The Northern Ireland Conflict: Conditions for Successful Peacebuilding

by
Stephanie Kerr

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Department of Peace and Conflict Studies
Department of Graduate Studies
University of Manitoba
Winnipeg

<u>Thesis Abstract</u>

Using Northern Ireland this study seeks to establish what conditions on the ground must be cultivated in order for this ripe moment to come to pass. This thesis argued that five conditions in particular were necessary, though not necessarily sufficient, for the success of the Belfast Agreement. These five conditions (1) the inclusivity of the negotiation process, (2) efforts to foster positive cross community contact, (3) the positive involvement of external ethno-guarantors(EEGs), (4) the involvement of formal international primary mediators, and (5) the use of targeted economic aid. What emerged was that when taken together, these conditions created the pillars upon which a more stable agreement was reached. What is also important is that none of these conditions are short term investments; they all involved a long term commitment to peacebuilding that began long before the official negotiations of the BA.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Purpose

Introduction

The Northern Ireland conflict can effectively be described as a "set of interlocked and confused problems" (Dunn, 1995:7) The centuries old conflict, whose violent incarnation from 1969 to 1998 is known as 'The Troubles', is not in fact, as it is often described, a conflict between Irish Protestants and Irish Catholics *about* religion. Rather, as MacEvoy describes "the religious fact in Northern Ireland arises from the fact that the religious identity of the two communities coincides with the ethno-national divide. Religion is thus the ethnic marker, or fault line, of the conflict" (MacEvoy, 2008; 8)

Thus the conflict can more effectively be described as an identity conflict. According to Rothman (1997), "identity driven conflicts are rooted in the articulation of, and the threats or frustrations to, people's collective need for dignity, recognition, safety, control, purpose, and efficacy." (p.7) This is further complicated by the fact that identities are not discreet and any one individual may simultaneously hold multiple identities. Nor are all identities mutually exclusive, one can define themselves as a caregiver in either community. However there are certain over arching identities that, given the conflict are intensified and often placed viewed as primary, in this case aligned primarily as nationalist or unionist. Further, the "mutually exclusive ontologies of ethnic identity create a core sense of self, as well as creating the other...Misperceptions result in a lack of trust and in a deep-seated hostility that frames the conflict as a zero-sum intractable game between adversaries with unequal power." (Byrne 2002;138) Thus, in the case of

Northern Ireland, the root of the conflict lies not in religion, politics or economics as such but rather in attempts to exert self-determination within a zero-sum context. As one group, historically Unionists, is possessed of greater resources in terms of access to political representation and socio-economic status, the other, Nationalists, perceive the conflict as not simply over self-determination – which in itself is far from simple – but also encapsulates the redressing of political and economic imbalances.

While a number of attempts have been made throughout the course of this period to address the ongoing conflict, the efforts of the 1974 Sunningdale Agreement (SA) and the 1998 Belfast Agreement (BA) stand out above the others. The first attempt crumbled quickly, and was followed by one of the most intense periods of violence of the conflict. The BA however, brought Northern Ireland to the relative peace that it has enjoyed for the past decade. Zartman, (2003) holds that seemingly intractable conflicts will only be brought to an end when a moment of ripeness has been achieved and acted upon. He does not however, as Lederach (2003) points out, provide detail as to how this ripe moment is brought to fruition. The Northern Ireland conflict provides an ideal opportunity to study what conditions changed in Northern Ireland to allow this moment of ripeness to succeed in the case of the BA. Northern Ireland provides such an ideal case study because the SA and BA were remarkably similar documents. As such they provide an ideal means of studying the conditions that ripened the conflict, so to speak, as the agreements themselves can be mostly removed from the equation.

Research Question

Accordingly, this study seeks to explore what conditions, in the perceptions of Northern Ireland's middle tier elites[1], led to the relative success of the Belfast Agreement (BA) compared to the failure of the Sunningdale Agreement (SA). Based on a review of literature, emphasis will be placed on exploring changes in the prevalence and significance of five particular conditions which include: (1) the inclusivity of the negotiation processes, (2) efforts to foster positive cross community contact, (3) the role of external ethno guarantors[2], (4) the role of formal international primary mediators, and (5) the use of targeted economic aid. The field research for this comparative study of the BA and SA took place in Northern Ireland.

Framework

In order to provide the theoretical foundation necessary for a study of this scope, a number of theories will first need to be explored. Chief among these is Zartman's (2003) theory of ripeness. This theory will be explored in conjunction with Lederach's (2003) critique and modification of the theory. Both of these arguments will provide the theoretical underpinnings to the argument that ethno-political conflicts require the creation of a 'ripe moment' through manipulation of particular conditions in and around the conflict. In support of the identified five conditions aforementioned other theories to be explored will be Galtung's (1996) work on direct and indirect violence; the work of

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[1] Lederach (1995) describes middle tier elites as individuals such as academics, middle level politicians, professionals and community organizers who have social and political access to both the elites of a society, such as the top levels of government, as well as the grassroots of a society.

[2] Byrne describes external ethno guarantors as "regionally powerful third party mediators with regional interest who perceived they have a direct and historical connection, as well as shared national identity, with their internal allies" in the conflict zone. (2000 as cited in Byrne 2006; 152)

Arendt (1948) and Lederach's (1995) exploration of the potential for change within the individuals of a community; the work of de Beauvoir (1948), Jeong (2005) and Goffman (1974) on the importance of an individual's perception of reality and of conflict; and the work of Byrne (2001, 2006) and Byrne & Keashley (2000) on the role of economic aid in fostering positive cross community contact, and the role of external actors.

This study made use of one-on –one interviews using semi structured, open ended questions (Druckman 2005) that allow participants to share their narratives and perceptions (Senehi 2009) to collect rich qualitative data. The participants were given a full explanation of the study and its goals prior to each interview. No deception was used in this research. Once transcribed, pseudonyms were assigned for each of the participants. The original recordings of the participants were then destroyed in order to protect the confidentiality of the participants.

In the course of the interviews the following key questions were asked: (1) Why is the BA more successful than the SA in keeping the peace in Northern Ireland? (2) How did the roles of the Republic of Ireland and Britain compare during the SA to the roles they took on during the BA? (3) What is the significance of the involvement of the United States and the European Union (EU) in the 1998 BA compared to the 1974 SA? (4) What is the significance of the inclusivity of multiple stakeholders in terms of the collapse of SA and the success of the BA? (5) Why was the use of external economic aid important in shoring up support for the BA and could it have assisted in building a peace dividend

around the SA? (6) And how would you compare efforts to foster positive cross community contact around the time of the SA compared to the BA? Along with each of these key questions was a series of probe questions that complemented the key questions to allow the researcher to go deeper to attempt to extract greater detail from the participants. (See Appendix A)

Significance

While the impact of any given study may vary, successful research projects contribute to the construction of a knowledge base and understanding from which policy and further research projects can be imagined and made to take form (Druckman 2005). Peacemaking and peacebuilding has long been the purview of kings and politicians, with little role for citizens. Today, political elites often reach an agreement that satisfies their counterpart at the negotiation table, which may not trickle down to the citizens in the grassroots, so that the conflict escalates in the future (Byrne 2001). However, with the emergences of such fields as Peace and Conflict Studies, Conflict Analysis and Resolution, Peace Studies, Social Justice, Human Rights and the broadening scope of Political Studies and History, peacebuilding as an elite activity has begun to change. This study hopes to add to the growing wealth of knowledge in this area.

It is hoped that the information acquired through the course of this research study will provide insight into the conditions that are required to transform conflict into resolution. It is the premise of this project that no conflict is always intractable. (Byrne 2002) In

particular circumstances, the resolution of the conflict may not be possible but this is not because the conflict itself cannot be resolved. Rather, there are conditions for peace that have not been created which reduce the likelihood of a successful resolution of the conflict at that juncture in time. Accordingly, this project is largely based upon attempting to determine what these conditions are with regard to the SA and BA.

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More specifically, this project attempts to determine what those conditions are from the point of view not of politicians but from those academics and community organizers who make up the category of middle tier elites as defined by Lederach (1995). Middle tier elites help bridge the gap of comprehension and communication between what political elites *say* is important, and what the grassroots and everyday citizens *feel* is important. In conflict, perceptions of what is a problem, what the current state of affairs is and what actions are helpful are tremendously important as it is upon these perceptions that the vast majority of those involved in a conflict act. (Byrne 1997)

This study may potentially offer insight into what conditions were necessary to cultivate in order to conduct a successful peacebuilding process in Northern Ireland. Ultimately, this study seeks to provide qualitative indicators of what conditions needed to be cultivated to bring the conflict in Northern Ireland to the 'ripe moment' that was seized upon in the mid 1990s. I hope that the results of this study might inform future research into successful conflict transformation. From there, it is hoped that this knowledge will be able to inform elites, middle tier elites and grassroots organizers and the policies they

promote. In this way, those attempting to bring a peaceful resolution to ethno-political conflicts around the globe will be able to do so with a greater understanding of what groundwork needs to be laid prior to the negotiations, and during the negotiations, in order to increase the likelihood of bringing about a more lasting peace.

Context

Colonization, Rebellion and Partition

Northern Ireland consists of the north eastern one sixth of the island of Ireland, and remains part of the United Kingdom (UK). (Carter, Irani & Volkan, 2009; 207) Colonization is a significant theme in Irish nationalist history. For those who choose to reach far into the past to explain the present, Nationalists claim descendance from the Gaels or Celts who arrived in Ireland in the 5th century C.E. They hold ancestral claims to those native Irish who were displaced first through invasion by the English monarchs in the 12th century and the subsequent colonization in the 17th century by primarily Scottish Protestant settlers who were awarded the lands of the native population. (Byrne 2009;212) The Plantation of Ulster, as it was called, was so extensive that by 1703 less than 5 percent of the land in the region reamined in Catholic hands. (Darby 1995: 16) A number of repressive 'penal laws' enacted from the 1690s to the 1720s banned Catholics from owning property, being educated, voting, holding public office, speaking Gaelic and practicing their religion, amongst other restrictions. (MacEvoy, 2008;22-3) The Great Famine of the mid-19th century further cemented perceptions of colonization and marginalization amongst Catholics in Ireland. This belief was amplified during the Great Famine of 1845-51, when the British government with seemingly little regard toward the

starvation rampant in the local population, continued to mandate the exportation of locally grown food. (MacEvoy 2008) For their part, the bulk of the Protestant population arrived from Scotland during the Plantation of Ulster in 1601 and for the following three centuries, for the most part, Ulster prospered under British rule, despite dissenter Protestant led nationalist rebellions for independence from Britain in the late 18th century, (MacEvoy 2008), particularly the United Irishmen of Wolfe Tone and Robert Emmett.

Although those rebellions were ultimately unsuccessful, pressure for Irish independence nonetheless continued, resulting in several versions of a Home Rule Bill, and eventually war. The 1920 Anglo Irish Treaty ended the British-Irish Republican Army (IRA) war and partitioned the island of Ireland (Aughey & Jeffrey 1988; 33) Since that time, Catholics have found themselves to be a minority in the country, representing 48 percent of the population. (Carter, Irani & Volkan 2009; 209-210) However, in an all-Ireland context Catholics represent an almost overwhelming majority. The demographics can thus be described as a double minority-double majority, depending on where the border is considered to lay. Within Northern Ireland, the Catholic population is most significantly distributed nearest the border with the Republic of Ireland and in Derry, west of the River Bann.(Carter, Irani & Volkan 2009; 209-210) These two factors are strong contributors to an important sense of 'Irishness' rather than to a 'Northern Irish' or 'British' identity.

Conversely, since the partition of the island, the Protestant community in Northern Ireland has been the majority ethnic group, representing roughly 52 percent of the population. (Carter, Irani & Volkan, 2009; 210). The majority of the Protestant

population is concentrated in the north east of the island. The border was designed to create and protect a Protestant majority in Northern Ireland. Traditionally consisting of nine counties, Ulster – the historic name of the kingdom of Ireland which today forms much of Northern Ireland - was redrawn to place only six of those counties within the province of Northern Ireland. Had all nine counties of Ulster been included, the Protestant population would have represented only 40 percent of the overall population, and been vulnerable to higher Catholic birth rates. (Buckland 1981 as cited in Tonge 1998; 11) By including only the six counties, a Protestant majority of two thirds was ensured. (Tonge 1998; 11) However, in an all-Ireland context, the Protestant community, which in 1991 represented less than 4 percent of the population of the Republic of Ireland (Carter, Irani & Volkan, 2009; 210), becomes a small minority group. Interestingly, within a British context, Protestant and Catholics once again represent a triple minority grouping. (Byrne 1997) It is the first and last of these two identities from which some Protestants gain their sense of 'Ulsterness' (the historic name of the province which today forms much of Northern Ireland) and their sense of 'Britishness' respectively, rather than an identity linked primarily to being 'Irish'.

Unionist Anxieties

Partition of the island did little to assuage the fears of those, primarily Protestants, who desired to remain part of the British Empire, the Unionists. Much of the Protestant unionist community feared being abandoned by the British state to be trundled unwillingly into the newly formed, Catholic Irish state where they feared discrimination. Thus, of primary concern to successive Protestant dominated governments in Northern

Ireland, was the threat posed by a large internal Catholic population and the Catholic state of the Republic of Ireland, who up to the 1998 BA ensured that Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish constitution did not acknowledge the legitimacy of Northern Ireland as a state and laid claim to the island territory as part of a united Ireland. (Byrne 1995). Exacerbating these fears was the fact that within a year of the ascension of the Fine Gael-Labour government in 1948, the Irish Free State changed its name to the Republic of Ireland, withdrawing from the British Commonwealth and "launched an all-party anti-partition campaign which financed candidates in the General Election [in Northern Ireland] in January 1949." (Bew et al. 2002; 97) Thus, for the greater part of the 20th century, the populist policy of the dominant Protestant political elite was "the only secure defense of the Union [Northern Ireland's constitutional status within the United Kingdom] was the existence of the particular type of exclusivist political regime." (Bew et al. 2002; 185)

The psycho-cultural factors affecting the Protestant community in Northern Ireland are many and deeply ingrained. In many instances they reflect the same events as those that are formative in the Nationalist community but from different perspectives. For example, just as Nationalists remember the Battle of the Boyne as a dark moment in history, the Protestant community cherishes and celebrates this event. (Tonge 1998) Marches are of particular psychological significance to the Protestant and Catholic communities alike. Between Easter and late August of each year the majority of the nearly 3,000 parades that take place in Northern Ireland, are organized by the Protestant community. As McCall

(2006) puts it: " the Unionist culture of parading has traditionally served to symbolically assert Unionist control in Northern Ireland."(303)

The historical narrative of unionism is therefore constructed upon an ideology of resistance. As Aughey describes it "Ulster unionism is an ideology based upon the defence of the status quo". Protestant forces have been engaged in 'defending the union', he argues, almost since its inception. (1994 as cited in Tonge 1998:51) This long standing perception of resistance, combined with the minority position of the Protestant people within an all-Ireland context, has contributed to the Protestant community developing a mentality of a community under constant siege. (Byrne 2009) This is further combined with feelings of betrayal from their historical external ethno guarantor, the British government, who they perceive as pushing them into a united Ireland. (Aughey, 2006). Unsurprisingly, then, the Unionist political slogan is "No Surrender!" and "Not An Inch!"(Byrne 2009; 214)

Nationalist Grievances
Following partition, the Catholic community in Northern Ireland continued to face discrimination, in particular in housing, elections and employment. In the newly established state, the electoral system all but guaranteed Unionist domination of the political system. Gerrymandering and a first past the post electoral system significantly disenfranchised Catholic voters as "in a polity in which the religious affiliation was the chief voting determinant, the protestant majority voted overwhelmingly for the Unionist

Party." (Aughey & Jeffrey 1988; 33) For example, in 1967 in Londonderry County Borough, despite the fact that the Catholic community represented 62 percent of the eligible voters, they were only able to elect eight non- unionist councilors out of twenty. (Aughey & Jeffrey 1988; 5)

Between 1920 and the establishment of Direct Rule in 1972 (Dunn 1995;8), the legacy of Northern Ireland's colonial past would continue to have significant discriminatory consequences. The extensive land dispossession which had taken place since colonization had significant consequences for the primarily Catholic Irish natives, as political representation had for centuries been based on landownership, and given that Catholic ownership of land was a mere 5 percent it follows that they were unable to achieve sufficient political representation to promote their interests. Titular freedom, while immeasurably valuable, does not assist in any meaningful way in the regaining of socio-economic standing that is the result of decades or centuries of disenfranchisement.

Further, as mentioned, Irish Catholics faced both targeted and systemic discrimination in employment. Northern Ireland provides a prime example of Hechter's (1999) understanding of internal colonization as the development of a core/periphery dynamic. For instance, by the 1950s, the majority of the core industries were located in the east of Northern Ireland, whereas there were more significant proportions of Catholics to the west and in the border regions, and so the failure to promote industry in non-Unionist

dominated areas meant that Catholics were disproportionately disadvantaged in access to

employment opportunities. According to Byrne et al. (2008):

> Shipbuilding and linen production for the British market were centered in
> the industrial heartland of Belfast as the agricultural periphery served the
> needs of Belfast's industrial economy....division of labour created a poor
> periphery west of the Bann and an industrialized powerhouse in the core
> area East of the Bann. (110)

Thus the core/periphery dynamic disproportionately affected Catholic workers. Catholic

workers were disproportionately affected by the high unemployment rates that plagued

Northern Ireland for much of the 20th century. According to the census data collected for

1971, "Catholics were two and a half times more likely as Protestants to be unemployed

and Catholics in employment were over represented in the semi-skilled and unskilled

categories." (Aunger 1975 as cited in Melaugh 1995)

Nor were election gerrymandering and lack of employment opportunities for Catholics

unrelated phenomena. Gerrymandering naturally increased opportunities for

discrimination in local government employment. As Bew et al (2002) report, one

government official noted that "There can be little doubt that in those areas where there

was a Protestant majority in the councils, in practice posts do not often go to

Catholics."(40 note 107)

Employment discrimination further exacerbated economic disparities as it related to

public housing in Northern Ireland. For example, although Dungannon, in Co. Tyrone, at

the time had a Catholic majority, between 1945 and 1968, nearly three quarters of all the

housing built was allocated to Protestant families by the local Unionist council. (Aughey

& Jeffrey 1998;5)

Combined with electoral, housing and employment disadvantages, Catholic communities

were consistently forced to endure what they perceived as breaches of their civil liberties.

One example is the policy of internment both from 1922-24 under the Civil Authorities

(Special Powers Act) to issue curfew, arrest without warrant and hold individuals without

trial. Such measures were again initiated from 1971-75 but turned out to be disastrous

both militarily and politically, providing fuel for civil rights activists and Republican

paramilitaries alike. (Dickonson 1995;63) Such breaches of civil liberties were viewed by

Nationalists as state brutality. In what became known as 'Bloody Sunday' in 1972, 14

unarmed civil rights protestors were shot and killed by British paratroopers. (MacEvoy

2008;38). Such events have been "ingrained in the memory, culture and folklore of …

Catholics in Northern Ireland" while Protestants feel they are a besieged community.

(Byrne 1995;1)

Given the political, social, economic and military discrimination, and the accusations of

being enemies of the state, it is not surprising, that like many minority groups, Catholics

in Northern Ireland typically "felt alienated and distrustful and portrayed themselves as

victims." (Byrne, 2002;136) Unsurprisingly then, the historical narrative of the nationalist

community is one constructed in the vein of battle, what Aughey (1994) describes as "an active ideological force". (as cited in Tonge 1998: 151) The Nationalist identity is predicated upon an ideology of action and rebellion, as opposed to the Unionist ideology of resistance and defence.

Modern Development of the Conflict

The full extent of the conflict began to make its presence felt during the 1960s with the rising unemployment and the electoral victory of the Labour Party in the British general election (Bosi 2008; 247) In 1964, Catholics again hoped that the changes they had expected but not experienced to the extent they had hoped, would materialize. According to the biography of one of the founders of the then burgeoning civil rights movement, Austin Currie; "the accession of O'Neill in 1963 [Northern Ireland Prime Minister from 1963-1969] generated hope of change and, . . . helped to create a climate among Nationalists for greater cooperation and involvement with the Stormont system" (2004: 68 as cited in Bosi 2008; 253)

Yet the hoped for reforms, both in terms of new anti-discrimination policies against Catholics, as well as welfare reforms, failed to materialize in a meaningful way for the Catholic community. O'Neill justified this as he held that "the problems of Northern Ireland tend to be behavioural rather than structural." (Cochrane 1996; 150 as cited in Bosi 2008; 252) Those reforms O'Neill did undertake were considered insufficient and

nominal by the Catholic community, and opposed as too great by Unionists, thus the Unionist idea that they will not 'give an inch'. (Byrne 2009; 214)

The disillusionment of the Catholic community sparked the rise of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) and movement in an expanded Catholic middle class, which materialized as a the result of those policies of British social welfare that were enacted in Northern Ireland. (O'Leary & McGarry 1993 as cited in MacEvoy 2008; 33) Their aim was to pressure O'Neill into following through on the rhetoric of anti-discrimination as well as to exert an influence over public opinion to begin considering issues of social justice by lobbying politicians, particularly at Westminster. (Bosi 2008; 253) The movement looked to the civil rights movement of the United States as a guide. (McGarry & O'Leary 1995;261)

At the outset, despite Unionist suspicion, the civil rights movement was concerned not with partition or an Irish dimension in politics, but with social justice. For the leadership of the Campaign for Social Justice (CSJ), even the discussion of partition was perceived as a "waste of time and energy". (McCluskey 1989 as cited in Bosi 2008; 253) There was no discussion of partition, of revisiting the border, nor was there a significant discussion of power sharing in government. Rather "toleration and fair treatment were desired as a precursor to participation in the Ulster polity…the very title of the Civil Rights Association implied a tacit recognition of the state." (Tonge 1998; 37) However, the

campaign was met with increasing hostility as many Unionists continued to harbour suspicions.

Tensions reached a boiling point on October 5th of 1968 when marchers in Derry met by the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) ended in violence. (Aughey & Jeffrey 1988;5) The civil rights agenda began to shift from equal rights, to RUC brutality, and subsequently to the defence of Nationalist communities. (Hamilton & Moore 1995; 188-9) In 1966 the loyalist paramilitary group, the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), reformed and made its presence felt once more in Catholic ghettos.

As the general public was increasingly drawn into the public demonstrations, there was an increase in "the unsought involvement of entire areas in violence, which became commonplace, even casual. … local remedies [began to involve]– barricades, vigilantes, citizens' defense committees and so on." (Bew et al. 2002; 148) Unsurprisingly, this led to increased feelings of alienation and victimization by both sides. By August 1969, the violence was so widespread that the Unionist government requested that the British government deploy troops in the region. Initially received by the Catholic communities as defenders against loyalist forces, the "British army increasingly came to be seen as defenders of the state. In response the IRA began an anti-imperialist campaign against the British army." (MacEvoy 2008; 37) On April 1st 1972, the British Prime Minister Chichester-Clarke prorogued the Northern Irish government and announced the imposition of Direct Rule from Westminster.

The period between 1972-74 witnessed some of the bloodiest violence throughout the Troubles with over 1078 deaths, more than half of which were civilian deaths (McCall 2006). The arrival of British troops failed to quell the violence. In December 1973 talks took place at Sunningdale in Berkshire between the Northern Ireland Assembly Executive and the British and Irish Governments. (Dixon 2006; 412) The resultant power sharing agreement was "an attempt to build a grand coalition of political elites amongst constitutional political organizations," and included a role for the government of the Republic of Ireland to appease Nationalists as well as constitutional assurances to appease Unionist fears. (Tonge 1998; 98-9) As Byrne (2001) argues until the 1998 BA, "the Sunningdale Executive is the nearest Northern Ireland has ever come toward the accommodation of both traditions." (335) In 1974 the new Executive formed. Notably absent were the representatives of the more extreme elements of the Nationalist and Unionist movements. Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) rejected the agreement and Sinn Fein (SF) and the Provisional IRA called for a boycott of the elections for the assembly. (Wolff 2001; 15)

Despite the formal agreement, support for the SA was thin on the ground and thinning quickly. The right wing of the Unionists was able to successfully "depict power sharing as an integral part of a 'Republican agenda'". (Bew et al 2002; 189) Increasingly, Loyalist disquiet with the agreement found expression through the Ulster Worker's Council (UWC) and the Loyalist paramilitaries, the Ulster Defense Association (UDA) and the UVF, with which it was aligned. (Wolff 2001;21) Following the failure of a motion to dissolve the power sharing government placed before the new assembly, the

UWC, supported by Loyalist paramilitaries, announced the commencement of an indefinite general strike, or as they labeled it, constitutional stoppage. (Tonge 1998; 103) The general strike gained momentum, both through genuine grassroots support and through paramilitary intimidation. In desperation, the use of troops was ordered by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Merlyn Rees to break the strike. Rather than breaking its momentum, the UWC threatened to sever emergency service to power stations.(Tonge 1998; 104). The British government did not take further action; the Unionist community had effectively vetoed the SA.

Direct Rule was reinstated but was not designed as a permanent measure. It was designed as a temporary measure until greater consensus could be reached, as well as isolating the Republican paramilitaries from the Catholic community. (Kennedy-Pipe 2006;46) Such consensus was not initially forthcoming and as such Direct Rule continued into the 1990s. (Darby 1995;18)

Conclusion

After decades of Direct Rule, and the political stepping stones of the Anglo Irish Agreement (AIA) of 1985 and Downing Street Declaration of 1993, the BA, also known as the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) was signed April 10 1998. (Wilford 2001;6) The BA in many ways constituted a departure from previous attempts at conflict settlement in Northern Ireland. In particular, it brought the former pariahs, the Loyalist and Republican paramilitaries, to the negotiating table, gave significant weight to an all-Irish dimension,

included referendums not only in Northern Ireland but in Britain and Eire as well, and provided guarantees of constitutional changes in the Republic of Ireland. Indeed, each party to the conflict conceded a great deal. (Wilford 2001; 5) On referendum day, May 22 1998, the BA was supported overwhelmingly by the grassroots. (Byrne 2001; 332) On a voter turnout of 81 percent, 71 percent of the electorate of Northern Ireland registered a vote in favour of the BA, and of the 56 percent of the electorate that voted in the Republic of Ireland, 94 percent voted in favour. (MacEvoy 2008; 121) For the Unionist population however, the vote was less favourable, with an estimated 55 percent voting in favour. (Aughey 2006;93)

Given the complexities inherent in discerning the roots, causes and even nature of the Northern Irish conflict, it logically follows that a wide variety of conditions and approaches, such as those proposed in this study, were taken into consideration as the various governments and political bodies involved in the BA worked towards its conclusion.

Chapter 2: Theory

Introduction

The theoretical background for this study falls into four interrelated categories. The first provides a framework for examining conflict through the work of Galtung and then examines the work of Zartman on the 'ripeness' of conflict as modified by Lederach's notion of cultivation. This approach provides the foundation for the notion that a ripe moment for conflict resolution is brought about through the cultivation of certain conditions. The second approach is based on the work of Arendt and Lederach who both examine the potential for action inherent in the members of a society in conflict and support the notion that if sustainable peace is to be achieved, the citizenry of the communities in conflict need to be actively mobilized into the peace making process. Thirdly, Byrne and Keashley's work on a multi-modal civic society approach to peacebuilding is explored as an expression of the potential for action of individuals and the role of community in transforming conflict. Further, Byrne and Keashley's work examines the role of economic aid in developing to redress economic imbalances and promote cross community contact. Fourth, the work of Goffman, Jeong, and de Beauvoir exploring the subjective nature of the perceptions and expectations that inform individual members in a community in conflict is explained. Appropriately addressing perceptions of the Northern Ireland conflict can be used to channel the potential for peacebuilding to create the conditions necessary for a sustainable negotiation and peacebuilding process.

Violence, Ripeness and Cultivation

To begin exploring the theoretical background behind the efforts of conflict resolution and transformation, one must first explore a theory of conflict itself. To this end, Johan Galtung's theory of direct and indirect violence is outlined. Galtung (1996) argues that: "peace is what we have when creative conflict transformation takes place non-violently."(265) Thus, peace is not simply the absence of physical violence. Accordingly, conflict is more than simply physical violence. Galtung (1996) thus divides violence into two categories: indirect and direct violence, and complements this understanding with the dimension of power. Direct violence is perhaps the most easily explained of the two as it constitutes what is traditionally thought of as violence: physical violence. (Galtung 1996;2) Indirect violence is more complex; it "comes from the social structure itself- between humans, sets of humans (societies) between sets of societies (alliances, regions) in the world... The major forms of outer structural violence are...repression and exploitation. Both work on body and mind but are not necessarily intended." (Galtung 1996; 2) An example of this is sectarianism.

Galtung develops this explanation by offering a description of the types of power that produce these two forms of violence. As he describes it there are four primary types of power: economic, military, political and cultural. (Galtung 1996) While the first three are well known to traditional political and social sciences, the fourth is perhaps not. Cultural power, rather than exercising the threat of physical violence, such as military power, or by incentives, such as economic power, instead "moves actors by persuading them what is right and wrong." (Galtung 1996; 2) While in a *realpolitik* sense, cultural power may

seem a minimal force, Galtung argues, convincingly, that culture has significant impact on the way affairs are conducted. While acts of direct violence may originate in the structures of the military, politics and economics, it is culture that pulls the strings as cultural power legitimizes some structures, and some acts while simultaneously delegitimizing others. (Galtung 1996; 2) Within the conflict in Northern Ireland, the Catholic population has keenly felt the effects of both direct and indirect violence, while the Protestant population has also been affected by direct violence. A positive, constructive peace lies in the ending of both of these forms of violence.

Once affected by such violence, bringing the conflict to a close can be exceedingly difficult. Zartman (2003) proposes that

> parties resolve their conflict only when they are ready to do so
> – when alternative, usually unilateral, means of achieving a satisfactory
> result are blocked and the parties feel that they are in an uncomfortable
> and costly predicament. At that ripe moment, they grab onto proposals
> that usually have been in the air for a long time and that only now appear
> attractive. (p. 19)

This notion appears to reflect the reality of the conflict in Northern Ireland; by 1998 there appeared to be no unilateral options for victory for either Nationalists or Unionists, a feeling of war weariness had arguably seeped into the populace, and the province seized at ideas that had long been on the table by consenting to the BA which on paper appeared so similar to the SA of 1974.

A key element of ripeness is what Zartman refers to as a mutually hurting stalemate (MHS) which may be associated with a recently passed or impending catastrophic event. This notion takes its basis from the idea that "parties find themselves locked in a conflict from which they cannot escalate to victory and this deadlock is painful to both of them" and this motivates the parties to seek an alternative, perhaps negotiated, way out.(2003: 19) This way out need not be necessarily identified by the parties, what is important is that there is a willingness to search for it.(Zartman 2003: 20) Zartman also points out that the recognition of the MHS is highly based on perception. It is not necessarily the existence of a particular condition that creates this understanding in the parties but the perception of that condition. Alternatively, a party may not recognize the existence of such a stalemate, in which case Zartman suggests it is the role of a mediator to point it out. (2003:20)

Importantly, the notion of ripeness implies that resolution to an intractable contract will not occur until the conditions for resolution are ripe, but not only ripe but seized upon. He argues that often a situation may be ripe for resolution but the opportunity is missed by either one or both of the parties or the mediator. He also suggests that attempting to negotiate a settlement when the conditions are not yet ripe for resolution may be harmful to the situation and cause it to deteriorate further. (Zartman 2003) Accordingly, one is left with a theory that suggests that certain conditions must exist in order for resolution of a conflict to occur, they must be perceived and seized upon by those involved, and that action to resolve the conflict without that moment of ripeness present may in fact be harmful rather than helpful.

As Lederach points out, there are a number of potential difficulties with this interpretation. Chief among these is the presentation of the ripening of the conflict as a linear process. Lederach argues that ripeness is more effective if viewed as a circular and linear process:

> Circular and linear can be visualized as a horizontal spiral where there is circular movement creating at any given moment forward, upward, backward and downward movement and the whole of the circles is moving forward across time… things feel like they may be moving forward, then a crisis comes and it feels like everything has come to a standstill. At other times it can easily feel like it is moving backwards, or even collapsing. (2003:33)

This then promotes an understanding of ripeness as a long term process that will be subject to crises and set backs but ultimately may be continuing forward. Also of critical importance is Lederach's notion that ripeness must be cultivated: "this may be the single most important lesson learned over the years, a shift from thinking about negotiations as a 'ripe' moment in time towards understanding that preparation and support for a change process over a much longer period of time." (1997 as cited in Lederach 2003: 35)

Accordingly, if one takes Zartmans' understanding of the necessity of ripeness for successful conflict resolution, tempered by Lederach's notion of cultivation, then it is understood that even when negotiations are not ongoing, efforts must be made to prepare the soil so to speak, for successful resolution of conflicts. This then supports the notion that conditions on the ground in a conflict zone must be addressed in an ongoing fashion to help ripen the moment.

Agency, the Individual and Communities

The study and resolution of ethno-political conflicts has arguably, long been thought of as being firmly entrenched in the purview of the political elites of a given society. However, political philosopher Hannah Arendt (1958) provided compelling arguments that political conflicts are not an 'elite problem'. Rather, she argues convincingly that the true strength of a society lies in the connectivity of its individual citizens. Thus, if the true strength of a society lies in its citizens, then arguably, these citizens have tremendous potential to catalyze political change and bring about the resolution of a conflict; resolving a seemingly intractable ethno-political conflict cannot simply be a matter of bringing the most amenable leaders of disparate groups together at the table to sign a document.

The strength in the individual societies is perhaps most ably demonstrated by Arendt's description of the public realm. As Arendt describes it "the *polis*...is not the city-state in its physical location; it is the organization of people as it arises out of acting and speaking together, and its true space lies between people living together for this purpose". (Arendt, 1958; 198) It is the power of the collectivity of individuals which creates this political space. Human power, in this sense, corresponds to human plurality rather than being derived from some demonstration of physical strength. It is this power which holds a community together once the moment of action has passed.(Arendt, 1958; 201) Power is derived from the *potential* for action.

To further explain, Arendt asserts that within each individual's ability to act, there is a potential for a new beginning (1958204) and for the attainment of a new achievement. Each individual is unique unto her/himself and is able to express this uniqueness through the public realm, the potential for action – power- is created. "The fact that man is capable of action means that the unexpected can be expected from him, that he is able to perform what is infinitely improbable." (Arendt 1958;178) Accordingly, it stands true that the true power of any particular state is not in its military or economic strength but in the potential of its citizens for action: its potential for a population to mobilize or be mobilized by a particular leader, along with the resources to which they have access and towards a particular course of action. Consequently, the survival of community or its advancement is based on a strength derived from its individuals.

This sentiment, of the wealth of potential action in a state's citizens, is echoed in the approaches to conflict resolution and peacebuilding put forward by Jean Paul Lederach (1995). Lederach highlights the role of culture and differentiates between an elicitive and a prescriptive approach to peacebuilding. Both of these models deal with the role and responsibilities that outsiders, (be they a United Nations diplomat, envoys from the EU, or trained facilitators and negotiators) have with the individuals involved in a conflict.

A prescriptive model is one that views the dynamic between outsider and the individual involved in the conflict as one of 'expert' and a relatively passive recipient of the 'expert's' knowledge. (Lederach, 1995, 49) The prescriptive model also makes

assumptions about cultural universality, and thus the cultural appropriateness of their

model, which is often not the case. (Lederach 1995; 68) While, the model or solution

being presented by the expert likely has it strengths, it comes with a bias of "this is what

works. We will fix your problems". (Lederach 1995;47). Thus this approach argues that

the outsiders with knowledge will essentially 'fix' the problem. In relation to the

understanding of power and citizen mobilization presented above, this approach may

seem short sighted and somewhat egocentric meglomania.

Accordingly, Lederach offers a second approach to conflict transformation and conflict

resolution training that attempts to harness the power of the individuals within a

community which he refers to as elicitive. As Lederach describes it, an "elicitive

orientation suggests that we consider what is present in a cultural setting the basis for

identifying key categories and concepts to use as foundational building blocks for a

conflict resolution model." (1995; 100). The elicitive model acknowledges the value of

understandings and processes indigenous to each society. It recognizes that participants in

a conflict have the capacity and creativity to respond to conflict in a constructive manner.

(Lederach 1995; 57) That is not to say that help from outside the parties in conflict is

never required or beneficial. Rather it implies that individuals actively involved in the

conflict, *are* able to be involved in the resolution of that same conflict. This then lends

support to the importance of canvassing the interpretations of middle tier elites as well as

political elites when analyzing a conflict. Further it obviates the need to involve the

grassroots in long term capacity and peacebuilding work to help ripen attitudes and

conditions for the successful resolution of a conflict. Finally, given the capacity able to be

harnessed for change – whether positive or negative – it can be argued that it is of great importance to involve a wide range of parties and perspectives in the peacebuilding process to provide a voice for all communities involved in the conflict, this must then include representatives of paramilitary organizations. (Byrne 1995)

Civic[3] Society Approaches to Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution

In terms of the practical applications of the notions of cultivation, the areas of civic life that can be harnessed towards conflict transformation are many. Byrne and Keashley identify the governmental level, middle tier elites, public opinion and media, research, training and education, religion, funding and businesses, professional conflict resolution, and external actors (such as external ethno guarantors, non-governmental organizations etc.) as key modes of transforming conflict on a multi-modal and multi-level basis. (Byrne & Keashley 2000) For the purpose of this review of theory, emphasis will be placed on the use of funding, the promotion of inter-group contact (used and created across a variety of these modes) to promote conflict transformation, and the positive involvement of external ethno guarantors to transform structures. Also to be addressed is the role to be played by international actors.

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[3] It should be noted that throughout the text the terms 'civil' and 'civic' society are used interchangeably as is reflected in both the literature and the participant responses.

Use of Economic Aid

Bearing in mind the critique of the neo-liberal peace paradigm approach of the

international community (governance, democracy, elections, economic aid) in escalating

ethnic conflicts, properly targeted economic aid can be an integral part of a peacebuilding

system. (MacGinty & Williams, 2009) The effective use of economic aid is crucial in the

transformation of conflict to address structural inequalities and rebuild infrastructure and

other objective conditions which may have suffered as a result of, or have been a

motivating factor in, the conflict. (Byrne et. Al 2009) In this process multi-national

corporations, non-governmental organizations, banks and external governing bodies may

have a crucial role to play.(Byrne & Keashley 2000;110) Byrne (2001) further argues that

: "Economic development to redress structural inequalities and intergroup activities and

interaction to broaden the identity pie and create a 'shared identity' must be coordinated

with the inter-elite negotiation process ".(Byrne 2001;330)

Fostering Positive Cross Community Contact

Providing economic funding is not enough; "what may be needed is a further

coordination and integration of the elite bargaining system, with the inclusion of middle

tier elites and grassroots participants in order to transform the civic culture and create a

participatory peace building system" (Byrne 2001; 328) In the pre-negotiation process

dialogue groups and problem solving workshops can be used at all levels of the society,

elite, middle tier elite and grassroots, "to get at underlying identity needs by demystifying

stereotypes and by addressing fears, mistrust and misperceptions" (Byrne 2001;332)

These dialogue groups and problem solving workshops help promote inter-group contact which can:

> facilitate enhanced positive attitudes under particular conditions: 1) high acquaintance potential situations which permit parties to come to know each other as individuals; 2) equal status contact in which parties interact on a coequal basis: 3) support of key institutional authorities 4) joint cooperative task and reward structures; and 5) the characteristic of the individual participants who are moderate to highly competent and mild to moderately prejudiced (Fisher 1996 as cited in Byrne & Keashley 2000;103)

Accordingly, fostering intergroup contact in all the modes listed by Byrne and Keashley, may help promote and facilitate improving relations between conflict groups.

Role of External Ethno-Guarantors

 Next one must consider the role of external ethno guarantors in the resolution and transformation of ethnic conflict. As Byrne explains, external ethno guarantors are "regionally powerful third-party mediators with regional interests who perceive they have a direct and historical connection, as well as shared national identity, with their internal allies" (2006;152). In the case of Northern Ireland then, the Nationalist community sees the Republic of Ireland as its external ethno guarantor while the Unionist community turns to the United Kingdom. While external ethno guarantors can often exacerbate a conflict (such as in the case of Greece and Turkey's role in Cyprus) or, can be instrumental in bringing about an agreement such as the AIA of 1985, widely considered a stepping stone on the path towards the BA, which was imposed over the heads of Northern Irish civil service by the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom.

The International Primary or Higher Mediators

Bercovitch and Rubin (1992) describe international mediators as falling into two primary categories: "International mediators can be informal individuals who are legitimate, credible, flexible and powerless. Or they can be formal mediators with resources and power to reward or coerce the parties, or a small state with no power or resources but with good relationships with both sides." (as cited in Byrne 2006;151) In the case of Northern Ireland's BA, the United States (U.S), and the EU fulfilled the role of formal international mediators who came to the table with both power and resources.

Perceptions and Qualitative Research

Simone de Beauvoir also argues for a socially and politically engaged global citizenry capable of enacting change, yet she does so from a different perspective, one based on the perceptions of the individual. According to de Beauvoir, the world in which an individual lives is the world that s/he has subjectively created for themselves through the projects and goals that each individual sets for him/herself. (de Beauvoir, 1948; 13). From this departure point one can reasonably argue that if the world in which one lives is dependent on one's own construction of it, it follows then that the meaning and significance of that life cannot be judged or applied externally as it must be generated from within. If meaning is generated from within, then the importance of an individual's subjective perception of the world around them, and in the case of an individual involved in an ethno-political struggle, the conflict itself must be understood and dealt with subjectively. This does not necessarily discredit these understandings of the context or of the conflict itself. As Goffman points out, "all meaning is defined by context". (1974 as cited in

Scheff, 2006: 78) Through this Goffman may be used to expand upon de Beauvoir's

notion of constructed realities. While individuals may construct their understandings of

the world around them, as Goffman (1974 as cited in Scheff, 2006) explains, one must

understand that those constructions are informed by the situations that surround them.

Thus while individuals construct their realities, they do so informed by the context in

which they live and their experience of the world. Accordingly, it can be expected that

participants will have similarly informed yet nonetheless unique understandings of the

conflict and the peacebuiliding process.

Finally, one may turn to the work of Ho Won Jeong to understand the importance of

qualitative research in group conflict. According to Jeong, both objective criteria based

on tangible outcomes such as employment equity or growth in household income, and

subjective criteria based on the "intangible psychocultural, cultural and spiritual

dimensions of transition" (2005;25) must be taken into account when evaluating the

success of a peacebuilding process. While not easily identifiable, these subjective criteria

are based on the perceptions and expectations of the individual, and inevitably play a role

in the decisions one takes. (Jeong 2005; 25) Accordingly, qualitative research is an

appropriate approach to understanding the more intangible criteria for accessing the

success of a peacebuilding process. (Druckman 2005)

Thus Arendt, Lederach, de Beauvoir and Jeong argue convincingly for the value of

qualitative research as all emphasize the importance of knowledge and the experience

that forms it, that comes of familiarity with the conflict itself. As Galtung puts is: "How

can a conflict be consciously transformed unless the parties to a conflict are conscious

subjects, true actors?" (Galtung 1996;74) While informed by their constructed realities, which in turn were informed by their lived experiences, the participants will be able to provide a wealth of contextual information to better understand what conditions were necessary, if not sufficient for the success of the BA in 1998. Quantitative studies, as Goffman (1974 as cited in Scheff 2006) explains, often omit those details that would help explain the context of the study; without those details to form the context, such studies can potentially be reshaped to say whatever the researcher likes. By providing a detailed context through semi-structured interviews, this study hopes to situate the responses of the participants within the framework of their shared experience – as members of Northern Irish society with experience and knowledge of the conflict.

Conclusion

Given the complexities and ingrained nature of the conflict on both the society and collective psyche of Northern Ireland it is necessary that the theories used as a foundation for understanding the conflict and its negotiated settlement must touch on the more empirically measurable conditions, such as economic development, to those more ephemeral, yet no less critical conditions of threats to group identity and security. An understanding that context is both built by and influences the perceptions of the individual is important to providing a means to studying those factors held by Northern Irish middle tier elites to have been important in the creation and signing of the BA. It must of course be noted that little to nothing takes place uninfluenced by broader structural factors. However, the intent of this study is to examine those factors which can perhaps be more readily influenced regardless of those structures.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

Introduction

During the Troubles a number of political initiatives were undertaken to attempt to resolve the conflict. The two most significant efforts - though not necessarily each equally significant in terms of success - were the Sunningdale Agreement (SA) and the Belfast Agreement (BA). The SA in 1973 collapsed after only a few months, (Mansergh, 2006: 31) and was followed by the most violent period of the Troubles while the BA in 1998, with some notable setbacks, assisted in bringing about the relatively frosty peace that Northern Ireland in now experiencing. (Mansergh, 2006: 39).

The Agreements: Sunningdale and Belfast Compared

The two Agreements, were however, remarkably similar in many respects, while being vastly different in their contexts and the groundwork that was laid to create those contexts. The similarities have been echoed by a number of politicians associated with the process, with Seamus Mallon, then Deputy Leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), and subsequently former Deputy First Minister following the BA calling the BA "Sunningdale for slow learners" (Wilford, 2001a: 6) and Former Prime Minister Edward Heath stated that " we know the people who were working out the new agreement went back over the whole of Sunningdale and more or less copied it" (as quoted in *Irish Times* 20 Oct. 1998 in McIntyre, 2001: 214)

In particular, the issues discussed at the negotiation table for the two Agreements were remarkably similar. As Merlyn Rees, the British Secretary of State during the Sunningdale Agreement, noted "There is nothing that the IRA can get now that they couldn't have had anytime in the past twenty years" (as quoted in an Interview with Rogelio Alonso, 4 December 1996,Unpublished, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, as cited in McIntyre, 2001: 206) In truth both Agreements dealt with eleven key issues, namely: the consent principle, reform of the policing system, prisoners, a bill of rights, abandonment of violence, security cooperation, cross border cooperation, intergovernmental cooperation, an institutional role for the Republic of Ireland, power sharing (implicitly discussed at Sunningdale) and devolution of powers (Wolff, 2001: 13). The BA did, however, add three additional issues, self determination, recognition of both identities, and inter island cooperation. (Wolff, 2001: 13) Both Agreements held also stipulated powersharing and an Irish dimension. (Mansergh, 2006:31)

While the issues brought to the negotiating table may have been very similar, the attitudes that also gathered around the table were not. In particular, the attitudes of the Unionist community over the institutional role for the Republic of Ireland were drastically different. In 1973, the proposed Council of Ireland was to have functions in the area of 'Culture and Arts' (Patterson, 2001: 172) and was dismissed by Brian Faulkner, then leader of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), perhaps the most powerful constitutional party at the time, as "necessary nonsense". (Wilford, 2001a: 5). During the negotiation process around the BA, the issue of a North-South Ministerial Council (NSMC), was, rather than being dismissed, negotiated to be balanced by an East -West

relationship through the British Irish Council (BIC), more commonly known as 'the Council of the Isles' to help appease Unionist fears (Walker, G., 2001) As the NSMC was not to be a free standing body, and was to have jurisdiction in areas of mutual concern between North and South, such as animal and plant health, and teacher qualifications, it was difficult for Unionist rejectionists to portray the NSMC as "creeping reunification" with the Republic of Ireland. (Bew et al 2002: 236)

Where the BA and SA become remarkable in their differences is in the context of surrounding the Agreements and the groundwork that was laid to create that context. In particular, a drastic change in context can be noted in five key areas, namely: the inclusivity of the peacebuilding process, the efforts to promote positive cross community contact and involvement, the positive involvement of external ethno guarantors, the involvement of formal international mediators, and the targeted use of economic aid. Each of these conditions were arguably more noticeably present during the time leading up to and surrounding the BA than they were during the equivalent periods of the SA. As a result, the BA was able to achieve a more widely supported agreement that subsequently brought about a relative peace in Northern Ireland, where the SA was unable to accomplish a peace process.

Inclusivity

To begin, just as the roots of a conflict are multidimensional, so too are the groups of participants in conflict. In a state affected by widespread ethnic conflict, few, if any, communities manage to remain entirely unaffected. If a community is involved in the conflict, for the resolution of that conflict to be effective and lasting, those same communities must all be involved in the conflict resolution process. Thus in the case of Northern Ireland, no group involved in the conflict "should be ineligible for participation because any likely outcome will affect the status and future of all Northern Irish persons" (Byrne 1995: 10).

In a multi party negotiation such as those conducted during the peace process in Northern Ireland in the 1990s, the ramifications of neglecting to include representatives from all communities was particularly evident. The exclusion of any one community from a peacebuilding process can potentially collapse that process. When a group feels that it has been excluded from the political and/or economic resources that affect its future, an ethnic minority can be motivated to rebel against a common enemy. (Volkan, 1998; as cited in Byrne 2001) In a process as delicate as the building of peace in a conflict affected area, the disaffection of one group with sufficient influence can have significant negative impacts. This was ably demonstrated by the unionist community's so called 'veto' of the Sunningdale agreement, when in 1974 the Ulster Worker's Council's (UWC) strike paralysed Northern Ireland and brought about the collapse of the power-sharing agreement (Kennedy-Pipe, 2006). In this situation the SA ostensibly included a Unionist

voice, but not of the whole Unionist population and the ensuing backlash had devastating consequences on the Agreement.

The relative inclusivity of a peacebuilding process can be examined in several ways, including, but not limited to the range in political allegiance and number of parties invited to take part in the negotiation process. While there are obvious similarities, the SA and BA have striking differences in this criteria. Perhaps the most obvious, but also perhaps the most significant, of these differences, is who was invited to the negotiation table for the building of each of the two Agreements. The SA took a more traditional approach to who was involved in the negotiations by inviting only those parties most representative of the moderate voices on the political spectrum while leaving the more extreme representatives, of both the Loyalist and Republican communities, outside of the process. The signatories included Britain and the Republic of Ireland representing external interests, the UUP to represent more moderate Unionists, the SDLP to represent more moderate Nationalists, and the Alliance Party of Northern Ireland (APNI) to represent cross community supporters. (Wolff, 2001: 13)

The BA not only doubled the number of signatories (from five to ten) but also represented the full breadth of the political spectrum in Northern Ireland. Signatories for the BA included all the aforementioned representatives of the SA as well as Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), the Ulster Democratic Party (UDP) and Progressive Unionist Party (PUP) as the political representatives of the Loyalist paramilitaries, SF as

political representatives of the Republican paramilitaries, as well as the now defunct Northern Ireland Women's Council (NIWC) and the Labour Party as cross community representatives. (Wolff, 2001: 13) During his visits to Northern Ireland in November of 1996 and September of 1998, then President Bill Clinton reiterated the importance of including the political representatives of paramilitary organizations in the peace building process so that they might be further brought into mainstream politics to help work toward building a common peaceful future. (Byrne,2001) As Mike McCurry, Spokesman for the White House said on February 12 1996 "Mr. Adams is an important leader in this process as he speaks for Sinn Fein. It is hard to imagine a process making progress toward peace without the active involvement of Sinn Fein." (as quoted in Bew & Gillespie, 1996: 166) Further, the Opsahl Commission argued in its 1993 report that " any settlement which entirely excluded Sinn Fein from the negotiating process would be neither lasting, nor stable" (Opsahl, 1993) Thus, in terms of representatives present and participating in the negotiation and the signing of the Agreement, the BA is noticeably more inclusive than the SA.

Involving all parties in the peacebuilding process also has another advantage; the third party mediators are able to advance their own credibility, thus making it more likely to reach an approved outcome (Byrne 1995: 13). Therefore, by involving the political representatives of the paramilitaries as well as the more moderate parties, the United States (U.S), in its role as primary mediator, as well as the British and Irish governments (ethno guarantors) clearly indicated that they were committed to reaching an agreement that satisfied all parties to the conflict.

This was not, however, achieved without a great deal of difficulty. Including stakeholders such as SF or PUP, political representatives of Republican and Loyalist paramilitary stakeholders vilified for their association with violence, can be an extremely difficult prospect for many. As Byrne, (2002) notes the process involves "one community negotiating with a party that it has vilified as terrorists in the past and another community that has to abandon a political strategy and a goal that it has been fighting for over the past 30 years." (p. 138) Thus getting the Unionist and Loyalist parties to talk to SF once it entered the talks and ensuring that the paramilitary organizations do not return to the use of force were two distinct and very real difficulties with this process. On October 5th 1993, the Republic of Ireland's Taoiseach Albert Reynolds stated that before SF could enter into political talks with the other parties, there would have to be a cessation of violence on the part of the Republican paramilitaries (Bew & Gillespie, 1996: 19) However it was not until August 31st of 1994 that the provisional IRA (PIRA) issued a statement announcing "recognizing the potential of the current situation and in order to enhance the democratic peace process and underline our definitive commitment to its success the leadership of Oglaigh na hEireann have decided that as of midnight, Wednesday, 31st of August, there will be a complete cessation of military violence."
(Bew & Gillespie, 1996:63) Although scepticism remained as to the sincerity of this ceasefire – as it excluded the word 'permanent' – the Combined Loyalist Military Command (CLMC) announced a reciprocal ceasefire, dependent on the maintenance of the PIRA ceasefire, as of midnight, the 31st of October 1994. (Bew & Gillespie, 1996: 72)

Yet entrance into talks was not immediately available for SF. The argument that SF representatives should not be allowed into the negotiation process until a decommissioning of Republican paramilitary weapons had occured was emphatically rejected by SF and led to the stalling of the peace process. On June 20th , 1995, Sir Patrick Mayhew, the former Northern Ireland Secretary of State, reiterated that SF would not be permitted into talks until the point where the decommissioning of paramilitary weapons had begun. In response, Martin McGuinness, former Chief of Staff of the PIRA stated "In reality there is not a snowball's chance in hell of any weapons being decommissioned this side of a negotiated settlement." (Bew & Gillespie,1996: 105)

However, as the peace process failed to gain momentum, some Republican paramilitaries became increasingly frustrated. Thus, on the 9th of February 1996, the PIRA released a statement saying that "It is with great reluctance that the leadership of the Oglaigh na hEireann announces that the complete cessation of military operations will end at 6 pm on February 9th, this evening." (as quoted in Bew & Gillespie, 1996: 160) Shortly thereafter a bomb detonated at Canary Wharf in London that killed two men and injured over 100 others. (MacGinty, 1996) However, rather than a renunciation of the peace process, MacGinty (2006) argues that the PIRA used the return to violence as a means of attempting to revive the talks that had stalled over the issue of paramilitary decommissioning. Despite the atrocity, David Trimble, former leader of the UUP, held that the consequences of the Unionist camp withdrawing into a "posture of resistance to dialogue" would be dire. (Bew et al. 2002: 219) Though arguably, the Republican

paramilitaries had illustrated that the use of violence could force a political settlement, talks were eventually resumed culminating in the BA.

Nor was this process of bringing SF to the negotiation table a last minute decision. Rather, the eventual inclusion of SF in the negotiation process was in large part the result of of the 'Hume-Adams' talks initiated by the former SDLP leader John Hume in the late 1980s. Both the Republic of Ireland and John Hume were convinced that without the involvement of SF any peace process was doomed to fail. (Patterson, 2001: 168) Accordingly John Hume had hoped that engaging SF in meaningful dialogue could help slowly draw the PIRA away from the use of violence. To that end in April of 1988, facilitated by the Catholic Church, John Hume began to meet with Gerry Adams. "Sinn Fein was no longer a political leper and other furtive political contacts could begin within the 'nationalist family"(Tonge, 1998: 132). These dialogue sessions helped bring about the initiation of back door avenues of contact between SF and the British government, through then Secretary of State Peter Brooke, which helped pave the way for the Framework Documents of 1995, and the eventual signing of the BA. (Mansergh, 2006)

Though not without significant effort, and setbacks the BA managed to include in the peacebuilding process not only a greater number of political parties, but a much wider range of political ideologies than did the SA. By bringing in the former pariah parties, the BA was able to bind them into a process of legitimate, democratic and peaceful means for achieving their goals. Despite the set back of Canary Wharf, and later the Omagh

bombing by the PIRA splinter group, the Real IRA, the paramilitary organization

significantly reigned in their activities with the PIRA eventually beginning significant

decommissioning in 2001(Cox, et al, 2006) and the Ulster Defence Army (UDA)

announcing in June 2009 its own, near complete, decommissioning (BBC News, 2009,

June 27).

Fostering Positive Cross Community Contact

According to the 2001 census, over 85 percent of the population of Northern Ireland

voluntarily identify themselves as either Catholic or Protestant. (Power, 2002:192). In

Northern Ireland, largely as a result of centuries of conflict, the identities created by both

communities are largely oppositional "in that the two communities generally classify

themselves according to who they are not rather than who they are" (Power, 2002: 192).

Such enmity has been heightened by violence. Since 1969 there have been over 34,000

recorded shooting incidents, while the conflict has claimed the lives of over 3000

individuals and injured more than ten times that number. (Gallagher, 1995: 27) In the

twenty year span between 1972 and 1992, 15, 615 people were charged with terrorism,

and census data suggests that one in two Northern Irish citizens have had a friend or

acquaintance killed by the violence and nearly one in ten have lost a family member to

violence (Gallagher, 1995: 27)

Unsurprisingly this personal violence has had significant impact in the amount of contact

between Protestants and Catholics. Understandably there is a great deal of fear of the

'other' community (Byrne 1995) and as a result a great deal of voluntary segregation. The west of the province is primarily Nationalist while the east primarily Unionist, with the two communities unevenly distributed (MacEvoy, 2008: 41)   In Belfast, for instance, fewer than 10 percent of the population lives in an area which is described as being 'the other' (Tonge, 1998: 90). Further, the most deprived areas of Northern Ireland are also those that are the mose segregated (CAJ, 2006;128) with the two communities often separated by 'peace walls' (MacEvoy, 2008: 41) As Senator George Mitchell, one of the primary mediators in the BA, describes his first experience with the peace walls "the huge wall which physically separates the communities in Belfast. Thirty feet tall topped in places with barbed wire, it is an ugly reminder of the intensity and the duration of the conflict" (Mitchell, G., 2002: 93) The segregation is further evidenced by the low rate of inter-faith marriages. From 1943 to 1982 the rate for mixed marriages was one tenth the figure of that involving a Catholic in England and Wales at a mere 6 percent (Fulton, 1991 as cited in Tonge 1998:88) Whatismore, since the onset of the Troubles segregation has only increased. (Tonge, 1998; 90)

Without question, this segregation between both communities must be addressed if any meaningful resolution of the conflict is to be fashioned. Underlying fears and mistrusts must be addressed if there is to be a political will to negotiate a settlement. Key to this process is the promotion of positive cross community contact. In promoting positive cross community contact, "projects that focus on collaborative and superordinate economic goals which can establish constructive interactions between previously feuding groups has the potential to strengthen shared identities across ethnopolitical cleavages"

(Byrne et al., 2008: 109) This cooperation in socioeconomic areas has the potential to "

build habits of interaction between parties on non-political specific issues that would

build trust and mutual understanding," (Byrne & Keashly, 2000:105) Economic activities

may provide a 'safe' superordinate goal which allows individuals to focus on their

common mutual task rather than on their animosity, allowing for the possibility of

constructing a positive relationship between the individuals in the process.

Nor must such contact be purely economic in nature. According to Byrne and Keashly

(2000), under particular conditions, intergroup contact can facilitate "enhanced positive

attitudes". They identify these conditions as

> high acquaintance potential situations which permit parties to come to
> know each other as individuals; equal status contact in which parties
> interact on a coequal basis; support of key institutional authorities; joint
> cooperation task and reward structure; and the characteristics of individuals
> participants who are moderate to highly competent and mild to moderately
> prejudiced. (103-104)

Accordingly, fostering intergroup contact in all the modes listed by Byrne and Keashly,

may help promote and facilitate improving relations between conflict groups.

This process can be undertaken in a multitude of ways as a process of community

building in both direct and indirect forms. In direct form, such contact can come through

reconciliation and capacity building work, facilitated by non-governmental organizations

(NGOs), religious groups, community groups, and storytellers among others. In a less

direct, but not necessarily less effective way, this positive contact can be accomplished

through work on superordinate goals, such as community reconstruction or, as aforementioned, economic goals. (Byrne & Keashly, 2000: 104) Such contact can have direct effects on the individuals involved by "dealing with the nightmares, terrors and fears generated by a violent conflict and that continue to fuel stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination long after the violence is ended", much of which can be addressed by providing physical and mental health aid as well (Byrne & Keashly, 2000: 104)

Yet another powerful means of addressing stereotypes and prejudices and promoting positive cross community contact is through the desegregation of the school systems. (Byrne 1997) Much of the attitudes and worldviews a child develops, are through the socialization process at school. In Northern Ireland, the majority of the schools have been segregated between private Catholic schools and public Protestant schools. Consequently, there is a need to promote integrated education. (Byrne 1995)

In all of these ways the trust and understanding that could potentially be built may "deescalate tensions, chan[ge] expectations about interactions...[and] build habits of interaction and common values that would spill over into the political system and develop a working peace system" (Byrne & Keashly, 2000: 105) Through these endeavours, both structural and psycho-cultural, communities may "eventually lead to the dissolution of sectarianism by promoting, from the bottom up, a programme of affirmative action and accomodationist politics by closely pursuing 'intermediate goals' and proceeding in small stages" (Byrne, 1995: 5).

Finally, by involving the communities in both cross community efforts and in governmental attempts to canvas the more peace oriented attitude that has, hopefully, developed the possibility of creating a stronger peacebuilding process is enhanced. In this way both communities are more likely to feel "a sense of control over the outcome and a substantial voice in the process" (Byrne, 1995: 5) which in turn makes it more likely that any agreement reached will hold. The consequences of this were aptly demonstrated by the reactions to the Anglo Irish Agreement (AIA) of 1985 by Unionists and Loyalists. The AIA was essentially imposed upon Northern Ireland by the British and Irish governments. The AIA sparked widespread protest in the Unionist and Loyalist communities as they felt they had been betrayed by their historical ally and guarantor, Britain (Kennedy-Pipe, 2006). The Unionist community reacted with mass demonstrations, civil disobedience, and on the part of the Loyalist paramilitaries, a return to the sectarian assassination tactics that had been abandoned in the 1970s. (Guelke, 1995: 125)

All considered, the SA and BA differed drastically in the efforts undertaken both by the government and the grassroots to promote positive cross community contact and involvement in the peacebuilding process. Efforts undertaken prior to the SA were marginal whereas following the collapse of the SA, the ensuing decades saw a gradual increase in inclusivity efforts that arguably helped cement the success of the BA. Moreover, the SA and BA also differed in terms of the efforts of the grassroots, and the government sponsored initiatives, designed to reach across community divides.

In terms of community involvement in community peacebuilding and reconciliation

work, Northern Ireland has come a long way since the SA. In 1968 there were only a

small handful of organizations in mediation and reconciliation, organizations which were

associated with the more traditional peace movement (Wilson & Tyrrell, 1995; 245). By

1993 this number had grown to well over seventy different peace and reconciliation

organizations. (Wilson & Tyrrell. 1995: 245) While these organizations have perhaps not

always made front page news, Wilson and Tyrrell (1995) report that the

> experience of escalating 'tit for tat' murders in October 1993 in Belfast
> on the Shankill Road, Kennedy Way and in Greysteel, a number of
> commentators have remarked that, while such violence would have
> served to split the communities in the 1970s, it would not be so powerful now.
> (246)

They attribute this to the increased awareness and resources promoting peaceful

reconciliation at the grassroots level.

Despite the fact that religion is often erroneously blamed for the conflict in Northern

Ireland, a great deal of effort in peacebuilding and reconciliation work has been put

forward by the religious institutions in Northern Ireland since the 1970s. While in the

1960s there was some contact between the Catholic and Protestant Churches, it was, at

the time, primarily devoted to the debate over doctrinal issues. However, by 1993 the

Inter-Church Meeting produced a document addressing issues of sectarianism along with

materials for clergy on dealing with sectarianism. (Power, 2002: 192-3)

While there have been critiques that such efforts or 'talk shops' only positively affected those immediately involved in the discussions, Power (2002) argues that these efforts have provided materials and guidelines for church groups to deal with sectarianism and perhaps even more importantly , in a society where 85 percent readily identify themselves according to their faith, these efforts, "provided much needed impetus for many local organizations and [have] been a symbol of the church leaderships' acceptance of such contact" (p. 195) Thus, the church groups in Northern Ireland have made an increasing effort since the SA to advocate in favour of their constituents reaching across the ethno-political, and religious divide. As a further indication of the churches' willingness and capability to positively affect the peacebuilding process, both Catholic and Protestant clergy played a crucial role in helping to broker the 1994 paramilitary ceasefires (Byrne 2001: 339)

Nor were all community driven efforts around both Agreements powered by the efforts of the religious community. Given that the Troubles were sparked in the wake of the Northern Ireland civil rights campaign, one cannot argue that grassroots community building organizations did not exist at the time of the SA. However, as Wilson and Tyrrell argue, there were significantly fewer NGOs and had more specifically focused mandates. Shortly after the collapse of the SA, grassroots organizations began to reemerge to fill the political vaccuum left by the lack of government initiatives. (Tonge, 1998). For example, following the death of three children in 1976 who died as a result of British troop efforts to apprehend a PIRA active service unit, the Peace People, led by Betty Williams and Mairead Corrigan, emerged as a widely supported grassroots peace

organization whose marches included up to 30,000 participants and assisted in

decelerating the eruption of paramilitary killings during this period. However, by 1978 as

a result of intimidation from both communities, the Peace People had largely lost its

momentum. (Tonge, 1998: 107)

In the years leading up to the BA, however, the situation was much changed. Many of

those same organizations who were present during the SA became significantly more far

reaching and effective in the 1980s and 1990s than they had been during Sunningdale.

For example, the Corrymeala Community has had a small number of community groups

working in local areas since 1965 providing training in mediation and reconciliation and

it continued to work throughout the 1990s peace process. (Byrne 2001: 46) The Quaker

Peace Education Project also partnered with the Centre of the Study of Conflict at the

University of Ulster in 1988 to create an action research project at Magee College in

Derry "to foster peace education and education for mutual understanding (EMU) in

primary and secondary schools in Northern Ireland" (Byrne 2001: 339)

Further, the attitudes and initiatives put forward by the British and Irish governments

have changed significantly between the SA and BA. Perhaps the most telling indication

of the state of government initiatives to promote positive cross community contact came

from then Prime Minister of Northern Ireland Terrance O'Neil who in 1967 advised his

supporters to "forget jargon words like community relations". (Bew et al. 2002: 168)

Following the descent into violence in 1969 it was announced that a Community

Relations Commission would be established to help deal with issues of cross community development. (Gallagher, 1995; 30) However, it has been argued that the Community Relations Officers were so laden down with administrative work that little community development was undertaken. (Frazer & Fitzduff 1991 as cited in Gallagher 1995; 31) However, in keeping with the attitude O'Neill displayed, the Committee was abolished in 1974 as an SA power sharing Agreement had "obviated the need for a community relations commission" (Gallagher, 1995: 30)

The fate of the Community Relations Commission contrasts sharply with later British initiatives. In 1987, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland set up the Central Community Relations Unit (CCRU) which was charged with creating, reviewing and challenging policy throughout the government based on its impact on community relations (Knox & Hughes, 1995: 46) The CCRU managed also to have community relations set as a mandatory remit on the 26 local district councils in Northern Ireland. (Knox & Hughes, 1995: 58) From there community relations projects were divided into five broad categories: high profile which are one time programs, such as a dance aimed at promoting community contact through public relations; inter/intra community development which is focused on addressing prejudices through the pursuit of common goals, such as economic development committees; cultural traditions which attempt to take advantage of shared cultural interests such as music or sports, perhaps through community drama groups or inter-music groups; focused community relations which attempt to tackle issues head on, such as anti-prejudice workshops; and finally substitute funding which are events that were functioning prior to the arrival of the community

relations officer and through which they hope to promote mutual cultural understanding

through Christmas lights or fireworks displays. (Knox and Hughes, 1995)

Through the CCRU, organizations in January 1990 the Northern Ireland Community

Relations Council (CRC) was established as a charitable organization (Knox & Hughes,

1995: 31). The CRC was to function as an umbrella organization providing organization

and direction "to assist moderates and peace activists within both communities in Ireland

to promote reconciliation work and community and cultural traditions, and to develop

cross community contact that breaches the sectarian wall" (Fitzduff 1996 as cited in

Byrne 2001: 340) Both the CCRU and CRC aptly demonstrate a greater commitment to

improvement of community relations than was demonstrated around the time of the SA.

The BA was also a more community involved agreement than the SA is in its deliberate

attempts to both seek the advice of the citizens of Northern Ireland as well as involve

them in approving the BA through a referendum. The willingness of the British

government to canvass the opinion of its citizens was amply demonstrated by the Opsahl

Commission collected throughout 1992. After collecting thousands of opinion polls and

submissions from the public of the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, and the United

Kingdom, the Opsahl Commission made recommendations aimed at ameliorating the

conflict in Northern Ireland (Tonge, 1998: 94) Many of the included recommendations,

such as the necessity of involving SF in the negotiating process (1.5), the enactment of a

Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland (2.4) and the need for funding for promoting cross

border economic cooperation (3.1), (Opsahl, 1993) were taken into account in the course of the BA peacebuilding process.

Lastly, the BA was put to referendum to determine its support and feasibility to those who would be affected by the agreement. Whereas in 1973 the SA was implemented by government decree, the 1998 BA was endorsed by citizens in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, providing citizens with a "sense of ownership" over the agreement and their fate (Wilford, 2001a:19). Overall, when the BA was put to referendum on May 22nd 1998, fully 85 percent of the people of the island of Ireland endorsed the Agreement. In Northern Ireland alone 81 percent of the population turned out to vote with 71 percent of the population in support of the BA and 29 percent opposed, although opposition was higher within the unionist electorate (Mitchell, P., 2001: 30). Efforts to involve both communities in the peacebuilding process provided both communities with a sense of ownership over their fates, thus making them more likely to accept the implementation of the BA rather than the violent reaction to the SA and AIA in 1985.

Accordingly, while a grassroots peace movement was present to a degree around the time of the SA, in the years leading up to the BA there was a great deal more emphasis placed at both the grassroots and government levels on the importance of promoting positive cross community contact and involving citizens in the peacebuilding process. Arguably such contact has helped lay the ground work for a society better able to envision peace

and to countenance supporting an agreement with those who many once counted as their enemies.

External Ethno Guarantors

Related to the involvement of the internal community in peacebuilding efforts is the involvement of the regional and international actors in this case meaning the external ethno guarantors of a community. According to Byrne (2000) external ethno guarantors (EEG) are "regionally powerful third-party mediators with regional interests who perceive that they have a direct and historical connections, as well as shared national identity with their internal allies"(as cited in Byrne 2006; 153) For the unionist community in Northern Ireland this is the British government and for the nationalist community the Irish government. These external regional powers have the capability to both ameliorate and exacerbate a conflict with their internal co-nationals (internal counterparts to the EEG). Often these allies can bring "muscle, motivation and resources" to help bring about the resolution of a conflict (Byrne 2006: 154). However, they can also exacerbate tensions by, for example, providing a safe haven for paramilitaries or providing military resources to those same paramilitaries.

If the EEGs are to be positively involved in resolving a conflict they have a delicate role to play. First, they must not be destructively involved in the conflict as this may undermine their credibility. Second, they must not impose any solutions upon the parties unless both EEGs, along with a primary mediator are prepared to jointly enforce the

agreement (Byrne 2006; 164). Third they must balance a paradox of "geopolitical proximity... on the one hand, it is restraining the actor in the conflict; on the other hand, it prevents the conflict from being fully resolved" (Wright; 1987 as cited in Byrne 2006; 164). Such a balance is not easy to achieve and requires a great deal of forethought into formulating a plan of action.

Although the British and Irish governments were both involved in the SA and BA, the context of that role changed dramatically from the 1973 agreement to that of 1998. Unfortunately, the involvement of the EEGs during the SA was predominately destructive, both on the part of both governments.

The Irish government's constitutional claim to the whole of the island of Ireland caused considerable difficulty among Unionists to accept the Republic's role in the SA. Under the Republic's 1937 Constitution, Article 2 claimed that the national territory of the Republic consisted of the "whole island of Ireland, its islands, and territorial seas" while Article 3 noted that "pending reintegration of the national territory... the laws of the state would only apply to the Free State areas" (Tonge 1998; 31). Not only did the Irish Constitution claim jurisdiction over the North, but it did not acknowledge Northern Ireland as a legitimate state (Arthur & Jeffrey; 1988; 78). Such a claim in no way appeased Unionist fears of the Republic's goal of reunification with Northern Ireland, and thus the collapse of the union with Britain.

During the negotiation process for the SA, the Republic did not offer, nor was it made to remove Article 2 and 3 from its constitution which would have greatly appeased Unionist fears. Obligedly Article 5 of the SA the Republic of Ireland "fully accepted and solemnly declared that there could be no change in the status of Northern Ireland until a majority of the people of Northern Ireland desired a change in that status" (SA, 1973; 5) However, on January 16th 1974 the Irish Constitutional Court ruled that Article 5 of the SA was not incompatible with Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish Constitution as Article 5 was merely a statement of policy, though any attempt to implement it would in truth be a violation of the Irish Constitution. The Irish Taoiseach, Liam Cosgrave tried to reassure Unionists that the "factual position of Northern Ireland is that it is within the United Kingdom... [his] government accepts this as fact" (as quoted in Coogan). However, this was perceived as poor reassurance to the Unionist community (Wolff, 2001;22)

For its part, the British government did not act much more positively than the Irish government. British involvement in Northern Ireland for much of the 20th century has been described as *ad hoc,* crisis management interventions undertaken with great reluctance and aimed consistently at "extricat[ing] itself and, failing this, to decrease its involvement and costs" (Byrne 1995: 5).

Moreover, despite Northern Ireland's status within the British union, the relationship was often characterized as one of disinterest, and often times as neglect. As Bew et. al. (2002) argue "not only was Northern Ireland economically and politically marginal for Britain,

but Britain had done much to keep it so" (154). Northern Ireland was on the periphery of British politics. In 1952, speaking on the severe economic downturn being experienced in Northern Ireland, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill's Minister of Supply, Duncan Sandys, while agreeing to provide some aid, concluded that "in the long run this is an Ulster problem which only Ulster can solve" (Bew et al. 2002: 114) Arguably, the British government had begun to attempt to insulate itself from Northern Ireland politics even before partition, with the process essentially complete by 1923. (Bew et al. 2002:154)

This economic and political neglect had a significant socio-economic impact on Northern Ireland. Prior to the outbreak of the Troubles, "Britain's economic negligence of Northern Ireland's working classes [left] Britain partly responsible for the feelings of alienation, distrust, and sectarianism felt in both communities" (Byrne et al. 2008; 111), which would have particular ramifications for the violence of the conflict. As McGarry and O'Leary (1995) note "paramilitary activity in Northern Ireland has been concentrated in deprived areas" (as cited in Byrne et. al. 2008; 111) This is partly a result of the great reluctance of mainland British political parties to organize in Northern Ireland, which created a political vacuum wherein sectarianism can flourish. (Tonge 1998: 50) Unsurprisingly, given this attitude, the SA was considered a relatively low priority for the British government (Wolff, 2001: 23).

During the BA negotiation process, the attitudes and commitments of both EEGs took on a drastically different tone, with constitutional concessions from the Republic of Ireland and far greater involvement from the British government . It can be convincingly argued that one of the most significant contributions that the Republic of Ireland made to the peace process as an EEG was its agreement to constitutional change. The Republic took on a far more conciliatory and flexible approach. Bertie Ahern, the former Irish Prime Minister, signed an amendment to the Constitution formally repealing both Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish constitution (Wolff, 2001) Further, through the BA, Northern Ireland is recognized as a legal entity within the Irish Constitution, and in doing so, the Republic also formally recognized the British identity and aspirations of Unionists (O'Leary 2001). However, the Irish government does retain a say in those Northern Irish issues that have not been devolved to the Northern Irish Executive (O'Leary, 2001).

In addition, the level of involvement and dedication of the Republic of Ireland's government in ensuring that the agreement took place has been commendable. According to Senator George Mitchell, one of the primary negotiators of the BA, Bertie Ahern took a tremendous political risk coming to Belfast, and further, he went to Belfast twice on the day of his mother's funeral. (Mitchell, G, 2002: 91) Such dedication impressed upon the Northern Irish population the importance and significance, as well as the support the Irish government offered, to the Agreement.

The British government also increased its positive role both in terms of the level of involvement it offered as well as the recognition it afforded the Nationalist community in

counterpart to that offered the Unionists by the Republic of Ireland. Through the BA, the British government officially recognized the right of the people of Ireland to exercise self-determination and confirmed that, with majority consent, Northern Ireland could secede from the realm. (O'Leary 2001) At the same time, the former Prime Minister of Britain, Tony Blair, made deliberate efforts to reassure Unionists that their place within the union was secure, that "a political settlement is not a slippery slope to a united Ireland. The government will not be persuaders for unity... None of you in this hall...even the youngest, is likely to see Northern Ireland as anything but part of the United Kingdom" (Bew et al. 2001: 231)

Also, just as the government officials of the Republic of Ireland attempted to personally demonstrate the importance of the BA, Prime Minister Blair made his very first trip outside of London after having been elected, to Belfast to showcase Britain's commitment to the peace process. (Mitchell, G., 2002: 91) As Wolff (2001) describes "in sharp contrast with the situation in 1973-4, the British government has placed Northern Ireland high on its agenda and that Prime Minister Blair has made several personal interventions to prevent a breakdown of the peace process." (p. 23) Throughout the course of the negotiation process the British government made clear its commitment to the process.

As a final example of the increased commitment of both the Republic of Ireland and Britain to bringing about a successful resolution to the Northern Ireland conflict, one can look back to the 1985 AIA. In the time surrounding the SA, the relationship between the

Republic of Ireland and Britain was at best frigid. In 1969, the Prime Minister of both Northern Ireland and Britain had issued a joint communiqué that stated that "the responsibility for affairs in Northern Ireland is entirely a matter of domestic responsibility" (Arthur & Jeffrey, 1988;77). In 1971, following the arrival of British troops in Northern Ireland, many in close proximity to the border, the Irish Taoiseach , Mr. Jack Lynch, stated that "if there are repeated and more serious incursions by the British army across the border it may be necessary to seize the U.N of this issue as a threat to international peace." (Arthur & Jeffrey, 1988; 90) Eire felt it their role to protect Nationalist refugees who were streaming south. Such language is not that of states seeking to work toward a common goal but rather of states seeking to defend territory and sovereignty.

However, by the 1980s the British government came to the realization that a stable and lasting peace was not likely without the support of the Republic of Ireland. Policing between the two states across the border region could only be more effectively handled if it involved coordinated efforts. Accordingly, the two governments came together in 1985 to impose an agreement over the heads of the Northern Ireland civil service and the Unionist community (Byrne 2006) and enforced that AIA until such a time as it was overshadowed by the BA.

Consequently, it can be seen that the attitudes and levels of commitment to a lasting and stable peace in Northern Ireland demonstrated by the two EEGs, the Republic of Ireland

and Britain, are drastically different when comparing the SA with the BA. The attitudes of the EEGs during the SA process were primarily disinterest on the part of the Republic of Ireland, - or rather, interest only so much as it might advance implementation of Articles 2 and 3 of the 1937 Irish constitution – and a desire to find a quick fix on the part of the British government. Even Direct Rule, established by the British government in 1972 and following the collapse of SA, was designed as a temporary measure (Arthur & Jeffrey, 1988;46). Though it has not been attempted here to delve into the motivations for the change of attitudes and involvement of the EEGs in the Northern Ireland conflict, it can nonetheless be perceived that there was a markable increase in the amount of effort placed into coming to a positive, long term resolution of the conflict.

Third Party International Mediators

Having examined the role of the more involved and biased EEGs, one can then turn to the role of formal international mediators in the successful formulation of the 1998 BA. Often, given their intense involvement in a conflict, EEGs on their own are not able to bring about the desired resolution. Up until the mid 1990s, the British and Irish governments had been unable to truly ameliorate or end the sectarian conflict (Byrne 1995). In formal negotiation processes, the involvement of a capable third party mediator can thus be very crucial to the success of the process.

Mediators in general fulfill several roles. According to Bercovitch and Kadayifci (2002) "mediators use process and content strategies to influence and exert pressure on parties to

change the pattern of ethnopolitical conflicts so that disputants are motivated by

economic and political costs to seek agreement" (as cited in Byrne 2006; 149). In order

to do so, mediators can be either informal individuals who are perceived as powerless,

though legitimate, credible and flexible; or formal mediators who are empowered by their

positions, a large state, who has the power and resources necessary to coerce or reward

the conflicting parties; or finally they might be smaller states without power or resources

but who instead have good relationships with both sides. (Byrne 2006; 151). In the case

of the Northern Ireland conflict, the U.S and the European Union (EU) – where

contributions have been significant in terms of financial aid - have taken on the role of

formal primary international mediators. The formal international mediator must be able to

coerce and manipulate EEGS and internal parties into committing economic and political

resources to the conflict resolution process. Both the United States and EU have been

able, and perhaps more important, willing to use their resources and power as leverage to

help manipulate the Irish and British governments, Unionists and Nationalists, toward a

negotiated settlement (Byrne 2006).

During the SA process, there was virtually no international involvement in the

negotiation cycle, it was a matter for the British and Irish governments and, Northern

Ireland's mainstream politicians (Dixon, 2006). As international involvement was not

therefore required to force the EEGs to cooperate, accordingly it is argued that credit

given to the EU and the US for having helped push the EEGs towards an agreement is an

exaggeration. (Dixon 2006) The two EEGs were involved in the SA process, though they

were not as constructively involved in genuinely building the conditions for a lasting

agreement. As a consequence, the agreement collapsed with the UWC strike of 1974, with little effort on the part of the Northern Ireland, or British governments to save it (Kennedy-Pipe, 2006)

During the BA agreement however, attention and effort from the international mediators, the US and the EU, were far more significant. Nor was the involvement of the US confined to the period of peacebuilding immediately surrounding the actual talks. As early as the 1970s, the so called 'Four Horsemen' – Tip O'Neill, Edward Kennedy, Daniel Moynihan and Hugh Carey – worked to help President Carter in 1979 to take a more proactive stance on Northern Ireland, while simultaneously denouncing paramilitary activities. (Tonge 1998; 152) The US became more involved in attempting to address the conflict. Following a scandal over interrogation methods used by the Royal Ulster Constabulary, (RUC) the State Department suspended the sale of handguns to the RUC (Guelke, 2001: 254). Further, President Reagan also put pressure onto Margaret Thatcher's British government to "acknowledge the legitimacy of the Irish Republic's concern over the situations [of its internal co-nationals situation] in Northern Ireland. These acts contributed to the pressure that persuaded Margaret Thatcher to sign the Anglo-Irish Agreement" (Guelke, 2001: 254).

Guelke (2001) has argued however, that the involvement of the US in the BA is primarily reactive. Senator Mitchell (2002), who unofficially successfully fulfilled the role of peace envoy and mediator stated "the American role was, and is, secondary; to be helpful

and supportive but not to be the ultimate decision maker" (90). The US government favoured the twin track approach of all party talks with simultaneous decommissioning and Senator Mitchell was appointed overall Chairman of the talks to whom all parties reported (Tonge, 1998). Further when the talks broke down, it was Senator Mitchell who was able to jump start the talks once more with a presentation of the parties of a draft of the agreement and in setting a deadline (Bew et al. 2002: 236)

It is not attempted here to determine in any quantitative way the extent to which the involvement of the US as a formal primary international mediator, yet one can nonetheless draw some cursory conclusions. First, there was a much more notable international presence surrounding the BA than there was surrounding the SA. The role of the international mediator is not to force an agreement but rather to coerce the greater expenditure of resources, both political and economic on the resolution of the conflict on the part of both EEGs. Whatever the motivations of the US were, it was widely accepted to have been part of President Clinton's re-election appeal to the 44 million Irish Americans as well as an attempt to solidify his legacy. (Tonge 1998) The United States government also supported the role of economic assistance to provide the necessary incentives, guidance and support to bring about the BA which has achieved a relative, if uneasy, cold peace.

Targeted Economic Aid

In conjunction with an inclusive negotiation process, the promotion of cross- community

contact, the positive involvement of EEGs and formal international mediators, targeted

economic aid can prove crucial in rebuilding both damaged infrastructure and damaged

community relationships. (Byrne et all 2009) Properly targeted, economic aid can provide

"community projects in the employment sector [which can and] have served to provide

hope and options to the next generation". Further, such targeted economic aid can also

assist in nurturing to create cross community contact which can serve to help reduce fear

and the stereotypes of the 'other' (Byrne et al. 2008) The most deprived areas of Northern

Ireland are also some of the most segregated, thus "community development has a crucial

role to play in addressing disadvantage" . (CAJ, 2006: 128) International economic aid is

crucial in rebuilding much needed infrastructure development in Northern Ireland (Byrne

et. al. 2008: 115).

The socio-economic situation in Northern Ireland surrounding both the SA and BA has

been a relatively bleak one rife with high unemployment and disadvantage. Following the

Second World War, many of Northern Ireland's key industries began to decline. In 1958,

unemployment in Belfast alone rose by almost half (Bew et al. 2002; 115). Furthermore,

while rates of unemployment were high for all Northern Irish communities, they were

disproportionately so for the Nationalist community. In 1971, while Protestant

unemployment rates were 5.6 percent, the Catholic rate more than doubled at 13.9

percent (Tonge 1998: 183), making Catholics two and a half times more likely to be

unemployed.

Also of importance to the socio-economic conditions was the border between the Republic and Northern Ireland itself. When the Border was established in 1921, it was designed to be a temporary measure while its final Border was under consideration by the Boundary Commission. However, this consideration never came to pass and thus when the border was confirmed in 1925, it was confirmed with little thought as to the consequences of its placement (Harvey et al. 2005: 12). One of the first casualties of the Border was transit between North and South; by the 1950s only one of the corridors between Dublin and Belfast remained open (Harvey et. al. 2005: 44). According to figures that may not have fully taken into account the economic boom of the 1990s, it was still found that the Border region held only 15 percent of the population but 34 percent of the country's unemployed. While the central Northern Ireland economy has been growing at rates consistent with the EU, the Border region is consistently lagging behind (Harvey et. al. 2005: 19).

In this regard, perhaps more so than in any other of the conditions compared thus far, the SA and BA differed dramatically. As Bew et al. (2002) points out, Northern Ireland had been deliberately politically and economically marginalized by the British government. By the time of the 1998 BA, while unemployment remained a significant problem, Northern Ireland was receiving substantially more targeted economic aid. A number of specific initiatives were enacted since the mid-1980s to help foster both economic development and community capacity building to also foster positive cross community

contact. Among these initiatives are the International Fund for Ireland (IFI), EU Special Peace and Reconciliation Fund Peace I, II and III programs, and Targeting Social Need (TSN).

With the signing of the AIA in 1985, the IFI was created and collected contributions from the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the EU. From 1989 to 1994 alone the EU contributed $18.3 million US, then in response to the paramilitary ceasefires in 1994, increased donations to $24.4 million US (Byrne et al. 2008: 111)

For its part, the Special EU Support Program for Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland consists of two related initiatives. The Peace I program established in 1995 was designed to "correct unemployment, social and political exclusion, and build upon the already existing momentum for the creation of stability, peace and reconciliation in the region" (Byrne et al. 2008: 111). This was in keeping with the Opsahl recommendations which favoured the immediate implementation of programs designed to rebuild infrastructure as well as the promotion of cross-Border and cross-community socio-economic initiatives (Opsahl, 1993: 3.1). With respect to efforts along the Border regions, sub program 3 focused specifically on cross Border cooperation. Objective 3.1 focused on business and cultural links; 3.2 on infrastructure; 3.3 on cooperation between public bodies; and 3.4 on cross Border community reconciliation (SEUPB for Peace and Reconciliation, 1999). Feedback from those participating in the projects were primarily

positive, with fully 95 percent saying that they would like to be involved in future cross Border work. (SEUPB for Peace and Reconciliation, 1999:35)

However, there remains room for improvement with 51 percent of participants listing excessive administration and bureaucracy as a primary difficulty with receiving funding. (SEUPB for Peace and Reconciliation, 1999). Further, Unionist applicants are having difficulty matching the organizational capacity of Nationalists – which they had been forced to develop over the duration of the conflict – in order to gain access to development funds and thus Unionist communities are more sceptical about the potential benefits of economic aid. There is also the risk that Unionist communities may perceive any socio-economic gain on the part of the Nationalist community as a deprivation from their own community(Byrne et al. 2008: 118).

Yet, despite funding, deprivation, and segregation remain a substantial issue. A Special EU Programs Body report found that 19.5 percent of the population who lived in the 500 most affluent neighbourhoods were Catholic, whereas of the 500 most deprived areas, 72 percent of the population was Catholic (CAJ, 2006; 116). It may be that concern over the effectiveness of the aid in creating sustainable economic development may have been in part due to inappropriate expectations (Byrne et al. 2008)

However, overall, there have been positive outcomes from the economic aid provided to Northern Ireland Byrne et al. (2008) describes as follows:

> a definite trend since the early 1990s has been the burgeoning increase in the number of community groups interested in addressing conflict related tensions in Northern Ireland.... many of these newly established community groups have been supported by economic aid from the IFI or EU Peace I and II programs.(112)

Related to these newly developed community groups has been the development of a large peace industry in Northern Ireland as the Peace II program attempted to focus on "larger and more successful cross community projects in terms of providing more jobs, and in building sustainable economic development and peace" (Byrne et al. 2008:112). Thus, the presence of these funding bodies, though hampered by bureaucracy and difficult to quantitatively evaluate, are having a positive impact on community relations. (Byrne 2009)

Without question, there has been significantly greater economic aid provided before, concurrently and following the BA than there was surrounding the SA process. Addressing economic disparities can help alleviate some of the sense of oppression and discrimination that so often goes hand-in-hand with deprivation. By focusing on infrastructure, business and community development, cross community contact can be promoted in a relatively safe and neutral context. The funding provided to Northern Ireland over the past quarter century has assisted in improving community relations prior to the initiation of the 1998 peace talks and helped to prepare communities and politicians

alike for the prospect of negotiating with each other which may contribute to the long term success and sustainability of the BA.

Conclusion

Both the SA and BA are significant and important interventive efforts to end of the Northern Ireland conflict. Though remarkably similar on paper, it is in the context surrounding both agreements that their success or failure appears to have been determined. Inclusivity, promotion of cross community contact, the productive involvement of external ethno guarantors and formal international mediators, and targeted economic aid are all inter-related aspects of the peacebuilding process. In all of the five aforementioned conditions, the BA had an advantage over the SA as all five conditions were in greater evidence during the more successful 1998 BA than the 1974 SA. While this chapter provides evidence for the presence of these conditions, further study into just how they were able to affect both Agreements is required so as to better understand when, where and how these conditions positively contributed to the peace process so that they may be understood and promoted in other conflict resolution processes.

However, overall when implemented in concert these five conditions can constitute, in part, "civil society and constructive conflict resolution approach[es] involv[ing] the development of an interactive interdependent web of activities and relationships among elite and the grass roots to build a shared 'culture of peace'" (Byrne 2001: 328) In creating

such a 'culture of peace', the conditions can be set to bring about the political will to sit down at the negotiation table with one's former enemies, as well as help create a context that is less volatile and thus more likely to be able to handle the setbacks that any peace process is likely to experience. As an example, despite the killings of British Army officers by IRA splinter groups in the spring of 2009, Northern Ireland, rather than descending into sectarian conflict, publicly denounced the violence, and in June the Ulster Defence Association (UDA), a loyalist paramilitary group, announced that it had put its weapons beyond use.

Chapter 4: Methodology

Introduction

Given the disparities in levels of success achieved by the SA and BA while the bulk of the document remained relatively similar, it follows that the conditions under which the Agreements came about should be considered when comparing the two. Using a qualitative research design, this study seeks to shed light onto what conditions on the ground in Northern Ireland, what contexts changed to allow for the development and signing of the BA. In particular, a series of semi-structured interviews are taken from a sample of Northern Irish middle tier elites to help determine what conditions were seen to have been necessary if not sufficient, for the change.

Participants

In order to pursue the research question, a series of semi-structured, (Druckman 2005) interviews were undertaken. Participants were chosen from the category of middle tier elites of Northern Irish society as defined by Lederach (1995). According to Lederach (1995), middle tier elites (who are professionals, academics, middle level politicians and community organizers etc) help bridge the disconnect that often exists between the everyday citizens and the political elites of a state. As such, this group was chosen in the hopes that they might offer pragmatic insight into both the perceptions of the average citizen as well as the thinking guiding the political elites.

Those selected for participation were divided into two categories. The first group, Group A, was comprised of scholars and scholar practitioners in the Northern Irish academic

community. Participants selected had direct personal and or research insight into the Northern Irish conflict and knowledge of both Agreements. This group was comprised of five individuals who had specific theoretical knowledge and insight into why the BA is more successful than the SA.

The second group, Group B, was comprised of grassroots organizers and middle tier organizational administrators with personal and professional experience and on the ground insight into the Northern Irish conflict as well as knowledge of both Agreements. This group was comprised of five individuals. These participants were selected for their insight into the relative stability following the BA in comparison to the turmoil that followed the SA.

Risks
As neither group consists of participants at immediate risk, ethical concerns were at a minimum. However, as participants may have chosen to voice concerns about the actions of a particular group, perhaps one responsible for their funding, the names of the participants were replaced with pseudonyms in the final text. Once transcribed, the original recordings of the interviews were destroyed to further ensure the confidentiality of the participants' responses.

Theory

I took on the role of an independent interviewer. This position was taken as the goal of the interviews was to draw out the stories of the interviewees and their insight into the perceptions of both peace processes in question. Storytelling in this way has been selected as it is both easily accessible and culturally appropriate. As Senehi (2009) points out that although Northern Irish culture is known for storytelling, "the Northern Irish are also known for being extremely reserved when it comes to speaking publicly about the conflict or revealing themselves through direct personal stories." (231) Accordingly, as "storytelling is a flexible process and because the storytellers are in control, they are able to reveal only as much as they are comfortable revealing." (Senehi 2009; 231) In this way it was hoped that the participants were comfortable enough to share their perceptions, without feeling pressured or defensive. Thus, while attempting to draw out rich and detailed stories in response to open ended questions, in an elicitive manner I attempted to guide the interviewee through the fullest explanation of their narratives without directing them towards a particular response.

Interview Process

Participants from Group A were selected by surveying the academic staff in Northern Ireland with publications and research interests relevant to this study. Once a list of potential participants was generated, the final participant group was selected from that list at random so as to avoid any bias on the part of the researcher based on familiarity with the participants body of work. Participants from Group B were selected from a survey of organizers and administrators involved in cross community peace building efforts such as

those funded by the Special European Union Programmes Body's Peace l and ll

programmes as well as those operated by the International Fund for Ireland (IFI). Similar

to those participants from Group A, once a list of potential participants was generated, the

final participant group were selected from that list at random so as to avoid any bias on

the part of the researcher based on familiarity with the participants body of work.

Once the preferred participants from both groups were identified, letters of introduction

were sent along with requests for interviews via email. I traveled to Northern Ireland to

conduct the interviews. The interviews were conducted in the fall of 2009 in the environ

in which the participant felt secure, for example, office, restaurant, or home etc. Prior to

the beginning of the interview, the study and its purpose were explained in detail and

their formal written consent was acquired by signing the University of Manitoba

Protection of Human Subjects consent form. An interview of approximately one half to

one hour was conducted in person and was recorded. A request was made that a second

interview may be conducted at a later date if clarification or greater detail was required.

Field Work

For the most part, surveying contact details from organizational websites was sufficient

to make contact with the participants. However in some cases, it was necessary to request

an introduction to the participant through a known associate, for instance, a volunteer

with the organization the participant worked with. During my stay in Belfast I was also

participating in Trinity College Dublin's Irish School of Ecumenics Masters in

Reconcilliation program. In this program students are placed as volunteers with a number of community organizations. In some instances a classmate worked for the organization that a participant was involved with and was therefore asked to make the introduction. As one participant explained, being as Northern Ireland is of such interest to researchers, often those same middle tier elites receive such a high volume of requests for interviews that without a recommendation, they are not likely to respond to most of those requests. Accordingly, a number of the interviews were obtained by asking volunteers to introduce the requests to the participants on my behalf. Of the 23 interviews requested, 11 were accepted and 10 were successfully arranged and undertaken.

The primary research site was Belfast, Northern Ireland. However to accommodate the schedules of some of the participants, interviews were also conducted in Derry, Co. Londonderry, Jordanstown, Co. Antrim, as well as Dublin, Republic of Ireland. The interviews took place in locations of convenience for the participants including work offices, university campuses, or outdoor cafes.

Prior to the interview, participants were informed of the nature of the study and asked to sign the University of Manitoba Human Subjects Forms. They were then asked whether or not they were comfortable having their interview digitally recorded before proceeding with the interview. The primary questions, as identified in Appendix A were asked of all participants, unless they answered the question without a prompt. Both prepared and unprepared probe questions were asked when clarification or elaboration was needed or

to pursue an unexpected point. The fist question asked participants to describe, without any direction from the researcher, what in their own opinion, led to the success of the BA over the SA. This was designed to both get the participants thinking about the topic as well as to help assess the relevance of the themes identified in the literature review, and thus the relevance of the questions to follow.

Coding

In order to collate the data, once transcribed, the responses of the participants were first categorized in the attached charts (see Appendix B) and the transcribed interviews were inductively searched for themes that emerged from this data in a grounded theory approach. (Druckman 2005)

The chart was generated in order to compare whether the ideas conveyed through the questions about what conditions were present during the BA but not as strongly present, if at all, present during the SA and what significance was attributed to their presence. The answers provided in the charts are meant as visual descriptive representations of the significance attributed to each of the conditions or actions and do not reflect the fact that many of the answers were qualified answers. There may also be some variance in the selected answer category based on the researcher's interpretation of the enthusiasm of the participant toward a particular response. Nonetheless, what the charts allow is a general impression of the significance of each factor. Subsequently, a richer analysis of the texts was undertaken to help determine prevailing and recurring themes in the responses of the

participants. This inductive process aided in providing rich information as to what conditions were necessary for a political settlement to be reached in Northern Ireland.

Given the inherent complexities of conflicts, particularly ethno-politically based ones, it is important not only to identify conditions of a successful or an unsuccessful peacebuilding process, but also to be able to fully describe and understand those conditions or strategies (in this case the productive involvement of external ethno guarantors, the internationalization of the conflict, the inclusivity of the peacebuilding process, the targeted use of economic aid and the efforts to promote positive cross community contact). In may be possible that in some cases, a condition is sufficient for successful negotiations, whereas in others it is necessary but not sufficient. Accordingly, a multitude of perspectives of individuals involved in making the peace process work, whether professionally or by living through the peace process, must be examined to understand what conditions are necessary for the citizens of a community in conflict to feel that the conflict may be de-escalating, or resolving itself. By conducting this series of interviews, I was provided with a rich and detailed information source to compare with the available literature. In this way the perspectives of those most directly involved with SA and BA may come to inform this exploratory research project, practice and policy that seeks to resolve ethnic conflicts in a meaningful and effective way.

Conclusion

The research design outlined seeks to provide a deep if focused understanding of how a particular group of people view the development of the peace process of the BA. By using semi-structured interviews, the participants are given the opportunity to respond to questions in whatever manner they see fit rather than be restricted to particular responses. As such rather than simply seeking confirmation of the research question, the researcher is given the opportunity to learn in what other ways the research question can be interpreted and potentially fill in any gaps that may have been missed.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

To open each interview, participants were asked to explain, in general terms, what it was they felt made the BA more of a success than its predecessor, the SA. A number of themes emerged inductively from the data, many of which fit into the specific conditions actively pursued throughout the interviews as laid out in the theory section. In these opening thoughts, eleven overall themes emerge, only three of which are not immediately identifiable as fitting within the identified five conditions of inclusivity, the promotion of positive cross community contact, positive involvement of external ethno guarantors, the engagement of third party mediators and the use of targeted economic aid, though they are not unrelated. The emphasis placed on each theme varied across the two participant groups. Group A, which was composed of the academics Alexander, Michelle, Gregory, Perry and Stanley, and Group B which was composed of the community workers and activists Jonathan, Rachel, Pauline, Dylan and Derrick.

Respondent Images of the SA and BA

The most prevalent theme that came to mind in the initial discussion of the BA was the role that the inclusiveness of the peace process played in its success. Of the ten participants, four out of five participants in each group held inclusivity as a key factor in the success of the BA. As Stanley put it; "there were more players. And I suppose that is the short and simple answer." Such sentiment was echoed by James who argued that "

Sunningdale was not as inclusive as the Belfast Agreement and I think you did not have the Republican movement in dialogue around Sunningdale." That is not to say that all participants viewed inclusivity through the same lense, however given its prevalence in the opening remarks of the participants and within the research, it is explored in full under Theme 1: Inclusivity.

The second most common theme to emerge from the initial discussion does not fit specifically under one of the pre-identified headings and concerned changes in the attitudes and perceptions of the Unionist community in the years between the Sunningdale and Belfast Agreements. Seven of the participants, four from Group A spoke of a variety of changes within Unionism from their fears and anxieties over their place in Northern Ireland and the United Kingdom, to their understandings of the role occupied by Nationalists within those same spaces and an early lack of cohesive political leadership. Though not specifically identified in the literature review as one of the original five themes, the change in community dynamic is discussed under Theme 2: Promotion of Positive Cross Community Contact as this theme reflects a change in the dynamic of a community and consequently its relational dynamic with Nationalism, not to mention, Loyalism and Republicanism.

The third and fourth most identified factors, identified by half of the participants each, in the success of the BA over the SA is also discussed under Theme 1: Inclusivity. Confidence building measures, such as the explicit promotion of the doctrine of consent,

and the use of referendums were identified. Gregory, Stanley, and Perry of Group A, and Dylan and James of Group B with Alexander, Stanley, Rachel, James and Dylan further identifying the role of paramilitary ceasefires as helping to bring a wider proportion of the communities into the peace process.

The fifth most identified theme in the success of the BA relates not to a specific condition being examined but instead supports the underlying theory behind the project; the notion of timing and the cultivation of ripeness. While participants do not, at this stage explain how this cultivation of a right moment occurs, they do speak of certain principles, such as a mutually hurting stalemate and general war weariness, that Zartman and Lederach refer to as examined in the Theory chapter. The importance of this finding is also discussed in Chapter 6.

Also receiving significant mention was the changing roles and relationships between the Irish and British governments. The increased understanding of each other's situation and that of their related communities within Northern Ireland, as well as the increased parity in their relationship is explored in depth under Theme 3: Positive Involvement of External Ethno-Guarantors.

Attracting five mentions were the themes of prepatory dialogue and increased efforts in community relations, both of which fit under Theme 4: Promotion of Positive Cross

Community Contact. Of Group B only James specifically referred to elite level cross community dialogue as well as grassroots level community work, along with Pauline, while Group A participants Gregory and Stanley referred almost exclusively to elite level dialogue. Both sub themes speak of a growing consciousness of the importance of dialogue with 'the other' in order to lay the ground work for long term negotiations – be they formal treaty negotiations or more commonly, how to negotiate daily life in close proximity to 'the other'.

The final two themes received little mention in the opening question but came to be explored in far more detail further into the interviews. Receiving a mention each from Derrick and Pauline of Group B was the positive involvement of the EU and United States. Receiving mention from Pauline was the importance of foreign economic investment in helping create a successful agreement. The involvement of the EU and United States are explored throughout Theme 4: Involvement of Third Party Mediators and the influx of foreign cash is examined in Theme 5: The Targeted Use of Economic Aid.

Theme 1: Inclusivity
Including a Wider Range of Representatives
Table #1

How Important Was it that the BA Was More Inclusive Than the SA?							
Group	Participant	Not at All Helpful	Not Signifi-cantly Helpful	Helpful	Significantly Helpful	Critically Important	NA
A	Alexander						√
	Stanley				√		
	Michelle					√	
	Perry					√	
	Gregory					√	
B	Dylan					√	
	Rachel					√	
	James					√	
	Derrick					√	
	Pauline					√	

One theme of interest that emerged both from the literature and the interviews was the importance of opening up the peace process to a wider range of players and opinions. For all of the respondents save Alexander who did not discuss on the subject, inclusion was central to the success of the BA. Perry lists inclusion as one of two key themes, along with consent: "inclusion, inclusion, inclusion". Participants were also in agreement that, in terms of those present at the negotiations, the BA was expanded compared to the SA. The SA as Gregory points out was meant to be built on a strong middle ground, a middle ground that wasn't there. Originally, the SA was to be formed between moderate Ulster Unionists, the Northern Ireland Labour Party and the Alliance Party. The UUP at the time was highly fragmented and in an attempt to gain wider support for the Agreement, the SDLP was brought in, much to the anger of many Unionists.

> Faulkner tries to... you know, had stood, the Ulster Unionists, had stood on the basis of we won't have anyone in government whose primary objective was a united Ireland and he quite clearly mean the SDLP and the unionist voters took it as meaning the SDLP.... All of a sudden the unionists go into power with the SDLP, you know, there isn't enough sort of preparation work done to prepare unionist voters for that.

Even with the last minute inclusion of the SDLP, as Rachel and others point out, while the BA had near total representation of the Nationalist community, "round bout the Good Friday Agreement probably the difference being Sunningdale didn't have Nationalists represented, as many Nationalists represented, certainly not marginalized Nationalist representatives, Republican representatives. So, the success was probably that it was brokered by local politicians." A sentiment echoed by Stanley who adds that in general the BA had a more comprehensive presence which contributed to its greater success. Also pointed out by James, and Dylan of Group B and Stanley of Group B, was that while the

BA was more inclusive than the SA on the Nationalist side, it was not until the St.

Andrew's Agreement in 2007 that the DUP was really brought on board.

However, Gregory doubts whether such inclusion would even have been possible during

the SA as it is his feeling that Republicans at that time had no real political

representation.

> You've two ways of looking at that, that is you know, 74 failed because it wasn't inclusive the other thing was how could it have been more inclusive? I mean it was as inclusive as it could have been and even the people that were involved couldn't agree. 1998 we still have people disagreeing but it's much more inclusive you know....it was a completely different game. Whereas in the late 1990s, mid late 1980s, everybody is, or most of the main parties are on the same page. They might disagree about something but they know what the rules are and they have all by and large agreed to what the rules are. That is not the case in the early 70s.

While SF and the PUP were involved in the BA as partners, Stanley points out that they

had little effect on the structures and frameworks of the Agreement itself: "Sinn Fein's

interest tended to focus on two or three things that were very much of their own, like

decommissioning...they were heavily involved in the deals about the prisoners but, at the

end of the day in a sense, I would characterize them as a party more concerned with their

own interests, because they knew maybe, the shape of the Agreement." However,

arguably, that SF stayed away from Strand One talks may not be as significant as the fact

that it was able to involve itself and take part in the negotiations of those issues which

were of import to SF and its constituencies.

Further, the efforts made to make the BA more inclusive also brought in cross community parties – initially- such as the NIWC. Because of NIWC's relative lack of electoral support and cross community mandate, the Women's Coalition, Michelle argues, was able to undertake an important role as a broker between the traditional parties. By widening the range of parties involved in the negotiation process, the BA not only allowed a venue for groups frustrated at a lack of voice, but also allowed for a broader base of small parties to provide a measure of glue to make the Agreement stick. To add to this, as Dylan argues, bringing in SF and the DUP as representatives of the more extreme views, in fact aided in making those same parties less extreme.

Bringing Paramilitaries in From the Cold

How Important Was it that the Paramilitaries Were Brought In From the Cold?							
Group	Participant	Not at All Helpful	Not Significantly Helpful	Helpful	Significantly Helpful	Critically Important	NA
A	Alexander						√
	Stanley				√		
	Michelle					√	
	Perry					√	
	Gregory					√	
B	Dylan					√	
	Rachel					√	
	James					√	
	Derrick					√	
	Pauline					√	

Table #2

Often decisions to involve a wider array of parties in negotiations is complicated by the ties of some parties with paramilitary organizations. Just as with the more general

concept of inclusion, all respondents to the questions acknowledged the importance, though to differing degrees, of the involvement of paramilitary representatives. According to Michelle, the inclusion of paramilitaries was absolutely essential. Rachel and Pauline were even more emphatic. "It was the only way it worked. There is no way it could have survived without them." In Rachel's view, the British State controlled the majority of the media coming out of Northern Ireland and "so it became, the reality became that the only bad people here were the IRA....those men in the 70s, 80s, 90s in their twenties, their thirties." It was nonetheless essential that they be involved in negotiations as "not to include them as leaders, because they were seen very much as leaders. I was brought up in the Republican community. They were seen very much as leaders." Derrick argued that "it was crucial. Gerry Adams, Gerry Kelly engaging with their own community, with the paramilitaries, all these personalities and the influence necessary." However, Derrick does not believe that such representation was as strong on the Unionist side. Pauline also stressed the importance of involving those who took an active role in the armed struggle.

> You cannot in any shape or form have a peace agreement without talking to those who were actually involved in the armed conflict you know? How ...like...this whole idea where they wouldn't recognize it as a war, it was a war! There was two opposing factions fighting you know, call it what it was, call it conflict, call it the Troubles, it was a war. You had those dying and fighting on either side of the war. You know, We didn't come to the end of the Second World War without talking to the heads of the opposing armies. Yes there were factions, but if you talk about the allies, they were different factions you know. So you needed to bring all of those in. And thankfully they did, thankfully that was recognized and progress was made.

Perry, who was involved in track two diplomacy from the 1990s on, also emphasized the importance of involving even those non constitutional parties. Even those less

mainstreamed such as representatives of the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA), a Marxist break-away from the Official IRA that was the mainstream Republican organization in the early 1970s with the PIRA as a break away unit.

Stressing the importance of the involvement of factions from all involved communities, Rachel notes the importance of recognizing political representatives in changing the atmosphere on the ground. In particular she refers to the importance of providing a whole section of the community, particularly the youth with a political project, which she argues, was not as available to Nationalists and Republicans throughout the 1960s and 1970s. In her view,

> the reality is, this so called IRA was in many cases, sixteen and seventeen year old kids who came through and saw injustice, who had been harassed by the British Army, you know, all sorts of issues....Now I'm not saying all of this was some free flowing and that there wasn't some terrible things done. I mean, we all know there was. But the difficulty was that while we still believed that the only bad people in this war was one side, and to try and sideline a large, a majority of the population, it wasn't going anywhere. And that was the Republican vote.

By bringing groups thought to be more hard line, as in this example with SF as representatives at of the PIRA and much of the Republican movement, a voice was given to a large section of the population who had long felt it denied them. This in turn allows, as Rachel points out, the emergence of other, more socially accepted and less violent expressions of dissatisfaction and anger. This was not a situation unique to the Republican community. Many Loyalists lacked a voice in the SA and were able to then voice their concerns during the BA through the Gusty Spence's PUP and Gary McMichael's UDP.

Once again however, it is overly simplistic to argue that had paramilitaries and a greater number of representatives been involved that the SA would have succeeded. As Stanley notes the IRA had "pledged to destroy anything that came out of the negotiations that led up to Sunningdale, and you had the Sunningdale itself, where the IRA described the SDLP as traitors. And of course the Ulster Unionist Party was severely, severely divided and Paisley and the other Unionists were intent on bringing it down and demonstrating and so on so the prospects just weren't as good at all." While the DUP for the most part remained dissenters until the 2007 St. Andrew's Agreement, by the time of the BA much of these attitudes had changed as Gregory has already pointed out. The parties had themselves changed to make their invitation to the negotiating table more likely.

Engaging the Population

Nor was opening up the negotiating table to a wider range and number of parties the only way the BA was more inclusive than the SA. On a symbolic level, if not always a practical level, the majority of respondents argued that the efforts to include a more diverse array of viewpoints as well as involve a greater proportion of the population through the promotion of the doctrine of consent and the use of a referendum to confirm the BA was important. As Perry puts it, "what is different about the 1998 is, I think, twofold. One the doctrine of consent, and two, the concept of inclusion." The doctrine of consent, which allows that only through the expression of consent of the majority of the people of Northern Ireland could its constitutional place within the union, be altered. James points out that this represents an interesting shift in self determination in Northern

Ireland: "what a shift, though, from what used to be there in previous governments, Government of Ireland Acts, because in those days it used to be solely the Stormont parliament that could make that sort of decision, and then, there was some re-drafting done and it was the British government that could make that decision, and the people of Northern Ireland". The understanding of the principle of consent was not new to the BA. Alexander acknowledges that it was implicit in the SA but, as he puts it "they sort of made a mess of it and it wasn't believed". Further, Stanley notes that the principle of consent was written into the very constitution of the SDLP when it was first formed.

The doctrine of consent as laid out during the negotiations of the BA places the decision of the constitutional future of Northern Ireland not with the government and its structures, but with the populace. In this way, it is attempted to relieve some Unionist anxiety that they might be trundled into a united Ireland without their consent, and for many Nationalists allows for the possibility of a united Ireland. It is, as James put it, a compromise model.

However, Perry and Michelle do point out that there is a certain amount of hubris involved in what Derrick calls a watered down SF agenda. As Michelle explains "the Agreement relies upon the hope that in the long term... well I mean the ludicrous notion that if 51 percent is for a United Ireland that it is going to switch, I mean that's what we have on paper at the moment, I'm thinking 'oh really?' That's a rather strange hostage of words. On the other hand, you know, Catholic women I think have no intention of

breeding in the numbers to bring that about." Perry also adds that there is a certain degree

of hubris in that many nationalists seemed to believe that "the more the equality and

human rights agenda came into play, the less reason there would be for unionists to want

to remain within the union. And that strikes me as being very facile." Yet it seems to

have been an important symbol nonetheless. As James states:

> The demographics may shift a bit but it's accept a majority of people, that's
> where the new Government of Ireland Act now places it. And so unionists
> should feel a bit more confidence with that, and I suspect a number do. On
> the other hand, one of the amazing things about this is, that's much less than
> what Sinn Fein set out for at the beginning, so there has been... the principle
> of consent, in a sense, maybe represents a kind of forced compromise on all
> sides because the Unionists had to accept that it wasn't going to be Stormont
> parliament making that decision anymore but the people. Sinn Fein also
> accepted that which was a shift... which meant that they were also having to
> accept that Northern Ireland would remain part of the United Kingdom for
> the foreseeable future.... There was a give and take I think. And that in
> itself represents a type of compromise model.

In a sense, the ambiguity of the doctrine of consent is both a drawback and its strength. It

allows groups to interpret its meaning in whatever manner is most reassuring while

nonetheless laying down certain limitations on the future of the state. As a symbol of the

willingness of both sides to let the future of the country be decided by the people, the

acceptance of the doctrine of consent was of significant importance.

A final way which the BA can be argued to be more inclusive than the SA is the holding

of a simultaneous referendum in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland on the

subject of the Agreement. Four of the five participants who responded to the question

saw the referendum as symbolically important. For Michelle, the referendum, due to the

fact that the 'yes' vote was much lower in the unionist community, is touch and go in

terms of its importance as a symbol.

How Important Was the Use of the North/South Referendum?							
Group	Participant	Not at All Helpful	Not Significantly Helpful	Helpful	Significantly Helpful	Critically Important	NA
A	Alexander					√	
	Stanley						√
	Michelle						√
	Perry					√	
	Gregory						√
B	Dylan						√
	Rachel				√		
	James				√		
	Derrick			√			
	Pauline						√

Table #3

According to Alexander:

> One of the things that people clearly understood from the failure of the
> Sunningdale Agreement was the importance of getting popular endorsement
> through a referendum....I mean John Hume's idea of having a referendum
> on the same day in both the Republic and Northern Ireland to trump notions
> of Irish self-determination being denied, I mean if you have a referendum
> on the same day and people across the island vote in favour of the Agreement
> that kind of has a ring as an authentic act of Irish self-determination.

While Rachel, James and Perry point out the same difference in 'yes' votes between both

communities, they nonetheless see it as an important symbol signaling that the population

of the island was ready for peace. Nor was the idea for a referendum new to the BA.

According to Perry, in an interview he conducted with John Hume, Hume had told him

that the SDLP had wanted a referendum in 1974 but that the Irish and British

governments were not confident that it could be carried. In a similar vein, Gregory argues

that the 1974 British general election in which anti-agreement Unionists won eleven out

of twelve seats, is indicative that the level of support needed for the Agreement to survive

was not present, certainly at least, not within the Unionist community. However, this

argument is indicative of a slightly different question, it speaks of the popular support for

the Agreement itself rather than the symbolic, or perhaps measurable importance, that the

referendum had on the BA. By putting the BA to a referendum, the people of the island

of Ireland were given the opportunity to take meaningful action toward determining their

future. It provided a sense of ownership and a reassurance to the whole of the population

that the island was ready to move away from violence. This sentiment is echoed by

Rachel who says that

> I don't think it mattered so much in the South, it was symbolic more
> than anything, to send a message, I think, to Northern Unionists. In terms
> of the referendum, it did... what it did was it clarified, in some senses
> that the majority of the community wanted to move on. And I remember,
> I couldn't believe it, I got really emotional when the results came through
> because I looked at my kids, and my son is now 18, my daughter is 22, so
> he would have be seven or eight and she would have been twelve, and I
> thought, "Jesus, you know, they might actually have a future here you know?"
> So yeah, it was important, but it was one of the factors.

As a symbolic gesture, the referendum was important, however it also provided, as

Rachel points out, a popular mandate for the peace agreement. In 1974, as Gregory

illustrates, it was clear that there was very little popular support for the SA and it failed to

be a lasting agreement. Though not without its difficulties, the BA has been a more

lasting and stable Agreement by far than the SA. The referendum provided a way for

people to reassure each other and to remind their politicians and community

representatives, that they had made the choice to accept this agreement. Perry furthers

this sentiment by arguing that

the North/South referendum was very important...you really needed to get it tied down that 'the people of Ireland want this' so it was very difficult for the nay sayers to come along and say this doesn't have a democratic mandate. And even though it was a tiny Unionist majority, it was a Unionist majority. And over 70 percent of the population of Northern Ireland signed up for it

As further evidence of the symbolic meaning of the referendum to the people of Northern Ireland, James points out that the referendum saw an increase in voter turn out, much of which is related to the active engagement of young people and women. "Now that's significant. Young people saw this as being hugely significant for the community and they went out and they said yes and they voted for it and there were two big majorities on both parts of the island."

Inclusion, in all the forms described above, had a significant role to play in not only bringing about the Agreement but helping drive home the popular mandates. By providing a voice for not only a wider variety of parties, but a wider variety of opinions, including seeking popular endorsement, the BA manages to provide for a greater expression of Irish self-determination to both Unionist and Nationalist communities thereby setting the groundwork for a more lasting, if not always dynamic, peace.

Theme 2: Fostering Positive Cross Community Contact

There are a number of ways which the participants outlined as promoting positive cross community contact in Northern Irish society. In general, these mechanisms fall into two sub-themes, first the growth and growing influence of civil society in Northern Ireland,

and secondly the growth and growing prevalence of organizations whose mandates are specifically designed to deal with sectarianism, its impacts and legacies. It is important to note, as Alexander points out, that there are both "nice civil society and there's nasty civil society", and so what is meant here by civil society is the 'nice' variety, those levels of civil service, social policy, grassroots and community organizations who seek to make their communities safer, less disputed and more equitable.

Growth of Civil Society

How Important Was the Involvement of Civil Society in the BA?							
Group	Participant	Not at All Helpful	Not Significantly Helpful	Helpful	Significantly Helpful	Critically Important	NA
A	Alexander				√		
	Stanley				√		
	Michelle				√		
	Perry						√
	Gregory						√
B	Dylan						√
	Rachel				√		
	James			√			
	Derrick						√
	Pauline					√	

Table #4

To begin with, many of the participants point out that civil society in Northern Ireland has grown in both size and influence significantly since the SA. As Stanley puts it "the concept of civil society just wasn't around in 1974, yet Gregory asserts that there have always been community relations councils. However, little is said about their mandate or efforts. How those community councils were viewed, and whether or not they were viewed as having counted may have been affected by Unionist perceptions of what community relations was in the 1970s. In Michelle's opinion even in 2009 "most, even

moderate Unionists really believe the place was okay in the 60s." As Alexander explains

"under Direct Rule, actual civil society that is.... the British Government had to base itself

on something, wanted to have some link with society for making policy fit and they

found it to be in their interest to make that the civil society groups. So NGOs had very

easy access to Direct Rule." As Michelle and James point out, much of the growth of

civil society comes from its increased institutionalization. Of the changes in civil society

Michelle says

> It has probably improved. It's institutionalized within the system, you
> know, what is it EMU? E.M.U Education for Mutual Understanding
> you know, it's in the school   curriculum, you know, I suppose the
> integrated school movement has grown, the women's movement was
> important at different periods. It's sending more of an institutional face
> by the latter than by the former.

James further talks about a change in attitudes that reflected a growth in civic society and

its influence

> I think there is a growing consciousness and awareness for example of
> the core values of community relations have been worked out and kind
> of articulated about a decade ago; equity, diversity, and interdependence.
> And a large number of organizations, statutory as well as voluntary have
> actually implemented those values into their policy and practice and their
> management. That wasn't there a decade ago. You know they have these
> policies...these organizational processes of implementation of those core
> community relations values, it says something is working.

Certainly such changes do not occur overnight and are indicative of an ongoing process.

Though its import may be difficult to pin down, as Gregory points out of the current

Executive "certainly the Executive at the minute realize it is an important area."

A second area in which participants felt civic society played a strong role in bringing about the BA was in driving the 'yes' campaign of the referendum in 1998. As Alexander phrases it "The civil society basically headed the 'yes' campaign of the Belfast Agreement." A sentiment shared by Rachel who shares a curious example of that campaign:

> I mean one of the funniest things that they did, which I thought was brilliant, was they got this cellophane paper, stickers, see through stickers, and completely see through, and they printed the word 'yes' on them in black and they put them on every green traffic light. Which meant that every time there was a traffic light turned to green it said 'yes'. Just 'yes'. Because it was see through all that came up was the black y e s. I remember that really giving me quite a smile, you know they were everywhere, everywhere you went. It was subtle things like that, well maybe not so subtle, but almost subliminal, at every traffic light. You know and how many traffic lights you pass a day if you're driving across Belfast maybe ten, twenty and you just keep getting this 'yes' message. I thought that was very effective. They pushed it.

The force with which civil society campaigned in favour of the BA likely helped create a more positive atmosphere in relation to the referendum that may have had some role in influencing voters towards voting in favour of the Agreement.

Yet another area where civil society grew and became more involved in the peace process in the intervening years was in the political engagement of interest groups. As Stanley explains:

> There is [now] a greater awareness, involvement. Civil society was more organized [in 1990s]. The employer groups, the trade union groups had got together to promote the talks and support the talks, at least in a moral sense, in a political sense with a small p. They weren't, it wasn't like that in 1974... you know, maybe the trade unionists made a few statements but they weren't as organized or as involved in the process. They didn't send delegations to meet the politicians and so on whereas they were doing that during the talks

in 1996-98.

However, it should be pointed out that though the concept of civil society was not present the way it was in 1998, that does not mean that many of these groups had no role to play. Gregory points out the role of the UWC as a representative of a number of trade unions actively protested the SA during the worker's strike of 1974. However, there appears to have been little involvement of these seeds of civil society in promoting dialogue or actively engaged in promoting a peace process. The worker's strike, as effective as it was at bringing the country to a standstill, is perhaps more indicative of the traditional Paisleyian stance of "No!" rather than any attempt to positively engage in the peace process. As Stanley points out, Paisley and other extremis Unionists were intent on bringing down the SA. This in turn is likely indicative of the level of fear and anxiety present in the Unionist community around this time period. That such a change occurred by the 1990s is thus in part indicative of a change in Unionist attitudes. Such changes will be the subject of further discussion at the end of this section.

An important distinction to make between community relation efforts and cross community relationship building in 1974 and 1998 was brought up by both Gregory and Dylan. The 1970s was a time of significant violence in Northern Ireland, it was in Dylan's words "a very dark period", and so as Gregory phrases it, "clearly people think that community relations are important but that just got subsumed. When the bombs are going off you don't have time to worry about that stuff." Yet nonetheless, perhaps based out of the basic talks of community relations Gregory mentions, as Stanley puts it "in the 1960s people will talk about an opening out but there wasn't any, there were no strong networks

of community relationships and community organizations in the 1960s. The Troubles

brought all that issue to the fore and community based organizations with a remit in some

way or another to improve community relations kind of mushroomed. Some with greater

success than others." The violence of the period can in this sense be seen to have

simultaneously led some to shut their doors metaphorically speaking, while reminding

others of the need to reach out to others and attempt to heal that same divide.

Grassroots Involvement

How Important Were Efforts to Foster Positive Cross Community Contact?							
Group	Participant	Not at All Helpful	Not Significantly Helpful	Helpful	Significantly Helpful	Critically Important	NA
A	Alexander		√				
	Stanley				√		
	Michelle			√			
	Perry						√
	Gregory		√				
B	Dylan				√		
	Rachel					√	
	James			√			
	Derrick			√			
	Pauline					√	

Table #5

That being said, efforts to foster positive cross community relations were made, and as

the years passed the actions multiplied. At the time of escalated violence in Northern

Ireland Dylan says of what he describes as the few cross community organizations "I

suppose this was at its worst could be construed as rearranging deck chairs on the Titanic.

At its best it was, I suppose, it was a sort of small witness to a different possibility."

While its impact is difficult to define, grassroots level community organizations, both

voluntary and statutory have mushroomed in number over the years leading up to the BA.

For Stanley, civic engagement and such community organizations were crucial in keeping

the violence from escalating to a greater level:

> Yes, I think all of that is very difficult to measure the effect of this in
> the benign sense but I think, we could well have gone over the precipice
> here and become more like the Balkans situation. If we hadn't been
> working at community relations, if we hadn't had political parties in the
> middle that totally renounced violence, and if we hadn't kept alive the
> democratic process because we had elections here time after time, and I
> think we had an underlying commitment not to let it go over the
> precipice and that's not because you know, the paramilitaries didn't try.

This understanding is not, however, universally held. To Gregory this type of reasoning is

as he phrases it, a nonsensical argument, one that cannot be proven.

What can be said is that while there are relationships that have, no doubt worsened over

the years – as evidenced by the greater levels of voluntary segregation in Northern

Ireland currently than in the 1960s – as pointed out by James there are certainly

relationships that have improved. As Pauline, who has worked in cross community

organizations since the mid 1990s, said that by the 1990s "there was a level of just,

professionalism that was coming together in the community field. There was people

seeing opportunities, there was a whole feeling of you know, we have to get this right

some time or another." To Derrick, while some may be skeptical of the 'industry' of

peace and reconciliation, nonetheless "there is a lot of cross community stuff going on. A

lot of good people out there doing good things...there are a lot of pioneering ideas in

conflict resolution...it's very vibrant, I have to say." This feeling is shared by Dylan who

adds that by the 1990s

> a lot more individuals and organizations got involved in peace and

reconciliation work. And it became less marginal, and there was money of course, which was another thing. A lot of work became more sophisticated. And it was in part going with the flow. There were a lot of people engaged in mediation work and developing links between the Republican movements and the ones in the Protestant community and so on.

What has changed in the intervening years is not only the prevalence of the cross community work but the targets and attitudes about it as well. While by the late 1980s, initiatives like EMU were taking root, but in 1988 when the organization Rachel works for first opened, it was the only one to work in the interface areas. "I'm sure there were lots [of cross community organizations], you know there was the Peace People and other organizations that were set up but they all had...but the one thing was they weren't in Trouble spots. They weren't in working class communities where the violence was happening. It was very risky, very, very risky." When organizations such as hers began work, they were doing so in the context of great danger, and even greater anxiety amongst those they worked with. According to Rachel, when such cross community work in interface areas began, it was viewed with great suspicion. "People felt, if people were talking across [community lines] nobody would have dreamt of going into the other area or whatever, but if people were talking, somehow, were passing information, or were being disloyal, or were being whatever." In her work, Pauline has encountered much of the same. When she first began going out to meet with groups, workers were divided into groups based on their names, as she was a Catholic, she was sent only to Catholic areas in the beginning. Yet as she points out that has changed. As she sees it, the fruits of single identity capacity building work are beginning to pay off:

> there are groups that are suddenly starting to break new ground and
> work together, particularly talking about ex-paramilitary organizations
> who were suddenly starting to work together. That was an amazing step
> forward and like, I haven't been directly in some of these groups but some

of my colleagues here tell me who's sitting in the room, the very fact that
these people are sitting in the room is amazing.

For some people, in some areas, this may be happening more quickly than in others. For

some, talking with 'the other' is still not an entirely acceptable practice. Yet changes are

being made and it is a slow process. Rachel divulged that even those who have worked in

her organization have long done so without the complete approval of their communities.

"I mean a guy from a Loyalist paramilitary group said to me the other day; it's only really

in the last 18 months that we believe that it is acceptable to talk."

Nor is 'who' is doing the talking the only thing that has been changed by time and the

work of cross community organizations. As Pauline notes, what people are able to talk

about has changed dramatically over time. "I am involved in a lot of well, getting

involved, whether doing conversational workshops about the past, dealing with the

legacy of the past, things like that. That has changed a lot. There's no way that would

have happened before. No way. The fact that they are even able to suggest doing these

programs that's big changes." Even how cross community groups and organizations

approach promoting contact between communities has changed, Pauline describes how it

used to be that workers had to give communities superordinate goals on non-political

issues to get groups to work together. That is no longer the case, "you can touch a lot

more issues that you never could have covered before."

Changes in Community Attitudes and Perceptions

A final point to examine under this theme is one not raised in the qualitative questions but

was raised by 7 out of 10 of the participants, and that is changes in attitudes and

perceptions of the Unionist community. While such changes were undoubtedly affected

by a great number of factors, it is posited that one among those factors was expanded

effort by members of both communities to facilitate dialogue and promote contact. While

it is true that Northern Ireland has become more segregated than during the Troubles,

ongoing attempts to bridge the divide, at the community and elite political levels have

undoubtedly fostered, perhaps unwittingly, a greater understanding of 'the other' and what

they stand for. In the 1970s, as Michelle sees it, most Unionists did not believe that there

was much in the way of discrimination or other such issues against the Catholic

community and accordingly there was no acceptance that a form of power sharing was

necessary within the Unionist community. As Alexander explains

> there was a feeling that you know, kind of that nationalists were a smallish
> minority. The Unionist perception was that quite a lot of Catholics accepted
> and went along with the union and...so they felt...what the institutions were
> trying do [with Sunningdale] was appease a relatively small group of people
> who wanted a united Ireland and that you know, this minority basically,
> didn't deserve to be appeased to the extent that it was being and so from
> their point of view they weren't willing to adjust to share power, in the
> way required under Sunningdale, and they saw it as a panic reaction to the
> violence...they thought that the British Government should take a much
> irmer stance and just simply kind of deal with, deal harshly with, the IRA
> and it would be all over and you know, and then there wouldn't be a need
> to have special arrangements to appease the minority that was as small a
> proportion of the population.

Further, there was a great deal of anxiety within the Unionist community that the SDLP

had been, as Perry put it, too successful in their negotiations. There is, in the Unionist

community, as Gregory describes it an "inflated sense of you know, we're heading toward

a united Ireland now that we've gotten rid of a Northern Ireland Parliament....there's a

great sense of angst and fear at the period that, you know, anything can happen, anything

is possible." While the Nationalist community is protesting its treatment, the loss of the

Northern Ireland Parliament was for Unionists, as James put it, a very traumatic event,

and a tremendous shock to the Unionist system: "that sense of loss, it was the ultimate, it

was in some sense the ultimate symbol of the Unionist and then suddenly it was no longer

there. So that was a huge psychological traumatic kind of event. So this was not a people

who were ready then for accommodation for compromise or for negotiation. And

fear...the fear factor was much too high." And not only fear, but anger. As Gregory

explains it "Unionists are up in arms. They feel they've been hard done by – we've lost

our parliament and why have we lost it? Because these you know, complaining

nationalists and these murderous IRA men." The fear that Perry mentions that the SDLP

had been too successful in their negotiations is a strong one. The UUP leader, Brian

Faulkner, had as Gregory points out,

> stood on the basis of we won't have anyone in government whose
> primary objective was a united Ireland and he quite clearly meant the
> SDLP and the Unionist voters took it as meaning the SDLP.... So there
> is no, you know, scene setting, you know, groundwork isn't' done for this.
> All of a sudden the Unionists go into power with the SDLP and you know,
> there isn't enough sort of preparation work done to prepare Unionist voters.

Their anxiety is further pushed by the fact that at the time, as Gregory mentions, Northern

Ireland had yet to be acknowledged by the Republic of Ireland.

Much of these anxieties and fears had eased or been redirected by the time of the BA. For

one, the fear of an Irish/Catholic dominated society had perhaps waned with the influence

of the Catholic Church in the Republic, according to Dylan. Further, to Michelle and

Alexander's point that many Unionists did not feel a need for change in the 1970s, Rachel

argues that by the 1990s, the Unionist community had "been through enough time to

understand the radical change that need[ed] to happen." By 1998, as James says, much of

the fear had been reduced and "at that point you have a community more open to

negotiation."

There is little dissent within the participants that efforts to foster positive cross

community contacts between different communities in Northern Ireland have grown in

number, sophistication and involvement. For the most part, participants who talked

specifically about such efforts spoke of slow but significant changes in the willingness of

people from all communities to come together and address their issues. There was also a

general agreement that civic society played an important role in building up support for

the BA, particularly through the 'yes' campaign prior to the referendum. There is some

dissent amongst the participants as to how much can be attributed to civic society and

cross community efforts at peacebuilding. However the general consensus appears to be

that such engagement is critical in the changing attitudes and perceptions to allow people

to not only better deal with each other through peaceful and democratic processes, but

also how to better come to grips with the legacy of the conflict itself. As Derrick sums

up:

> reconciliation is very difficult for people to get into. But what is happening
> is that, what I'm hearing is, we just need to get along, we need to get on
> with things to, you know, once you have Victoria Square and Christmas
> lights switched on and people get, you know, and some people are going to

wreck that[4]. You know. There is still a sense that what is most important is
to have those occasions where both communities, most people will come together.

Prepatory Work

One of the key issues pointed out by the participants, with the BA was not, in truth, one

single event but the result of a long process of dialogue, community work, and

negotiations. As Gregory points out

> There is an awful lot going on in that period. You know, between 72
> and 74. When you get to the 90s it's much more extended over a longer
> period of time, you know, those negotiations are going on for you know,
> well, you can pick a date from the late 1980s, from early 90s, you know, the
> Brooke-Mayhew talks involving the political parties. You've got back
> channel stuff involving the British government and the Irish Government
> talking to the IRA and Loyalist parmailitaries, so the process of negotiation,
> at least for the Good Friday Agreement, goes on for years and years... whereas
> Sunningdale all happens within a year.

Nor is Gregory alone in pointing this out, Michelle refers to the 1985 as a linchpin in the

negotiations of the BA, Stanley holds that the Framework Documents of 1993 were the

template used for the BA. It is very difficult to pinpoint the exact start date of the

negotiations for the BA as the decades after the SA collapsed were spent taking one step

after another, both at the political and grassroots level, to move toward a resolution. This

ongoing dialogue is indicative of middle tier elite and elite efforts to create contact and

meaningful dialogue across community, or in some cases, party divides.

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[4]When the Christmas lights were switched on in City Center in Belfast, there was what some described as
rioting but what others, such as students working with Pauline dismissed the shouting as " "it was just a
couple of millies [derogatory term equivalent to 'White Trash' in North America] messing about with a
tricolour wrapped around their shoulders".... She was more concerned about the fact of the TV cameras see
[her] dancing to Bob the Builder. So it just shows how we do, to them it didn't seem a big deal, they were
like, why you asking me? But I heard it on the news and you know, you're in there talking about conflict
and community relations and all that and I thought well what happened downtown last night girls, and that's
just what they said, a couple of millies. That's just it. They totally normalized it, and I just thought well is it
just that the media is hyping it or, you as somebody from outside the country saying that's not nice?"

Theme 3: Changing Roles of External Ethno-Guarantors

More so than in many of the other suggested conditions, participants were agreed that the

roles played by the EEGs had changed in the years between the SA and BA. They did not

all speak of the same changes but there was a general consensus that change had occurred

and that it was positive. The changes outlined by the participants fell into three

categories: changes in the attitudes and actions of the British government, changes in

attitudes and actions of the Irish government, and changes in the relationship between the

British and Irish governments. These are not unrelated categories as, for example,

changes in how the Irish government approaches Unionists was undoubtedly affected by

its changed relationship with the British government. However, for the ease of

presentation, these three categories are dealt with separately.

Role of the British Government

How Important Was the Change in the Role Played by the British Government?							
Group	Participant	Not at All Helpful	Not Significantly Helpful	Helpful	Significantly Helpful	Critically Important	NA
A	Alexander					√	
	Stanley					√	
	Michelle						
	Perry					√	
	Gregory				√		
B	Dylan						√
	Rachel						√
	James					√	
	Derrick				√		
	Pauline				√		

Table #6

To begin with, the British government had a vested interest in seeing the conflict come to

a close. Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher had approached the signing of

the AIA in 1985 with Garrett Fitzgerald, the Irish Taoiseach, as a means of improving

security. As Perry elaborates "on a security level, the enormous cost that Northern Ireland was bearing down on the Exchequer and psychologically in terms of its reputation" motivated the British government to begin to seek new ways of resolving the conflict. Pauline adds that there was an element of personality driven motivation. In her view former Prime Minister Tony Blair, the British Prime Minister at the time of signing of the BA, wanted to build a reputation as a peacebuilder internationally, but he couldn't do this while there was an ongoing conflict on his back step. Michelle adds that "the difference between the 70s and now was that Blair more wanted a deal. He is less informed by principle." That the British government be more motivated to make a deal with Northern Irish politicians and interests is particularly important given that, as Pauline points out "the role of Westminster publicly, and probably where I'm coming from, did seem a lot more active, it did seem that they had a great role to play because it was down to them to change the actual institutions. To give up Direct Rule, you know."

Associated with this increase in positive active engagement with the conflict resolution process is the change in context of dealing with ethnonational identities as part of the UK, as well as the respondents understandings of the conflict itself. As Alexander explains devolution within the UK with Wales and Scotland helped Northern Irish Unionists be more familiar with alternative structures of governance, and helped make the notion of power sharing more palatable. Further, such devolution helped normalize East-West relations which helped make it easier for Unionists to accept North-South relationships.

> In 1974 there was no devolved government, it was centralized government
> in the UK. UK based on a Westminster system, majority system, and no

hint of interest in proportional representation in the UK and yet Northern Ireland was being told it must go this separate route and be treated separately. So it looked like Northern Ireland was being treated like something kind of alien to the rest of the United Kingdom. But of course, once the United Kingdom had devolution, and proportional representation came into elections in the UK because you couldn't just have Scottish elections on the basis of pure first past the post and once the idea generally that the kinds of institutional arrangements for Northern Ireland didn't look so odd in the UK context because they were reflected in other kinds of practices that occurred in other parts of the UK, then for Unionists it made the whole thing more palatable. Accordingly, this helped Northern Irish Unionists be more accepting, over time, of the structures of government that came to be promoted in the BA.

As for changes in how Nationalist's grievances were understood, that too came a long way. As Michelle explains "in 73 the British government did not accept a kind of Nationalist, at that point, not provisional IRA, representation of the conflict about being A about partition and B about the treatment of Nationalists in Northern Ireland. By 30 years later it is really just about the treatment of Nationalist in Northern Ireland". Thus, according to Michelle, the British became much more willing to sell the Nationalist deals as "they kind of demonstrated over a long period that the terrorists don't really have options." This greater understanding of Nationalist fears is perhaps best demonstrated in the Peter Brooke speech on 1991. As James explains:

> There was a key statement made by the Secretary of State in 1991, that opened up possibilities, that led eventually I think to 1998 and the Agreement, and that was when the Secretary of State Peter Brooke, in a speech in Coleraine said that Britain no longer had any strategic, selfish or economic interest in remaining within Northern Ireland and that reversed about eight centuries of history. And that I think gave the Republican movement confidence that 'we could come into negotiations' and constitutional politics might work.

This statement is also coupled with the British assertion in the 1993 Downing Street Declaration, as Gregory points out, that Britain announces that rather than being

persuaders for a particular outcome, they will instead be 'persuaders for peace'. As he

explains Britain essentially announces that

> if the people of Northern Ireland decide they want to go in a united Ireland, we will facilitate that. You know, so we support their stance in remaining in the United Kingdom, and we're not going to force them to leave the United Kingdom but if they ever want to change that, we support that decision. But you know, they say it's for the people of Ireland alone to decide their constitutional statues, but North and South separately, to create a united Ireland if that is their wish. And the subtext of that is that it doesn't have to be their wish.

In this way the British government attempted to provide Unionists with reassurance that

they were not going to be abandoned to be forced into a united Ireland while at the same

time sought it to recognize the right to self determination of the Northern Irish people

which had so long been on the agenda of Northern Irish Nationalists.

Role of the Irish Government

How Important Was the Change in the Role Played by the Irish Government?							
Group	Participant	Not at All Helpful	Not Significantly Helpful	Helpful	Significantly Helpful	Critically Important	NA
A	Alexander					√	
	Stanley					√	
	Michelle				√		
	Perry					√	
	Gregory				√		
B	Dylan					√	
	Rachel				√		
	James					√	
	Derrick				√		
	Pauline				√		

Table #7

More so than the British government, the Irish government underwent significant

transformation with respect to its understanding of Unionism, its support for Northern

Nationalists and its understandings of the role of an external government in mediating a conflict. As a result, the Irish government, though as Pauline pointed out, did not have as many of the structural and institutional moves to make as the British government, were more actively engaged in the conflict resolution process in the 1990s than it had been in the 1970s.

First, the understanding of the Irish government of Unionist anxieties became far more nuanced by the time of the negotiation process of the BA than it had been at the time of the SA. Accordingly, it made fewer mistakes, and as some of the participants phrased it, got in their own way less often. For example, in the SA period, as Gregory points out, the limited recognition provided to Northern Ireland in the Sunningdale Communique in the Dublin High Court and therefore, contradicts Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish Constitution, "the Dublin High Court says well, actually, no, it's just a statement of policy it doesn't contradict it. The quest for Irish unity is still a Constitutional imperative." As recognition by the Irish government of Northern Ireland was one of the key platform components that Brian Faulkner of the UUP was using to try and sell the SA to Unionists. The Irish government, as Gregory put it "blows a complete hole in the last remaining plank that Faulkner had going for him. And so, you know, he's left with nothing really, of what he had started out to achieve and the Loyalists in the background start getting organized." Yet another example can be seen with the Irish government's response to the flow of Nationalist refugees across the Border in the early 1970s. As James points out "there was a statement made by the Taoiseach or Prime Minister Jack Lynch in the early days, at one point a group of Irish soldiers, or Irish troops were ready

to come across the Border to defend Catholic communities. Now in terms of Unionists hearing that, it was pretty explosive, and that's no pun intended, but it was." The Irish government at the time of Sunningdale it seems, had little understanding of how far Unionists could be pushed. Dylan says "the Irish government was pushing too far, along with the SDLP, that I think created a problem. I think the context of the Belfast Agreement was of the British and Irish working together and I think the Irish government was more sensitive to Unionist opinion."

How Important Were the Changes to Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish Constitution?							
Group	Participant	Not at All Helpful	Not Significantly Helpful	Helpful	Significantly Helpful	Critically Important	NA
A	Alexander				√		
	Stanley				√		
	Michelle			√			
	Perry			√			
	Gregory			√			
B	Dylan				√		
	Rachel						V
	James					√	
	Derrick			√			
	Pauline				√		

Table #8

Perhaps one of the most significant ways the Irish government demonstrated its growing sensitivity to Unionist fears was by agreeing to amend Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish Constitution. For most participants, this recognition of Northern Ireland was significantly important symbolically to Unionists. While Alexander argues that the significance of the Articles is dependent on one's interpretation of them and Stanley points out that Article 28 of the Irish Constitution had restricted pursuit of unity to peaceful means, it was generally felt that the amendments to Articles 2 and 3 were an important psychological reassurance for Unionists. As Michelle elaborates "in real terms, perhaps they weren't

important [changes] at all. In symbolic terms, you know, they were hugely important to Unionist. Its not like their achievement gave them great celebration. Do you know what I mean?....but it seems the removal of a festering sore or one that could be perpetually cited." James further argues that just as the Peter Brooke speech of 1991 helped give Nationalists the reassurance that they could now come into constitutional politics and expect to make gains, the changes to Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish Constitution, was an enormous psychological move to ease the anxieties of the Unionist community, who had perceived the Articles as a threat:

> If Peter Brooke saying in 1991 that Britain no longer had any selfish, strategic or economic interest in remaining in Northern Ireland was hugely psychological for the Provisional IRA and the Republican movement, then I think the removal of Articles 2 and 3 was a huge psychological move for the Unionist community. So that, that was enormous. That gave the Unionists confidence to begin to listen, to begin to talk with people from the Republic of Ireland, politicians south of the border.

It should however be pointed out, that as Pauline says, while the removal of the Articles was symbolically important, just how important is largely reliant on who is being asked.

> What difference did it really make to my life? You know, I still carry an Irish passport, it is of no real significance and I know this is probably why people get so frustrated with the peace process and with devolution and with the whole Agreement: people get so bogged down in semantics. And I know semantics do count and I'm not trying to underplay their importance in anyway or even appear naïve in that I think oh what's the matter. It does matter… if you talk to a hard line Republican they're going to say something totally different, you know, what did they die for? If you talk to a Unionist they're going to say well what did they really give up? You know? I don't want to appear naïve because I know that these things are important but there were some many more important issues that weren't addressed.

This then demonstrates some of the issues surrounding such peace processes, often times the achievement of symbolic victories that leaders can take back to their constituencies

are given more weight than issues that may have had more lasting repercussions and more of a long term effect on the stability of the Agreement. Thus it is important to point out that while such gestures are important, they must occur in conjunction with discussions of 'real' issues, ie housing, education, health care etc.

The final change in the involvement of the Irish government in the peace processes pointed out by the study's participants relates to their ties to Northern Nationalists and the growth in their experience as a state. As Gregory pointed out, by the time of the BA negotiation processes, the Republic of Ireland as a state is a different place: "it's not a Catholic, Gaelic rural state. It's much more cosmopolitan….Ireland has changed [], it's become richer, become less unsure, a bit more self confident, which gives it, allows it to be a bit more generous in its dealing with Britain as well. It's kind of grown up a bit." Rachel agrees saying that "they were [by the 1990s] more inward looking and toward their own social-economic development. I also think they got clever in terms of staying more in the background. They were very much in your face you know, in the earlier part, with the symbolic gestures."

These changes in the state itself likely had great bearing on how the Irish government approached the conflict in Northern Ireland. As James explains "if we went back to that early stage, it was dragged into being the sort of defender of the nationalist community in the North. By the early 1980s and the mid 1980s, it had become, now a government committed to finding some way out of this violence that would be good for both

communities." As both Gregory and Michelle point out, in the early 1970s the Irish

government's alliance in the negotiations was much more Nationalist oriented. As

Michelle explains: "people like Hume had much more access to the Irish government,

they were more on behalf of the SDLP, were more willing to share the aims of Northern

Nationalists at the time of Sunningdale." Gregory furthers clarifies this point by saying

that: "for a long period of time, the Irish government really follows the line of what the

SDLP takes, and as you get into the 1990s, it sorta gets a bit more cynical." Gregory also

points to involvement of the Irish government in the AIA as an event that may have

taught the Irish government more about dealing with the Northern Irish conflict, it was, as

he called it a "growing up period" for the Irish government as it took greater

responsibility and involvement in the conflict resolution process.

Changes in the British-Irish Relationship

Britain and Ireland have an extensive history with one another, a relationship long

characterized as colonizer and colonized. This was not, however, the characterization of

the relationship by the 1990s. Many of the study's participants placed particular weight

on the change in dynamics between the two states and credit this change in dynamic for

many of the positive developments in the Northern Irish conflict resolution process.

While seven of the ten participants spoke of the change in dynamic between the two

states, James, Alexander and Perry elaborated on the source of this change in dynamic

fashion and specifically credit the EU with having helped create and foster this new

relationship. Perry describes this change succinctly:

The UK and Ireland went into the European Union the first of January

1973 and over a very short time what you see is the overturning of a very asymmetrical relationship which goes back centuries…So the superordinate/subordinate relationship, a French writer, I think, a long time ago spoke of Ireland as being 'l'ile derriere une ile' an island behind an island. And the big island it was behind was obviously the one that dominated completely.

James concurs, elaborating on the notion of the greater self confidence of the Irish government alluded to previously, saying that through the European experience the British Prime Minister and the Irish Taoiseach: "are not senior and junior anymore. They're on an equal level, and that has psychologically as well as politically changed the whole relationship. And so Britain and Ireland are not any longer colonizer/colonized, though that history is there, as well as legacy. They are now equal within a European structure, and that changes the way they relate to each other."

With this Europeanization, contact and dialogue as equal partners – though not necessarily of equal power – in the EU has had the effect of building a stronger relationship between the two governments. As Perry explains the two government have "become coordinate inside the European Union so that when British-Irish relations are being discussed, it was broader than simply the Northern Ireland question." Perhaps more important is the fact that through European integration the two governments have had more opportunity and motivation to dialogue with one another. This had a tremendous effect on the Irish government as according to Perry "the fact that the British and Irish officials were meeting on a very regular basis on the margins of Europe, enhanced the self- confidence of Irish officials dealing with the British. So they now don't approach the British in a sort of passive aggressive way, they are now very self confident in

approaching the British." With this increased contact has come an increased recognition

by the British government of the necessity of involving the Irish government in any

resolution of the Northern Irish conflict. As Stanley argues:

> in 1974, while the two governments did cooperate, the British government
> was much more in the driver's seat and they admitted the Irish government,
> in a sense, I don't want to say completely reluctantly, but they recognized
> that the Irish government had to be there because of the Irish dimension…
> but there wasn't the same level of understanding between the two
> governments about how to deal with the matter. The British still regarded it,
> I suppose, as an internal UK problem with an Irish dimension, whereas by
> the 1990s, from the Anglo-Irish Agreement on, it was an Anglo-Irish, it was
> a British-Irish problem. It was a joint problem. And I think that was a
> significant difference.

Michelle further points out the role of the AIA as a linchpin in Anglo-Irish relations over

Northern Ireland: "the Anglo-Irish Agreement is the key agreement, it's where the Dublin

government moves into more of a driver, albeit a driver without power, position…there

was more of a sense of the Southern Government as equal partners I suppose, by the time

of Belfast."

The relationship between the two governments developed over time, allowing them to

interact more constructively with one another. As Dylan phrases it "in the space between

the two events the British/Irish relationship had transformed and increasingly the British

and Irish governments worked together on the Northern Ireland conflict, and it was in

their mutual interest to work on this." Gregory agrees noting that the Anglo Irish relations

then had a greater amount of time to develop: "if you looked at 73, 74, there's not that

level of experience to be had. So I mean, that people had a chance to learn, they got to

know each other, they know what the expectations are, they know what the reality is, what's achievable and what's not. There's still a lot of people pushing and shoving and trying things out but they know the reality of what they can do. Which clearly isn't the case in 74."

Theme 4: Role of Third Party External Mediators

In 1974 the EU as it is today did not exist, and the US was actively engaged in the Cold War. Neither were particularly interested in what was going on in Northern Ireland. By the time of the BA, this was no longer the case and both external actors had had some sort of ongoing relationship with the Northern Irish conflict.

Role of the United States

The US was according to all of the respondents, an important actor in the BA. Derrick describes the US involvement as "huge. Massive." How they characterize those roles does differ.

		How Important Was the Involvement of the United States?					
Group	Participant	Not at All Helpful	Not Significantly Helpful	Helpful	Significantly Helpful	Critically Important	NA
A	Alexander				√		
	Stanley					√	
	Michelle				√		
	Perry					√	
	Gregory				√		
B	Dylan			√			
	Rachel				√		
	James					√	
	Derrick					√	
	Pauline				√		

Table # 9

To begin with, as Alexander points out, during the Cold War, the UK was an important geopolitical ally of the US and thus

> you had a situation where, at an official level, if you like, a governmental level, the United States was very reluctant to get involved at all. You had the State Department basically telling all American Presidents don't touch the Irish Question with a barge pole. The UK is our main ally against the Soviet Union. Absolutely, there is no point in doing anything that might conceivably kind of irritate the British....the Irish Troubles are a minor issue by comparison with the importance of retaining Britain as an ally in that context.

Gregory agrees putting forth the idea that during this period the US basically follows the British line. Yet the US does maintain an interest, and this is not to suggest it remained uninvolved. Under Carter the federal administration pressured American manufacturers against selling guns to the RUC. Further, in Thatcher's early days as British Prime Minister, she was under pressure to put some sort of power sharing initiative forward, and so, as Gregory explains, the Humphrey Atkins talks -which ultimately amount to little – are undertaken. The US also had a hand in the introduction of the Fair Employment Act of 1989. Carter, Perry adds, also issued a statement in August of 1977 making him the first American President to break with the British line. Until that point, American administrations had held that Northern Ireland was within the British sphere of influence and thus it could not intervene. In 1977 Carter becomes the first American president to speak of not only the British and Irish governments as the actors, but he also added the people of Northern Ireland "and so it's as if he is removing the people of Northern Ireland as being an entity in its own right which we [the US] can deal with. And in that way, he allows an entrance for the United States without upsetting the British."

The American interest in Northern Ireland had long existed but was restrained by diplomatic relations with the UK. Much of this interest derived from a sizeable Irish diaspora of 50 million in the United States and their strong special interest lobby groups. Traditionally as James, Alexander and Gregory point out, the Irish interest in Northern Ireland had a particularly green tinge. According to James "there were always those in Washington who lobbied for the Irish thing, there was huge fundraising going on in the United States of America but that's fundraising coming exclusively almost toward the Republican movement and they were very often coming from a highly romanticized notion of what was going on in Ireland." This engagement was also actively sought. As Gregory explained, following the UWC Strike, Faulkner spoke with the Northern Irish Secretary of State Merlyn Reese about talking to the strikers. When Reese refused, Faulkner resigned and the SA collapsed. What this results in, Gregory argues, is that "in the longer term the SDLP sort of go off and say we can't do a deal with Unionists again so they try to sort of involve the Irish government, Europe and the Irish Americans. To sort of broaden the battlefield as it were." And so as James further articulates

> Hume beat a trail to Washington and this is a dynamic that I think was significant....and he more than anybody else I think, convinced Irish American politicians, and then in turn the Irish American, kind of, Republican sympathizing lobby that there's another, there's got to be another way of resolving this issue and this problem. And in some sense John Hume can be said to be responsible for the kind of drying up of the money that was coming from the USA to the Republican cause, because he was convincing people, increasingly, that there's another way to do it; there's a constitutional way of resolving the problem.

Alexander concurs, explaining that, as he puts it, Irish Americans begin to ask "who are all these people called Protestants and Unionists, where do they come from, what is their attitude?" and so as they gain a more complex understanding of the Northern Irish

conflict, begin to push less for the withdrawal of the British and begin to push more for a negotiated solution. And so, as he says, as the Irish American public gain a more nuanced understanding of the conflict and the Cold War winds to an end, the American administrations begin to involve themselves in Northern Ireland in a more savvy and constructive fashion.

And so, in 1992 President Clinton enters the debate. He has, it would seem Gregory adds, a personal interest in Northern Ireland, who has promised Irish Americans a peace envoy to Northern Ireland as a campaign point. Yet as Gregory explains, once elected, Clinton backs away from the vocabulary of 'peace envoy' and instead sends former Maine Senator George Mitchell as the much less politically connotated 'economic advisor'. Mitchell is widely credited by the study's participants of being exceptionally skilled and even handed. As Rachel explains he was an excellent facilitator and "managed to convince people that he was there to look after the process as opposed to getting involved in the content." Of Mitchell and with him the American administrations, Michelle argues that "the US became quite good at understanding that, you know, they had to woo Ulster Unionists and I think the choice of personnel was quite important, somebody like Mitchell, very well informed." Mitchell was, as James put it,

> a guy with huge skills as a mediator,...Mitchell comes in here and sets about the process of bringing together all inclusive party talks. ...did huge things with local politicians, took them away, out of Ireland, at crucial moments told them, okay we're not going to do any political work tonight, we're just going to have dinner, we're not going to talk politics, we're just going to talk about each other's families and about each other's lives. And they did. And the next morning they went back to the politics and they had a breakthrough. And so the humanizing process which he was

sensitive to, and aware and saw the necessity for...so Mitchell's
contribution...without Mitchell I don't think the Belfast Agreement would
have been reached....Mitchell's role was crucial, hugely crucial.

Nor was Mitchell's involvement as facilitator the only important personality led
contribution from the US. As Michelle describes it the US were cheerleaders, and
intervened at crucial times. They provided, as Derrick phrases it, impetus with Clinton
providing a positive charisma for the peace process. The US and particularly, Clinton's
own personal involvement helped cement the significance of the Agreement. Pauline
describes the experience as one that helped the Northern Irish to come to understand that
this was a 'serious' peace process.

Well Bill Clinton. Just the fact that he came. You know. Like I live in
Armagh and the fact that the US President came to Armagh was huge.
Absolutely huge. We just thought...I think people thought that we are
internationally being taken seriously here, therefore, this is serious, this is
not just lets talk about talks and talks about talks. You know, I remember
in the 80s when there was talks and the Anglo-Irish Agreement, they always,
always fell apart. There was always this feeling that we had to do it, but
suddenly we had this serious peace process. D'you know, the US President
was here to give it his physical support of actually being on the steps and
saying 'yes, we back you'.

Clinton was also careful, Gregory points out, to ensure that American involvement was
perceived in as neutral a light as possible. By assigning Mitchell as 'economic envoy'
rather than as a peace envoy, Gregory argues that "it seems as if you're not taking a
Nationalist side, you're more even handed by looking at economics and saying we're here
as facilitators." In his visits to Northern Ireland he visits not just Nationalist West Belfast
but also Protestant East Belfast, "you know, he does the rounds and glad-hands
everybody. You know he really does boost the peace process at that time".

US involvement not only had an effect on the citizens of Northern Ireland but on nationalism as a movement and on the elites themselves. It had been Nationalists and Republicans, as mentioned that had most sought after American engagement in Northern Ireland. SF, as Stanley explains, put particular emphasis on American participation which bolstered its self confidence and allowed it to say in a sense "we have a big guy at our back and he's helping us", which in its mind helped counter poise somewhat British involvement. This attitude is not altogether unreasonable as Michelle, Dylan and Pauline all discuss how American engagement with SF and Republican figures helped them gain a level of credibility they might otherwise had difficulty achieving. Dylan believes that "Clinton helped Gerry Adams make changes that he was already making. He enabled Gerry Adams to be treated as a more respectable figure and that in turn put pressure on the Republican movement to make change" As Gregory phrases it, Clinton works to 'butter up' SF for the peace process, even when it risks irritating the British, such as when Adams was granted a visa to fundraise in the US. As Stanley points out, SF appeared to view American involvement "as a form of guarantee for their right to be in the talks." Pauline further makes the point that Clinton had an effect on the politicians of Northern Ireland as well: "your playing up to the egos as well, suddenly you've got Northern Ireland politicians say 'yeah, aren't we the lads like?' These are people from housing estates who have come from nothing, most of them who left school at sixteen, and they're standing there in the room with the US president, talking about real issues. You know, you can't underestimate the power of stroking the egos of politicians."

Overall, the US involvement, including financial aid through the IFI and ongoing investment, as Stanley and Michelle remind, positively supported the BA. Yet while the US were, as she words it 'heavy hitters', and were more directly political in their involvement than the EU as Gregory phrases it, it is important to point out, as Michelle does, that the US had no impact on the structure of the Agreement itself. The primary impact of the US on the peace process in the eyes of the participants appears to be as cheerleaders and facilitators, the importance of which cannot be understated.

Role of the European Union

How Important Was the Involvement of the European Union?							
Group	Participant	Not at All Helpful	Not Significantly Helpful	Helpful	Significantly Helpful	Critically Important	NA
A	Alexander					√	
	Stanley				√		
	Michelle				√		
	Perry					√	
	Gregory			√			
B	Dylan				√		
	Rachel			√			
	James					√	
	Derrick		√				
	Pauline					√	

Table #10

The involvement of the EU as a third party primary international mediators is as Gregory categorizes it "a bit more nebulous". Unlike the US, Stanley argues, the EU was not directly involved in the political side of the peace process. While Derrick begins by arguing that "the EU really doesn't count for much" he concedes immediately after that it is the context in which the conflict has come to be situated. How this context has been changed by the EU was of significant import to the majority of this study's respondents.

The involvement of first the European Economic Community and then the EU is described by the participants as effecting an important change in the relationship between the external ethno-guarantors of the conflict, of placing the conflict within a wider context, and in providing structural economic support to help stabilise the country so as to lay the groundwork for dialogue and the peace process.

To begin with, the relationship of the Republic of Ireland and the UK had long been one of conqueror and conquered. As Perry explains, the Republic and the UK first joined the EU in January of 1973, and they did so in the context of the superordinate/subordinate relationship and "over a very short time what you see is the overturning of a very asymmetrical relationship which goes back centuries....what the European Union does or the Economic Community did was, it means that there is a functional relationship now between the UK and Ireland. It makes much more sense for them to cooperate much more closely." Dylan agrees phrasing it that "first of all the importance of the European Union as providing a context for a profound change in the British-Irish relationship. For the first time Ireland was finally able to get out from underneath the skirts of Britain....and enabled a new British-Irish relationship to be established." In this way, as described under theme 3: the Changing Roles of External Ethno-Guarantors, the Republic came to be seen, and see itself as more of a partner in the Northern Irish question and began to have a more involved and constructive role in building the peace.

The second way in which the EU helped create a context for peace building in Northern

Ireland was through involvement in targeted economic aid and structural economic

support. The influx of money the EU provided was perceived by most participants as

crucial. When asked about the involvement of the EU in the peace process, Pauline's

initial response was one word "money". Dylan further expounds the notion by speaking

of EU peace money as "oil" to grease the wheels of the peace process. Because of the

enormity of funds poured into Northern Ireland and the Border Counties over the last two

decades, further discussion of the role of EU peace monies is reserved for Theme 5: The

Role of Targeted Economic Aid. At this point it is simply worth pointing out that when

asked about the involvement of the EU, one of the primary responses of participants was

to talk about its economic support for the Northern Irish peace process.

Theme 5: The Role of Targeted Economic Aid

How Important Was the External Economic Aid Provided?							
Group	Participant	Not at All Helpful	Not Significantly Helpful	Helpful	Significantly Helpful	Critically Important	NA
A	Alexander				√		
	Stanley		√				
	Michelle					√	
	Perry					√	
	Gregory			√			
B	Dylan				√		
	Rachel					√	
	James					√	
	Derrick					√	
	Pauline					√	

Table #11

As explained in the literature review, over the last several decades Northern Ireland has

received significant funding from outside sources. While, the levels of enthusiasm over

the importance of economic aid varied, there was a strong sense that, as Dylan phrased it

"I don't think the in flowing of money has made *the* difference, it's helped." Others, such

as Pauline, were much more enthused saying "Definitely. The Peace Fund has been

amazing." Derrick held that "IFI? International Fund for Ireland? How significant is that?

And the Peace II funding from Europe has been huge." There was a general sense that the

influx of targeted economic aid was important in supporting efforts at the political level

but on its own, would not have been sufficient to make or break any negotiation. In

general, throughout the interviews the respondents raised three ways that the external

economic aid positively impacted Northern Ireland: (1) by helping create an atmosphere

more susceptible to peace building efforts by easing financial pressures, (2) by allowing

funding to reach the grassroots and shore up cross community work that helped create a

population who were more open to dialogue, and (3) by shoring up the Agreement by

enticing the Republican and Loyalist parties into talks.

Creating Context

To begin with, the foreign financial aid entering Northern Ireland helped to take some of

the financial pressures off of a country which had, in the early 1980s experienced several

decades of economic decline and high levels of unemployment. As Gregory describes it

> the big thing is the sort of grants, the European Regional Development
> funds to some extent you can argue, common agricultural policy, because
> Northern Ireland is still more heavily dependent on agriculture and you
> know, there's different one's......but you know, the big grants in place to try
> and create stability in Northern Ireland helped ease the situation.

While she is not without criticism of the program, Michelle agrees, saying "was external

money important? I suppose it's vital." Dylan also uses a common phrase from the

literature when describing the role of external economic aid referring to it as 'mood music' adding that it helped to 'lubricate' the process. James also felt the role of external economic aid was important saying that "there are huge European efforts going into trying to ensure that there is a peace process, there is European backing for a peace process but most significantly, Europe put millions of Euros to make that peace possible." By taking some of the edge off the pressures of financial instability, the external monies appear to have helped ease tempers that might otherwise have flared higher.

Perry further argues that the external aid helped promote a context for peacebuilding by helping to change the context of the conflict. Much of the funds poured into Northern Ireland were also received by the Border Counties of the Republic of Ireland. As he argues these funds, particularly the EU special programs funds that worked along the Border Counties and Northern Ireland were significant as "the fact that it worked in that cross Border way, meant that the Border, by its very nature became much more porous. That you're not dealing with a 'Northern Ireland' problem, but you're dealing with a 'North of Ireland' problem, but you see it in this wider context." By widening the context, much in the same way as the Carter statement of 1977, helped make international involvement in Northern Ireland more acceptable as it was no longer solely the responsibility of Britain.

Funding the Grassroots

The second way the external economic aid played a positive role in the peacebuilding process according to the participants was by helping to support grassroots efforts at fostering positive cross community and single identity work. As James explains, referring specifically to the EU Peace Programs, that "without that a lot would not have been achieved in grassroots communities as well as at the macro level in Northern Ireland. So in a sense, Europe put its money where its mouth was and made this huge contribution." Still speaking of the EU peace programs Perry adds that "what European money was doing was getting there to the grassroots and giving people at the grassroots a sense of what they could do....European input in the 90s was much more about functional cooperation between the two communities in Northern Ireland".

Rachel, whose organization received IFI funding but little in the way of EU peace money argued that one of the most important aspects of the foreign funds, - for which she is not without criticism – is that it took risks in the 1980s in funding groups in interface areas when no one else was:

> IFI funded this project so you know, and it certainly wouldn't have been
> in existence and certainly we've been trail blazers in terms of inter-community
> dialogue...so the point, the point that I'm making is that small investment and
> that small risk back in, twenty one years ago, has led to the establishment of
> major networks right across the North, good practice.

While neither she nor Rachel are without criticisms of the administration of the peace money, Pauline also expressed the importance she felt held by the fact that the EU peace

money did not wait until the Agreement had been signed to begin providing support for the grassroots.

The third point made by participants in favour of the external economic aid referred to its role in shoring up support for the Agreement by the political parties. As Alexander points out, the promise of external economic aid in the BA was an enticement for the smaller Loyalist parties to support the agreement:

> a lot of EU Special Program, a lot of money went to interface areas,
> went to community groups and hard line areas. It shored up support of
> the Loyalist parties, the two small Loyalist parties, attached to loyalist
> paramilitaries that supported the Belfast Agreement. So than the money
> was quite important in keeping the Loyalist political parties on board. I
> mean, the DUP was handicapped in its opposition in the referendum campaign
> in 98 by the fact that the Loyalist political parties, the small ones, the tiny
> ones, the UDP and PUP supported the Agreement. And certainly the money
> helped to, not directly, not a direct bribe, but certainly in the sense that it
> was a benefit...money would come to ease the process.

Dylan argues that a similar shoring up occurred within the Republican movement. He holds that "peace money helped lubricate peace and jobs went to Republican activists and so there was lots of jobs in the voluntary sector created here, and it's partly and mood music, and that's not to be despised, the British Government is trying to create a mood music, a feel good thing here. That's necessary."

Not all participants, however, were convinced that external economic aid was important to the peace process of Northern Ireland. Stanley argued that he doubted that it had had any significant impact on the process. He felt that at best it was indirectly positive as

interest groups feared that a lack of success in the negotiation process may have cost

them their funding:

> Northern Ireland was economically on an upward trend anyway from
> the early 1990s. Unemployment was dropping considerably, investment
> was increasing and although it wasn't on the scale of the Celtic Tiger, it
> certainly was not insignificant. You know, I suppose, indirectly the prospect
> of a more prosperous Northern Ireland meant that people were, people
> generally were more anxious to see it continue. Talks therefore succeed so
> that the economy would not be put in jeopardy by another big failure to
> resolve the political situation. So indirectly...

Gregory is also not as convinced of the importance of external economic aid as many of

the other participants. As he phrases it, the direct import of such funding is difficult to

judge. He compares it to the effect of advertising saying that "the economic question I

think it's hard to pin down. All you can say is that clearly the European Union, the

European Economic Community, the European Community, as it is, now feels that it

does play a part because we're still getting peace money....the least you can say is that

people think that by changing the economic situation that it plays a part."

It should also be noted that even those participants who felt that external economic aid

played a crucial role in the Northern Irish peace process were not without their concerns.

For Rachel and Pauline there was a concern that, while they acknowledge the importance

of single identity work, that funding was too long directed towards single identity work

rather than seeking to engage in cross community work. Rachel says that 'I think that if

we had gotten to where we are now quicker, and if there had been more pressure put on

by Europe to work across communities we could be an awful lot further on." Derrick also

added that there is some concern over the level of accountability and transparency in the

Northern Ireland Office in the use of the funds. Nonetheless, on the whole, the participants were confident in the importance of targeted external economic aid in creating context and support for the Northern Irish peace process.

Findings

Introduction

Based on the inductively arrived at themes from the respondents' images of the SA and BA, a number of conclusions can be drawn. Just as these images have been thematically categorized above, the findings described below follow the same format.

Inclusivity

According to the participants, just as was evidenced in the literature review, the BA sought to involve a wider representation of the political community and was crucial in the success of the Agreement. In so doing, the negotiators were able to craft an Agreement that better reflected the interests of a much broader swath of the Northern Ireland community thereby making it more likely to be accepted by the participants as well as the community at large. That, as Stanley mentioned, SF only seemed concerned with its own issues does not diminish the importance of its involvement. By having SF involved, it was able to address issues, in this case prisoner release schemes, which were considered important to their constituents thereby helping the agreement to take into account the interests of a portion of the community that might otherwise have been ignored. This in turn may have helped to generate support within the various communities who were given voice for constructing of the Agreement itself.

It is also important to note, as Gregory does, that simply saying a negotiation process should be inclusive is not always sufficient to make it so. For the negotiations to be successful, there must be some degree of willingness on the part of the participants to negotiate, and this willingness is not always present. However, as with the focused involvement of parties, this does not reduce the importance of attempting to make a process inclusive. Simply because parties may not want to be involved in peace talks at a particular moment does not mean that they should not be courted. The involvement of these aloof parties may have, as was felt to be the case in the BA, critical repercussions on the success of the Agreement. As such efforts must be undertaken to ascertain how the standoff parties can be persuaded to sit at the negotiation table; and this may not be a simple or quick process. Yet this does not make it unnecessary. Accordingly, ongoing efforts should be promoted to entice parties to the negotiation table in order to make talks more inclusive.

This particularly holds true when dealing with a situation, such as was the case in Northern Ireland, where certain political organizations were indirect – some times less indirectly than others – representatives of paramilitary organizations. Just as participants were adamant that inclusion of a wider representation of political views was critical to the success of the BA, so too were they adamant that paramilitaries must be brought in from the cold and be permitted a seat at the negotiation table. The difficulties pointed out by Gregory and Stanley in involving a wider array of representatives most certainly applied

to the paramilitary representatives in Northern Ireland. However, ongoing efforts to involve these parties, such as the Hume-Adams talks of the late 1980s provided important alternatives for, in this example, SF, to branch into other avenues to pursue its political goals.

Inclusion does not solely apply to the political representatives in a state. It is also vital that the constituents have a sense of ownership over the peacebuilding process. Gregory aptly pointed out that, within the Unionist community, the SA had next to no support from the very beginning and yet the British government and signatories insisted on trying to push it through. Alexander argues that this was a key lesson of the SA, that the constituent communities need to be brought on board. In Northern Ireland this was done in a number of ways. The Opsahl Commission actively sought out suggestions from the population. Further the explicit inclusion of the doctrine of consent in the BA as well as the use of a referendum helped provided Northern Irish citizens with a sense that they were the one's responsible for their fate. In many respects, the referendum was a highly symbolic, and may not for everyone, have had any real effects on their lives. However, such symbols are important to provide a sense of ownership of the peace process, and as evidenced by the increased voter turnout mentioned by a number of the participants, that is exactly what the North/South referendum provided.

Inclusion is a vitally important condition for the success of a negotiation process. Though it make take on a variety of forms, inclusion helps provide a solid foundation for the

structures that will emerge from the negotiations. This does not imply that inclusion on its own is sufficient for success, nor does it imply that it is always a readily available feature in any given political climate. However, given the importance attributed to it in the data, it is an important feature to strive for throughout the process of cultivating a ripe moment for negotiation.

Fostering Positive Cross Community Contact

Enthusiasm for the role that civic society and cross community groups have played to help prepare Northern Ireland for its current cold peace, was not as strong amongst the participants as it was for the notion of inclusion. Some pointed out the difficulty of measuring the success of the organization as being problematic when evaluating its influence. Nonetheless, while the perceived effectiveness of such organizations was for some participants, difficult to pin down, it was nonetheless thought to have had a primarily positive effect on the Northern Irish peace process. In terms of the role of civic society, the trend toward institutionalization of equal rights, and human rights norms in Northern Irish civil and public service was perceived as important for having fostered greater contact in the public sphere between Northern Irish Nationalists and Unionists. Higher acquaintancy rates can contribute to the breaking down of old stereotypes and the facilitation of dialogue. As Pauline pointed out, simply having some of the people in the room together would have been unheard of in the past. It stands to reason that if people can learn to be in each other's presence they can learn to better understand one another. Pauline further noted that as a community worker she is able to broach subjects now with her participants that she would not have been able to touch in the past. Granted this is

some time after the negotiations of the BA but this is also a very slow and arduous process. While it was pointed out by some of the participants that around the time of the SA and immediately following it, violence was so high in Northern Ireland that ideas to promote community relations were easily sidelined. Yet efforts in the intervening decades were nonetheless made to continue to communicate across the sectarian barriers.

For some, such ongoing efforts were important to keep Northern Ireland from having descended further into violence. While this is arguably difficult to objectively determine, Rachel provides a significant example of how cross community organizations have worked to help build communication networks to diffuse volatile situations. In particular she cited the cell phone network developed by her organization that stretches across interface zones in Belfast. As she explained it, oftentimes it is a rumor that gets started about someone about to do something – perhaps launch a petrol bomb – on one side of the wall when in fact there is no one there. Yet because of the lack of communication, each community feeds off each other's fears and anxiety until there is a significant chance that some type of incident might occur. What the cell phone network provides is a way for community workers on either side of the barrier to speak to one another and determine what, precisely is going on and work together to diffuse the situation.

Though their effects might be difficult to measure, there have been, as Pauline alluded to, positive changes in the dynamics between communities in Northern Ireland. Rachel further notes that former Loyalist paramilitary and community activist Billy Hutchinson

was able to engage with SF, even if, at the time it was kept relatively quiet. What this implies is that the ongoing effort to make connections across the divide is not solely present at the elite level, but is also the jurisdiction of the grassroots. The grassroots can play an important role in facilitating encounters and dialogue between groups. While it may start small, with meetings such as the one Rachel describes, they contribute to the slowly growing dialogue between communities that moves up to the elites and back down again. By having communities more accepting of dialogue with the other, elites are freer to enter into meaningful negotiations. And conversely, if the elites are paving the way for dialogue – in Northern Ireland many, if not all political parties met on several occasions to revisit potential negotiations – this assists in providing the grassroots with reassurance that the other is not solely the enemy.

While it should be noted that in some respects, Northern Ireland is just as, and in some areas, more geographically segregated now than it was prior to the SA or even the BA, this does not detract from those initiatives which have helped individuals deal with past trauma, or learn to interact positively with a member of the other community. The importance that emerges from the data with respect to the fostering of positive cross community work is that it is a slow, and very much long term investment, that requires a great deal of initial risk but may in the future help pave the way for a population that can conceive of non- violent, potentially peacefull coexistence with members of the other community.

The Roles of External Ethno-Guarantors

Perhaps one of the most interesting findings to emerge from the data was how the roles and relationships of the British and Irish governments were perceived to have changed in the years between the SA and the BA. On its own, the British government was seen to have developed a greater understanding of Nationalist grievances and come to recognize that the question of Northern Ireland, is not simply a question for the United Kingdom, but also required the input of the Republic of Ireland. For its part, the Irish government is seen as having gone through a process of maturation. Whereas in the 1970s the Irish government was dragged into the role of defender of Northern Nationalists, and felt the need for symbolic gestures such as threatening to send troops across the Northern Irish border, by the 1990s, it had become a state more aware of the needs and fears of Unionists, more cynical of the SF and SDLP presentation of the conflict and less passive-aggressive towards its former colonial overseer, the British state. It had, in a sense, matured as a political entity.

Very interestingly, these changes in attitudes were credited by a number of participants to the change in relationship between the two states brought on by their involvement in the EU from the early 1970s. The EU was seen as not simply an organization of partnered states but a process through which the subordinate/superordinate relationship that had existed between the British and Irish governments was evened out. Further through their increased contact on the margins of the EU, the two governments developed habits of

cooperation and assisted in creating a greater understanding for the other of the internal

co-nationals in Northern Ireland.

As a result of the continued dialogue and growing understanding of one another, two

things in particular occurred. First, the British government came to recognize the need for

greater involvement from the Irish government in any attempt to resolve the conflict, and

second the Irish government gained greater confidence in dealing with not only Britain,

but Unionists and Nationalists, allowing them to make better informed and significant

steps for their part in resolving the conflict. Having agreed that the constitutional status of

Northern Ireland was to be the jurisdiction of Northern Irish citizens, through their

mutual cooperation the two EEGs were able to take productive steps towards brokering

an agreement. Rather than, as had been the case in 1974, attempt to push through an

agreement that had no support (the British government) or undermined its own efforts by

fanning the fears of the Unionist population (the Irish government).

Accordingly, the results appear to show that having the EEGs of the conflict involved in

working jointly for the resolution of the conflict can have significant impact on the

outcome of the negotiation process. With this in mind it can be understood that just as

efforts should be undertaken to allow the involvement of a wide array of political

representatives at the table, for the successful resolution of the conflict, efforts should

also be undertaken to ensure that the EEGs of the parties to the conflict have agreed to

cooperate with one another and maintain an open line of communication so that they can better deal with the situation.

The Role of Third Party International Mediators

When asked about the roles of the EU and US, responses from the participants varied from those who thought them both critical to those who felt the EU's involvement was nebulous, or that the US's involvement was solely as cheerleaders.

For its part, the US was seen primarily by the participants as having provided much needed impetus for the Agreement. While that is, as some described, perhaps only cheerleading, it was nonetheless argued by a number of participants that this cheerleading was important in drumming up support for the Agreement. This was in part because of the international reputation of the US. For some, the fact that the President of the United States was personally making trips to Northern Ireland to throw in his support behind the BA provided a sense that, as Pauline suggested, these were not just talks about talks, that *these* talks were serious.

Furthermore, much credit was given by the participants to the particular skills of former Senator George Mitchell, the US peace envoy who was the chief facilitator of the BA talks. Mitchell's approach was as a facilitator and not a negotiator or a fixer, which coincides with Lederach's (1995) ellicitive understanding of peacebuilding. Mitchell was

perceived as being important in humanizing the parties and ultimately helping them to reach an agreement, without imposing one of his own.

As for the EU, there were three principle ways in which participants identified its important role played in the BA, both of which involve creating the right context. The first way was by providing funds to help stabilize the country and ease some of the pressures that financial hardships might add to the conflict. This is discussed in greater detail in the following section.

Second, the EU was credited with having changed the context of the Northern Ireland conflict, that is to say, integration with the EU helped familiarize the British and Irish governments with one another. As equal members of the EU, the British and Irish government's relationship was altered to be on a more coequal basis, they became more familiar with one another and there was a greater history of cooperation. This helped lead the British to change its understanding of the Northern Irish conflict as one that was the sole prerogative of the UK, to one that was a joint Irish-British problem. Once having undertaken this shift, the British government began to make greater allowances for the Irish government to involve itself in the negotiation process. This is exemplified by the signing of the 1985 AIA which was undertaken primarily by the Irish and British governments with little involvement from Northern Irish politicians.

Third, the EU helped create a context for conflict resolution that was equally as inadvertent as the change in relation between the British and Irish government. Through integration within the EU, the population of Northern Ireland became familiar with systems of governance and decision making, that they, particularly the Unionist community, had found so unpalatable in the 1970s. For instance, the notion of power sharing was what was on the table in 1974, referred to at the time by some as a 'Lebannon style government'. As Gregory and Alexander explained, all the Unionist community had ever experienced was the British Westminster system and now they had suddenly lost their Parliament and were being told to adopt these systems, d'hondt mechanism, power sharing, that were not really in evidence anywhere else. By the time of the BA, through involvement with the EU, these were no longer foreign concepts and were much easier for the Unionist community to accept.

As James put it "it's the classic conflict transformation dynamic, third party intervention and that was third party intervention, both in a sense by Europe and the USA. And it worked." Rather than seeking to impose an agreement on unwilling political representatives, the EU and the US instead both focused, both advertently and inadvertently, on creating a context under which an agreement might flourish. Accordingly, the data seems to support the notion that not all conflicts need be solved as internal problems, there can be an important role to play for external third party mediators to involve themselves and help till the soil for the ripe moment.

The Role of Targeted Economic Aid

The use of economic aid received some of the most mixed reviews (though still positive) with Stanley and Gregory arguing that it had no discernable effect and others arguing that despite some administrative complaints, the influx of economic aid was absolutely vital to the success of the BA. For those who felt that the international funding was important, its importance fell into three categories: creating the context or 'mood music' as one participant described it, in funding the grassroots organizations, and in shoring up support for the BA in loyalist communities.

In terms of helping to create an atmosphere conducive to peacebuilding, the international funding was perceived as having facilitated internationalizing the conflict, assisting it to be seen as more than simply a British issue, in much the same way that increased Europeanization did. Particularly as much of the funds were targeted toward cross Border work, the Northern Irish conflict was increasingly a joint Irish-British problem. Also, while, Britain may have initially resented the foreign aid flowing into one of their charges, this offered a less politicized medium for the US and other states to begin to involve themselves with the problem solving process while minimizing the potential to impinge on British sovereignty.   The influx of foreign funds also helped to stabilize the Northern Irish political situation by helping to relieve some of the pressure that financial hardships can add to conflict, giving many Northern Irish citizens one less stressor to deal with.

Just as the international funds created a way in for international actors, the funds were

critical in funding grassroots organizations who worked every day to improve relations

between communities. As Rachel pointed out, it was a significant risk for the IFI to begin

funding organizations in interface areas in the mid-1980s while violence was still

rampant. Yet this risk, in her view, paid significant dividends. Many of the organizations

simply could not exist without the international funding. While Rachel felt that "most of

the funding was going to stuff that the government should have been funding anyway,"

both her and Pauline note that when the Peace III program funds run out over the next

couple of years many of these organizations will be shut down. Here both women made

the important point of noting that effort must be spent by these organizations and perhaps

as part of the funding requirements that these organizations make themselves sustainable.

Some will undoubtedly shut down as they are no longer needed, and as Rachel notes, "if

at the end of that it's decided that there isn't a relevance, it needs to go. And I hope it has

the courage to do that. I still think, there is definitely a role for it within the next couple

of years." Money cannot simply continue to be poured into the country indefinitely,

particularly as some of the participants pointed out, when there are regions such as the

Balkans and Cyprus which are in desperate need of support and rebuilding. Without the

funding from international donors, much of what has been accomplished by these

grassroots organizations could not have existed.

Also of importance was the role that international funding played in help securing the

involvement of Loyalist communities in the peace process. Though initially held by some

Loyalist communities in the 1980s as being bloody money, Perry noted that over time,

Loyalist areas also began to make use of the peace monies. Many Loyalist communities are, and have been in the past, areas of significant poverty and unemployment. As pointed out by Perry, "if you go to a Progressive Unionist Party conference, you will find that the major item on the agenda is education. How can we get people…if you take somewhere like the Shankill Road, where you know, what percentage, 2 or 3 percent of kids pass their 11+? That's a real, real concern." Loyalist areas often have additional issues such as poverty, unemployment etc that are not as prevalent in the constituents of parties such as the UUP or SDLP or as Derrick says "which is really a middle class party in my book anyway". Therefore, the potential for structural funding being brought to their communities was significant incentive for parties such as the PUP and UDP to throw their support in with the Agreement.

Conclusion

In all, just as the other conditions which emerged from the interviews, the influx of external economic aid was found for the most part to have been of significant importance in providing scaffolding for the BA, though on its own, it would not have been sufficient to result in the BA. As Gregory pointed out, to hold that to be true one would have to be working based on the oversimplified assumption that the entire conflict was simply about money.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Introduction

The interviews conducted provided a wealth of firsthand accounts of what makes an agreement successful. As Lederach explained (2005), moments ripe for conflict resolution do not simply appear to be seized, they must be cultivated. What the themes which emerged from the interviews ably demonstrated is that, just as ripe moments do not simply appear, neither did the BA. The success of the BA can be seen to have been facilitated by decades of groundwork and preparation. None of the conditions identified in the literature review and whose significance was confirmed in the data, are likely to have been capable of making or breaking the negotiations of the BA. Rather, they were necessary but not sufficient when taken on their own. However when taken together, these conditions, inclusiveness of the negotiation process, the fostering of positive cross community contact, the positive involvement of EEGs, the involvement of third party international mediators, and the use of economic aid, created the pillars upon which a more stable agreement was reached. What is also important is that none of these conditions are short term investments; they all involved a long term commitment to peacebuilding that began long before the official negotiations of the BA.

The BA and Peacebuilding in Northern Ireland

Having signed an Agreement in 1998, the future of Northern Ireland's peace process is by no means guaranteed. As Derrick pointed out "there are a lot of people walking around that are hurting. There are a lot of people with blood on their hands who did

things. There is no truth and reconciliation. There is not justice here." Accordingly,

efforts must be ongoing to provide counseling and therapy to those who need it. As

Rachel pointed out, there is a great deal of self medicating going on in Northern Ireland,

particularly among cross community levels. Decades of conflict have caused potentially

lasting mental health damage to entire communities and this must be addressed.

James and Pauline also pointed out the need for education about the past, about

citizenship and about what exactly are the structures of government. As Pauline describes

it:

> This is the society we live in, these are the political structures which we
> had, Direct Rule, what that all meant and this is where we are at now. This
> is what our First Minister is responsible for…Unless people realize that
> these are the institutions that run our country, that can run our lives, can
> impact our lives, rather than those wasters up on the hill, I don't believe the
> political situation and therefore the conflict will completely end.

This is particularly important, as a number of participants pointed out, that the youth of

Northern Ireland understand these processes and are made to feel involved in the political

processes. James further explains that not only do citizens need to be more informed

about their government, and this is largely the responsibility of Stormont to get out into

the public and explain themselves and their roles, but also to educate on community

issues and sectarianism.

> I think that education needs to play a role in this as well; we are still struggling
> to overcome sectarianism in this community. The politics express it from
> time to time, civic society expresses it from time to time, but it hasn't gone
> away. So community education needs to kind of empower people in all the
> ways it can, on citizenship, on overcoming sectarianism, on peacebuilding.
> These things also need to become increasingly part of primary and

secondary education as well as part of community adult education.
Otherwise we are not going to sustain this Agreement.

As pointed out by many of the participants, sectarianism is still a significant issue in
Northern Ireland. Both Derrick and James noted that dealing with this is a slow process
until the point where, as Pauline phrases that sectarianism "could in some ways become
an ism that doesn't have an undertone of armed conflict, a war, again". James used to
"think that we could turn this place around in a generation, but I think it is going to take
at least two generations to achieve significant attitudinal, behavioral and structural
change. One generation was too optimistic."

Conclusion

Conflicts, whether resource based or as expressions of self determination, are never
simple. Accordingly any attempt to try and bring those conflicts to an end must respect
that lack of simplicity and attempt to approach the situation with long term, multi-faceted
strategies. While the peace in Northern Ireland is a cold one, and one that remains
plagued by sectarianism and partisan politics, that it has any peace at all is testimony to
the decades of work by Northern Irish citizens, from the grassroots to the elites, and the
actors of the international community such as Great Britain, the Republic of Ireland, the
United States and the EU, among others. The 1998 BA was the result of what Lederach
would refer to as the 'cultivation' of conditions for peace. This study has identified five
such conditions as having been of importance to this process: inclusivity, fostering
positive cross community contact, the positive involvement of EEGs, the involvement of
third party primary international mediators, and of targeted economic aid. This study does
not attempt to deal specifically with any broader geopolitical concerns that may have

effected the peace process. Rather it takes a deliberate focus on the agency of individuals and groups of individuals. It does not attempt to dismiss structural concerns but instead focuses on those conditions which may more readily be effected and manipulated by those looking to make a positive contribution to the peacebuilding process, regardless of their political status. There may well be other conditions beyond those identified, it was not the intent of this study to comprehensively catalogue all such conditions. However, the response of the study's participants to these conditions illustrates their importance in the peacebuilding process in Northern Ireland. Just as conflicts are never simple, no two are exactly alike. Accordingly the knowledge gained from this study cannot be lifted and placed onto the peacebuilding process in another part of the world. What it does provide, however, is greater insight into the peacebuilding process, what can work, and how. It can help provide not a model, as they are rarely transferable, but tools for peacebuilding. (Lederach 1997)

Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Questions

Main Question:Q1

Please explain why the Belfast Agreement has been more successful than the Sunningdale Agreement in building the Peace in Northern Ireland?

Probe Questions:
a. Why is that?
b. What difficulties has the Belfast Agreement avoided that were also encountered during the Sunningdale Agreement?
c. How was the Belfast Agreement able to overcome those difficulties?
d. Were there difficulties that the Sunningdale Agreement faced that the Belfast Agreement did not encounter?
e. What is needed to keep the Belfast Agreement from collapsing?

Main Question: Q2

Please explain how the roles of the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom compare during the Sunningdale Agreement to the roles they took on during the Belfast Agreement?

Probe Questions:
a. How significant was the Republic of Ireland's concession of its con-stitutional claims to Northern Ireland through the amendments to Acts 2 and 3 of the Irish Constitution, to the Belfast Agreement?
b. How significant was Britain's acceptance of the principle of majority consent the Belfast Agreement?
c. Could such concessions have altered the outcome of the Sunning-dale Agreement?

Main Question: Q3

Was the involvement of the United States and the European Union in the 1998 Belfast Agreement in anyway significant?

Probe Questions:

What impact did increasing integration with the European Union have on the success of the Belfast Agreement?

    a. How might the involvement of politically powerful actors, such as the United States, and the EU have influenced the success of the Sunningdale Agreement?

Main Question: Q4

The Belfast Agreement was more inclusive and civil society oriented, including the paramilitaries and referendums, while the Sunningdale Agreement was more elite driven and consociational. Was there any significance to this increase in inclusivity in terms of the collapse of Sunningdale and the success of the Belfast Agreement?

    Probe Questions:

    a. How does including more extreme parties such as Sinn Fein, the Democratic Unionist Party, or the Progressive Unionist Party, in the negotiation process affect the long term potential of maintaining stability in Northern Ireland given that these parties are often viewed as promoting the interests of the republican and loyalist paramilitary groups?

    b. What affect would bringing Sinn Fein, the DUP, PUP and other parties viewed as representing paramilitary interests, have had on the Sunningdale Agreement ?

Main Question: Q5

Was the use of external economic aid important in shoring up the support for the Belfast Agreement and could it have assisted in building a peace dividend around the Sunningdale Agreement?

    Probe Questions:

    a. How do feelings about the effectiveness of the economic aid from Peace I and Peace II differ between the Protestant and Catholic communities?

b. What are the long term effects of this economic aid on the peace process?

c. In what ways, if any, is the economic aid provided failing to meet the expectations of the two communities?

d. Had economic aid been provided in support of the Sunningdale Agreement, where might it have come from?

e. In what ways might economic aid have helped prevent the collapse of the Sunningdale Agreement?

Main Question: Q6

How would you compare efforts to foster positive cross community contact around the time of the Sunningdale Agreement compared to the Belfast Agreement?

Probe Questions:

a. What impact will these efforts have on the long terms success of the Belfast Agreement?

b. What impact would these efforts have had on the Sunningdale Agreement had they been undertaken at that time?

c. Why were such efforts not undertaken at the time of the Sunningdale Agreement?

d. What are your hopes and fears for the future of the country?

Appendix B: Coding Charts

How Important Was it that the BA Was More Inclusive Than the SA?							
Group	Participant	Not at All Helpful	Not Significantly Helpful	Helpful	Significantly Helpful	Critically Important	NA
A	Alexander						
	Stanley						
	Michelle						
	Perry						
	Gregory						
B	Dylan						
	Rachel						
	James						
	Derrick						
	Pauline						

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