negotiation, and sought to

\(^{291}\) A Framework for Accountable Government in Northern Ireland, Paragraph 3, Section 7.
\(^{292}\) Cash, 211
express unionist and Loyalist concerns within the context of the peace process. The immediate aftermath of the Frameworks saw the emergence of figures like John Taylor, who became the deputy leader of the UUP in 1995. Taylor certainly objected to numerous aspects of the Frameworks, but he strongly advocated cooperation and discussion with the Republic of Ireland and Sinn Fein. These arguments were largely prompted by the numerous changes and initiatives proposed by the Irish government in both the Downing Street Declaration and the Frameworks.\textsuperscript{293}

The emergence and rise to power of figures like Taylor, as well as the enduring commitment of both factions to a continued ceasefire, demonstrate that the Frameworks were at least partially successful in gaining the cooperation, however reluctant, of moderates. Additionally, the Frameworks represented another step in the process of isolating hard-line extremists within each terrorist organization. As discussed above, there is little evidence to suggest that this was the main goal of the Documents, but the contribution of the Frameworks to the peace process ensured the continued dissatisfaction of those individuals who were unwilling to accept anything other than full concessions from the government.

\textit{Did the Framework Documents address the underlying causes of the conflict, or attempt to appeal to the “represented” populations?}

Like the Downing Street Declaration, the Framework Documents did strive to address the concerns of the two main communities in Northern Ireland. In this attempt to appeal to everyone, the British and Irish governments were certainly guilty

\footnote{Cash, 216}
of imbuing the Documents with an extraordinary degree of ambiguity and shallow conciliation. However, these flaws were the result of a genuine effort to address the concerns of both the Protestant majority and the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland. The Frameworks asserted the governments’ commitment to the development of a settlement that would not violate “the essential principles or long-term aspirations or interests of either tradition or of either community.”

This essential theme informed numerous segments of the Frameworks, and the governments resolved to utilize the principles of the Downing Street Declaration to address the conflict between the two communities in a new, truly equitable way. In order to achieve these goals, the British and Irish governments proposed extensive reforms with regard to the political system within Northern Ireland, as well as the establishment of North/South and East/West institutions. The Frameworks can be clearly classified as a concerted effort to gain the support of the divided communities in Northern Ireland.

Public opinion data taken during this period indicate that the Northern Irish public remained extremely divided with regards to the constitutional status of the province. A poll taken in 1996, approximately one year after the release of the Framework Documents, found that 28% of Northern Irish respondents preferred a system of direct rule from Britain, while the other strongest contenders were Irish unity (16%), and Anglo-Irish power-sharing (13%).

Although these data show a

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294 A New Framework for Agreement, Paragraph 7
295 A New Framework for Agreement, Paragraph 12
complete lack of consensus within Northern Ireland, all of the positions represented in the poll were addressed to some degree by the Framework Documents. While the British and Irish governments certainly did not produce proposals that satisfied all of these positions, they certainly made an effort to address and discuss them.

Data on political trust from the years surrounding the Framework Documents demonstrate relatively low levels of confidence in the British government. In the 1995 Northern Ireland Social Attitudes Survey, 22% of Catholics and 25% of Protestants believed that the British government could usually be trusted to act in the best interests of Northern Ireland. However, Catholic trust in the British government was on the ascendancy after the release of the Framework Documents, having increased from 17% in 1994. Additionally, levels of both Catholic and Protestant distrust in the British government declined in a significant way after the Frameworks were established. Protestant distrust in the British government declined from 30% in 1994 to 26% in 1995, while Catholic distrust experienced a far more dramatic drop from 42% in 1994 to 31% in 1995. Finally, levels of trust in the Irish government increased in both communities, while levels of distrust declined.


297 Northern Ireland Social Attitudes Survey (1995)
298 Northern Ireland Social Attitudes Survey (1994-1995)
299 Northern Ireland Social Attitudes Survey (1994-1995). Note: the question from which these data are drawn asks whether, in the event of a united Ireland, the Irish government could be trusted to work in the best interests of Northern Ireland. The prospect of a united Ireland may have caused lower levels of trust in unionist respondents than if they were simply asked whether the Irish government was currently working in the best interests of Northern Ireland. However, the question still provides useful insight into the sentiments of the Northern Irish population towards the Irish government, which is why I have included it.
The data confirm a continued state of division among the Catholic and Protestant communities with regard to the future of Northern Ireland. However, the overall decline in distrust of the British and Irish governments suggest that the Framework Documents had at least a slight positive effect on the populations “represented” by the PIRA and the CLMC. Public support for the continuation of a ceasefire also continued to grow throughout this period, indicating that the policies of the British and Irish governments had at least demonstrated that an acceptable negotiated solution was a possibility.


In the aftermath of the Framework Documents, the British government turned its attention to the question of decommissioning. Prime Minister John Major firmly believed that all-party talks could not begin until the PIRA and the CLMC began the process of decommissioning and handing over weapons. Although this proposal enjoyed widespread popular support in Northern Ireland, Sinn Fein and the PIRA refused to comply. This particular precondition had not been mentioned until after the declaration of the PIRA ceasefire, and was tantamount to a complete PIRA surrender in the eyes of the organizational leadership.\(^{300}\) Additionally, the leadership of Sinn Fein argued that Sinn Fein and the PIRA were two different organizations, and that negotiations with the political party should not be conditional on the

behavior of the terrorist organization. Loyalist organizations expressed a similar unwillingness to relinquish their weapons, especially given the intractability of the PIRA.

Although the fragile ceasefire held throughout this debate, the British and Irish governments began to realize that the issue of decommissioning had the potential to entirely derail the peace process. Adams warned the British government that Sinn Fein would not be able to prevent the collapse of the ceasefire unless significant political progress was made. This was likely no empty threat; the PIRA had maintained a state of complete readiness, and the organization was by no means united in favor of a protracted ceasefire.

In order to forestall the destruction of the tenuous peace, the British and Irish governments released a Joint Communiqué on November 28, 1995, which called for the creation of the International Body on Arms Decommissioning. This three-member committee was chaired by U.S. Senator George J. Mitchell, and presented an assessment of the situation on January 22, 1996. Mitchell’s presence on the committee was calculated to appease members of the Republican movement, as the Clinton administration was relatively sympathetic to nationalist aims. The final report of the committee acknowledged the importance of both Loyalist and

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301 Fraser, 75
Republican decommissioning, but concluded that “the paramilitary organizations will not decommission any arms prior to all-party negotiations.”

The committee asserted that “the commitment to peaceful and democratic means by those formerly supportive of politically motivated violence is genuine and irreversible.” However, discussions with Loyalist and Republican representatives revealed that prior decommissioning was not a realistic goal, and that it would be nearly impossible to implement. The members of the committee concurred with this assessment, and recommended that all-party negotiations begin without delay. The report did suggest that decommissioning occur concurrently with the all-party negotiations, and explained that this could be used as a confidence-building measure as the talks progressed.

Although the establishment of the committee represented a clear step, the British and Irish governments failed to follow through on numerous aspects of the Framework Documents. In fact, by the time the committee presented its recommendations, little to no progress had been made on any of the major Framework provisions. The British government accepted the recommendations of the committee, but immediately added another precondition for all-party negotiations; in order to select delegates for the negotiations, Forum Elections would have to be held in Northern Ireland. These elections would establish the Northern Ireland Forum, as well as facilitating the selection of delegates for the negotiations. While this was not necessarily a particularly onerous condition, members of the Republican movement

306 Mitchell, de Chastelain, and Holkeri, Paragraph 26
307 Mitchell, de Chastelain, and Holkeri, Paragraph 30
308 Mitchell, de Chastelain, and Holkeri, Paragraph 34
rejected this certain affirmation of their minority status. Additionally, Sinn Fein deeply resented the fact that the elections requirement was a direct concession to the requests of the UUP and the DUP. As I will discuss later in this chapter, the British administration did not have the luxury of angering the unionist parties, and refused to make any concessions with regard to the elections. The talks could not occur until all parties had proved the strength of their democratic mandate. Less than three weeks after this, the seventeen-month PIRA ceasefire collapsed.

*Did the British policies surrounding the Mitchell Report attack terrorist motivations, as well as capabilities?*

The An official PIRA statement of February 9, 1996 ended the group’s seventeen month ceasefire approximately one hour before a truck bomb was detonated at Canary Wharf in London. The statement issued by the PIRA blamed the British government (specifically Prime Minister John Major) for the collapse of negotiations and the failure of the ceasefire. The PIRA accused the British government of having squandered “this unprecedented opportunity to resolve the conflict,” and claimed that the government was not truly devoted to the peace process. These accusations confirm that any attempt on the part of the British government to undermine Republican terrorist motivations during this period was an

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309 Stevenson, 129
310 Guelke, 30
312 Irish Republican Army, *IRA Statement Ending the Ceasefire* (February 9, 1996) CAIN Internet site http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/ira9296.htm
abject failure. The same can largely be said with regards to Loyalist terrorist organizations, even though the UVA and the UVF maintained a nominal ceasefire throughout these years. The sole exception to this rule was the Anglo-Irish decision to establish an international committee to examine the question of decommissioning.

The Joint Communiqué establishing the International Body on the Decommissioning of Arms represented an attempt by the British and Irish governments to ease the tensions that threatened to derail the fragile peace process. Members of the UUP and DUP had refused to participate in negotiations with Sinn Fein until the PIRA began the process of decommissioning weapons, and neither Sinn Fein nor the PIRA appeared willing to comply. At the same time, the UVF and the UDA had refused to decommission their weapons, citing the PIRA’s continued state of armed readiness as justification. The establishment of an independent body to review the situation essentially negated any objections that the ensuing policy recommendations would be biased or unfair. As the bulk of the pressure to decommission was aimed at the PIRA, the inclusion of Senator George C. Mitchell on the committee represented an assurance that Republican concerns would be addressed. At this point in the conflict, Sinn Fein (particularly Gerry Adams) had developed a relatively friendly relationship with the U.S. government, and was eager for increased U.S. involvement in the peace process.\(^{313}\)

With the exception of the Joint Communiqué, however, British policy during this period actually increased motivations for both Republican and Loyalist violence. Sinn Fein and the PIRA were disgusted with the decommissioning demands of the

\(^{313}\) Stevenson, 129
British government, and claimed that this had never been part of any previous negotiations. In addition, the Sinn Fein and PIRA leadership argued that the PIRA could not decommission its arms as long as the British security forces continued to operate against members of the Republican movement.\textsuperscript{314} Although the issue of decommissioning was certainly an important one, the British government’s insistence on full compliance prior to negotiations simply gave hard-line members of the PIRA a stronger argument in favor resuming hostilities.

In addition to the decommissioning debate, the lack of substantive progress towards all-party negotiations steadily eroded the willingness of both Loyalist and Republican organizations to maintain a ceasefire.\textsuperscript{315} The British and Irish governments had proposed definitive action in the Framework Documents, but these proposals remained hypothetical months after the release of the Frameworks. As discussed above, the Irish government had attempted to reach out to Loyalists and unionists by planning for the removal of Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish Constitution, which claimed sovereignty over Northern Ireland. However, this had yet to occur months after the establishment of the Frameworks.\textsuperscript{316} In the context of pre-existing Loyalist suspicion of the Frameworks, the government’s failure to follow through on this proposal severely damaged Loyalist incentives to continue their work in the political arena.

Finally, the establishment of the Forum elections angered members of Sinn Fein and the PIRA, and was cited as one of the main causes of the PIRA resumption

\textsuperscript{314} Davis, 40
\textsuperscript{315} See Appendix E for data on annual Loyalist terror attacks
\textsuperscript{316} Davis, 41
of violence on February 9, 1996. As discussed above, the PIRA leadership viewed this added provision as yet another precondition that had not been discussed prior to the establishment of the ceasefire. The organization was entirely unwilling to accept a situation in which Republican representatives would certainly be in the minority. The decommissioning debate and the Forum elections together represented too much of a compromise for the PIRA, and indicated a lack of forthrightness and commitment on the part of the British government.

The lack of significant progress towards all-party negotiations and the interminable debate on the topic of decommissioning signaled to both Loyalist and Republican terrorist organizations that the peace process had begun to stall. The PIRA, the UVF and the UDA had declared ceasefires because it appeared that political action would be more productive than a continuation of violence. This argument was shaken by British policies leading up to and following the publication of the Mitchell Report.

Did the British response include wedge strategies/appeal to moderates?

With the exception of the Joint Communiqué, the policies of the British government during this period constituted the exact opposite of a wedge strategy. As discussed above, the strength of PIRA and CLMC unity regarding the ceasefires had begun to dissolve fairly early on, as small groups of dissidents became impatient with the lack of progress. However, the physical splits within the organizations did not occur until well after the PIRA had declared an end to the 1994 ceasefire. The British

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317 PIRA and CLMC ceasefire statements
policies during this period actually served to briefly unify the PIRA in particular, as both moderates and extremists perceived themselves to be the victims of an unfair attack.

The British insistence on decommissioning served to push Sinn Fein even closer to the PIRA, as the preconditions essentially described these two organizations as a single entity. The projected exclusion of Sinn Fein from the negotiations as a result of PIRA actions undermined the efforts of moderates who had been trying to move the party into the legitimate political sphere.\textsuperscript{318} The conditions developed by the British government diluted the invitation extended to Sinn Fein in the Downing Street Declaration, as the party was now required to force drastic action on the PIRA.

Although the British government did eventually accept the parallel decommissioning recommendation of the Mitchell committee, the elections requirement discussed above served to alienate many members of Sinn Fein. Any elected Northern Irish assembly would contain a majority of unionists and Loyalists, given the demographic composition of the province. This generated significant concern within both Sinn Fein and the PIRA that Republican positions would not be equitably heard. The UUP had originally suggested the elections, and members of the Republican movement resented the apparent influence the UUP exerted on the British government.\textsuperscript{319} The simple fact that the leadership of Sinn Fein refused to condemn the resumption of PIRA attacks provides compelling evidence that the British government’s policies had had the opposite of a wedge effect.

\textsuperscript{318} Davis, 40
\textsuperscript{319} Ingraham, 7
Although there was considerable debate within the unionist movement during this period, the Loyalist terrorist organizations remained relatively united and resolved. The UVF and the UDA, while agreeing to maintain their ceasefires, flatly rejected the possibility of decommissioning weapons before the start of all-party negotiations.

_Did the British response address underlying tensions/grievances of the “represented” populations?_

Public support for the actions of the British government declined in a relatively dramatic fashion in 1996, particularly within the Catholic community. In the aftermath of the British government’s insistence on decommissioning and elections, Catholic trust in the British government declined from 22% to 14%.\(^ {320} \) This drop likely reflected widespread concern over the fact that the peace process appeared to be faltering dangerously. Protestant trust in the British government experienced a similar shift from 25% to 18%. Meanwhile, both communities expressed an even larger increase in distrust of the British government.\(^ {321} \) Although both communities expressed approval for the prospect of decommissioning, the polling data demonstrate a significant degree of war weariness and impatience with the preconditions stalling the negotiations.

Catholics and Protestants alike expressed overwhelming support for the pursuit of a negotiated settlement, but found that the British government was not

\(^ {320} \) _Northern Ireland Social Attitudes Survey, 1996_

\(^ {321} \) Catholic distrust rose from 31% to 48% from 1995-1996, while Protestant distrust increased from 26% to 32%
doing nearly enough to further this process. 322 50% of Protestants did state that
decommissioning prior to the start of negotiations would be “preferable,” but 88% 
maintained that a more flexible arrangement would be “acceptable.” 52% of 
Catholics preferred negotiations followed by decommissioning, but 69% found any 
system of simultaneous decommissioning and talks “acceptable.” 323 In general, these 
data demonstrate that both Catholics and Protestants were eager for the success of the 
negotiations, and were willing to compromise in order to ensure the continued 
progress of all-party talks.

The public rejection of the British preconditions was further demonstrated by 
Catholic and Protestant views on whom should be included in the talks, and how 
problems with decommissioning should be addressed. Protestants largely preferred a 
clear ceasefire declaration before all-party negotiations, and Catholics responded that 
talks could take place in the absence of a ceasefire (but that the ceasefire precondition 
was acceptable). Although 34% of Protestants did “prefer” a ceasefire plus other 
preconditions, they found a simple ceasefire to be “acceptable.” 324 Finally, majorities 
of both Catholics and Protestants argued that all-party negotiations should not be

68% of Catholics and 51% of Protestants found that the British government was 
doing “not very much” or “nothing at all” to build confidence between the two main 
communities in Northern Ireland. An additional 19% of Catholics and 21% of 
Protestants found that the British government was doing only “a little” to build 
confidence. Similar percentages found that the British government was not doing 
enough to further the development of a negotiated settlement (63% of Catholics and 
49% of Protestants). An additional 23% of Catholics and 32% of Protestants found 
that the British government was doing only “a little.”
323 “After the Elections,” Question 3
324 “After the Elections,” Question 2
prevented, stalled or interrupted by the issue of decommissioning. 85% of Catholics found that a subcommittee should deal with any decommissioning issues, and that negotiations should not be delayed or stopped. An additional 10% found this solution to be either “acceptable” or “tolerable.” Protestants remained slightly more divided, but 56% preferred the subcommittee option, while an additional 28% found this option either “acceptable” or “tolerable.”

In light of these strong expressions of public opinion, it seems clear that the British government was relatively unsuccessful in addressing the grievances of the populations “represented” by the PIRA, the UVF and the UDA. As I will discuss in the next section, the British government made significant adjustments to their policies in the aftermath of renewed PIRA conflict and the 1997 general elections. These adjustments played a significant role in allowing the negotiations for the Belfast Agreement to go forward. However, during the period from late 1995 throughout much of 1996, the policies of the British government directly contradicted the expressed wishes of the Northern Irish population.

The Belfast Agreement (1998)

The PIRA called an end to their seventeen month ceasefire on February 9, 1996, and the group detonated a massive truck bomb at Canary Wharf (London) less than one hour after the announcement. The decision to launch a London attack

325 “After the Elections,” Question 4  
reflected the PIRA strategy throughout much of the 1990s, in that the organization had made a concerted effort to bring the conflict to the British mainland.\textsuperscript{327} Between 1990 and 2005, the PIRA launched 105 attacks in the United Kingdom, as compared to 44 between 1969 and 1974.\textsuperscript{328} Although the PIRA did pursue a violent campaign throughout 1996 and the first months of 1997, the number of attacks and fatalities remained relatively low in comparison the levels of the early 1990s.\textsuperscript{329} This reflected the desire of both the PIRA and Sinn Fein leadership to retain the possibility of engagement in future negotiations. Even the PIRA statement ending the ceasefire emphasized an organizational desire for “an inclusive negotiated settlement,” and exhorted the British government to face up to its responsibilities in that light.\textsuperscript{330} This decision to keep PIRA violence at a relatively low level (and the fear that another ceasefire might be declared) prompted the Continuity IRA to begin a separate terrorist campaign in July of 1996.

In the aftermath of the Canary Wharf bombing, the British and Irish governments scheduled the Forum Elections, and began to construct plans for multi-party talks. The elections were held on May 30, 1996, and had surprising results. Although Sinn Fein still remained in the minority, the party received 15.47% of the vote (17 seats in the Forum), which represented its best showing in any election up to

\textsuperscript{327} Smith, 195

\textsuperscript{328} See Appendix F for data on annual PIRA attacks and fatalities in the UK between 1990 and 2005.

\textsuperscript{329} See Appendices D and F (Attacks in Northern Ireland and in the United Kingdom)

\textsuperscript{330} \textit{IRA Statement ending the Ceasefire} (February 9, 1996), CAIN Web Service http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/ira9296.htm
that point.\textsuperscript{331} This result was somewhat ironic, given the intensity of Republican sentiment against the implementation of these elections. The irony was compounded by the fact that the UUP did not do nearly as well as had been expected, gaining only 24.2% of the vote and 30 Forum seats.\textsuperscript{332}

In spite of Sinn Fein’s strong electoral showing, the party was banned from the subsequent negotiations due to the PIRA’s refusal to reinstate a ceasefire.\textsuperscript{333} The absence of Sinn Fein stymied the negotiations, and little progress was made. PIRA violence continued in both Northern Ireland and the UK, further undermining the legitimacy of a peace process that did not include adequate Republican representation. The situation began to change when Tony Blair’s Labor government was elected with a tremendous majority in May of 1997. Blair expressed an immediate commitment to bringing Sinn Fein into the negotiations, and set about eliminating the decommissioning requirement and establishing numerous other incentives for Sinn Fein participation.\textsuperscript{334} These effectiveness of these measures was clearly demonstrated when the PIRA agreed to another ceasefire on July 19, 1997.\textsuperscript{335} In a statement declaring the ceasefire, the PIRA claimed that it was time to seek “a democratic peace settlement through real and inclusive negotiations.”\textsuperscript{336}

\textsuperscript{332} “The 1996 Forum Elections and the Peace Process”
\textsuperscript{333} Mulholland, 172
\textsuperscript{334} Fitzduff, 129
\textsuperscript{335} Irish Republican Army, \textit{Irish Republican Army Ceasefire Statement} (July 19, 1997), CAIN Web Service http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/ira19979.htm
\textsuperscript{336} \textit{IRA Ceasefire Statement} (July 19, 1997)
The negotiations began in September of 1997, and were originally plagued by a number of difficulties. The DUP delegates walked out of the talks, infuriated that the PIRA had not been required to “give up a single bullet” before Sinn Fein was allowed to negotiate.\(^{337}\) Although the talks were certainly in jeopardy at this point, the other main unionist parties (particularly the UUP) responded to overwhelming public pressure and remained at the bargaining table.\(^{338}\) Sinn Fein and several Loyalist parties were briefly excluded from the talks in 1998 as punishment for ceasefire violations, but the negotiations continued at a fairly steady pace. Largely due to the powerful delegates from the SDLP and the UUP, the Belfast Agreement/Good Friday Accords emerged on April 10, 1998.

The Agreement established a number of constitutional provisions, focusing primarily on Northern Ireland’s right to democratic self-determination and establishing the right of the Northern Irish population to hold any combination of British and Irish citizenship. Additionally, the British and Irish governments took substantive steps towards reforming their respective constitutions within the context of the new Agreement.\(^{339}\)

The other main provisions in the Agreement established the following governmental structures: a power-sharing Assembly and Executive in Northern Ireland; a North-South ministerial council to facilitate Irish and Northern Irish cooperation; and a British-Irish Council consisting of representatives from Northern

\(^{337}\) Mulholland, 173
Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, as well as from the British and Irish governments.\textsuperscript{340} The Agreement did also address numerous issues relating to human rights, inclusion policies (economic, social, and cultural), security policies, and the structure of the criminal justice system.\textsuperscript{341} Finally, the Agreement established a timeframe for decommissioning, and new regulations for policing and security in Northern Ireland. The Agreement, although it drew upon principles from Sunningdale, the Anglo-Irish Agreement, and the Downing Street Declaration, was a far more dramatic and comprehensive step towards the resolution of the conflict.

Referendums on the Belfast Agreement were held in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland on May 22, 1998. The wording of the referendum in Northern Ireland was as follows: “Do you support the Agreement reached at the multi-party talks on Northern Ireland and set out in Command Paper 3883?” The response was a clear “yes,” with 71.1% of participants voting in favor of the Belfast Agreement and 28.9% voting against.\textsuperscript{342} In the Republic of Ireland, voters were asked, “Do you approve of the proposal to amend the Constitution contained in the under mentioned Bill? Nineteenth Amendment Constitution Bill, 1998.” As discussed above, the amendment included the removal of Irish territorial claims to Northern Ireland. Although turnout was significantly lower in the Republic of Ireland, 94.4% of participants voted in favor of the Amendment, while only 5.6% opposed it.\textsuperscript{343}

\textsuperscript{340} \textit{The Agreement}, Strand 1, Strand 2, and Strand 3.
\textsuperscript{341} Fitzduff, 130
http://www.ark.ac.uk/elections/ref98.htm
\textsuperscript{343} “The 1998 Referendums”
The Belfast Agreement faced and continues to face numerous obstacles, particularly with regards to the continued debate surrounding the decommissioning of both Loyalist and Republican organizations. Additionally, the Northern Irish Assembly has been suspended several times as a result of internal disputes and inability to function. In spite of these difficulties, terrorist violence remained at far lower levels during the period from 1998 to 2005. As mentioned at the start of this section, the British government has since largely turned its attention to the development of counterterrorism policies that fit into the framework of the Global War on Terror.

*Did the Belfast Agreement attack terrorist motivations as well as capabilities?*

The Belfast Agreement represented a clear attempt to use politics to simultaneously diminish terrorist motivations and capabilities. The Agreement sought to achieve this by including provisions that addressed the fundamental goals and grievances of terrorist organizations, while also requiring a gradual process of decommissioning.344 The Agreement did not address the motivations of hard-line dissidents, but did make a concerted effort to outline responses and solutions to the concerns cited by the PIRA, the UVF, and the UDA. The Agreement attempted to assuage the concerns of the UVF and the UDA by clearly acknowledging that Northern Irish membership in the UK was the will of the majority and was entirely legitimate. However, the development of closer ties between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland through the North-South Council and the citizenship provisions

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344 *The Agreement* (April 10, 1998), Section 7, Paragraph 3
represented an acknowledgement that a significant minority did not wish to be
defined as British.\textsuperscript{345}

The Agreement was by no means a perfect foil to the motivations of Loyalist
and Republican terrorists. The ensuing difficulties of implementing the terms of the
Agreement, and the interminable debate over decommissioning, ensured that tensions
continued to simmer, manifesting in sporadic incidents of terrorist violence. The
terms of the Agreement did not fully satisfy every Loyalist and Republican demand,
and none of the main terrorist organizations were perfectly united in favor of it.
However, the occasional periods of violence never escalated to earlier levels, and
many of the attacks during this period were not actually carried out by the PIRA, the
UVF, or the UDA. As the next section will demonstrate, the Stormont Talks and the
Belfast agreement exacerbated existing divisions within the terrorist organizations,
contributing significantly to the emergence of small splinter groups. The Agreement
was certainly a clear attempt to limit the motivations of terrorist organizations, but
was unable to deter hard-line extremists on either side.

\textit{Did the Belfast Agreement include wedge strategies/appeal to moderates?}

The Stormont talks and the continuing ceasefires on both sides created an
unprecedented role for moderates, and became a significant source of concern to
hard-line members of the terrorist organizations. As discussed in Section 2, the CIRA

\textsuperscript{345} Joseph Ruane and Jennifer Todd, “A Changed Irish Nationalism? The
Significance of the Belfast Agreement of 1998,” in \textit{Europe’s Old States in the New
World Order: the Politics of Transition in Britain, France and Spain}, ed. Joseph
Ruane, Jennifer Todd, and Anne Mandeville (Dublin: University College Dublin
Press, 2003), 123-124
became active in 1996 when it appeared that the PIRA might be willing to reinstate a ceasefire, and continued to utilize terrorist violence throughout the peace process.\textsuperscript{346} Although the CIRA had existed since 1986, this was the first time that the group had directly acted in opposition to the policies of the PIRA. The emergence of the Real IRA in 1997 was a direct result of the proposals and initiatives during the build-up to the Belfast Agreement; the PIRA had finally decided to accept the Mitchell Principles on non-violence, and had implemented a second ceasefire.\textsuperscript{347}

The PIRA’s decision to actively reengage in the peace process demonstrated the extent to which the new policies of Tony Blair’s Labor government had acted as a wedge strategy. A few months earlier, the organization had been entirely unwilling to commit to non-violence through the Mitchell principles, and the prospect of a ceasefire was the subject of virulent debate. By mid 1997, however, the majority of PIRA members had accepted Adams’ argument in favor of a ceasefire, and only a small group of hard-line dissidents remained. Although this group did become extremely active independent of the PIRA, the RIRA was unable to carry out more than one truly horrific attack. The small size of the splinter organization severely limited its capacity to undermine the peace process. The Omagh bombing shortly after the signing of the Belfast Agreement was the mostly deadly demonstration of RIRA sentiments, but the group was forced to apologize after the attack was met with overwhelming public disapproval. The case of the RIRA demonstrates the importance of effective wedge strategies—although the emergence of the group did

\textsuperscript{346} See Appendix D for annual data on CIRA attacks.
\textsuperscript{347} Moloney, 479
cause an initial escalation in the levels of violence, this level was not sustainable for such a small organization.

The LVF emerged during this period as well, due to a combination of internal disputes and unhappiness with the progression of the peace process. Like the RIRA, the LVF was extremely active in the first few years of its existence, but then shifted its focus to the pursuit of criminal dealings. The organization actually declared a ceasefire shortly after beginning its campaign, and participated to some extent in the Stormont talks.

Although these splinter groups remain active, and certainly do present a threat to the peace process, none of these organizations have the power or public support to recreate the astronomical levels of violence that were an inherent part of the earlier Troubles. The public opinion data discussed in the next section demonstrate that Catholics and Protestants alike were extremely supportive of the Belfast Agreement, and of the peace process in general. The public response to the RIRA Omagh bombing was universally negative, as was the international response. In fact, the bombing actually increased public support for Sinn Fein and the PIRA, as these organizations reaffirmed their commitment to the peace process.\textsuperscript{348}

\textit{Did the Belfast Agreement address the underlying tensions/grievances of the “represented” populations?}

An examination of the provisions of the Belfast Agreement reveals a clear attempt to discuss each of the underlying causes of the conflict in depth. The three-

\textsuperscript{348} Dingley (2001), 461
strand governmental structure ensured (at least in theory) that the voices of unionists, Protestants, nationalists and Catholics would be equitably represented for the first time. Additionally, the citizenship clause and the extensive discussion of equality and human rights addressed the claims of discrimination that had contributed to the escalation of the Troubles. The inclusion of clear criteria as to policing and security measures finally responded to the deep-seated tensions and suspicions that had allowed the PIRA to abscond with the role of an unofficial police force. Finally, the reforms enacted by the British and Irish governments (see above) at last brought to fruition the promises made in the Downing Street Declaration and the Framework Documents.

The effectiveness of these provisions was reflected in the reaction of the Northern Irish population. The Belfast Agreement was approved by overwhelming majorities in both Northern Ireland and Ireland, and enjoyed an impressive degree of support within both the Catholic and Protestant communities. As discussed in preceding description of the Agreement, the document was approved by overwhelming majorities in both Northern Ireland and Ireland.

In spite of the challenges that plagued the peace process throughout implementation, the Northern Irish community remained remarkably supportive of

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349 For examples of the tension between security forces/the police and the Catholic minority, see the discussions of counterterrorism in the previous chapter. The period of 1969-1974 was characterized by frequent altercations that appeared to demonstrate a high level of bias on the part of the RUC and the British security forces.

350 The British government repealed the 1920 Government of Ireland Act, and reaffirmed that Britain would accept the will of the Northern Irish majority with regards to the constitutional status of the province. The Irish government removed the provisions of the Irish constitution that asserted a territorial claim over Northern Ireland.
the Agreement. In a poll taken in March of 1999, 89% of Protestants and 97% of Catholics stated that they wanted the Belfast Agreement to succeed. Although these communities expressed varying concerns and priorities regarding the Belfast Agreement, the overall provisions of the document were viewed in a positive light throughout implementation. In 1999, both communities indicated that the politicians and the paramilitaries each bore some degree of responsibility for the developing implementation difficulties; Catholics tended to place a greater degree of blame on politicians, while Protestants suggested that paramilitary groups were endangering the peace process. However, 74% of Catholics and 81% of Protestants described themselves as “sympathetic” to the difficulties in implementing the Belfast Agreement. In spite of some enduring concerns, Catholics and Protestants alike clearly felt that the multi-party negotiations had at least begun the process of easing the underlying tensions and grievances of the conflict.

4. Data Analysis

The table below outlines patterns of terrorist activity during the years surrounding the counterterrorism measures I selected. At first glance, these results appear to confirm my hypotheses, with the exception of the Downing Street Declaration. In this section I will discuss why attacks appear to have increased in the

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353 Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey 1999
aftermath of a counterterrorism strategy which was clearly aimed at undermining terrorist motivations and which certainly constituted a wedge strategy. I will also briefly discuss the increase in attacks by the CIRA and RIRA in the aftermath of the Belfast Agreement, as well as the unexpected decrease in LVF attacks. In addition, I will address other possible factors that may have caused any of the terrorist organizations to increase or decrease their attacks in the year following these counterterrorism measures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Counterterrorism measure</th>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>Wedge</th>
<th>Larger Population</th>
<th>Attacks in NI</th>
<th>Attacks in UK</th>
<th>Fatalities from attacks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Downing Street Declaration (1993)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Attempt; limited success</td>
<td>PIRA: up</td>
<td>PIRA: up</td>
<td>PIRA: up UVF: up UDA: up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belfast Agreement (1998)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>PIRA: down UVF:</td>
<td>PIRA: same (0)</td>
<td>PIRA: down UVF:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^{354}$ I have included the CIRA in this column because the group launched its first attacks in the year following the decommissioning debate, the Mitchell Report and the election controversy. I have categorized their attacks as increasing because the group had carried out no attacks up until this point.
Downing Street Declaration

Although the Downing Street Declaration did attempt to fulfill the criteria discussed above, the success of this document was not demonstrated until months after it was released. The analytical discussion of the effectiveness of the Downing Street Declaration demonstrated that neither the PIRA nor the CLMC (UVF and UDA) were entirely certain how to react to the agreement. The Declaration attempted to reassure members of both movements by employing ambiguous rhetoric, and failed to include proposals for real, substantive action. In the months following the Declaration, both Republican and Loyalist organizations sought clarification, while increasing their attacks. In the end, however, both organizations acknowledged that it could be used as a starting point for peaceful negotiation. Although terrorist attacks increased dramatically in the first half of 1994, these numbers had dropped significantly by the beginning of 1995. There was little else occurring at this time to mandate the ceasefires, and all three organizations cited the prospect of peaceful negotiation as their motivation. Additionally, intensive debate on this topic occurred throughout the months leading up to the ceasefire, suggesting that the Downing Street
Declaration did indeed play a role in bringing about a temporary cessation of hostilities.

Due to the fact that the PIRA in particular had no other reason to implement a ceasefire at this time, it seems clear that the Downing Street Declaration facilitated this decision (albeit in a delayed fashion). The Declaration made a clear appeal to moderates, particularly within the Republican movement, which enabled the Sinn Fein leadership to begin advocating for debate on the topic of a ceasefire. The effects of the Downing Street Declaration were not immediate because the document did not present a clear enough examination of terrorist grievances, making it very difficult for Loyalists or Republicans to publicly accept it. However, the events of the year following the Declaration suggest that terrorist organizations on both sides saw it as an opportunity to begin legitimate political debate.

**Belfast Agreement**

In general, the pattern of terrorist attacks following the Belfast Agreement adheres closely to the predictions made at the beginning of this thesis. However, the data show that the CIRA and the RIRA both increased their attacks after the Agreement was signed and approved. Additionally, given the extremist tendencies of the LVF, it was somewhat surprising to see that LVF attacks declined in the period immediately following the Belfast Agreement. As discussed above, the emergence of the CIRA and RIRA was largely due to the fact that Sinn Fein and the PIRA appeared to be softening their positions towards the peace process. Both of these organizations stated that they had no intention of giving up the armed struggle until a united Ireland
was guaranteed. The Belfast Agreement clearly stated that Northern Ireland was currently part of the Union in accordance with the wishes of the majority, and would remain so until the majority decided otherwise. Although the Agreement did at least partially satisfy members of the PIRA and Sinn Fein, the small extremist groups were unwilling to compromise. As discussed above, an effective wedge strategy will usually leave a small group of violent dissidents, but they will be largely isolated from the rest of the group. This is exactly what occurred in this situation. The CIRA and RIRA continued to operate, but lost the resources, support and influence of the PIRA and Sinn Fein.

The decline in LVF attacks is largely attributable to the fact that Billy Wright was arrested in March 1997 and assassinated in December 1997. This event likely influenced the immediate drop in LVF attacks more than the ongoing peace process. In the absence of effective leadership, the group could not continue to function at the same level, and recognized that participation in the Stormont talks might facilitate at least their short-term goals (such as obtaining the release of imprisoned members). The LVF did continue to launch attacks in the years following the Belfast Agreement, but, like the RIRA and CIRA, could not dramatically raise the levels of Loyalist violence.

Alternate Explanations for Changes in Terrorist Attacks

My analysis has focused on a close examination of four counterterrorism measures during this period. I acknowledge that these policies were not selected and

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355 Silke, 24
implemented in a vacuum, and will therefore devote this section to a brief discussion of other events and factors that may have contributed to shifts in terrorist activity.

Hayes and McAllister suggest that political violence will occur indefinitely in Northern Ireland because this type of activism has become a permanent and accepted “extraconstitutional” tradition.³⁵⁶ Their research finds that public support is a strong positive determinant for terrorist violence. The authors utilize the results of a 1999 poll to demonstrate this latent acceptance of political violence in Northern Ireland. However, this expression of support is limited to a “significant minority” on each side, while majority opinion opposes the use of violence.³⁵⁷ Additionally, this minority opinion is largely limited to an expression of “a little sympathy” for paramilitary action. Only an extremely small percentage of respondents of either faith expressed strong support for violent tactics.³⁵⁸

This article provides useful insight into the dynamics of public support for political violence in Northern Ireland. However, it does not examine shifts in public support over time, or within the context of government initiatives. The data I have discussed above suggest that public opinion throughout the 1990s was fairly sensitive to the actions of the British and Irish governments, and was not always sympathetic to terrorist goals. One of the more dramatic examples of this was the Omagh bombing—as discussed above, members of both the Catholic and Protestant communities were extremely supportive of the Belfast Agreement, and very much

³⁵⁷ Hayes and McAllister, 607
³⁵⁸ Hayes and McAllister, 607
hoped for its success. As a result, the Omagh bombing was received with disgust and fury by the entire Northern Irish population, and was perceived as a brutal attempt to undermine the peace process.\footnote{Dingley (2001), 461} The shifting levels of trust in the British government and general flexibility of public opinion during this period suggest that the Northern Irish population did not exert a constant level of pressure on terrorist organizations throughout this period. My research suggests that public pressure was closely linked to the current status of the peace process, rather than on wholly independent factors.

I have argued that the PIRA maintained a relatively low level of violence in 1996 due to a desire to retain the possibility of participation in future negotiations. Additionally, a significant portion of the group’s Republican constituency was inclined to prefer peaceful negotiations to a violent campaign at this point. However, it is also important to note that the PIRA was facing considerable difficulties following the collapse of the ceasefire. The resumption of hostilities was greeted with disapproval by many of the PIRA’s financial contributors, leaving the organization deeply in debt.\footnote{Moloney, 459-460} In addition, the British security forces had managed to avert a number of PIRA attacks during this period due to an improved intelligence network.\footnote{Moloney, 443} The combination of financial troubles and failed attacks certainly created a situation in which the PIRA had to expend a higher level of effort in order to maintain a violent campaign.

Although these factors may have impacted the PIRA decision to keep violence at a lower ebb, little had changed when the PIRA nearly tripled its attacks in Northern
Ireland in early 1997. This upswing in PIRA violence coincided perfectly with the organization’s growing dissatisfaction with the peace process, and was not impeded by the difficulties discussed above. These factors may well have informed the PIRA decision to shift the focus of its campaign back to Northern Ireland, rather than continuing to carry out a high volume of attacks in Britain. The improvement in British intelligence certainly impacted the PIRA’s capabilities, but the effectiveness analysis above suggests that this would not have been sufficient had the government not also been targeting the motivations and justifications of the organization.

5. Constraints on Governmental Learning/Policy Selection

The period from 1969 to 1974 featured consistently high levels of the internal and external constraints on policy selection, suggesting the existence of a correlation between these factors and ineffective counterterrorism. The period addressed in this chapter, however, was characterized by a far greater degree of political, economic and social variation. The British economy plummeted during the early part of the 1990s, only to experience a high degree of resurgent growth in the latter half of the decade. The political situation fluctuated in a similar manner, as the Major government struggled to remain in power in spite of the Labor party’s growing strength and popularity.

362 See Appendix D: 5 attacks in 1996, 14 in 1997
Internal Constraints (Action Determinism and Political Process)

The lens through which the British government viewed the conflict had changed from one of containment and control to one that focused on negotiated solutions. Intra-governmental debates throughout the peace process centered primarily on how to proceed towards a negotiated solution, and featured far fewer references to the use of repressive military powers. The nature of the debates, as well as actual policy output demonstrated that both administrations during this period had gained a much more nuanced understanding of the nature of the Northern Ireland situation. The generally positive trajectory of British policies during this period indicates that the constraints imposed by the containment and control framework had declined to some degree.

The general loosening of the government’s organizational norms was, however, impeded at several points by the internal political dynamics of the Conservative party. The Conservative majority in Parliament was drastically reduced in the 1992 elections, and the party itself was highly fragmented over the role of the United Kingdom in Europe. As a result, John Major was forced to seek the support of UUP members in order to achieve the passage of the Maastricht Treaty, rather than being able to rely on the strength of his own party.363 This unofficial alliance gave

363 W. Harvey Cox, “From Hillsborough to Downing Street—and After,” in The Northern Ireland Question in British Politics, 191

Under the watchful eye of the UUP, Major was unable to accede to Sinn Fein and PIRA demands regarding decommissioning and the Forum Elections. These debates (particularly that over decommissioning) severely endangered the peace process, and were cited as one of the main causes of the PIRA ceasefire collapse. Although Major was able to make some progress with the Downing Street Declaration and the Framework Documents, he was unable to take the riskier steps that would actually bring Sinn Fein to the negotiating table.

The weight of these internal dynamics and constraints was clearly demonstrated by the acceleration of the peace process following the 1997 election of Tony Blair. In addition to being elected with an overwhelming mandate, Blair’s Labor party was united in a way that the Conservative party had not been for years. Within months of entering office, Blair had constructed an extremely nuanced set of policies that ended the decommissioning standstill, and had brought Sinn Fein back to the negotiating table.\footnote{Michael Cunningham, “Northern Ireland,” in \textit{Changing Party Policy in Britain: An Introduction}, ed. Richard N. Kelly (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), 166-167.} The combination of a flexible perceptual framework and a lack of intra-party fragmentation coincided perfectly with the most effective policies utilized by the British government up to that point.
Immediately following his election, Blair made it abundantly clear that he was impeded by none of the constraints that had plagued the Major administration. In his first official address in Belfast, Blair roundly condemned both Republican and Loyalist terrorism, and affirmed that he was prepared to negotiate with any party that renounced violence.\textsuperscript{366} Within the context of this speech and Blair’s subsequent policy initiatives, it became far more difficult to accuse the government of being “in hock to the Ulster Unionists.”\textsuperscript{367}

Resource Constraints

The economic situation during the 1990s featured a distinct lack of consistency as compared to the steady decline of the early 1970s. In order to provide a clear analysis of the resource constraints faced by the British government, I have divided the time period examined in this chapter into two discrete subsections. During the first period (1990-1992), the British economy was under considerable strain, while the late 1990s featured steady economic growth.

Although not on the same scale as the recession of the 1970s, the recession of 1990-1992 had serious implications for the British economy. Real GDP declined by approximately 3.5% during this period, necessitating a careful examination of British

\textsuperscript{366} Tony Blair, \textit{Address at the Royal Agricultural Society, Belfast} (May 16, 1997). CAIN Web Service: http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/tb16597.htm

\textsuperscript{367} Kevin McNamara, “Northern Ireland,” \textit{House of Commons Debate 497} (October 22, 1993): 497. This accusation was leveled at John Major in 1993; he was perceived as being entirely under the control of the UUP.
monetary policy. John Major’s Conservative government was held responsible for
British policy shifts regarding the European Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM);
Britain’s decision to withdraw from the ERM in 1992 resulted in an estimated loss of
3.3 billion pounds. As I will discuss in the section on audience costs, the policies
of the Major government cost the Conservative party dearly in the 1992 elections,
causing the administration to seek an unofficial alliance with unionist members of
Parliament.

Although the British government continued to pursue negotiations regarding
Northern Ireland during this time period, no substantive policies were put in place
until the Downing Street Declaration was published in December of 1993.
Throughout the two years of the recession, talks continued between the British and
Irish governments, with the sporadic participation of some of Northern Ireland’s main
political parties (Sinn Fein did not participate in these talks). While these talks did
produce the three-strand framework that would be used in later negotiations, it is
interesting to note that little substantive progress occurred until after the British
economy had begun to improve. As discussed earlier in the chapter, this lack of clear
progress may well have incited the PIRA to pursue extremely high levels of terrorist
violence during the early part of the 1990s. As the attack data graphs demonstrate,

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368 Luis Catao and Ramana Ramaswamy, “Recession and Recovery in the United
Kingdom in the 1990s: Identifying the Shocks,” National Institute Economic Review
369 Debt and Reserves Management Team, “The Cost of Black Wednesday
Reconsidered,” HM Treasury (August 6, 1997), 5.
370 Fitzduff, 129
the years of the recession were also the years in which the PIRA carried out the
greatest number of attacks.

By the end of 1993, the British economy had begun to recover, much to the
relief of the Major government. Major spent much of 1993 attempting to gain public
and parliamentary support by continually harping on the fact that the economy was
finally improving. In fact, he exhibited a tendency to brush off the Northern Ireland
issue, saying that, “While Northern Ireland touches us all, the economy affects us
all.” Although the Major government did later devote a great deal of time and
energy to conflict resolution in Northern Ireland, the above statement provides useful
insight into the effect of the recession on government priorities.

Following the recession, the British economy steadily improved throughout
the 1990s, coinciding with an increased degree of British involvement in the peace
process. The one exception was the period leading up to the PIRA ceasefire,
during which ineffective policies were pursued in conjunction with a complete
absence of resource constraints. However, the constraints imposed by internal
dynamics and audience costs were certainly present during that particular period of
ineffective policy selection.

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(November 18, 1993): 30.
(Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 195.
Audience Costs

Between 1990 and 2005, British public opinion followed similar a trajectory to the one seen between 1969 and 1974. While it is true that the British public expressed a slightly greater degree of enthusiasm for a united Ireland during the later time period, the general patterns of opinion remained the same. The same can be said for opinions regarding the involvement of British troops in the conflict. In the later period, the public was slightly more divided, but a plurality still generally favored eventual troop withdrawal.373 Expressions of support for a unified Ireland remained above 50% between 1990 and 2000, peaking at 75% in 1996.374

In spite of the similarity in public opinion data across both time periods, the British government pursued dramatically different policies. This supports Child’s hypothesis that organizational perceptions of external factors may be just as (if not more) important than the actual reality of those factors. Child argues that organizational perceptions have a powerful impact on the way in which environmental information is received and interpreted. The lens through which the British government viewed the conflict had shifted dramatically by 1990, largely due to the improvement of Anglo-Irish relations, and a growing supply of evidence that exclusively military strategies could not permanently resolve the situation. Within this new framework, the will of the British public could be achieved in an entirely different way. Rather than assuming that the British public simply wanted to be rid of

373 Economic and Social Data Service, British Social Attitudes Survey, (1990-2005): Variable A538
the Northern Ireland question, the government utilized the public’s interest in a united Ireland to pursue a negotiated settlement allowing for that eventuality.

The question of internal constraints and audience costs are closely related, particularly within the context of a democracy. I have already addressed the internal political dynamics constraining Major’s policy choices, but it is worth noting that these political factors were accompanied by significant audience costs as well. The Conservative party was deeply divided over the role of the United Kingdom in Europe throughout this period, and was unable to present a coherent position to the public. The public’s opinion of these obvious divisions and weaknesses was manifested in a 1997 poll, in which 55% of British respondents to suggest that the party was utterly incapable of strong leadership.375

Conclusion

The analysis in this chapter shows a high degree of correlation between the presence of the effectiveness criteria and a decline in terrorist activity. With the exception of British policies surrounding the decommissioning debate and the Forum Elections, the policies adopted during this period demonstrated a much higher degree of consistency with the established effectiveness criteria. However, it is interesting to note that several of the counterterrorism measures adopted during this time period showed variation between stated government intentions and actual policy effects. The authors of the Downing Street Declaration, for example, clearly made at least a preliminary effort to eliminate terrorist motivations, engage moderates and reassure

375 Economic and Social Data Service, “British Social Attitudes Survey” (1997)
the populations “represented” by the targeted terrorist organizations. However, this policy was immediately followed by a significant increase in terrorist activity, as neither Republicans nor Loyalists were prepared to trust the British and Irish governments to develop an equitable solution. The PIRA and the CLMC did both eventually declare a ceasefire, but this did not occur until months after the Declaration was released.

The discontinuity between government intentions and actual results suggest that the pursuit of effective counterterrorism may be constrained by yet another factor; as discussed in the previous chapter, the perceptual framework through which the British government viewed the conflict played a critical role in the development and implementation of counterterrorism strategies. Even the Major administration, weakened as it was by party divisions and plummeting approval ratings, perpetually worked towards the development of a negotiated solution in cooperation with the government of Ireland. Major was severely constrained by the environmental variables discussed above, but was certainly operating within a set of organizational norms that was no longer centered on the principles of containment and control.

The presence of a loosened perceptual framework remained consistent throughout both administrations during this period, whereas the environmental variables (resource constraints and audience costs) fluctuated to a far greater degree. With one exception, the trajectory of these factors closely followed the patterns of government effectiveness and ineffectiveness. The sole exception to this was the period of 1995-1996, when the Major government pursued ineffectual policies regarding decommissioning and the Forum Elections. However, as the analysis in
this chapter has demonstrated, this particular lapse of organizational adaptation was primarily due to the tremendous political and public pressure weighing down on the Major administration.

The interaction between the learning variables is demonstrated to a greater degree in an analysis of the time period addressed in this chapter. These factors remained in a strong constraining position throughout the period from 1969 to 1974, making it appear as though there was a constant perfect correlation between the presence of all three learning constraints and the selection of ineffective counterterrorism policies. However, an examination of the 1990s demonstrates the extent to which these variables shifted, occasionally enabling the government rather than constraining it. Major faced these variables as constraints during much of his tenure in office, whereas Blair’s policy selection was actually aided by both internal and external factors. The economy had dramatically improved at this point.

In general, this time period demonstrates a more complex relationship between the learning variables and effective counterterrorism, but still indicates that the analytical framework established in this thesis may have further applicability.
Conclusion

In the current political climate, the word “effective” is constantly used to assess the success or failure of counterterrorism initiatives. The impetus for this project was a desire to gain a better understanding of what actually makes a strategy effective or ineffective. In order to accomplish this, I established a set of “effectiveness criteria,” which were then applied to a number of specific counterterrorism measures. These factors have been analyzed in various ways in the existing literature, but rarely within the type of framework utilized in this thesis.

This thesis also sought to examine the hypothesis that government counterterrorism choices may be impacted by internal or external constraints. Governments do not select counterterrorism strategies in an entirely neutral environment; policy decisions are always made within the context of other factors. Using the strategic choice variables adopted by Child, I have provided a general analysis of the internal and external factors that were relevant during periods of counterterrorism selection and implementation.

This conclusion will be divided into four sections. In the first, I will address the contribution that the analytical framework of this thesis could make to the existing counterterrorism scholarship. Section 2 will outline the main findings regarding Northern Ireland that I have extrapolated from the development of this study. Finally, Section 3 will discuss possibilities for future research and analysis of this topic.
The Analytical Framework

As Art and Richardson point out, “there is not one terrorism but many.” 376 The same might be said of counterterrorism. There is no single perfect counterterrorism strategy, and the most effective strategies include a number of elements. However, the two-part analytical framework utilized in this thesis may provide a useful starting point for future research.

The effectiveness model applied throughout this study is by no means the only way in which to examine counterterrorism, but it has a number of extremely useful characteristics. The three criteria are interrelated, but each one approaches counterterrorism from a slightly different angle. The use of this model (or another like it) permits the researcher to delve into the goals, effects, and consequences of a specific counterterrorism model. Rather than assessing counterterrorism strategy in a unitary fashion, this model facilitates an examination of each aspect of a policy that might contribute to its effectiveness or ineffectiveness. This deconstruction of counterterrorism policy allows the researcher to determine when and why certain facets of the policy do or do not succeed. 377

The policy selection/learning variables adapted from Child’s analysis also provide useful insight into the many factors that may impact a government’s ability to adapt and select effective policies. These variables are particularly useful as they


377 My research has found that the three criteria frequently coincide, at least in the case of Northern Ireland. This is a question that would certainly benefit from additional research.
account for both internal political dynamics and environmental determinants. There is a long-running debate in the organizational change literature which revolves around the relative importance of internal vs. external factors. The variables utilized in this project take this debate into account, and allow for a simultaneous analysis. These variables serve as a useful reminder that counterterrorism policy does not occur in a vacuum, and that other factors may impact policy choices. As the case studies in this thesis have demonstrated, counterterrorism is extremely complex, and may be influenced by any sector. Thus, it seems logical to include a discussion of these constraining and/or enabling factors in any analysis of counterterrorism policy.

Northern Ireland Findings

My analysis of counterterrorism in Northern Ireland has yielded a number of general findings which may contribute to further research on the topic. These largely relate to the frameworks and constraints within which the British government operated during the two selected time periods.

The development of effectiveness classifications for each counterterrorism measure in this study revealed that government intention does not always coincide with the actual effect of a policy. This has been addressed in the preceding chapters, but it is important to note that there were certainly instances in which the government attempted unsuccessfully to operate within the effectiveness model. As discussed in the previous chapter, the Downing Street Declaration was perhaps the most significant example of this. The occasional discontinuity between intention and effect enforces the idea that government learning/adaptation will only be successful if it is supported by an appropriate mechanism of interpretation. A government may well be
updating information and changing policies, but this is not inherently positive unless the new information is being interpreted and utilized in an effective way.

As mentioned throughout this study, Child suggests that the choices made by organizational actors may be constrained by personal psychology (action determinism) and by political processes. The political processes theory essentially suggests that organizations develop established norms and frameworks that shape the way in which new information is absorbed, interpreted and utilized.\(^{378}\) This hypothesis is extremely relevant in an analysis of learning constraints in Northern Ireland. The framework through which the government viewed the conflict represents one of the most dramatic differences between the two time periods I selected.

Between 1969 and 1974, the British government attempted to reconcile all new information with the pre-established norm of containment and control. During the 1990s, however, the “norm” had become flexibility and negotiations. The role of these constraints was clearly exemplified by the fact that the Heath government attempted to pursue the same policies repeatedly, while the Blair government (and to some extent the Major government) carefully altered and shaped each new policy to address any enduring tensions or uncertainties. The lack of an enforced organizational norm provided the Blair government with the freedom he needed to pursue drastic changes in British policy (such as the removal of the decommissioning requirements established by the Major administration).

The application of the learning variables to my selected case studies revealed the presence of a strong interaction between the organizational norms/frameworks

\(^{378}\) Child, 51
established by the government and constraints imposed by audience costs (specifically public opinion). Although public opinion towards the future of Northern Ireland did not shift dramatically between 1974 and 1990, the governments of each period interpreted that information in a surprisingly oppositional fashion. The appearance of this interaction serves as another reminder that neither counterterrorism policy nor public opinion formation occurs in a vacuum. In each time period, public opinion data was interpreted and shaped by the government in such a way as to justify the pursuit of preferred policies.

The final main conclusion drawn from my study of Northern Ireland is that learning took place within the British government over time, thus allowing for the development of the flexible framework of the 1990s. However, the constraints discussed throughout this thesis inhibited the progress of that learning at various points, making it much more difficult for the British government to implement effective policies. This is evident throughout the 1969-1974 time period, as well as during certain parts of the Major administration. The Blair administration was the only government examined in this study that was essentially free of constraint, as well as having the benefit of all the lessons available from earlier periods.

**Directions for Further Research**

The conclusions I have drawn from my research represent a first step towards answering the questions posed at the beginning of this thesis. However, there is a great deal left to do. I chose to focus my analysis on two time periods within one country. Close analysis of one or two cases certainly has its benefits, as it permits the
researcher to truly explore the nuances and intricacies of specific policies and policy responses. However, there are a number of possible future studies that would lend a greater degree of depth and applicability to the work that I have done.

The research conducted for this project revealed a strong correlation between the presence of the three effectiveness criteria and a decrease in terrorist activity. Likewise, I have found that the three learning variables selected interacted to constrain or enable government learning. While this theory provides extremely useful information regarding the dynamics in Northern Ireland, it has not been explored widely enough to make any plausible determinations about its applicability to a wide range of other situations and circumstance. In order to ascertain whether or not this framework has wider applicability, I would recommend a series of studies in which it is used to assess counterterrorism in a wide variety of cases. In particular, cases examined in future research should be selected with a goal of obtaining a significant degree of political, regional and economic variety.

Because my case was largely focused on a single, democratic country, I have been unable to comparatively examine the relevance of my framework to authoritarian and non-democratic regimes. This type of study would be an extremely useful contribution, as a significant portion of the current scholarly debate on this topic is devoted to the question of whether democracies or authoritarian regimes make superior counterterrorists. A comparative examination of counterterrorism in authoritarian and democratic regimes through the lens of these criteria would help determine whether the same standards can be applied to multiple regime types. Additionally, the criteria account for the role of government intentions, so a study
along these lines would be able to examine whether or not varying regime types actually define goals and effectiveness in a comparable manner. Similar objectives could be achieved by examining the applicability of these criteria within the context of regional and economic variety.

In addition to examining a wider sampling of governments, I would recommend an analysis focusing on different types of terrorist organizations. My discussion has centered on nationalist and separatist organizations, all of which have concrete territorial goals. The applicability of my effectiveness criteria could easily vary in cases of religious or suicide terrorism, when there is considerably greater pressure on the government not to employ conciliatory counterterrorism strategies. Additionally, all of the groups examined in my research were or are closely associated with a recognized political party. In spite of the numerous negotiation setbacks, the British government was able to justify pursuing talks with Sinn Fein in a way that would not have been possible had the IRA been the only available negotiation partner. As it was, it was challenging enough for the British government to include Sinn Fein in the peace talks without entirely alienating members of the unionist community and political parties. In the current counterterrorism situation, it is far less clear that the U.S has the will or capabilities to seek out moderate supporters of al Qaeda and other similar terrorist organizations. Although the U.S. has begun to work with moderate elements in Iraq, the U.S. government continues to maintain a strict doctrine of no negotiation with terrorists. Within the context of such a framework, it is unclear whether the U.S. will be ever be able to engage in open talks with leaders or representatives of a terrorist organization. A great deal of this
may have to do with the fact that the current terrorist “threats” are generally
associated with Islamic extremism and suicide terror (at least in the USA). These
groups are viewed in an extremely negative light, making it much more difficult for
the government to pursue anything resembling a conciliatory strategy.

In light of these facts, I argue that any further analysis on this topic should
certainly include discussions of religious, secular, and nationalist terrorist
organizations; this type of analysis would permit a wider interpretation of the
effectiveness criteria, and would allow an in-depth example of the ways in which
constraints on learning shift from situation to situation.

Finally, a few scholars have begun to explore the notion of competitive
learning. I have mentioned this briefly at various points throughout this study, but it
certainly deserves additional attention in future research. This hypothesis essentially
suggests that states must be able to outlearn their terrorist adversaries in order to
implement effective counterterrorism policies. I have focused primarily on the
factors which enable or constrain state learning, but a more extensive analysis would
benefit from applying these variables to both the government and a terrorist
organization. This would provide a greater understanding of the ways in which
governments and terrorist organizations actually enable or constrain each other
through their respective policy choices.
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Appendix A: Republican Attacks in Northern Ireland 1969-1974
Official IRA Attacks 1969-1974

Year


Fatalities and # attacks

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14

# Attacks

Fatalities
Appendix B: Loyalist Attacks in Northern Ireland 1969-1974
Appendix C: PIRA Attacks in the United Kingdom 1969-1974
Appendix D: Republican Attacks in Northern Ireland 1990-2005

PIRA Attacks 1990-2005

Real IRA 1998-2005
Appendix E: Loyalist Attacks 1990-2005