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**THE IRISH REVOLUTIONARY LEADERSHIP (1916-1922): A CASE STUDY  
IN ELITE CONFLICT**

*City University of New York*

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THE IRISH REVOLUTIONARY LEADERSHIP (1916-1922):

A CASE STUDY IN ELITE CONFLICT

by

MARTIN S. MILLER

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in  
Political Science in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University  
of New York.

1982

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1982

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Political Science in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

8/18/82  
date

*Danwood A. Rustin*  
Chairman of Examining Committee

8/18/82  
date

*Thomas D. Karis*  
Executive Officer

Dr. Thomas Karis

Dr. Herbert Weiss

Dr. Irving Leonard Markovitz  
Supervisory Committee

The City University of New York

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When finances became a larger headache than usual, my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Miller (I'm sorry to say that my father died before the acceptance of this dissertation) and friends were usually more than generous with a Marshall Plan for a beleaguered graduate student. Burt Harris and Gordon Davies were more than generous with their aid, and I'm forever grateful for their sensitivity when dispensing same.

Lastly, I must pay tribute to two people who were indirectly the most important contributors to the completed manuscript. My wife Micheline, the apple of my eye, neither typed nor edited these pages, and at times felt like throwing them out the window with this writer in tow. Usually, though, she was a loving, caring partner who made it all worthwhile. As for my son David, I'm simply so pleased that he grew during this period into a decent young man; one quite capable of returning the love that I have for him.

## Abstract

### THE IRISH REVOLUTIONARY LEADERSHIP (1916-1922): A CASE STUDY IN ELITE CONFLICT

by

Martin S. Miller

Adviser: Professor Dankwart Rustow

Twentieth-century anticolonial revolutionary leaders have often surprised both their enemies and supporters by the way in which they violently turn on each other after the struggle with the colonist has ended. Civil war is indeed a tragic way to begin building a nation. A number of hypotheses have been offered to explain such bloody intra-elite conflict in the cases of Algeria, Angola, India, Zimbabwe, and a host of others. This study presents an explanation for such violent conflict using a sociocultural background approach. Correlations are established between individual background attributes and future behavior.

The focus is upon Ireland during the 1916-22 period of insurrection against the British Crown that ended with partial British withdrawal and civil war among the Irish Republic Army "victors." The studies goals are to: (a) conceptually tie Ireland to the developing countries that have experienced colonization, exploitation, national revolutionary war, and ultimate independence; (b) test a wide variety of background variables (age, education, occupation, etc.) that have been commonly employed in case studies of elite conflict to determine

whether they are correlated to either the moderate (Free State compromisers who accepted a tie to the Crown and partition) or intransigent (fight on for the independent republic!) positions that were most prominent in 1922; and (c) challenge or bolster the results of other intra-elite studies that deal with precisely the same leadership circumstances.

The results of this study demonstrate that there was indeed a clear correlation between certain types of background factors and behavior in the sample under study. Such variables as friendship circles, institutional membership, and revolutionary task were strongly correlated with moderation or intransigence. In other words, if one wants a better understanding of the momentous political conflict that still troubles Ireland, these background factors should be taken into account.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE.....	1
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\* \* \*

### Chapter

I INTRODUCTION.....	9
A Divided Leadership.....	9
The Problem: Explaining Elite Behavior.....	19
The Study of Elites: From a Description of Leadership Background to an Explanation of Their Behavior.....	28
Elite Studies: The Algerian Revolutionary Leadership Conflict: A Comparison with Ireland.....	30
Studies of the Irish Revolutionary Elite's Background.....	35
Who Is a Sinn Fein Leader?.....	47
II THE SINN FEIN/IRA ELITE: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....	66
Pre-Rising Reformist Politics: Home Rule Shapes the Nationalist Agenda.....	67
Three Failed Home Rule Bills: A Prelude to Revolutionary Politics.....	70
Peace Negotiations: A Leadership Divided.....	126
III A DEFINITION OF THE IRISH REVOLUTIONARY ELITE.....	155
Who Are the Elite?.....	155
Who Is an Irish Revolutionary Leader?.....	158
The Sinn Fein/IRA Elite.....	161
IV BACKGROUND VARIABLE: PARTICIPATION IN THE EASTER RISING.....	176
Historical Background of the Rising: Ideologues of the "Blood Sacrifice".....	177
The Eve of the Rising.....	180

TABLE OF CONTENTS  
(continued)

	Insurrection!!.....	182
	The Rising's Aftermath: A Terrible Beauty Was Born.....	186
	Participation in the Rising: A Background Variable.....	189
	Conclusion.....	192
V	BACKGROUND VARIABLE: THE MILITARY MAN VERSUS THE POLITICIAN.....	199
	The Military Man versus The Politician.....	200
	The Military Man vs. The Politician: Views of the Leadership.....	202
	"Military" vs. "Politicians": Post-Civil War Cleavages.....	205
	The Military vs. Politicians: A Comparison with the Algerian Revolution.....	206
	The IRA Military Man's Radicalism: A Framework for Understanding His Behavior.....	207
	Explaining the Military's Behavior.....	217
	Conclusion.....	236
VI	BACKGROUND VARIABLES: FRIENDSHIP CIRCLES.....	247
	Fratricide: Ireland, 1922.....	248
	Friendship Circles.....	252
	Conclusion.....	274
VII	BACKGROUND VARIABLE: MEMBERSHIP IN THE SECRET IRISH REPUBLICAN BROTHERHOOD.....	283
	IRB Members Who Were Free Staters.....	287
	IRB Members: Anti-Treaty.....	295
	Hostile to the IRB: Pro-Treaty.....	297
	Hostile to the IRB: Anti-Treatyites.....	301
	Conclusion.....	305
VIII	BACKGROUND VARIABLE: ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ATTITUDES.....	311
	The Making of "Conservative" Revolutionaries.....	313
	Who Qualifies As an Economic and Social Radical?.....	321

TABLE OF CONTENTS  
(continued)

	Background and Civil War Behavior.....	323
	Conclusion.....	339
IX	BACKGROUND VARIABLES: AGE, EDUCATION, OCCUPATION, AND FAMILY BACKGROUND.....	348
	Age.....	349
	Education.....	352
	Occupation.....	357
	Family Background.....	359
	Conclusion.....	371
X	BACKGROUND VARIABLE: MARGINALITY.....	375
	Who Is a "Marginal Man"?.....	375
	A General Definition of Marginality.....	378
	The Irish Revolutionary Elite: "Marginality" Criterion.....	381
	The Irish "Marginal" Revolutionary: Civil War Position.....	384
	Conclusion.....	396
XI	CONCLUSIONS.....	404
	* * *	
	Appendix I: THE LEADERS' ROLE IN THE EASTER RISING (DUBLIN, 1916).....	414
	BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	432

## LIST OF TABLES

I	The Leadership.....	166
II	The Leadership Elite Republicans and Free Staters.....	171
III	Men of the Rising--Republicans and Free Staters.....	193
IV	Friendship Circles--Michael Collins.....	253
V	Friendship Circles--Arthur Griffith.....	269
VI	Educational Backgrounds--Republicans and Free Staters.....	355
VII	Occupational Backgrounds--Republicans and Free Staters.....	360

## PREFACE

The revolutionary struggle of anticolonial liberation fronts has violently punctuated the course of twentieth century history. Numerous battles for national self-determination have challenged the nineteenth century, marxist prediction of class-based conflict occurring primarily in the most advanced portions of the developed world, and we find ourselves witnessing a long succession of brutal wars of independence that exhibit surprisingly similar dynamics. In cases such as Algeria and Angola, initial nationalist rebellions are smashed with a startling ferocity, only to elicit the widespread support that small, unrepresentative groups of insurrectionaries lacked in the first place. Then, of course, the home country invariably carries out reforms of the "too little, too late" variety and population forced to choose sides inevitably becomes the "water" for revolutionary "fish." Rebel losses are considerable, but they survive to extract a high price from their well armed foe. Liberal/left dissent in the metropole, coupled with the force of a critical world opinion, ultimately limits the success of military options for the colonist. And finally, political denouement is followed by national independence and a squaring of accounts with former agents of colonialism and groups owing their privileged position to the imperialist policies of the past (white settlers, pieds-noirs, "harkis," et al.). Tragically, racial/communal stereotyping greatly inflates the number

of victims on both sides, although the colonized endure the most grievous suffering.

One famous apostle of revolutionary violence, Franz Fanon, argued that this blood-letting on a grand scale was absolutely necessary, indeed beneficial, for Algerian Arabs and Berbers and all oppressed colonized people. The individual psychologically frees himself from past indignities and inner-directed rage by striking at the European, and, in the process, forges leadership solidarity and the very basis for a resurrected or newly created nation. Therefore without armed struggle there is little chance for post-independence unity. Of course, revolutionary elites don't always follow Fanon's neat scenario.<sup>1</sup> As often as not, the day when the colonist/imperialist departs (or the days before!) marks the onset of leadership divisiveness, tension, and bloodshed. Race, religion, tribal conflicts, generational tensions, ideology, personality, competition for office and lucrative jobs, etc., are some of the well-known factors usually associated with these elite schisms. Take, for example, Fanon's own Algerian experience. The ostensibly ultra-disciplined FLN movement (at least "unified" in the perceptions of their French antagonists), was from 1954 onward increasingly wracked by all sorts of actual or potential splits barely papered over. Berbers versus Arabs, the army men of the Tunisian and Moroccan "exterior" set against the starving guerrillas of the "interior" "wilayas," personality feuds, differing tribal loyalties, and more, all surfaced dramatically once the Evian peace "broke out" in 1962.

Clearly, Fanon exaggerated the relationship between guerrilla warfare and leadership cohesiveness,<sup>2</sup> although one could well understand his wish for a political payoff to compensate for the carnage. The fact remains, though, that heroic struggle may not foster elite solidarity, and perhaps it often exacerbates underlying tensions and divisions.

Why do twentieth-century revolutionary elites often degenerate into fratricide after the anti-colonial struggle has ended? One way of partially explaining such behavior is to focus on the sociocultural background attributes of various leaders (age, education, job, revolutionary role, friendship circles, etc.) as factors that correlate with major intra-elite divisions that end in civil war. And one of the greatest moments of tension and danger occurs precisely when negotiations with the "enemy" are in the offing. Beneath the contest over ideas and strategy one may find that certain readily identifiable "types" of leaders tend toward either moderate (compromise with the colonialists) or hardline (fight on!) behavior. One such critical moderate/intransigent divide occurred among the Irish revolutionary elite (1916-22), a valiant group that achieved only partial victory fighting the British colonial power that had formally integrated Ireland into the United Kingdom during the early nineteenth century. British troops were finally driven from a portion of Ireland after 800 years of subjugation and bitterness. Tragically, the somewhat exhausted victors turned on each other precisely because there was scant agreement concerning the limits of the evacuation and the vestigial (and enduring!) British hold on six counties of northeast Ulster.

The aim of this study is to utilize the example of the Irish revolutionary leadership (1916-22), those men and women comprising the core of the Sinn Fein political movement and its military arm, the Irish Republican Army, for a case study of such elite conflict leading toward civil war and bloodshed. We will examine the Irish revolutionary leadership through the lens of the background approach in order to (a) better understand the great division among Sinn Fein/IRA revolutionaries stemming from the British offer to partial withdrawal from Ireland (26 southern counties) and Dominion status for this Irish state, and (b) to conceptually tie the Irish schism to that of other colonial struggles and test hypotheses concerning background variables that have been generated in other such elite studies.

The Irish experience was one of the first<sup>3</sup> twentieth-century wars of national independence--notably the only such struggle occurring in "developed" Europe--and it demonstrates how a united front revolutionary movement could display remarkable unity opposing the British before degenerating into fratricide. The issue dividing Irish nationalists was one confronting, at different times, every anticolonial movement: how far to depart from stated maximalist goals in pursuit of a negotiated settlement? Of course, the daring Sinn Fein/IRA front only partially attained its formal goal of "driving the Brits out" and establishing a 32-county, all-Ireland republic. The British were harassed and somewhat humbled by effective guerrilla tactics but were certainly never defeated in a major battle. There were no Dien Bien Phus in Ireland. Beginning in the spring of 1922, a civil war was fought over whether to accept the Irish Free State compromise (26 counties of the south)

and the existence of a partitioned northeast Ulster/Protestant enclave still a constitutional portion of the United Kingdom. In other words, the British would accept a Catholic nationalist southern Free State now loosely tied to the Crown, while guaranteeing the separate identity and insoluble link with what was deemed a Protestant-controlled area of Northern Ireland. The moderate Free State leadership, and a minority among rank-and-file IRA soldiers in the field, overcame the extreme Republican purists. The latter group fought to preserve the Irish Republic which the united front, Sinn Fein/IRA, had once declared to be totally independent of the United Kingdom and encompassing all of Ireland. The rift runs deep and long. The last decade-long installment of IRA violence can be traced, in part, to the still unresolved issues of that period;<sup>4</sup> staunch Republicans denying the legitimacy of the enduring Ulster partition, calling for the "Brits" to remove themselves from Northern Ireland, and challenging the southern 26-county government that evolved from the despised Free State which had the audacity to name itself the Republic of Ireland!

To understand the behavior of the warring Free Stater and Republican leaders, the moderates versus the extremists, and conceptually link their experience to the general problem of elite conflict, the aim of this work is to focus almost exclusively on the backgrounds (age, occupation, revolutionary role, friendship circles, etc.) of a wide variety of leaders as major explanatory factors. When we speak of "backgrounds" the allusion is to a set of commonly employed sociological indices that can be correlated with political behavior, in this case "moderate" (Free State) or "extreme" (Republican) civil war activity. Seen through the lens of this elite background approach, the civil war

schism is not simply rooted in chance factors and missed opportunities, noncommunication, the divide-and-conquer tactics of Britain, or simply falling out over an idea. Patterns of individual characteristics circumscribe the entire bloody process. We will demonstrate how particular attributes of the leadership are related to either compromise or intransigence, moderation or extremism, and thereby both help explain this specific elite conflict and provide evidence supporting or rejecting conclusions from other such case studies (e.g., lessons learned from the Algerian revolutionary divisions will be applied to our Irish concerns).

The accent on sociocultural background factors has a number of shortcomings that should be mentioned at the outset, problems reconsidered throughout the following pages. For instance, it would be difficult to convince the intelligent reader that one's youth is a necessary "cause" of his radical stance. Yet, if a great many youthful leaders tend to be extremists it is perfectly logical to assume some essential connection between these variables. Does this mean that such correlations approach the explanation for internecine conflict? Obviously, there are other factors involved which decidedly limit the scope of these findings. If only the British had placed the all-Irish Republic four-square on the bargaining table, a joyous Sinn Fein/IRA would have remained united and, most likely, faced a sectarian battle with Ulster Protestants. British "behavior," therefore, completely explains the civil war, at least in this very abbreviated sense. However, this simplistic view says little of actual choices conferred upon revolutionary actors who could have swallowed the compromise whole-hog rather than resist to the last breath. The question of why some bitterly opposed to peace offering is of the greatest historical

interest and shouldn't be swept aside by placing the ball in the British court. (The latter's duplicitous behavior towards Sinn Fein is not excused by this statement!) The background approach is an enlightening way to "retrieve" the ball and deal with the fateful decisions undertaken by Irishmen. In sum, our conclusions do not preclude a variety of alternate explanations for the civil war split, which will continue to be the topic of endless and vigorous debate. We are most definitely presenting a type of explanation, limited correlations or relationships which fall somewhere between an educated guess and scientific precision.

Lastly, we should mention the thorny problem of defining the leadership group. In our opinion, a good deal of energy should be expended in justifying the parameters of the elite sample. Arbitrary definitions of "leaders," as we shall argue, are the bane of elite studies, skewing results and fostering the wrong impressions of revolutionary movements. Therefore, prior to declaring precisely "Who is a leader?" we shall undertake a lengthy historical analysis to provide the reader with the necessary information to comprehend our selection criteria. In other words, choosing the leadership is absolutely crucial to the study, and by simply trotting out a detailed list of the "elite" will only confuse those uninitiated in the nuances of Irish nationalism. Once the sample is established we can then proceed to the bulk of our analysis, applying a whole range of background variables to the Sinn Fein/IRA group looking for patterns associated with moderation and extremism.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>In cases like Vietnam, Fanon was quite correct in his evaluation. Ho Chi Minh eloquently summarized the net effect of the Viet Minh's and the National Liberation Front's decades of guerrilla war against France and America without undue exaggeration. "Our Party . . . is great because it covers the whole country and is at the same time close to the heart of every compatriot. . . . It has won so much love in the thirty years of struggle and success." Quoted in Frances Fitzgerald, Fire in the Lake (New York: Vintage Books, 1972), p. 302.

<sup>2</sup>In Angola, Jonas Savimba, Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) leader, continues, as of the summer of 1980, to fight his Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) who are now running the government. He controls the southern Ovimbundu heartland while also stumping the U.S. to advertize his "nationalist" cause in opposition to the pro-Soviet marxism of Augustinho Neto's successors. The 1975 Portuguese withdrawal hardly presaged a unified movement towards nation-building.

<sup>3</sup>Although Afrikaanerdom is now commonly associated with its oppressive apartheid barrier to self-determination for black South Africans, their Boer War stand against the British Empire is perhaps the very first guerrilla struggle for nationhood in this century.

<sup>4</sup>The Provisional IRA, of recent media fame, overstates this connection with even the most extreme Republicans of 1922. For instance, one of the last surviving members of that group which challenged the Free State "moderate" government. Sean MacEntee is vocal in his denunciation of these would-be successors to the militant Republican tradition. Interviewed in The Irish Times, December 14, 1979, MacEntee observes, "Those whether in the North or South who have aided, abetted or condoned those terrible crimes of recent times have made the initials IRA stink in the nostrils of those who, under the authority of the First Dail Eireann, served in the 'Army of the Irish Republic' which was the legal style and designation of that force" (p. 6). Ironically, such charges were once hurled against MacEntee and other Republican extremists in 1922.

Chapter I  
INTRODUCTION

A Divided Leadership

And so ended for us what we called  
the scrap, the people later on the  
trouble; and others fond of labels,  
the Revolution.

Ernie O'Malley, IRA  
Commandant (Spring 1921)<sup>1</sup>

Up to this we have had four glorious  
years, years of magnificent discipline  
in the nation. . . . The world is  
looking on at us now.

Eamon de Valera  
(January 1922)

The terrible beauty began to lose her  
good looks.

Sean O'Casey<sup>2</sup>

The Irish national war of independence (1916-21) ended in tragedy. By the winter of 1922 "troubles" were only beginning for the above-quoted IRA Commandant Ernie O'Malley, the "four glorious years" of disciplined struggle against the might of the British nation were being transformed into the dark days of civil war, and indeed as the fervent nationalist O'Casey wrote, the "terrible beauty" born in the 1916 Easter Rising--the revolutionary Irish Republic--began to lose her good looks. It was a bitter conclusion to what had promised to be a unifying battle against endless centuries of British

domination, a fight to resurrect an all-Ireland, 32-county nation, North and South, Protestant and Catholic. But what if Protestants were clearly in favor of a continued tie to the British Crown, and Catholic rebels were, themselves, in violent disagreement as to the nature of this link?

A compromise treaty hammered out in the Fall and Winter of 1922 with the Lloyd George government was only accepted by a bare majority of the Irish revolutionary leadership, and, sadly, internecine bloodshed among overwhelmingly Catholic separatists replaced the former British terror with a vengeance. All shades of strict Republicanism angrily rejected the basics of the compromise London Conference Treaty: (a) partition of the six Northeast Ulster counties<sup>3</sup> where, at least in some areas, Protestants held a firm majority and supported Unionism (i.e., "union" with the United Kingdom), (b) the semi-sovereign status of the prescribed 26-county, southern Irish Free State whose leaders would still swear loyalty to the despised Crown, and where the presence of British military bases and British foreign policy were still guaranteed. The moderate Free Staters manned the somewhat limited Irish government and successfully prosecuted a military campaign against their former revolutionary brethren, now Republican diehards. The moderates were victorious in the field and yet unable to address the problem of a border dividing Ireland in two, North and South.

Thus the newly "independent" Ireland of 1922 was ravaged in a number of vital ways: (a) the Catholic nationalist community was hopelessly split along intransigent and compromising lines,

(b) traditional Catholic/Protestant enmity, a legacy of the historical privileges bestowed upon a Protestant settler population by colonial Britain, was further hardened and formalized by a sectarian border (of course, a healthy minority of Catholics has always resided in "Protestant" Ulster), (c) the Free State appeared to be ham-strung by its dominion status within the British-directed Commonwealth. This seemed hardly an auspicious start for the renaissance of a people bent on self-determination.

Throughout the war years (1919-21), an umbrella united front Republican party, Sinn Fein, and its tenuously connected military arm, the Irish Republican Army (IRA), displayed remarkable cohesion and discipline while fighting the British to a virtual stalemate (July 11, 1921 truce). The future moderate and extremist civil war combatants had at least given the impression of a deeply felt solidarity. But the ranks of Sinn Fein/IRA harbored all sorts of anti-British nationalists, ranging from marxists aiming at an independent workers' republic, to rebels ready to settle for some form of loose tie with Britain and the Commonwealth. It was certainly a volatile mix of political tendencies given that the British were not decisively defeated during a fiercely contested guerrilla war, and the inevitable negotiated settlement couldn't possibly satisfy those hoping for total separation and an intact, all-Ireland republic.

This disparate Sinn Fein/IRA revolutionary movement began to slowly coalesce during the days just prior to World War I. In that fateful period Britain's Liberal government, headed by Prime Minister Asquith, attempted to outflank Irish nationalism by passing a reformist Home

Rule Bill--partial devolution of authority within the United Kingdom had been the major political demand expressed by the Catholic nationalist community since the 1880s--which proved to be a half-hearted, abortive measure. More than anything, the death of Home Rule fostered the growth of Irish elements seeking the solution to past and present political subjugation outside the UK framework, precisely the men of the Sinn Fein/IRA front. Of course, home rule did not simply wither and die through lack of interest. Support for the measure was an article of faith in the Catholic community, and from the latter part of the nineteenth century to well past the 1916 Easter Rising militant separatists were essentially a small splinter group among the wider home rule, nationalist sentiment. But home rule had its potent enemies. It was the combination of Ulster Protestant "Unionists" and Parliamentary Conservatives (many members of the House of Commons and House of Lords were linked through family, land and ideology to the Protestant Ascendancy class in Ireland), which effectively blocked this piece of Crown Law through legislative obstructionism, bellicose propaganda, and outright paramilitary threat. Why this vehement opposition to a lukewarm dose of home rule? Were Protestant interests really threatened by a slight loosening of the UK tie? From the Unionist point of view the constitutional link was the ultimate guarantor of what amounted to a very privileged economic, social, and political life for the Protestant minority. The momentous Act of Union (1801) had in one stroke miraculously transformed Ireland into an integral part of the United Kingdom (the parallels with "legislating" Algeria into metropolitan France

under the short-lived Second Republic are instructive), and eventually Protestants would, by and large, perceive this act as a sacrosanct promise of British support for their ascendancy. Independence from Britain, in any form, would inexorably lead to rule by the Catholic majority population, a much feared turn of events. Perhaps the more enlightened Protestants rejected their militants' cry of "Home Rule is Rome Rule," but there was no getting around the fact that this reformist measure presaged a future Catholic government. And such a government could engage in unravelling the inequitable social system that had set aside for Protestants the best land (seventeenth century plantation), access to education, government jobs and political rights.

Thus the failure to implement home rule in the face of home-grown Protestant and British conservative foes demonstrated the bankruptcy of pinning Irish hopes on Westminster reforms, setting the stage for radicals with a very different message--armed struggle aimed at total independence. As we shall see, by 1918, Sinn Fein had literally swept aside the entire reformist home rule nationalist elite, a leadership that had endured thirty years of struggle at Westminster trying to extract a viable home rule bill from Parliament with little result. Sinn Fein was now the representative political organ for an increasingly radical Catholic nationalism.

As we mentioned, the ideological roots of Sinn Fein/IRA were varied. For example, there were the men of the secret, oath-bound Irish Republican Brotherhood, a clandestine, ritualistic organization having a tradition of failed insurrections, dynamiting

campaigns and Republican goals going back to the mid-nineteenth century. Violence and Republican purity were their trademarks. On the other hand, Arthur Griffith's organization, Sinn Fein--not to be confused with its post-1917 Republican united front which is the center of our discussion--stressed economic self-sufficiency, cultural nationalism and withdrawal of Irish parliamentarians from Westminster, but would accept the Crown tie and generally eschewed armed activity. An economically radical component of Sinn Fein/IRA descended from the men of James Connolly's Citizen Army, born out of labor strife (i.e., formed to protect the Dublin workers from the armed goons and biased police during the Great Lock-Out of 1913) who struggled for a completely separate marxist state. Finally we might mention the paramilitary Irish Volunteers, initially created (1913) to assure the gains of a home rule bill, it became the rank-and-file of the 1916 Easter Week rebellion and later the core of the IRA. Of course, membership in these various groups often overlapped; an armed Volunteer might attend a meeting to hear Arthur Griffith lecturing on economic self-sufficiency and then hurry off to a secret Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) gathering. One day individuals in the movement would have to choose their primary allegiances, often a life-and-death decision, but not while opposing the common British enemy. The compromise treaty abruptly ended the era of artificial cohesion and by January 1922 both Sinn Fein and the IRA were split down the middle. Free Staters accepting a negotiated settlement and Republicans vowing to uphold the independent state of their dreams.

The issues confronting the Irish revolutionaries at the London Conference (Fall 1921) were nothing short of dramatic: risk Lloyd George's implicit threat of immediate and total war<sup>4</sup> or acquiesce to Dominion status for the southern twenty-six counties, accept or reject an oath to the Crown, allow British naval facilities to occupy Irish territory, and face the possibility that Northeast Ulster would remain outside the political settlement. An independent Irish "republic" had already been declared by the handful of failed insurrectionaries at Dublin's 1916 Easter Rising--the "blood sacrifice" precursor of the 1919-21 guerrilla war--but this maximalist goal was never in the cards dealt out by the British negotiators. (We may add, that it was never offered as negotiable by extreme Republicans.) Lloyd George, Winston Churchill, Lord Birkenhead, et al.--the political heavyweights of the Empire--would not budge on firmly anchoring Ireland to the Commonwealth and flatly refused to unambiguously direct (coerce?) Protestants into a dominion home rule government, a critical decision that assured the partition of Ireland. Admittedly a formal provision of the treaty created a Boundary Commission which gave some hope of national unification to Sinn Fein. By deciding upon equitable communal/religious boundaries along the traditional Ulster border, this Commission might reduce the Protestant rump area to a nonviable ministate, therefore forcing it to merge with the Free State. But this mechanism only elicited a disdainful "not an inch" from militant Protestant leaders who viewed the six-county Ulster settlement as absolute and final. And we may add, it's been "not an inch"

to date. The harsh political fact of life was that at no time did Protestants display anything but distaste for an all-Irish republic, inclusion in a more limited Free State that emerged from the London conference, or any other devolved and unified political entity having a Catholic majority (i.e., failed home rule bills of 1886, 1893, and the abortive 1912 version).

So there it was: limited independence and a truncated nation with peace, or the full Republican demand and further hostilities. A badly divided delegation of plenipotentiaries led by Michael Collins and Arthur Griffith, signed on the dotted line as the best of possible worlds or as an alternative to immediate war. Collins, the romantic figure of the revolution, only grudgingly approved of the compromise. His heart-rending words written to a friend summarize the tragedy well:

When you have sweated, toiled, had mad dreams, hopeless nightmares, you find yourself in London streets, cold and dank in the night air. Think--what have I got for Ireland? Something she has wanted these past 700 years. Will anyone be satisfied at the bargain? I tell you this--early this morning I signed my death warrant--a bullet might just as well have done the job five years ago.<sup>5</sup>

He was only partially correct, as the "death warrant" was also served to a good portion of the Sinn Fein/IRA leadership on either side of the treaty divide.

The compromising results of the London Conference immediately split the revolutionaries into Free State and Republican camps. In Dail Eireann, the underground parliament formed in January 1919 by Sinn Feinners elected under the British franchise and abstaining from Westminster, the 63-57 vote in favor of accepting the Free

State reflected the close division of deputies. Depending on the area, IRA contingents were drawn fairly equally to either camp, although the Republican "irregulars" (as they were pejoratively named by Free State propagandists) initially enjoyed an overall numerical advantage of gunmen.<sup>6</sup> Throughout the general population homes and friendships were often rent apart, but with the Catholic hierarchy, the press and business interests all urging moderation, not to mention a pervasive weariness of anti-British struggle, the Free State immediately gained a legitimacy that was never really undermined by the Republican forces.<sup>7</sup> By May of 1923 it had ended with a Free State victory, a tragic one, though. Liam Lynch, Republican "irregular" Chief of Staff, neatly captured the mood of despair and anguish--on both sides--in a short note:

The disaster of this war is sinking into my very bones when I count the loss of Irish manhood and the general havoc of the Civil War. Who could have dreamt that all our hopes could have been so blighted?

Griffith, Collins, and a host of others did not survive. Republican diehards, the "legion of the rearguard," dumped arms, and crawled off to the hills, were hounded into internment camps, or followed the time honored route of the down-and-out Irishman, emigration. Never forsaken was the often fanatical allegiance to the supposedly established and existent republic, the mythical state prematurely called into being by the martyrs of the 1916 Easter Rising. From the Republican point of view the Irish Republic had been ratified by the 1918 Khaki election<sup>8</sup> (utilizing the British electoral machinery to demonstrate Sinn Fein popularity), revitalized

by the creation of a functioning parliament, Dail Eireann, and paid for in the currency of IRA blood. Republicans certainly had a point. It would be hard to find a revolutionary movement in the twentieth century with a more widespread democratic sanction, or better functioning governmental infrastructure. What right did Dail Eireann members have to compromise the reality of the republic? In any case, the Republicans who survived the crusade for political purity were the lucky ones. The Free State managed to execute or strike down in the field a number of Republican "irregular" leaders that far surpassed the infamous terror of the British "Auxiliaries" and "Black and Tans," special military units that descended upon Ireland like a plague during the 1920-21 period. Liam Mellows, Cathal Brugha, Erskine Childers, Liam Lynch, Rory O'Connor, et al. were some of the better known revolutionary war giants who paid dearly for their Republican intransigence. They, in turn, became the heroic martyrs for succeeding generations of IRA men who have viewed the Free State leaders (i.e., moderate Sinn Fein/IRA) as misguided brothers at best, or simply murderous colleagues of the British.

One needn't indulge in flights of historical imagination to link this momentous civil war episode with ensuing decades of sporadic IRA violence and the most recent 1969-80 installment of Ulster warfare. All IRA groups, despite numerous splinters, ideological twists and strategic differences, claim to be lineal descendants of this Republican faction which struggled against the Free State. To some degree, the integrity of the quarrel

remains firm and the demand clear: end the partition by removing the British from Northern Ireland and establish a thirty-two county Irish Republic. (But what of Ulster Protestant wishes to remain a part of the United Kingdom and their majority status in the six Ulster counties?) This stalemate has continued to be a source of controversy and bloodshed for more than a half-century. Thus the world's longest running intermittent guerrilla war (terrorist campaign?) was rooted in the intra-elite conflict that pitted the Free State moderates against radical Republicans.

#### The Problem: Explaining Elite Behavior

Why did various leaders choose either the Republican or Free State position in 1922? Can we explain the political behavior of the Irish revolutionary elite proceeding on a path towards fratricide? (The thorny problems of defining the "elite" and underscoring the limits of "explanation" will be discussed in detail below.) Some traditional answers to this question have pointed to the role of the great man<sup>9</sup> influencing their respective followers and polarizing the conflict, the divide-and-conquer tactics of perfidious Albion setting leader against leader, or the natural tendency of the inherently violent Irish to turn on each other once the enemy departs. Perhaps there is some truth in one or more of these types of explanations. The central thesis of this work, however, is that background attributes of individual leaders are important factors for influencing their choice of sides during the

civil war. By focusing on a relatively large number of the major Sinn Fein/IRA leaders, correlations can be established relating background variables and treaty position. In other words, specific revolutionary behavior is linked to particular individual characteristics, a connection which is clearly demonstrated when a broad sample of the elite is surveyed. This sociological explanation for elite conflict, as we shall see, has been either overlooked, downplayed, or outrightly dismissed by historians of the Irish Revolution, and shall be emphasized in the following analysis. But which among the infinite number of leaders' characteristics should be evaluated for a possible explanatory role in the elite schism? Two categories of variables seem relevant for our purposes. Firstly, there are those leadership attributes that derive directly from individuals' participation in the revolutionary experience itself: (a) friendship circles, (b) a role in the Easter Rising, (c) membership in the secret Irish Republican Brotherhood, (d) economic and social attitudes, and (e) a "military" or "political" job slot during the guerrilla war. The revolutionary organs one joins, the comrades one engages with, the specific type of insurrectionary role one finds himself undertaking, are all kinds of factors that William Quandt, in his study of Algerian revolutionary elite conflict,<sup>10</sup> loosely terms "political socialization" variables. These can be contrasted to a second category of background attributes that are related to a more distant period in the leader's life, or are essential parts of an individual from birth: (a) family's political history, (b) education, (c) age, (d) occupation, (e) marginality (foreign birth, Protestant religion,

Ulster residence, feminine gender, non-Irish nationality).

Briefly let us summarize some of our conclusions concerning these various background characteristics, all of which will be discussed at length in ensuing chapters.

Sinn Fein/IRA leaders who had participated in the 1916 Easter Rising "blood sacrifice" (approximately half our total elite sample verified) were fairly evenly distributed in the Free State and Republican camps in 1922. Surviving the horrors of the Dublin insurrection, internment, and the shock of comrades executed by the British, neither disposed the participant to moderation or radicalism on the treaty issue some six years later. Interestingly, though, those half dozen or so nationalists who ardently opposed a rising continued to harbor moderate attitudes which would be translated into a Free State stance.

In general, the ties of friendship circumscribed the leadership's behavior despite the fact that some famous examples of comrades-turned-enemies give the faulty impression that personal ties are a poor guide to political affinities. By and large close buddies faced the civil war as a group, whatever the side.

The most active IRA commandants engaged solely in military activities, contrasted to, say, Dail Eireann "politicians," were most likely to opt for hard-line Republicanism. This is particularly true in remote areas of the South and West where "military" men functioned as semi-independent warlords. These are men who lost the most casualties, felt increasingly isolated and abandoned, suffered the greatest deprivations, and who had a vested interest in not allowing

what they perceived as a "politician's" sell-out.

Not surprisingly, members of the secret Irish Republican Brotherhood indeed displayed oath-bound allegiance to their leader, Michael Collins (president of the IRB's Supreme Council), who supported the treaty. (The IRB has been universally recognized as a bulwark of moderation, at least at the time of negotiations. Yet we have found a number of IRB dissenters in the Republican camp which somewhat complicates this simple picture.)

Economic and social radicals, particularly the small group of marxists, were clearly Republican advocates. Likewise the few extreme conservatives turn out to be Free State adherents. Perhaps more interesting, though, is the paucity of either types among the elite. By and large, we find the leadership totally preoccupied with carrying out a national revolution, ridding Ireland of the British, and having scant energy or inclination to address the questions of poverty and social ills with viable programs.

The much discussed "marginal man" has generally been thought to play a disproportionate role in all radical movements. (Which traits are deemed "marginal" is a tricky business, of course.) Protestants in a largely Catholic nationalist universe, women in a man's world, foreigners in an Irish movement, etc. would reasonably be expected to gravitate toward the extreme end of Sinn Fein/IRA politics--Republican intransigence. The results are ambiguous. Firstly, it is noteworthy how few "marginal men" were found in the elite, and among those displaying such traits there was a fairly even division along Free State/Republican lines. Still, those

few leaders with the greatest number of marginal characteristics were indeed radicals.

The average age of Republicans and Free Staters is similar, although an extreme subgroup of radicals, the military executive of the "irregular" forces, are markedly more youthful than either general category.

The level or type of a leader's education doesn't dispose him to either side. As expected from the profile of other revolutionary elites, though, the entire leadership does exhibit a high level of educational attainment.

Occupational background is similarly not correlated to treaty preference. (The numbers of professional and white collar clerical types among radicals and moderates was impressive.)

Lastly, one's family's political background seems crucial for the civil war split only in a limited sense; the case of extreme nationalism or support of Unionism. If, say, a father was incarcerated in British prisons for revolutionary activity this fact appears to play a role in the son's future allegiance. Interestingly, a staunch pro-British Unionist background is also linked to diehard Republicanism. The more run-of-the-mill Catholic nationalist family history appears to produce both Free Staters and Republicans.

One other general conclusion should be mentioned. The variables associated directly with adult revolutionary political activity are more closely linked to treaty preference than the more long-standing basic attributes such as class background or education; a relationship that supports an hypothesis advanced by analysis of other such revolutionary leadership conflicts (i.e., the Algerian

experience; see below).

Historians of the Irish Revolution have shown a passing interest, urged caution, or have been outrightly negative towards our prescribed elite background approach for understanding the civil war conflict. Brian Farrell, for instance, implies that no specific leadership types can be discerned as proponents of compromise or intransigence, rather it was simply a random falling out of comrades contesting an idea.<sup>11</sup> Marxists (T.A. Jackson, Erich Strauss, C. Desmond Greaves), analysts most likely to relate, say, lowly origins with a more radical political consciousness, dismiss any such notions.<sup>12</sup>

And those who off-handedly attempt to stress background psychological traits (i.e., "realist" Free Staters versus Republican "fantasists"<sup>13</sup>) on closer examination are not really discussing "backgrounds" at all. Advanced instead is the marred tautological view claiming that the adoption of a Republican stance confirms the presence of a "fantasist" or "idealist" mentality. Free Staters are naturally closet "realists." The behavior one seeks to explain becomes the explanation itself, and the circle is complete. Of course, psychological variables may be important explanatory factors for the conflict, and psychohistorical studies of Irish leaders may turn up a wealth of valuable insights. In any case, the point to be drawn from present "psychological" pronouncements of historians is that a valid background leadership characteristics have not been explored.

Other major authors of outstanding works on this period (F.S.L. Lyons,<sup>14</sup> J.C. Beckett,<sup>15</sup> Robert Kee,<sup>16</sup> Dorothy Macardle,<sup>17</sup> George Dangerfield,<sup>18</sup> Bowyer Bell,<sup>19</sup> T. Desmond Williams,<sup>20</sup> et al.) carefully weigh impressionistic evidence and then actually make references to leadership attributes and their relationship to the Republican Free State split. What is generally missing, though, is a detailed list of elite characteristics correlated with civil war behavior, the empirical evidence for such behavior. In other words, one can find references to, say, youthfulness as an element of Republican radicalism without the expected headcount or tally. This study will be a partial corrective to the limitations and oversights of the above-mentioned works.

The question of what is meant by "explaining" the civil war divide is part and parcel of the more general problem of recognizing the limits of "explaining" the behavior of any political leader. Firstly, there are two extreme analytic stances that we reject from the outset. One tends to draw a hard and fast deterministic line between an individual's background and his decisions, and the other encourages a strict divorce between a leader's class, education, age, etc. and subsequent political choices. In the one formulation political actors are predetermined atoms following a fairly certain course. If only our background variables become more refined, missing facts fitted to the appropriate boxes, and all this run through sophisticated computers, we'd be well on our way to social scientific explanation--indeed prediction--of behavior. On the other hand, far from this predictable Newtonian world, political

actors are thought to be randomly moving atoms not amenable to any type of elite background analysis. One can never really explain leadership divides by examining their backgrounds, however diligent the researcher may be in gleaning data. Better than tallying up columns of elite attributes and correlating them with behavior, defer to the impressions and insights of historians interested in broad political forces, diplomatic intrigues, chance occurrences, and the usual emphasis on the most visible "great men" (Lloyd George, Collins, De Valera et al.) for influencing events. It is one of political science's great debates, featuring the apostles of scientific precision and the predictability of behavior versus the historical oriented "traditionalists" critical of such pretensions.<sup>21</sup>

Rejecting either of these extreme stances leaves us somewhere in an mid-ground position, a sort of explanatory limbo. We join the sensible proponents of elite studies who in their pursuit of leadership behavior speak a somewhat vague, restrictive, language of merely seeking "linkages" between background and behavior, offering "suggestions" for the explanation of elite attitudes and activities, and discerning "connections" between the individual's past and subsequent political decisions.<sup>22</sup> These scholars, by and large, recognize that establishing a hard and fast relationship between background and behavior--a "treacherous" analytic leap<sup>23</sup>--is not the currency of elite studies. The tenuous line connecting the two runs through the formation of attitudes; background attributes tend to foster attitudes that in turn may affect leadership behavior.<sup>24</sup> Political decisions, of course, are also the feedback that reshapes

attitudes. However vague this formula, it yields explanatory dividends when applied to a large number of leaders in instances where we are trying to roughly understand general behavior patterns. No one would even hint that an individual with A, B, C characteristics will predictably decide upon X, Y, Z precise decisions. In the Irish experience by demonstrating that certain specific types of leaders tend to be either moderate or radical in a basic way, the link between personal characteristics and behavior is established. In this limited sense we shall "explain" the conflict.

Furthermore, there is another level to our investigation. Conclusions gleaned from this case study in elite conflict will help verify or reject<sup>25</sup> numerous propositions concerning leadership behavior in other revolutionary situations. (Again, the Irish revolution is the single European variant of twentieth-century violent decolonization experiences, and as such begs the question of how it differs from the examples of the lesser developed countries.) And in a discipline simply overwhelmed by unsubstantiated hypotheses this is no small matter.

In the following pages we shall: (a) briefly describe the scholarly tradition of elite background studies focused on revolutionary leadership, the theoretical support for the examination of Sinn Fein/IRA divide, (b) discuss the case of the Algerian revolutionary leadership conflict in a comparative perspective which ties the study of Irish experience to the larger universe of twentieth-century wars of national independence, and (c) finally, evaluate three works on the Irish revolutionary elite that have, in fact,

used the background approach but are flawed and limited in ways that provide a rationale for this study.

The Study of Elites: From a Description of Leadership  
Background to an Explanation of Their Behavior

A general focus on the behavior of elites, and a particular emphasis upon explaining the attitudes and actions of revolutionary elites have created a burgeoning literature within the discipline of political science.<sup>26</sup> This is a very different approach than, say, a preoccupation with the psychology of the "great leader," that characterizes the work of psychohistorians. That expanding field followed the fundamental insights of Harold Lasswell (the leader, "displaces private effect on the public arena") and the developmental analysis of Erik Erikson.<sup>27</sup> The unique often pathological leader is the object of study and by putting him "on the couch" we elicit clues concerning revolutionary behavior. Wolfenstein for instance has delved into the psyches of such giants as Trotsky, Lenin and Ghandi, maintaining that their public political performance was the forum for resolving tensions rooted in their ambivalent feelings toward their respective fathers.<sup>28</sup> The accent is on the idiosyncratic, often non-comparable<sup>29</sup> reasons for the individual's ultimate behavior patterns, and the way in which they dovetail with history. On the other hand, the elite studies approach employs a larger sampling of the leadership, eschews the subtleties (vagueries?) of in-depth psychotherapy<sup>30</sup> and looks to rather simple and commonsensical background attributes to describe the composition of elites and suggest explanations for their behavior.

Age, education, class, occupation, region of birth, etc. have all been staple explanatory variables of such analyses. Whatever the researcher loses in terms of individual detail is compensated for by the aggregate data characteristics of many important political leaders.<sup>31</sup>

This tradition has been fostered by such pioneering works as Crane Brinton's The Jacobins.<sup>32</sup> His venture in "retrospective sociology" uncovers the seemingly "normal" economic and social backgrounds of those leaders who were so susceptible to the "fever" of the French Revolution. From a quantitative sociological viewpoint, the conservative historian Taine's "madmen," poisoned by the writings of Rousseau and seeking an impossible utopia, look surprisingly like "just plain folks; indeed a cross-section of the community."<sup>33</sup> Dankwart Rustow has compared the post-World War I, Kemalist, Ankara group of revolutionary Turkish leaders to the reactionary Constantinople generals and uncovered interesting age/generational differences between them.<sup>34</sup> And a background analysis of the early Chinese Communist Party's elite demonstrates, against all expectations, a close similarity to that of the supposedly "bourgeois" Kuomintang rivals.<sup>35</sup> We also find that revolutionary Bolsheviks, the self-professed "vanguard" of the proletariat, have few "workers" in their leadership ranks.<sup>36</sup> (Would the background approach yield insights into the Bolshevik/Menshevik split?) And Daniel Lerner's study of the Nazi elite, not surprisingly, found them more apt to exhibit traits of "marginality."<sup>37</sup> In all such works, employing similar background variables, there are very different sized leadership groups deemed "the elite," from the

rather small politboro to the extensive Nazi leadership delineated by the movement's own Fuehrerlexikon. The question, "Who is a leader?" will obviously be central to any study of elite backgrounds, and we shall later devote a chapter to defining the Sinn Fein/IRA "elite."

Elite Studies: The Algerian Revolutionary Leadership  
Conflict: A Comparison with Ireland

The general sociological descriptive efforts of Brinton et al. have led to scholarly claims that revolutionaries' backgrounds indeed circumscribe their specific behavior. William Quandt's analysis of the FLN's internal conflicts, Revolution and Political Leadership: Algeria 1954-1968, is one such effort that is particularly relevant to our concerns.

The case of a divided Algerian revolutionary elite perhaps affords the most interesting comparisons and parallels with the course of Ireland's struggle for independence. (Crane Brinton, Chalmers Johnson, Neal Ascherson, Richard Rose, T. Desmond Williams et al. have noted the potential comparative pay-offs in conceptually linking these twentieth-century revolutions, although there is a lively debate as to the efficacy of such a linkage.<sup>38)</sup>

In this writer's view both were similarly exploited colonies integrated within the metropole by parliamentary acts (Act of Union, 1801, the Second Republic's legislation); they had been planted by Protestant (seventeenth century) and pieds-noirs (post-1871) garrison classes that quite literally expropriated Catholic and Arab/Berber lands. Though Irish Catholics were enfranchised and had attained

small freeholding status prior to their revolution--unlike Algerian Arabs/Berbers--devolution of "ultras" (Protestants, Algerian colons) and conservatives within the metropole. Threats to the constitutional authority of Westminster (Curragh Incident, 1912)<sup>39</sup> and to the very life of the Fourth and Fifth French Republics, stemmed from the respective military's reluctance to "coerce" settlers (i.e., Ulster Protestants/Algerian colons) into "native"-dominated states of varying degrees of independence. Two blood sacrifices (Setif, 1945; 1954 rising; Easter Week, 1916) began similar guerrilla war dynamics characterized by official British and French reaction (overreaction?)<sup>40</sup> eliciting the very mass support for the IRA/FLN that they did not possess at the outset of hostilities. In Maoist terms, the supportive "water" for revolutionary "fish" was provided by the home country. Though neither movement could claim anything approaching a military victory, Sinn Fein's or the FLN's total defeat would be too costly to the metropole in terms of world opinion, internal liberal/left dissent, and an unending economic drain on their respective economies. Therefore, in what seems to be a standard revolutionary equation, the tenacity to hold on and inflict politically unacceptable casualties upon the colonial power, or to bear politically unacceptable atrocities, equalled ultimate victory at the bargaining table. Note the marked similarity of great issues facing the respective antagonists as they sought some form of political denouement.

Up for grabs at the London Conference (Fall 1921) and at Evian (1962) were: (a) territorial integrity (partition, including a six-country Protestant redoubt or an all-Ireland political entity; an

enclave reserved for the defeated pieds-noirs minority of one Algerian, colon-free, nation), (b) the constitutional link with the metropole (the totally independent Irish Republic or limited Free State headed by the British monarch; Algerian formal ties to the French community, or complete separation), (c) strategic bases and economic concessions (Irish ports for His Majesty's Navy; Saharan oil rights, military bases). In short, the FLN attained all of their maximalist demands, while the Sinn Fein/IRA--or at least its moderate faction--compromised on each and every one of theirs. Were strikingly different outcomes of revolutionary struggle due to the infinitely greater amount of bloodshed and inter-communal hatred characterizing the Algerian Revolution? Or, perhaps, the greater radical economic and social dimensions of the FLN's struggle (Gerard Chaliand,<sup>41</sup> Arslan Humbaraci<sup>42</sup> et al. have pointedly questioned the reality of such a socialist element, rhetoric aside) necessarily pushed all demands to the extreme? What role did the timing factor play? In 1921 the Liberal Lloyd George could hardly contemplate Ireland's complete break with the United Kingdom, and certainly couldn't sell such a heretical idea to Conservative Coalition cabinet members, or even fellow Liberals like Churchill. Some forty years later, with the benefit of hindsight--armed with the lessons of costly national wars of independence--De Gaulle was able to reluctantly grant total independence.

It is rather interesting that Quandt uses a background analysis of the FLN to better understand their relatively greater success in extracting the maximalist goals. The most hard-line

types--strictly military men--were able to dispose of the political reformers from the previous leadership generation (e.g., Ferhat Abbas): the moderates necessary for a hardpressed united front. In Ireland, similar types pushed for extremes, but were ultimately isolated and defeated. In any case, contrasting the two experiences, confirms a general assumption about the corporate group interest of independent, nonintellectual, distinctly military kinds of leaders: they, apparently, are ready to continue the physical struggle rather than sit around the politician's negotiating table. (This thesis will be discussed at length in Chapter 5, "Background Variables: The Military Men versus the Politicians.")

Furthermore, the author advances a number of major propositions concerning the inherent nature of conflict among elites participating in national wars of liberation. He takes issue with Fanon's contention that violent struggle against the colonial oppressor develops leadership solidarity, and argues that intra-elite conflicts are, in fact, fostered and exacerbated by the revolutionary process itself.<sup>43</sup> In his formulation political socialization variables<sup>44</sup> --differing entrance points to, pathways through, and skills developed in political activity--are the most important factors for explaining the schisms within the Algerian leadership. Sociological attributes that have been commonly employed in background studies (i.e., "traditional social structure, class, ethnicity, and cultural differences"<sup>45</sup>) are related to a position of somewhat lesser importance. Thus, for this author, not only can elite behavior be understood by the background approach, but certain categories of

variables are deemed most explanatory for understanding a general type of leadership conflict. To confuse the issue, though, other scholars would disagree with Quandt's choice of explanatory factors. One man's independent variable appears to be merely a dependent one for the next fellow. For instance, Alistair Horne's opus, A Savage War of Peace, published almost a decade after Quandt's work, still is of the opinion that ethnic attributes (Arab/Kabyle) played a decisive part in fomenting and widening leadership disputes within the FLN.<sup>46</sup> And Quandt himself, somewhat backtracks on the political "socialization trail" by discussing the early acquired, Arab/Berber, cultural basis for intra-elite mistrust, assassination, and pervasive violence.<sup>47</sup> In any case, the thrust of Quandt's study makes sense: arrange background characteristics in clear categories, and empirically test the efficacy of each.

Of course, comparisons are not limited to that of the Algerian nationalists. The Sinn Fein/IRA elite was essentially a creation of colonialist policies and, thus, can be conceptually tied to a long list of anticolonial movements. And the fact that the Irish War of National Independence is the single twentieth-century European variant in a universe of cases usually associated with the developing world, makes it all the more interesting.<sup>48</sup> It was "the first state to mount an ultimately successful civil war against a colonial power. Thus, it is a country with similarities to the developing revolutionary systems of Asia, Africa, and Latin America."<sup>49</sup> These similarities did not go unnoticed by actual developing countries' leaders--or their adversaries. Gandhi, for

example, carefully followed the course of the Sinn Fein/IRA guerrilla struggle, and Whitehall policy-makers were very much aware of the Irish rebellion's lessons for Indian nationalists.<sup>50</sup> But, if there are "similarities" and "connections," do the dynamics of intra-elite conflict and its relationship to leadership background fit into a general pattern across the development divide? Perhaps Ireland's atypical socioeconomic setting (e.g., high literacy rates prior to independence) sets it apart from the developing world, and its aberrant nature would be reflected in specific types of leaders background characteristics that are associated with intransigence or moderation. In any case, at this beginning stage of comparative research, background attributes of other revolutionary movements provide us with a point of departure for this study. If we can confirm some commonly held propositions thought to describe the nature of leadership characteristics, so much the better.

Studies of the Irish Revolutionary  
Elite's Background

Now, whatever it's worth in comparative terms--and that worth seems considerable--we should establish at minimum, the importance of the background approach for understanding Irish divisiveness and "troubles." Three studies closer to the Irish shores examine, to some extent, the link between background and behavior for segments of the Irish revolutionary elite, and underline the relevance of this mode of analysis. By direct and indirect inference, omission, and error, they all lead towards

our focus on the backgrounds of the civil war protagonists.

Briefly, Al Cohan's The Irish Political Elite has an overly restrictive definition of "leadership," failing to include and examine the backgrounds of leaders crucial to war effort; IRA commandants not members of the underground parliament, Dail Eireann. And Brian Farrell's The Founding of Dail Eireann also overlooks the pure commandant "gunmen," and more importantly, states outright that there is little point in correlating leadership background to the treaty divide. The third study, Peter Pyne's "The New Sinn Fein Party 1923-26" assumes that backgrounds are not important for the civil war split, based on its findings from an evaluation of a different leadership schism; the split of Republican Sinn Fein (they co-opted the name after losing the civil war) into yet other moderate and radical factions (1925).

Problem: An Overly Restrictive Leadership Sample

In The Irish Political Elite A.S. Cohan compares the "ideological attitude and behavior of the revolutionary leadership" ("they held a sense of national identity that took precedence over more pragmatic considerations such as close economic ties with the British"<sup>51</sup>) to that of the post-1922 political elite of elected Dail members, civil servants et al.; those increasingly removed from the guerrilla struggle. The major question asked is, "whether any real differences--other than that of revolutionary participation --are to be found between revolutionary and post-revolutionary elites that might explain the shift from cultural nationalism to overriding

pragmatism."<sup>52</sup> What types of background characteristics are associated with--strict causation is quite rightly not claimed or even deemed possible--distinct forms of political attitudes and behavior?

Most interestingly, for our purposes, he employs the same general categories of variables, and a similar analytic framework that is the backbone of Quandt's inquiries concerning the Algerian leadership. To answer Cohan's main question, individual socialization factors ("the way in which one is brought into the political culture") and variables such as level of education, place of birth and "marginality," are examined and analyzed. He concludes that aside from the traumatic socialization experience of revolutionary participation itself, there is little difference between the two groups of leaders in terms of social composition.<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, like Brinton's Jacobins, the Irish revolutionaries appear to be "just plain folks," rather than, for instance, solely middle class intellectuals.

Although The Irish Political Elite seems an important step in exploring the leadership background characteristics of the Irish revolutionary elite, while also injecting a comparative note into such an analysis,<sup>54</sup> there seems to be at least two serious flaws in this work. The first appears to be unavoidable; a problem that will repeatedly crop up throughout this study. The second flaw is of a type that may be rectified, or at least highlighted, by our analysis of the intra-elite schism of 1922.

Paradoxically, the most interesting background variables are often the most remote, indecipherable, and neglected. Is it relevant that a very limited number of easily obtained indices of social composition turn out to be quite similar for the revolutionary and post-revolutionary leadership groups? Though it would be near impossible to put dozens of leaders "on the couch" in the rigorous fashion of Erikson or Wolfenstein--and their work has been heavily criticized from some quarters<sup>55</sup>--one could hazard a guess that essential "hard to handle" factors are necessarily avoided. For example, how did the early socialization experiences within the family affect their political behavior? Were the parents hard-line Republicans, lukewarm Home Rulers, or diehard Unionists? In any case, how are these values transmitted (accepted/rejected/reformulated) to future revolutionaries? Obviously, these types of questions, and the variables they imply, are infinitely more difficult to operationalize and quantify when compared to, say, determining whether a leader was highly educated or not.

Cohan also runs into a problem more easily remedied. He fails to mention any of the commandants not having a "political" role in the revolutionary parliament, the Dail Eireann. He selects revolutionary period leaders using restrictive institutional criteria (e.g., formal cabinet members) which discriminates against many important "boys in the hills." Admittedly, his institutional/governmental definition of an elite is eminently fair in the post-revolutionary period. During that post-1923 period, after Republicans had dumped their arms, successive Irish governments were indeed "authoritatively allocating values" for the society (i.e.,

the twenty-six counties of the Free State and, later, the republic). Cohan convincingly argues that unlike the pluralist world of the industrial countries featuring numerous countervailing political forces, Ireland resembles a rather small modernizing society where the centrality of government is pronounced. Hence, it is perfectly reasonable for Cohan to draw his elite leadership groups from its institutional ranks. But, even a cursory glance at the 1919-23 period yields a very different picture of who was "allocating values." IRA leaders, independent of the revolutionary Dail, began the shooting war against Britain; remained virtually autonomous centers of power in the south and west throughout the guerrilla struggle; and later provided a major segment of anti-treaty support and civil war participants. Wouldn't they represent precisely the types of revolutionary leaders that should be compared to future "pragmatists?" Why exclude the extreme elements of those leaders deemed by Cohan ideological "cultural nationalists"? Their sociocultural background characteristics may differ from that of their revolutionary Dail/cabinet brethren and, therefore, also contrast with the post-revolutionary pragmatists. This study provides such information while asking the general question, "Which types of leaders gravitated toward either side of the treaty divide?" The most active IRA leaders will be included in the "Irish revolutionary elite," those who were most apt to become Republicans. In other words, Cohan's oversight fails to account for a different "type" of leader, who, indeed, can be contrasted to both his revolutionary brethren and the future pragmatists.

Problem: Are Leadership Backgrounds Related to Civil War Division?

Another study concerned with the Irish revolutionary elite, Brain Farrell's The Founding of Dail Eireann, similarly raises questions about the background characteristics of our respective moderate/intransigent leaders. Whereas Cohan sought comparisons between revolutionary and post-revolutionary elites, Farrell focuses squarely upon possible background differences among the 1916-22 leadership--our elite. Were the leaders of the war of independence struggle a completely new political species having scant continuity with past moderation (i.e., the Irish Parliamentary Party nationalists). He argues that aside from the "blood sacrifice" martyrs of the 1916 Easter Rising, who were cut down by British firing squads, the entire post-1916 Sinn Fein elite--both anti-treatyites and treaty supporters--were of the same cloth. Basically, they were all bourgeois democrats partaking in the "civic culture," give-and-take, parliamentary tradition; one positive aspect derived from British rule.<sup>56</sup>

For a generation (1870s-1918) the Irish Parliamentary Party had pursued the elusive goal of home rule within the confines of Westminster. And, when Sinn Fein nationalists supplanted the moribund Parliamentary Party, they duplicated the British parliamentary model by creating the clandestine Dail Eireann. Their collective cry was certainly not the Bolshevik's "All power to the Soviets," and instead of cataclysmic economic and social change, a conservative bourgeois leadership manned the Irish Free State parliament.

Furthermore, a number of Republican leaders who fought a civil war against the "duly constituted" Free State Dail, were to eventually return to this body as elected abstaining protestors (1926), a vigorous opposition (1927), and constitutionally legitimate ruling party (1932, the Eamon DeValera-led Fianna Fail victory). Even the rebels were to successfully play constitutional politics. In short, the idealistic Men of the Rising are viewed as an aberration, a group of extremists at odds with the dominant tradition of Irish protest that was infused with the norms of British political culture.

Farrell does relate this "aberrant" political behavior to the sociocultural attributes of the 1916 radicals. They were the "men of words" and

were comparatively young . . . mainly drawn from a broad middle class of society and they were intellectuals. . . . It is atypical of the conventionally accepted leaders of Irish politics both before and after. If men like Connolly<sup>57</sup> and MacDermott were activists all their lives, much of that activity was in print. . . . All seven signatories of the Proclamation had published work. It was the background mass of writing that gave the Easter Rising much of its subsequent prophetic and mystic tone.<sup>58</sup>

Furthermore, "marginality" (i.e., English birth, Protestant backgrounds, etc.) was an appropriate descriptive category for a number of these martyrs. After their tragic departure from the revolutionary scene, they were supposedly replaced by the "men of action" who carried out a partially successful guerrilla war. These were "pragmatists" and compromisers willing to participate in coalitions of disparate political tendencies, the forerunners of the two major parties that have alternated in power for the last half-century (pro-treatyites

are the forebears of Fine Gael; anti-treatyites eventually became political base of Fianna Fail).<sup>59</sup> Farrell describes these "democrats," who were to ultimately fight each other on the treaty issue as

mainly a group of younger men, in their late thirties. . . . They came from a mixed group of middle class occupations--the members included priests, university lecturers, teachers, civil servants, journalists, and doctors, as well as solicitor's clerk, a grocer, a farmer, a salesman, and two widows of executed leaders. In marked contrast to the Parliamentary Party leaders, almost all were educated at national or Christian Brothers' schools. In political terms, they stretched along a wide spectrum of nationalist opinion, which was to define the main groupings in Irish politics over the next half-century.<sup>60</sup>

And most importantly, for our concerns, he implies that the civil war split was not related to differing background characteristics among this essentially bourgeois democratic elite. The Sinn Fein leadership

became involved later in a strategic and political dispute about achieving settlement or resuming the War of Independence expressed in the Treaty debate and Split. But by then, no simple generational analysis applied, and men who had been earlier militants found themselves on the moderate side, while some of the original Sinn Fein . . . joined the "republicans."<sup>61</sup>

In sum, Farrell is arguing that a specific British political culture pervaded all elements of the post-1916 revolutionary leadership, and it is more instructive to conceptualize even the intransigents of 1922 as similar types of leaders. Why then proceed with a background analysis of an elite divided along pro- and anti-treaty lines?

Firstly, some leaders among the Irish elite seem hardly the adherents of a theorized civic culture; rather, they appear

closer to the anti-democratic, elitist, "blood sacrifice"-oriented men of the Easter Rising. Consider, for example, the cases of two Dail Eireann ministers, who were staunch Republican anti-treatyites. Cathal Brugha, in the opening salvos of the civil war, faced the Free State troops alone, guns ablaze, in a characteristically defiant, suicidal gesture.<sup>62</sup> In 1916, a similar stance vis a vis the British had cost him over a dozen bullet wounds. Or, take Liam Mellows, who was sentenced to death while serving a prison sentence in a Free State jail. His execution was a reprisal for Republican assassination attempts against "moderate" Dail deputies. His last correspondence from prison reiterated his oft-repeated, nonnegotiable view of full-Republican demands, and was imbued with the blood sacrifice mentality of the hero dying for a nonbargainable just cause. Representative institutions (of course, Mellows would claim that the Free State Dail was not "representative") and the give-and-take of parliamentary debate, could not dismember the "Republic... a living tangible thing."<sup>63</sup>

Clearly, these are not the words or actions of Farrell's "compromisers" or "pragmatists," and depending on one's political views they may not be those of "democrats." It would be hard to imagine Cathal Brugha, or Mellows, assuming their seats on the opposition benches of the Free State!

A second criticism of Farrell's analysis would, again, center upon the "leaders" that are excluded from his "civic culture" formulation. His interest lies with the Sinn Fein members of the

first revolutionary Dail Eireann, and their supposed continuity with a parliamentary political tradition of the past and future. Therefore, the political culture of IRA commandants operating outside the Dail are not discussed. This we feel is a mistake, tending to downplay the role of important leaders and a tradition of violent, secret society-based, protest movements that coexisted with a British style "civic culture." Men such as Ernie O'Malley fought heroically, literally to their last breath, against the treaty compromise voted by his Sinn Fein compatriots in the duly elected Dail. After the Civil War defeat, he emigrated rather than live under the Free State. Ironically, he'd been elected to the Free State Dail while incarcerated in their prison; an elective position he could not accept given the destruction of the "Republic," the fact of partition, and the noxious oath of allegiance to the Crown required of deputies.<sup>64</sup> Others also endured the extreme privation of hunger strikes, physical abuse, and self-imposed banishment from their homeland, while some reemerged in succeeding decades, Republican intransigence intact, to carry out bombing campaigns aimed at the political fruits of the treaty compromise. The point to be made is that substantial segments of the Sinn Fein/IRA elite resemble, in both ideas and actions, those "aberrant" ideological martyrs of the Easter Rising. The "blood sacrificers" of 1916 had, according to Farrell, specific sociocultural background characteristics suggestive of their extreme political stance. Might not the same appraisal be extended to at least some elements of the

anti-treaty elite?

Furthermore, the very selection of the thirteen "atypical" Easter Week "radicals" for martyrdom was, to some degree, a haphazard process of an inept, partially informed, British officialdom. Any number of post-Rising leaders--Farrell's "moderate democrats"--may have ended their revolutionary careers prematurely facing firing squads. In short, survival was, for some, pure and simple luck. For instance, Constance Markievicz was saved from a death sentence as she was a woman; and Eamon DeValera, the Rising's most successful military leader, was perhaps saved by his American citizenship.<sup>65</sup> On the other hand, the likes of William Pearse was executed mainly for being the brother of the "blood sacrifice" poet, Patrick Pearse. And Sean MacBride, Maud Gonne's husband, who lacked prior knowledge of the insurrection, faced British retribution for his Boer War exploits against the Crown. In either case, the logic of Farrell's "aberrant leadership" category breaks down under close scrutiny, one more reason to conceptualize the major elite division along the treaty decision axis.

Again, the Irish Elite's Backgrounds Are Supposedly Not Related to Their Civil War Positions

And, finally, we might mention one last study concerning the Irish revolutionary elite that further underscores the need for a background analysis of a divided leadership. Peter Pyne advances the notions that: (a) there were identifiable and quantifiable sociological bases for the general Irish populace's

support or rejection of the treaty (e.g., districts of larger landholdings gravitated toward the compromise Free State, "lower orders" were Republican-oriented, etc.); (b) these sociological facts of life were largely ignored by a post-civil war, reconstituted Sinn Fein elite--deputies elected to, and abstaining from, their Free State Dail seats--hence damaging their chances of obtaining broader support for the all-Ireland republic demand.<sup>66</sup> In other words, abstentionist politics could not parlay the surprising post-civil war electoral strength of Sinn Fein into a viable Republican movement. The apparent danger was to be outflanked by the governing party (Cumann na Gaedheal). Essentially, these Dail Eireann participants were our "moderate" revolutionary leaders, and they began a reconstruction program virtually unopposed. By 1926, a weakened Sinn Fein Party, of declining import, splintered once again. One faction advocated formal entrance into the Dail (DeValera's Fianna Fail), where they could make an imprint on governmental policy and, therefore, take advantage of the widespread discontent engendered by continued partition and other economic and social issues. The radical faction declined a parliamentary role, clinging to the one issue--a united Irish republic--that would supposedly rally all segments of the nation to their cause. Again, for this latter group, their potential economic and social electoral base and the practical policies that would cement such support were disregarded in favor of Republican purity.

Interestingly, Pyne makes reference to individual background attributes being linked with the respective positions of this schism,

although, again, the psychological categories utilized (pragmatists/realists)<sup>67</sup> seemed marred by a tautological quality (i.e., Dail entry is equated with pragmatism, hence the "backgrounds" of those entering are necessarily deemed pragmatic). Furthermore, his background approach also touches on the intra-elite conflict of 1922. Contrary to Pyne's societal-wide conclusions, he does not believe that readily identifiable sociological leadership types tended toward either side of the treaty split. What was apparent for the general populace does not hold for the Sinn Fein elite. Yet, there is scant evidence to substantiate such a claim; rather, the author seems to retreat from his rigorous assessment of class, occupational, religious, age, and geographical correlates of treaty support among the Irish people, to impressionistic fleeting remarks concerning the revolutionary elite. Thus, his article implicitly points toward a thorough background analysis of the 1922 leadership conflict.

#### Who Is a Sinn Fein Leader?

Before launching into a background analysis we face some critical tasks. Firstly, in the following lengthy chapter we must provide a more detailed account of the period under consideration from the failure of home rule, through the Easter Rising, to the creation of Dail Eireann and the ensuing guerrilla war that precedes elite conflict. Particular attention will be paid to four nationalist organs--Arthur Griffith's Sinn Fein, James Connolly's Citizen Army, The Irish Republican Brotherhood and The Irish Volunteers--because

virtually every one of our revolutionary elite emerges as a "leader" through participation in one or more of them. In other words, the pages below represent an elaborate justification for the parameters of the leadership sample limiting the elite to the military men and politicians that coalesced into a Sinn Fein/IRA united front. Only when the reader understands the complex historical events that forged this all-important coalition, and placed it center-stage in nationalist politics can we then proceed to identify individual Sinn Fein/IRA men who should be identified as the leaders.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Ernie O'Mally, Army Without Banners (London: Rich & Cowan Ltd., 1936), p. 252. Some forty years after the publication of his autobiography a second volume appeared, The Singing Flame. It begins with the July 1921. In his own words, "the day of the Truce dawned leaving us in a state of uncertainty" (p. 13), which better describes his attitude toward the apparent cessation of hostilities. The "scrap" was far from over.

<sup>2</sup>Sean O'Casey, Irishfallen, Fare Thee Well (London: Avon, 1973), p. 88.

<sup>3</sup>The historic province of Ulster was comprised of fully nine counties--Derry, Down, Antrim, Armagh, Fermanagh, Tyrone, Donegal, Monaghan, Cavan. The last three were included in the Irish Free State, as they were clearly Catholic areas, not that Protestant leaders hadn't attempted prior to World War I to claim the entire traditional province as one integral political unit wedded to the Crown. A major and enduring problem arose with the inclusion of Tyrone and Fermanagh in Ulster, both having Catholic majorities. Furthermore, areas such as South Armagh were veritable hotbeds of Catholic Republicanism and the recruiting grounds for the IRA. This state of affairs has not dramatically changed to date.

<sup>4</sup>George Dangerfield in The Damnable Question (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1976), pp. 344-46, argues convincingly that the threat was hollow. Lloyd George had confessed privately "that he would have resigned rather than fire another shot." Public opinion was clearly against such a resumption of hostilities, a delicate Arms Conference was being held in America, and an economic depression was threatening England, a country which could not afford a renewed waste of resources and manpower. The Daily Chronicle, a house organ for Lloyd George, declared right before the signing of the Treaty (December 6, 1922) "that the Prime Minister should adjourn his negotiations for several weeks if no agreement could be reached" (p. 1). This was probably the voice of Lloyd George.

Tom Jones, Cabinet Secretary, claims that Lloyd George on November 8, 1921 privately admitted that the war threat would not be carried out (Whitehall Diary, Volume III: Ireland, 1918-1925 [London: Oxford University Press, 1971], p. 156). "I have made up my mind definitely today. . . . I take lots of time to explore a situation but when I come to a decision I take it at once and stick to it. I have done so today. I will not be a party to firing another

shot in the south of Ireland. I have told the King. I have told my wife, who fully agrees with me, and I have told my secretaries today that there may be someone else here next week; . . . Curzon, Lord Worthington-Evans, and Baldwin, they will all go over to Bonar (Law) if the opportunity comes."

According to F.S.L. Lyons (Ireland Since the Famine [London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1971], p. 436), the exact wording of the apparently false "threat" was a more lukewarm statement: "The Irish delegates . . . must settle now or else quit . . . and both sides would be free to resume whatever warfare they could wage against each other." In any case, Arthur Griffith and Michael Collins may have signed unless under duress and later joined the Republican side). First off, Arthur Griffith, the exponent of economic protection, was duly impressed with the fiscal autonomy section of the Treaty (Eric Strauss, Irish Nationalism and British Democracy [New York: Columbia University Press, 1957], p. 280). Note, though, that tariffs were prohibited between Britain and the Free State, and, in any case, to quote Churchill, "we are the sole market and sole source of supply" (Martin Gilbert, Winston Churchill: The Stricken World, Vol. IV: 1916-1922 [New York: Viking-Macmillan, 1973], p. 692). Griffith was willing to accept the Crown (Sean Cronin, The McGarrity Papers [Tralee: Anvil Books, 1972], p. 107; De Valera admits knowing this prior to the conference), and was committed--or tricked--into supporting Lloyd George's Boundary Commission to "smite" the "die-hard" Conservative opposition in Parliament. Similarly, one could build a somewhat weaker case emphasizing Michael Collins's willingness to compromise: war threat aside. F.S.L. Lyons (Ireland Since the Famine, p. 442) points out that Collins equated the stated Sinn Fein policy of "non-coercion" of Ulster Protestants into a Republic, with the "obvious" fact that partition was unavoidable.

<sup>5</sup>The Earl of Longford and T.P. O'Neill, Eamon De Valera (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1971), p. 166.

<sup>6</sup>For instance, T.P. Coogan notes that a high proportion of the IRA joined the anti-Treaty side (Ireland Since the Rising [New York: Praeger, 1966], p. 28). Frank Gallagher, in The Four Glorious Years ([Dublin: Irish Press, 1953], p. 381) believes, "a great majority of Volunteers became Republicans." His view is suspect considering that he also felt a "majority of the people" were against the Treaty--sheer fantasy. Cathal Brugha, obviously not an impartial analyst, guesses that some 80 percent of the IRA supported the Republic by March 1922 (Hayden Talbot, Michael Collins's Own Story [London: Hutchinson, 1970], p. 204). Churchill, on the other hand, wrote (The World Crisis: The Aftermath [London: Butterworth, 1929], p. 326) that the IRA had split in the same proportions as the Dail, which would yield a slight pro-Treaty majority. By April 1922 Churchill observed that "a very large proportion of the IRA is already openly disloyal to the Provisional government, and by far

the greater part is ardently Republican" (Gilbert, Churchill, IV: 704). J. Bowyer Bell claims that the IRA outnumbered the Free State forces five to one at the outbreak of hostilities in June 1922. Yet they could not parley this numerical advantage into a dynamic offensive campaign (The Secret Army: The IRA, 1916-1974 [Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1970], p. 35).

<sup>7</sup>J. Bowyer Bell sums up the array of forces supporting the Free State; Most Irishmen, "the newspapers, the business community, the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, the southern Unionists and the men of substance" (The Secret Army, p. 3). T.P. Coogan similarly points to Church, big business, and "a large proportion of the population" as bulwarks of the Provisional government (Irish Republican Army [New York: Praeger, 1970], p. 28). Much has been written on the role of the Church, especially from the Republican side. Dorothy Macardle, for instance, notes that a "pronouncement issued from Maynooth at the end of April [1922] condemned the Volunteers who had set up an independent Executive; the unconstitutional formation of the Provisional Government's army went unrebuked" (The Irish Republic [Dublin: The Irish Press, 1951], p. 701). And T. Desmond Williams explains the central position of the Church in the life of the average Irishman: "the Church was dealing with people who attended Mass every Sunday and who took the Sacraments, when not expressly refused them" (Secret Societies in Ireland [Dublin: Gill & MacMillan, 1973], p. 9). Peadar O'Donnell, a rabid Republican, and socialist to boot, pointed out the Church's hostility to their movement, and the ambiguity it created for many religious Irishmen. His estimation of Republican strength is, of course, exaggerated: "The issue was simple: God versus the Republic. The embarrassing thing was that the vast majority of nationalist population insisted on standing by the Republic in the Name of God. . . . Every Curate was the Holy Roman Catholic Church with infallibility complete and every Republican was an unbeliever, a heretic, an anti-Christ" (The Gates Flew Open [London: J. Cape, 1932], pp. 46-47).

<sup>8</sup>What the election of 1918 did, or did not, signify has been a battleground for debate over the last sixty years. A letter to the Irish Times (December 14, 1978) demonstrates the role given to the historic "Khaki Election" as a rationale for a united Irish Republic: "The Irish people made its choice in 1918. No amount of bodging or gerrymandering can alter the fact that. . . 81% of the Irish people voted for freedom . . . proud as I am to be an Ulsterman, nothing in this world could persuade me to return to that nasty little world [Northern Ireland]." Robert Kee (The Green Flag [New York: Delacorte Press, 1972], p. 627) does acknowledge that the Sinn Fein candidates almost totally wiped out the old nationalist Irish Parliamentary Party, but he also notes that the anti-Republican vote, including Unionists was a majority over Sinn Fein. Furthermore, he argues that a violent revolution with strict Republican goals was not what the electorate had bargained for. They were

essentially rejecting this over the execution of 1916 Rising leaders and general British strongarm tactics, but were not committing themselves to a war of national independence.

<sup>9</sup>Obviously, Michael Collins, the most charismatic leader of the guerrilla war would qualify on this count. The refrain, "If it's good enough for Mick it's good enough for me," reflected the attitude of a good portion of the population. F.S.L. Lyons (Ireland Since the Famine, p. 438) suggests that his general popularity may have been more important than his behind-the-scenes maneuvers as president of the secret Irish Republican Brotherhood. In the British Government's estimation, aside from the 10,000 pound reward, Collins had assumed almost mythic proportions. A letter from Cabinet Secretary Thomas Jones to Bonar Law, Spring 1921 (cited in Jones, Whitehall Diaries, III:156) asks, "where was Michael Collins during the Great War? He would have been worth a dozen brass hats. . . . I'm sure the Prime Minister [Lloyd George] has a secret admiration for him." The anti-Treaty side was quick to point out Collins's nefarious role in undermining the Republic. Harry Boland, a hardline Republican and good friend of "Mick," remarked: "Indeed were it not for the fact that Mr. Collins signed them, the articles of Agreement would have received very short shrift in Dail Eireann" (Talbot, Michael Collins's Own Story, p. 224). And a Republican verse of that period is instructive on this score: "God save the southern part of Ireland / 3/4 of a nation once again / To the Treaty we will stick / For it's good enough for Mick / and the Father and the Mother of Sinn Fein" (Leon O'Broin, Revolutionary Underground [New York: Macmillan, 1976], p. 204).

<sup>10</sup>William Quandt, Revolution and Political Leadership: Algeria, 1954-1956 (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1969).

<sup>11</sup>Brian Farrell, The Founding of Dail Eireann (Dublin: Gill & MacMillan, 1971), p. 19. According to the author it was a "political and strategic dispute" and "men who had been earlier militants found themselves on the moderate side while some of the original Sinn Fein . . . joined the Republicans."

<sup>12</sup>T.A. Jackson (Ireland Her Own [New York: International Publishers, 1947], p. 413), C. Desmond Greaves (Liam Mellows and the Irish Revolution [London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1971], p. 341), and Erich Strauss (Irish Nationalism and British Democracy) have alluded to the class-based support for and against the Treaty only among the general Irish population, not the leadership. For instance, Jackson writes, "The line-up was between the actual or potentially Land Hungry, supported by Republican intellectuals and urban revolutionaries, on the one side; and the urban bourgeoisie, the State functionaries, the landowners, and the upper strata of the peasantry on the other. The skilled elements--and the Labour Party generally--were paralyzed by division" (p. 413). Similarly,

in a more recent "scientific" analysis, Peter Pyne ("The Third Sinn Fein Party, 1923-1926," Economic and Social Review 1/2 [January 1970]: 229-57) supports the "lower orders as Republicans" thesis (urban labor excluded!) but also refrains from linking leaders' class background to their Treaty position. J.A. Murphy (Ireland in the Twentieth Century [Dublin: Gill & MacMillan, 1972], p. 54) questions the validity of the class analysis of the split. Yet Professor Murphy does note that, to a degree, the Treaty divide was along the "axis of social class." Those who would protect property and return to order and stability were opposed by the "old radical element." He apparently does not rule out the effects of social class within the leadership group. Sean O'Casey, for one (Inishfallen, p. 89) clearly associated "middle class" leaders with the bourgeois Arthur Griffith and the Free State.

<sup>13</sup> Churchill (The World Crisis, V:329) dubbed the Treaty moderates as "realists" (Collins, Arthur Griffith, Richard Mulcahy, Kevin O'Higgins), "men who feared God who loved their country, and who kept their word." (This description would seem to apply to an ample number of Republicans.) Kee (The Green Flag, pp. 730-31) distinguishes between realists and fantasists, with the women Dail members that had lost a husband, brother, or son, as the most extreme "fantasist" anty-Treatyites. Chief of Staff of the IRA Richard Mulcahy, in a meeting with De Valera (in Terence de Vere White, Kevin O'Higgins [Tralee: Kerry, 1948], p. 123) posits the character divide "Men of reason" (i.e., himself) and "men of faith." Padraic Colum (Arthur Griffith [Dublin: Browne & Nolan, 1959], p. 123) utilizes Crane Brinton's category, the "men of virtue," to describe the "types" who were totally intransigent on the Treaty terms. (The "virtuous" included Cathal Brugha, Austin Stack, and Liam Mellows; a seemingly fair list.) John Murphy (Ireland, p. 54) also attempts to explain the divide in idealist/pragmatist terms.

<sup>14</sup> Lyons, Ireland Since the Famine, pp. 445, 448-49. (a) A radical independent military element, (b) relatives and spouses of martyred heroes were naturally intransigent, etc., (c) Collins's charismatic role, and (d) IRB influence.

<sup>15</sup> J.C. Beckett (The Making of Modern Ireland, 1603-1923 [London: Faber & Faber, 1966], p. 4-5): (a) the role of Collins and De Valera swaying their followers towards the respective Republican and Free State poles; (b) anti-democratic elements among the semi-autonomous IRA translated intransigence into a violent split.

<sup>16</sup> Kee, The Green Flag, p. 730: (a) personal rivalries and jealousies; (b) "realists" and "fantasists" splitting the country, etc.; (c) anti-democratic nature of the IRA (p. 732); (d) the role of the IRB in pushing the Free State cause; (e) the influence of individual commandants to sway their men.

<sup>17</sup>Macardle, The Irish Republic: (a) the role of the IRB; (b) Collins's pro-Treaty stance.

<sup>18</sup>Dangerfield, The Damnable Question: (a) the role of Collins and the IRB (p. 344); (b) the Republican intransigence of the "convert" (p. 343); (c) the roles of relatives and spouses of martyred heroes.

<sup>19</sup>Bell, The Secret Army, p. 31: (a) the IRB's pro-Treaty role; (b) the intransigence of the most active Southern military leaders; (c) the tension between the politician and the soldier.

<sup>20</sup>T. Desmond Williams ("From the Treaty to the Civil War," in The Irish Struggle, 1916-1922, ed. T. Desmond Williams [London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966], p. 121): (a) the corporate group interest of the military; (b) a matter of jobs; (c) youthful, active commandants spearheaded the Republican drive.

<sup>21</sup>The term "Great Debate" was initially used to describe the conflict between "traditionalists" and "scientific-minded" political scholars in the field of international relations. See, for instance, Hedley Bull's famous article, "International Theory: Case for a Classical Approach," and the equally famous rejoinders of Marion Levy, Morton Kaplan, et al., in James Rosenau and Klaus Knorr, eds., Contending Approach to International Politics (19 ). The lines of debate are essentially the same in the study of elites; "predictability" versus "unpredictability," etc.

<sup>22</sup>William Quandt (The Comparative Study of Political Elites [New York: Sage Professional Paper, 1971], pp. 180-81) quotes Reinhard Bendix (Class, Status and Power), who states: "A study of politics should be concerned with the social composition of the members and leaders of different political organizations; this kind of knowledge will provide a clue to the political goals which their leaders are likely to pursue." And Dankwart Rustow ("The Study of Elites: Who's Who, When and How," World Politics 18 [July 1966]: 704) quotes Frederick Frey from The Turkish Political Elite, "while unacceptable as direct evidence speculations . . . based on inferences from social background analysis may nevertheless be useful if viewed as hypotheses or suggestions demanding more explicit confirmation." Frey lauds "cautious inference" (p. 716).

<sup>23</sup>Rustow ("The Study of Elites: Who's Who," p. 702), again quotes Frey: "to leap from some knowledge of social backgrounds to . . . judgments about the political behavior of these same politicians can be treacherous." In Frey's study (The Turkish Political Elite [Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1968]), he notes, for instance, that the constraints of party discipline--to give but one example--often override all other considerations in one type of "behavior," individual voting (p. 24). Furthermore, he states that "the truth is that the political scientist's ability to handle behavioral

analysis, as arbitrarily distinguished from attitudinal and formal structural analysis, is currently very limited." Difficulties aside, Frey does not back off from asking the question, "Did politicians from divergent social backgrounds exhibit significantly different types of political behavior?" (p. 16). This question is applied at different levels of authority and at different points for some 2210 deputies of the Grand Nation Assembly since the inception of the Republic.

<sup>24</sup>L. Edinger and D. Searing ("Social Backgrounds in Elite Analysis: A Methodological Inquiry," American Political Science Review 41/2 [June 1967]: 428) concur that, "while attitude and behavior dimensions are not identical or equivalent . . . elite attitudes undoubtedly represent an important component of elite behavior." Yet, Searing's own work on social backgrounds ("Comparative Study of Elite Socialization," Comparative Political Studies 1/4 [January 1970]: 47) relates social backgrounds only to "attitudes," stating that attitudes may have little relationship to elite behavior patterns over time in any event." Also, Quandt (Revolution and Political Leadership in Algeria, p. 19) notes: "social background information is used primarily to indicate types of experiences which in turn tend to produce values and attitudes which then influence behavior."

<sup>25</sup>In a scientific sense, no one experiment (i.e., case study) can be offered as strict proof of a causal relationship, but it can certainly "disprove" an hypothesis. Scholars who are not permitted the luxury of laboratory experiments have supported this single case study method as a way of approaching explanations in this oblique way. For instance, Quandt (Revolution and Political Leadership, p. 10) observes that: "No hypothesis is proved by a single example, of course, but occasionally a widely held assumption about social processes can be called into question by showing it fails to account for at least one important case." Similarly, Barrington Moore, in his study of the Bolshevik elite (Soviet Politics: The Dilemma of Power; The Role of Ideas in Social Change [New York: Harper & Row, 1965], p. 3) warns of the inherent limitations to social scientific "proof." His case study, however, becomes the testing ground for evaluating--not "proving"--any number of partially verifiable hypotheses: "While one may disprove a theory by testing it against the facts, it is impossible to satisfy the requirements of logical proof by such testing. . . . The agreement between the results of an experiment and one's expectations based upon theory does not exclude the possibility that the theory is wrong, and that a totally different theory is required. . . . The hypothesis can be "verified" by repeated experiment and still be incorrect. . . . These remarks are not intended as a plea against the role of theory in the social sciences. They are a plea in favor of investigators with many and even consistent theories." Lastly, we might mention Stephan Bernard's case study in decolonization (The French-Moroccan Conflict,

1943-1956 [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968], p. xxvii), in which he suggests a number of generalized relationships between the colony and home country on the basis of a single experience: "In the social sciences, knowledge generally advances by side-stepping the problem of proof. By common consent, more comprehensive theories are substituted for less comprehensive ones, and there is no crucial test that can distinguish one from the other."

<sup>26</sup>There are literally hundreds of such works cited in the bibliography sections of Carl Beck, et al., A Survey of Elite Studies (Washington, D.C.: National Technical Information Service, 1965) and Quandt, Revolution and Political Leadership.

<sup>27</sup>Isaac Kramnick (Revolution: Definitions and Explanations, a Critique of Recent Scholarship [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970], p. 46) refers to the early work of Harold Lasswell (Psychopathology and Politics) and his claim that: "The intensive study of the individual . . . by psychoanalytic methods would reveal the importance of psychological needs and motives derived from childhood in determining political beliefs and actions." As for Erikson's method, great stress is placed upon the supposedly universal "identity crisis" of the adolescent "when each youth must forge for himself some critical perspective and direction" (Young Man Luther: A Study in Psychoanalysis and History [New York: W.W. Norton, 1962], p. 8). In Wolfenstein's terms (The Revolutionary Personality: Lenin, Trotsky, Gandhi [Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1966]), Gandhi's early loss of his father, or the young Lenin facing the execution of a revolutionary older brother, provide the backdrop for such traumatic "identity crises." Similarly, Lewis Edinger's study of Kurt Schumacher (A Study in Personality and Political Behavior [Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1965], p. 304) demonstrates that the psychic trauma of losing his arm as a young man during World War I (the arena for the "volunteer" hoping to "find himself") may have shaped the course of his life. Politics was to become the all-consuming passion allowing Schumacher "to assert his masculinity."

<sup>28</sup>Wolfenstein, Revolutionary Personality, p. 14. The author notes that "much of their political activity can be understood as a way of managing their repressed impulses, or relieving internal conflicts by working them out in a political context."

<sup>29</sup>Betty Glad, a political biographer (Charles Evans Hughes and the Illusion of Innocence [Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1966]) is one author who questions the "unique" qualities of any leader. At one point (p. 7) she argues, "all humans have some common intellectual structures and potential," and then proceeds to evaluate Hughes's behavior in terms of universal psychological categories. She appears to have weakened her case, though, when noting in another article ("The Contribution of Psychotherapy," in The Handbook of Political Psychology, ed. J. Knutson [San

Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1973], p. 309) that her choice of Hughes as a subject was to mitigate "idiosyncratic" problems that arise from selecting a creative "genius" type. (Gandhi, Lenin, et al., of course, would fall precisely into such a category.) The author wants to have the best of both worlds. Erik Erikson (Young Man Luther, p. 16), more convincingly, undermines the notion of the leader's uniqueness and noncomparability. He demonstrates the bond between two types of recorded history: the average man's clinical encounter, "in which the suffering for the sake of securing help... becomes case history... and the extraordinary beings... prodded by the charismatic hunger of mankind... becomes biography." Thus, his analysis is based on the crisis found in all youth; the clinical observation creating theory which enables the observer to decipher the remote and idiosyncratic personality of the great historical figure.

<sup>30</sup>A rare effort in combining a large sample of individuals and a psychohistorical approach is Peter Loewenburg's (Psycho-Historical Origins of the Nazi Youth Cohort, 1928-1933 [unpublished paper, The City University of New York, 1978]). He asks: "What common experience did this group undergo in their childhood psychosexual development, and political socialization, that led to the fixations and distortions of the adult character." His answer includes a subtle blend of factors such as societal catastrophes (defeat in war and the ensuing material deprivations) and psychic traumas (the death or long absence of the father).

<sup>31</sup>Kramnick also (Revolution: Definitions and Explanation, p. 51) explains this point using the work of Erik Erikson and Robert Lifton. In regard to Young Man Luther, he states, "Luther's psychic life and its concern with the father... is metaphorically and symbolically related to the larger crisis of the age with the father of Christianity." Kramnick also cites Robert J. Lifton's Revolutionary Immortality: Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese Cultural Revolution (New York: Random House, 1968, p. xvi) as a good example of the individual/historical synthesis. Kramnick states, "Mao's quest for a personal immortality is linked to the crisis in the party and movement in general, it fears for the vitality and perpetuity of the revolution." In a similar vein, we might lastly mention Dankwart Rustow's study, "Ataturk as Founder of a State: Collective Sociopolitical versus Individual Psychobiographic Explanations" (Daedalus 97/3 [Summer 1968]: 793-828). The author focuses upon the graveside speech some thirteen days after his mother's death to demonstrate the intimate connection between the personal crises of Mustafa Kemal and the blames on political tyranny... there is a political consolation in Kemal's own recent triumph.... The Sultan, one readily infers, represents the evil father figure; Kemal himself appears as the loyal son, who avenges mother and country.... Only to the country at large could Kemal unstintingly give that love that has so often withheld from his mother and the many other women

in his life. . . . The avenging son's crowning reward was that he could be acknowledged by his countrymen, and indeed by history itself, as the Father Turk."

<sup>32</sup>Crane Brinton, The Jacobins: An Essay in the New History (New York: Russell & Russell, 1961).

<sup>33</sup>Crane Brinton, The Anatomy of Revolution (New York: Vintage Books, 1959), p. 95.

<sup>34</sup>Dankwart Rustow, "The Army and the Founding of the Turkish Republic," World Politics 11/4 (July 1959): 516.

<sup>35</sup>Robert North, "Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Elite," in World Revolutionary Elites, eds. Harold Lasswell and Daniel Lerner (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1965), p. 320.

<sup>36</sup>George K. Schueller, "The Politburo," in World Revolutionary Elites, eds. Harold Lasswell and Daniel Lerner (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1965), p. 98.

<sup>37</sup>Daniel Lerner, Ithiel de Sola Pool, and George Schueller, "The Nazi Elite," in World Revolutionary Elites, eds. Harold Lasswell and Daniel Lerner (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1965), p. 288.

<sup>38</sup>Brinton (Anatomy of Revolution, p. 269) writes: "Two revolutions rarely compared the Irish and the Algerian, still have very much, and that most enlightening, in common; but it would be absurd to deny that there is much in each not found in the other." For Brinton, the Irish Revolution, 1916-22, can be classified as a territorial-nationalist revolution, whereas the Algerian experience is partially relegated to this category and that of the socioeconomic revolution. (His book was written before the overthrow of Ben Bella. No doubt the accession of Boumedienne would confirm his thesis that "thermidor" necessarily follows the reign of the radical "men of virtue." Irish marxists, such as Desmond Greaves, view the Free State's decimation of the IRA "irregulars" as the onset of thermidorean reaction (see Liam Mellows, chap. 1). Neil Ascheron ("The Morose Revolution," The New York Review of Books, 4 May 1978, p. 21) also points out the crucial difference that "the FLN, from start to finish, stood not for multiracialism but for an Algerian Algeria in which the pied noir would have no rights." But in any case, the author utilizes such a comparison. Richard Rose (Governing Without Consensus [Boston: Beacon Press, 1971], p. 33) notes that the crucial point of similarity is the "ultra" mentality of both the Northern Irish Protestant and the former Algerian "colon." Both are individuals supporting "a particular definition of the existing regime so strongly that he is willing to break laws, or even take up arms, to recall it to its 'true' way." T. Desmond Williams (The Irish Struggle, p. 122) compares the revolutionary events in Algeria and Ireland in a novel manner.

In both cases the most active army units of the IRA/FLN saw themselves shunted aside after victory, with the best governmental jobs and positions often going to late-comers in the struggle. (Of course, one could argue, at least in Ireland's situation, that a strong Republican stance was the reason for the loss of status and position, and not vice versa.) Some charge that one cannot compare the two cases without implying that the "laws of necessity" will force similar political conclusions for both situations. Also, comparison blurs their real differences. For instance, Paul Bow ("The Grass Roots," Books Ireland, March 1978, p. 34) reviews the work of historian A.T.Q. Stewart (The Narrow Ground: Aspects of Ulster, 1609-1969 [London: Faber & Faber, 1977]): "he rightly dismisses the Ulster/Algeria analogy which still has an opiate affect on so many people's minds. 'They believe . . . or have been told, that the tide of history is on their side. The example of Algeria among many others gives them encouragement. The tide of history is not on anybody's side but its own, and is subject to disconcerting eddies.'" Or, in a letter attacking Ascherson's article "The Morose Revolution" (cited above), there are a number of representative criticisms of the Ireland/Algeria analogy (New York Review of Books, 15 June 1978, p. 36). Firstly, the claim is that race and color were central to Algeria's struggle, whereas religion was the question in Ireland. (One possible rejoinder to such criticism has been implicitly advanced in the work of Ned Lebow, White Britain; Black Ireland [Ph.D. dissertation, The City University of New York, 1970]; racial stereotypes of the Irish purveyed in British newspapers, etc., were quite similar in the late nineteenth century to those utilized to portray "colonial subjects" of color in different settings. The dehumanization of a "Catholic," white skin or not, seems to be done in the same time-honored racist, bigotted manner.) Secondly, the critic takes issue with the notion that Algerian pieds noirs as well as Irish Protestants are distinct from citizens of the mother country. If they were simply Algerians and Irishmen, then there would be relatively little separating them from Arab/Berber Nationalist and Republicans. Obviously, this was not the case. Ascherson replies (p. 36): "The point of that analogy was to compare the craziness of the pied noir claim to be more French with the craziness of the Northern Ireland Loyalist claim to be the most British of Brits."

<sup>39</sup> The refusal of certain military units to "coerce" Ulster --some would refrain from calling it a mutiny since specific orders were not involved--was noted in other areas of the Empire attuned to the general struggle for self-determination. F.X. Martin, in his article "MacNeill and the Irish Volunteers" (in The Scholar Revolutionary, eds. F.X. Martin and F.J. Byrne [Shannon: Irish University Press, 1973], p. 106) cites Nehru on this matter: "Thus the very foundations of democracy were attached by it and the old boast of the English people that they believed in the reign of law and in constitutional activity was set at naught." T. Desmond Williams, though, does indeed designate it a "mutiny"; a contributing

event in the European turn toward fascism (The Irish Struggle, p. 43). Erich Strauss, on the other hand, is reluctant to elevate the "incident" to the status of a world-shaking mutiny, since the officers involved were only important if the Liberal Government itself was seriously considering "coercion." He concludes they were not. The real culprits standing in the way of Home Rule were the waffling Liberal politicians who were afraid to face up to Ulster Protestant intransigence (Irish Nationalism and British Democracy, p. 238). A more famous marxist, none other than Lenin, commented that the events of the Curragh occurred on "the day when the noble landlords of Britain smashed the British constitution and British law and gave an excellent lesson in class struggle" (quoted in Ulick O'Connor, The Troubles: Ireland, 1912-1922 [Dublin: Gill & MacMillan, 1972], p. 60). Of course, things haven't changed all that much in the last sixty some odd years. Catholic Nationalists on both sides of the border have little faith in the Crown ever "coercing" Ulster into a united Republic.

<sup>40</sup> Alistair Horne (A Savage War of Peace: Algeria, 1954-1962 [London: Macmillan, 1977], p. 96) compares the "mass indiscriminate round-ups" in Palestine, Ireland, and Algeria; the overreaction that precludes any benefits from a policy of liberalism.

<sup>41</sup> Gerard Chaliand, Revolution in the Third World (Middlesex, Eng.: Penguin, 1978), p. 73. The author characterizes the Algerian's narrow emphasis on national identity (to the detriment of economic and social goals?) in a similar manner to "left" critics of nationalist Irish revolution.

<sup>42</sup> Arslan Humbaraci, Algeria: A Revolution that Failed (New York: Praeger, 1966), chap. 6: "What Socialism?" The author advances a heated polemic claiming that Ben Bella, and those around him, merely mouth the words of progressive socialism: indeed, "empty words" (p. 110). In essence, the peasant "fellah" had been fighting for a piece of his own land, and "his aims were capitalistic" (p. 113). The leadership rose to power and maintained themselves supported by these same peasants.

<sup>43</sup> Quandt, Revolution and Political Leadership, pp. 10-11. The author cites Fanon's words from The Wretched of the Earth: "The practice of violence binds them together as a whole. . . . The groups recognize each other and the future nation is already indivisible."

<sup>44</sup> The author stresses the importance of the "process of politics socialization, whereby each political generation was exposed to radically different experiences, while reacting to what was widely perceived as the failure of the preceding generation to achieve its political goals" (p. 12). Thus, the author identifies a number of categories of leaders--Liberal Politicians, Radicals, Revolutionaries, Military, Intellectuals--artificially joined together during the

post-1954 struggle against the metropole, having differing entrance points and roles during the struggle, and ultimately leading to internecine strife (e.g., from June 1960 on, the issue of possible negotiation with the De Gaulle regime concerning the "future status of Frenchmen remaining in Algeria, the degree of cooperation with France following independence, residual French rights to military bases in Algeria, the formal mechanism for the transfer of sovereignty, . . . all became a point of contention among the liberals, Radicals, Revolutionaries, Military . . ." [p. 142]). The author defines "political socialization" as the "process by which an individual acquires value-laden political identifications, gains knowledge of the political system, forms judgements of various types of political behavior, and develops skills which are useful in a political career. The process includes both indirect learning, as well as overt teaching, through some agency of political socialization."

There is much debate within the political science discipline as to the crucial point(s) of focus for studying the process: childhood, youth, early adulthood, etc. See, for example, Fred Greenstein, Children and Politics (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965); Herbert Hyman, Political Socialization (New York: The Free Press, 1959). In James Barber's The Presidential Character (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1972), the author, while not overlooking the character development of early youth, pays particular attention to the first political successes when the leader "came forth to be reckoned with by other people. The way he did that was profoundly important to him. Typically, he grasps that style and hangs onto it" (p. 10). Similarly, Lewis Edinger, in Kurt Schumacher (p. 304), also stresses the early adult period--his subject faces the general horrors of World War I and the specific trauma of losing a limb--as a crucial political turning point for the individual. Or, Erik Erikson's focus in Young Man Luther (p. 8) centers upon the adolescent's "identity crisis."

<sup>45</sup>Quandt, Revolution and Political Leadership, p. 12.

<sup>46</sup>Horne, A Savage War of Peace, p. 143. The Arab (Ben Bella)/Kabyle (Krim, Abane) tension and conflict are mentioned throughout the book.

<sup>47</sup>Quandt's other work on elite schisms also question, to some degree, his conclusions gleaned from the Algerian experience. In The Politics of Palestinian Nationalism ([Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973], pp. 79-84), the intransigent/moderate cleavage within guerrilla organizations, reflected in the respective political stances of "moderate" Yasir Arafat and "rejectionist" George Habash is linked to differences in nationality and religion. The Sunni Moslem from the Palestinian heartland is more apt to compromise on the extent of a full measure of self-determination than the Christian or Iraqi "marginal" revolutionary. (This is not the place to discuss the charge that all such groups are more appropriately deemed simply "radical terrorists" or "freedom-fighters.")

Thus, basic ascriptive individual attributes are linked to respective Palestinian leadership factions. Translated into plain language of Irish politics, the "marginal" Sinn Feiner--an English-born leader like Erskine Childers--would tend to support Republican intransigence.

<sup>48</sup>Crane Brinton, in an introduction to Padraic Colum's Arthur Griffith (p. x) stresses the relevance of this "neglected case history of a nationalist revolution in our modern Western world."

<sup>49</sup>Al Cohan, The Irish Political Elite (Dublin: Gill & MacMillan, 1972).

<sup>50</sup>The interdependence between the Irish struggle and events in India and the Dominions was poignantly set forth in Churchill's House of Commons speech on December 15, 1921 (

):

"Our whole army was tethered to Ireland. Our great interests in Egypt and India were sensibly affected by that weakness. So were our interests all over the world, especially in our Dominions and in the United States." Behind the scenes, Thomas Jones (Whitehall Diary, III:xxiii) notes the hard-line milieu of the British Cabinet and its relationship to events within the Empire: "at worst, they saw Irish aspirations in the same right as tribal revolt in India, or the Boer Rebellion in South Africa. Churchill compared Sinn Fein with the Wafd Party and Zaghlal in Egypt. Even Smuts, with all his anti-British past, thought the Irish leaders small men, living with dreams. . . . There was no middle range of vision between claiming it as an indissoluble part of the United Kingdom, or as a colonial possession the recipient of paternalistic reform." Jones (III:xxiii) then changes directions and argues that compromise--not brutality--with the Irish made it easier for future Conservative governments to deal with other "subjects." To deal with Collins, a "gunman," at the London Conference, October 1921, was more shocking for die-hard Conservatives than the eventual parleys with Gandhi. Or, Ulrick O'Connor (The Troubles, p. 168) claims that Michael Collins was the prototype for the guerrilla war leader in Kenya, Egypt, Cyprus, Palestine and Burma. But, interestingly, the charge against Sinn Fein leader Arthur Griffith was that he refused to admit to a connection between the struggle in Ireland and the aspirations of nonwhite subject people of the British Empire (Conor Cruse O'Brien, States of Ireland [New York: Pantheon Books, 1972], p. 65). It was precisely this "imperialistic" attitude that separated moderate Pro-Treatyite Griffith from radical Anti-Treatyites such as Liam Mellows, and was one of the few points of contention during the historic Dail Eireann Treaty debates that rose above the narrow issue of oath to the Crown (see Greaves, Liam Mellows, p. 257). Of course, for Gandhi the violent aspect of the war of independence was not the most relevant aspect of the Sinn Fein strategy. In fact, the pre-Rising, Griffith-led Sinn Fein that made general noncooperation and abstention from Westminster their cardinal political strategies were most attractive for the Indian nationalist (see Sean O'Luining,

"Arthur Griffith and Sinn Fein," in Leaders and Men of the Easter Rising, Dublin 1916, ed. F.X. Martin [Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967], p. 60). Nonviolent, noncooperation, or Satyagraha, was practiced by Gandhi even in the face of such massacres as 1919 Amritsar Tragedy (379 killed, 1200 wounded); precisely at the moment that the post-Rising Sinn Fein was becoming wedded to the physical force of the "gunmen" (Michael Brecher, Nehru: A Political Biography [London: Oxford University Press, 1959], p. 37).

<sup>51</sup>Cohan, The Irish Political Elite, p. 2.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., p. 70.

<sup>54</sup>To pursue a point previously made, the conclusions gleaned from a single case study may confirm or reject other assumptions concerning revolutionary elites. Cohan concludes that leaders of very similar types became pragmatic and economic issue-oriented as time passed. This fact supports findings of Robert Lifton, whose work, Revolutionary Immortality, is cited by Cohan (p. 73). In the case of "China, Mao was most concerned with maintaining revolutionary fervor among those who were too young to have participated in the revolution. Ireland may be considered an example of the probability that it cannot be done." (If this were a general rule of all revolutionary elite development--and scholars, such as John Kautsky ["Revolutionary and Managerial Elites in Modernizing Regimes," Comparative Politics 1/4 (July 1969): 436-46] and Derek Waller ["Evolution of the Chinese Communist Political Elite, 1931-1956," in Elites in the People's Republic of China, ed. Robert Scalapino (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1972), pp. 64-66] have concluded that it is--one wonders whether Milo von Djilas's famous critique of the USSR's new class wouldn't be divested of its moralistic flavor (The New Class [New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1969])). A managerial elite of economically oriented, pragmatic, technocrats, would necessarily replace the fervent ideologues of the revolutionary period. The conservative views of Cohan, Lifton, Kautsky, and Waller have not gone unchallenged. For instance, Immanuel Wallerstein, in an introduction to Chaliand's Revolution in the Third World (p. xi) answers, to some degree, the "counter-revolutionary cynicism" inherent in such works. Surely, "bureaucratization" of revolutions has happened "everywhere," but he claims, "there is better and there is worse. The better are those countries, those movements, those leaders who acknowledge the reality of the danger and who at least struggle against it, who search for ways to prevent ossification and the creation of a 'new class.'" (One wonders, if Mao's Cultural Revolution will be deemed part of this struggle. Lifton's formulation has certainly been given credence--at least in terms of numbers--by the recent [1978] events in China.)

<sup>55</sup>Irving Howe, for instance, in The Critical Point: On Literature and Culture ([New York: Horizon Press, 1973], p. 192), has questioned Erikson's extrapolating from Gandhi's motivation and behavior in an Eastern, Hindu, milieu lessons that can be applied in the Western environment.

<sup>56</sup>Farrell, The Founding of Dail Eireann, pp. 19, 23.

<sup>57</sup>It is by no means clear that "men like Connolly" were just intellectuals. Certainly, he was a self-taught marxist and much of his activity "was in print." But his work for the Edinburgh Corporation as a carter, for instance, is the type of background data that should not be cast aside. Were working-class leaders --intellectual pursuits notwithstanding--more apt to be radicals in 1916 or at the Treaty split? As we shall see, the answer is no.

<sup>58</sup>Farrell, The Founding of Dail Eireann, p. 7.

<sup>59</sup>See, for instance, Maurice Manning, Irish Political Parties (Dublin: Gill & MacMillan, 1972), chap. 2.

<sup>60</sup>Farrell, The Founding of Dail Eireann, p. 21.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>62</sup>Ernie O'Mally, in Army Without Banners (p. 99), sums up the almost universal view of Cathal Brugha. He was the most uncompromising of all the Army Officers." An ode to the martyred hero, published by a Cork Sinn Fein group in 1955(!) graphically depicts the spirit of Brugha's last stand (Cathal Brugha, Brian Dillon Branch, Sinn Fein, Cork City, 1955, IR 92, p. 114, National Library of Ireland): "He cried boys no white shall / ever wave above me / I'll make my dash for freedom and / fighting I'll go through."

<sup>63</sup>Macardle, The Irish Republic, p. 632. There is no better example of the blood sacrifice mentality that exalts the sacrifices of the "dead generations" than the last words of Mellows. Republicans may admire his tenacity, others like Conor Cruse O'Brien, might lament the terrible civil war price paid by Ireland for their intransigence, but, in either case, these are not the sentiments of a "compromiser." Frank Gallagher (Four Glorious Years, p. 380) cites Mellows's last thoughts: "The Republic lives; our deaths make that a certainty." Compare this idealism (fanaticism?) with the words of Kevin O'Higgins, a cabinet member of the Provisional Free State Government: "During the past two years, the 'existing Republic' had existed only in a couple of backrooms in Dublin" (White, Kevin O'Higgins, p. 56). Or, consider the words of Michael Collins: "During the Rising, the leaders of Easter Week declared a Republic. We knew it was not a fact" (The Path to Freedom [Dublin: Talbot Press, 1926], p. 65).

<sup>64</sup>Ernie O'Malley, The Singing Flame (London: Avon, 1977), pp. 237-38.

<sup>65</sup>Dangerfield, The Damnable Question, p. 20. The author suggests that "Dev" was saved by dint of adverse public opinion, generated by the burgeoning number of death sentences. This, rather than the fear of alienating their World War I ally, the United States, was at the bottom of his good fortune. The commutation of Tom Ashe's death sentence on the very same day--and he was involved in planning the Rising--lends credence to this interpretation. In any case, the point to be made is that survival or execution was not necessarily a function of one's radicalism.

<sup>66</sup>Peter Pyne, "The New Sinn Fein Party" (January 1970).

<sup>67</sup>Peter Pyne, "The New Sinn Fein Party, 1923-1926," Economic and Social Review 1/1 (October 1969): 45.

## Chapter II

## THE SINN FEIN/IRA ELITE: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

[Home rule for Ireland is] . . . a policy which, while explicitly safeguarding the supremacy and indefectible authority of the Imperial Parliament, will set up in Ireland a system of self-government in regard to purely Irish affairs.

Prime Minister Asquith<sup>1</sup>  
December 10, 1909

. . . whatever they might have said in the past, Redmond, Dillon, O'Brien, and company [Nationalist Parliamentary Party] had now publicly committed their careers to a nationalism which fully accepted the overriding supremacy of the Imperial Parliament . . . 1911 Redmond as a leader had once again declared that a Home Rule incorporating this principle would be a final settlement and had pledged his countrymen to accept it as such.

Robert Kee<sup>2</sup>

We must be prepared, the morning Home Rule passed, ourselves to become responsible for the Protestant Province of Ulster.

Sir Edward Carson<sup>3</sup>  
Ulster Volunteer Force leader

So far as our Liberal government was concerned, Ulster was obviously the difficulty. To leave that historic province permanently out of the settlement would have been an outrage upon Irish unity . . . but to bring her in without bloodshed seemed impossible.

Augustine Birrell<sup>4</sup>  
Chief Secretary for Ireland

Pre-Rising Reformist Politics: Home Rule  
Shapes the Nationalist Agenda

On the even of World War I any group that one might designate an Irish revolutionary elite was pathetically small and hardly representative of the vast majority of the populace. The clandestine Irish Republican Brotherhood, republican segments of the Irish Volunteers, Arthur Griffith's Sinn Fein, and the socialist Citizen Army were all minor forces when compared to mainstream home rule nationalism. It was the above-cited leaders rather than revolutionary separatists who represented the major actors in the unfolding drama of freedom for Ireland. First and foremost, the reform-minded, Catholic-dominated, Parliamentary Party was committed to their constitutional Westminster role, and willing to accept the Liberals' offer of all-Ireland home rule (thirty-two counties) as full payment on the nationalist debt. They were opposed by Irish Protestant "Unionists" (i.e., wanting continued "union" with Great Britain) and most of the Conservative Party, the traditional political groups intent on preserving the essential British connection. For both, the main question was simple: how many counties of historic Ulster would remain outside an imminent all-Ireland home rule settlement? (The older question had been how to anchor all of Ireland firmly to the Union!)

Interestingly, at that point the most credible revolutionary threat of independence came from these Protestant "ultras"<sup>5</sup> rather than from extreme republican quarters. The Unionists threatened a

a unilateral declaration of independence response to any form of devolution "coercing" them into a Catholic majority political entity. As in the past (1886, 1893) home rule was played up as Rome rule--the emotional, religious shorthand for their political fears. They were not bluffing.

A home rule bill would drastically alter a constitutional relationship that had traditionally buttressed the privileged position of Irish Protestants. The Act of Union of 1801 formally integrated Ireland into the United Kingdom--it allowed a limited number of Protestant, and later Catholic representatives at Westminster--to reduce this colony's penchant for rebellion.<sup>6</sup> Loosening the British tie<sup>7</sup> would, for Catholics, redress a tragic history of military conquest, the plantation of Protestant settlers, and exploitative economic relationships. (Although there was a net outward flow of funds from the British Exchequer from approximately 1911, past land confiscations by Protestants, outrageous taxing practices, a hideously conceived land tenure system extracting maximum rents--often to absentee landlords--while affording a minimum of security,<sup>8</sup> complicity in such "natural" disasters as the Great Famine of 1845-52<sup>9</sup> and artificially reducing Catholic portions of Ireland to agricultural districts servicing the industrial metropole,<sup>10</sup> all contributed to the collective memory of oppression shared by a majority of Irish Catholics.)

Home rule would be the culmination of almost a century of slowly evolved step-by-step reforms extracted from Parliament by

protest movements, the rural violence of secret societies, and by pressure from Irish parliamentarians serving at Westminster. During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries a steady stream of ameliorative measures were enacted: Catholic Emancipation (1829), a share in Britain's famous electoral reforms (1832, 1867, 1884), disestablishment of the Protestant Church of Ireland (1869), a Local Government Act (1898), and a Catholic University (1909). And perhaps most importantly, a series of sweeping land acts gave Irish farmers the much sought after "3 Fs"--fair rent, fixity of tenure, free sale-- followed by land purchase acts providing the means to obtain outright possession of their acreage. A number of scholars have deemed this land reform carried out between 1879 and 1910 a veritable "revolution," creating, according to Basil Chubb, a conservative small-holding nation of satisfied farmers.<sup>11</sup>

This impressive record of economic and social reforms only needed the addition of some semblance of political freedom to almost totally assuage Irish Catholic grievances.<sup>12</sup> It hardly seems like a record that would engender a bitterly fought war of independence. Certainly, if you compare this impressive list of reforms with, say, the hollow French "mission civilizatrice" in Algeria, even until the 1954 rebellion, far different levels of mass discontent are apparent.<sup>13</sup> But the neat scenario of a moderate Catholic elite accepting the Liberals' home rule and thereby ending all nationalist claims against Great Britain vastly understates the potential for continued conflict. (Were nine, six, four, or no counties of Ulster

to be excluded, forever/for a period, in the home rule formula?) Again, as Birrell noted, "Ulster was obviously the difficulty," and we might add not the sole difficulty. Aside from the Protestant Unionists rejecting home rule, there were these four radical groups, comprised mainly of Catholics, who were camouflaged behind the reformist political landscape. They aimed at more complete separation. Their demands ranged from James Connolly's Irish Workers' Republic to Arthur Griffith's quasi-independent Dual Monarchy configuration. In short, the passage and implementation of home rule for all thirty-two counties was an ill-fated proposition from the start given the political views of extremists in both camps.

#### Three Failed Home Rule Bills: A Prelude to Revolutionary Politics

Looking back a generation the Liberal Prime Minister Gladstone had on two occasions supported home rule hoping to stem that ominous "Cloud in the West . . . that coming storm,"<sup>14</sup> an Irish rebellion. Aside from the very real rumblings of his own social conscience, it was the obstructionist parliamentary tactics of Charles Stewart Parnell's Irish Home Rule Party ("We shall never gain anything from England . . . unless we tread on her toes"<sup>15</sup>) and an aroused peasantry indulging in agrarian violence and harnessed to the potentially revolutionary Land League,<sup>16</sup> that were the forces motivating Gladstone. Devolution of political authority coupled with a series of land acts would defuse a rural radicalism drifting towards

"nationalization" and mass violence. Parnell, a Protestant landowner, and at heart a reformer, supported this dual program but, like Gladstone, would never live to see the political problem solved.

In 1886 Gladstone's home rule bid died in committee, as many Liberals defected to the Conservative Unionist ranks. The 1893 version passed through Commons only to be defeated in the Unionist-dominated House of Lords. In either case, formal passage of the reform would not have assured a settlement since Irish Protestants were firmly set against this political solution. And the "Orange card" --Ulster Protestants' militant reaction to an all-Ireland home rule government--was played to the hilt by British Conservatives. Randolph Churchill's baiting cry, "Ulster will fight and Ulster will be right," indeed fell on receptive Protestant ears. Would they really fight? Although there is a vigorous debate concerning the extent of the "bluff," and whether Conservatives had fomented an artificial crisis or merely tapped an explosive political force, it appears that a very real threat of violent resistance to home rule did exist. (Incredibly, almost a century later, in 1979, the degree of Protestant hostility to an all-Irish government--whether or not they would actually fight to preserve their six-county Ulster redoubt or join the twenty-six country Irish republic to the south--is still a controversial issue.<sup>17)</sup>)

Returning to the eve of World War I, the constellation of forces arrayed against the third home rule bill were similar to those of Gladstone's era. But the parliamentary barriers to its formal passage had been removed in two ways: first, by 1910 the

arithmetic of British politics gave the Irish Nationalist Party a new leverage on the House of Commons.

272 Unionists opposed by 272 Liberals, in a House of Commons which also contained 42 Labour and 82 Irish Nationalists, equalled Home Rule. It was as crude as that. The fact does much to explain a certain lack of determination in pursuing the issue home, which finally proved fatal to it.<sup>18</sup>

Secondly, the veto power of the Unionist-oriented House of Lords was hamstrung by the Parliament Act of 1911, a milestone in British constitutional history passed with the assistance of the crucial Irish Nationalist MPs. No longer would an overwhelmingly Conservative House of Lords, mostly landowners to boot, be able to obstruct such social legislation as the People's Budget (1909)<sup>19</sup>--or home rule.

Asquith, the Liberal prime minister--certainly not a crusading moralist in Gladstone's mold--had struck a political bargain with his Irish allies. His introduction of a third home rule bill (April 1912) was the payment for services rendered by Nationalists, a deal that outraged Unionist opinion. From that critical juncture, through the outbreak of World War I, to the 1916 Easter Rising and beyond, the Liberal and coalition governments increasingly waffled on their home rule commitment. To a large degree, this weak stance was a reaction to an ever more effective campaign of resistance mounted by the British Conservative/Protestant Unionist alliance. And this resistance, in turn, spurred on more extreme elements of Catholic separatism that had been moving slowly toward center stage in the unfolding drama. In fact, one could argue that armed Protestant threats were absolutely crucial for engendering a viable Catholic-

dominated revolutionary elite.

Edward Carson, Unionist leader, stated in 1911, "I am not for a mere game of bluff, and, unless they are prepared to make great sacrifice which they clearly understand, the talk of resistance is no use."<sup>20</sup> By January 1913 Ulstermen were indeed preparing to resist: an Ulster Volunteer Force was created, later to be thoroughly armed by gun-running against a mildly vigilant Crown. It could field some 100,000 men prior to the rising. Now, the development of an overtly treasonous Protestant military force was closely followed by all sections of Catholic nationalism. (Bonar Law, the Tory leader, a man of Ulster Presbyterian stock, responded to their proposed sedition against the Crown's law saying, "there are things stronger than parliamentary majorities."<sup>21</sup>) The UVF armed precedent provided the impetus for creating a predominantly Catholic mass military organization, the Irish Volunteers, whose ostensible goal was to "defensively" insure the implementation of all-Ireland home rule. Supporters of Redmond's Parliamentary Party--moderate nationalists--were the largest and most representative group in their ranks. But behind the moderate front lurked the physical force republicanism of the clandestine Irish Republican Brotherhood. An extremist IRB clique was involved in forming the Volunteers, and they were to plan and execute the 1916 Easter Rising from their position in the mass-based, essentially home rule oriented military force.

There were other non-IRB Volunteers--albeit a minority within the organization--who were similarly further along the path to revolution than the dominant home rulers. In fact, virtually every leader

of the war of independence period--pro-treaty or anti-treaty--was in some capacity associated with the pre-rising Volunteers, an armed movement following the lead of Ulster Protestants.

On this score, a most revealing story is told of Eoin McNeill, the Gaelic scholar who unknowingly became the legitimate front Volunteer "leader" carrying out the insurrectionary plans of the behind-the-scenes IRB. McNeill became a post-rising Sinn Fein revolutionary, (He had issued the infamous/famous countermand order limiting the Volunteers' participation in the rising), a moderate on the treaty issue, and later a minister in the Free State government. When asked some time after the war of independence how the revolution was brought about, his answer was a simple "mainly by Carson."<sup>22</sup> Was he understating the role played by secretive elite groups of rebellious plotters, or correctly noting that the IRB and company couldn't go very far without Protestant Unionists derailing the all-Ireland home rule bills? Would the moderate political solution, in the context of pervasive economic and social reforms, have sufficed to head off the spiral to revolution? (Of course, for Ulstermen the "moderate" home rule solution was anything but palatable, a fact that is often overlooked by those hypothetically pondering such historical puzzles.)

A brief glance at the Ulster Unionist/Tory enemies of home rule (1912-16) demonstrates the lengths they traveled in opposition to a thirty-two county government. (One could ask the nasty question: was the large Catholic minority of Ulster--and five of nine of the traditional Ulster counties could elect home rulers!<sup>23</sup>--to be forced

into a Protestant north?) Asquith's government stood by and complacently watched His Majesty's subjects partaking in public oaths swearing to violate the proposed parliamentary legislation<sup>24</sup> (Ulster Covenant), implicitly condoned the mutinous pronouncements of an officer corps reluctant to "coerce" their fellow Ulster countrymen (Curragh Incident),<sup>25</sup> and hypocritically permitted the Ulster Volunteer Force<sup>26</sup> to illegally arm.

The absolute bottom line for Ulster Protestants accepting home rule legislation was a guarantee of exclusion for the "North" without time limits. Preferable, of course, would be Ireland's continued integration in the United Kingdom. Carson realized that some of home rule was a foregone conclusion and so, "the whole of Ulster should be excluded, but the minimum would be the six plantation colonies . . . we do not want a sentence of death with a stay of execution for six years."<sup>27</sup> On the other hand, Catholic nationalists backing the Parliamentary Party could live with temporary exclusion, but universally rejected the permanent partition of their "country." The stalemate was apparent. In the long run home rule moderates embraced extreme separatism only when they recognized that the Liberal government would not, or could not, produce a limited devolution scheme for all of Ireland. In some ways this state of affairs was a preview of the 1922 treaty decision, where the populace chose between limited self-government, possibly without Ulster, or the all-Irish republic. Ironically, in the latter period "moderation" was the choice of the majority, which touched off the civil war. During the 1912-16

years, though, Catholics were gradually becoming disillusioned with the Parliamentary Party's chances of obtaining full-blown home rule, turning slowly toward militant republicanism.<sup>28</sup> In both instances, diverging strategies and choices did not budge the rock of Ulster. The watchword of James Craig, Unionist leader of a six-county Ulster "state-let" in 1922, was a defiant, "not an inch," a phrase virtually unchanged from the sentiments of Carson in 1912.

With the outbreak of World War I, a home rule bill was actually on the books, although a suspensory act froze the entire controversy for the year's duration. (Wasn't everyone to be home by Christmas after the Hun was taught a lesson?) The war period coalition government--Carson himself was to hold a ministerial portfolio--was obviously not composed of politicians ready to "coerce" Ulster loyalists. And despite Irish Catholic casualties in the Crown's service on World War I battlefields--the ultimate proof of allegiance--all-Ireland home rule was a dead letter.

It was the war, though, and England's "misfortunes" on the continent that provided the "opportunity" for radical nationalists to effectively adopt a strategy far different from home rule. The revolutionary tempo quickened. The IRB's inner sanctum planned for an insurrection before the war's end; a daring "blood sacrifice" that would embroil advanced nationalists directly in the violence or indirectly in the post-rebellion British repression. It would serve notice on the Empire and polarize the populace. In fact, within two years of the crushed 1916 Easter Rising moderate Home Rulers were swept away by a united nationalist front, Sinn Fein, and a new

generation of Irish Catholic leaders were now calling for a completely independent republic. Almost to a man these revolutionaries developed their political views within the ranks of the IRB, (Griffith's) Sinn Fein, The Citizen Army, and the Volunteers. A brief historical sketch of each of these organizations will allow the reader a better understanding of our choice of Sinn Fein/IRA leaders for a background analysis.

### Arthur Griffith and Sinn Fein

But for the writings of Arthur Griffith and the work of the Gaelic League, I believe, might still be unaware and I, too, might be uttering abuse of the rebels. But for those two influences I have mentioned we might have no rebels to abuse.

Peadar O'Hannrachain<sup>29</sup>

I'm a King Lords and Commons man, Dan, and you're a Republican . . . my ideas wouldn't suit your age.

Arthur Griffith to Dan Breen,  
IRA leader (1920)<sup>30</sup>

Is there to be no living Irish nation?  
Is the Irish nation to be the dead past  
or the prophetic future?

Arthur Griffith arguing for the  
treaty (1922)<sup>31</sup>

For more than half a century the name Sinn Fein has been attached to widely differing nationalist organizations. Prior to the Easter Rising Arthur Griffith's brainchild was only moderately separatist. By 1917 Sinn Fein described the umbrella nationalist front espousing republicanism, and later the defeated civil war republican faction

rallied behind the name only to splinter over the issue of entering the Free State Dail. The IRA Provisionals, of recent media fame, still have a Sinn Fein political arm as does the socialist-oriented opposition IRA "Officials." Ideological stances notwithstanding, Sinn Fein history begins with the profoundly committed Irish patriot Arthur Griffith.

Who and what is a Sinn Feinner?

On one level, the British erred in designating the events of Easter Week 1916 a "Sinn Fein Rebellion." Arthur Griffith's separatist party, formed in 1905 from the ranks of Cumann na Gaedheal,<sup>32</sup> was not privy to the secret IRB plans for insurrection, and, in any case, were not about to declare for an all-Irish republic. Though decidedly not pacifists,<sup>33</sup> they frowned upon any direct "blood sacrifice" confrontation with the vastly superior armed might of the British Crown. (However, once the shooting started, Griffith, characteristically, tried to sign up with the rebels manning Dublin's General Post Office.) In fact, Sinn Fein was a very different political animal than its post-rising officially republican namesake (reconstituted October 1917). And yet, in a sense, Griffith was responsible for the rising. As one revolutionary put it, he "made us all."<sup>34</sup> Undoubtedly the influence of the Sinn Fein movement was recognized by radical segments of the revolutionary elite, although its non-republican roots were to be bitterly recalled by some during the Dail treaty debates of 1922. And Griffith himself was to fall in step, rather uneasily, with the revolutionaries that carried out

the guerrilla war since, in his words, "1916 changed all our views."<sup>35</sup>

In sum, then, Arthur Griffith's Sinn Fein did "make them all," although he came to represent the most moderate elements of the pro-treaty leadership. His reformist posture was to be a "winning" position, institutionalized in a functioning Free State government (1923).

In most general terms Sinn Fein (ourselves) stressed self-reliance on two critical fronts, the political and economic. The terms "abstentionism" and "protectionism," not originally Griffith's,<sup>36</sup> were perhaps his main contributions to the course of the Irish struggle against Britain.

#### Abstentionism and independence

Well before Asquith, Lloyd George and company began waffling on their home rule commitment, Griffith's Sinn Fein

utterly rejected the postulate of seeking Ireland's salvation in the House of Commons . . . and . . . made abstention from Westminster its cardinal principle. He argued that the presence of Irish members in the House of Commons was useless and demoralizing. It gave the colour of sanction to British usurpation of Ireland's right, it shifted the centre of political gravity from Ireland to England, and it held no present or future prospect that the eighty Irish Nationalists in the British Parliament could make any useful impact on an assembly seven times their number. Griffith pointed to the Renunciation Act of 1783, under which England renounced forever her right to legislate for Ireland and urged that this Act, always valid, should be taken as the starting point in the relations between the two countries.<sup>37</sup>

In order to make separatism palatable to a majority of Irishmen, and especially to Ulster Protestants,<sup>38</sup> he advocated a separatist, quasi-monarchical political form fashioned after the nineteenth century

Austro-Hungarian model. Hungarian dissident representatives had withdrawn from the Imperial parliament (1864), eschewed violence, and "had won for themselves the concession of a dual monarchy."<sup>39</sup> Could not Ireland retain the Crown but sever all other actual political ties with the United Kingdom? "He proposed . . . that a Council of Three Hundred, composed of abstentionist MPs and delegates from local bodies, should assume the powers of a de facto parliament and exercise its functions through the county councils."<sup>40</sup> And, in a sense, the platform of a revamped republican-oriented Sinn Fein (October 1917), with Eamon deValera replacing Griffith as leader, embodied the abstentionist ideal, within the compromise framework of a united advanced nationalist movement. The revitalized Sinn Fein stood for

the international recognition of Ireland as an independent Republic, and, having achieved that status, the people might by referendum, choose their own form of government, when they would deny the right of the British, or other foreign Government to legislate for Ireland.<sup>41</sup>

Furthermore Sinn Fein's abstentionism, with a republican twist, was embodied in the formation of the revolutionary parliament, Dail Eireann (January 1919); a body comprised of Sinn Fein deputies refusing their Westminster seats after sweeping to victory in the "Khaki" elections (December 1918). The Dail was to be the political vehicle of the revolution, the "Republic's" duly constituted parliament, prosecuting a war in the name of the Irish electorate. But to some degree, Arthur Griffith, the original Sinn Feinner, remained aloof from republicanism throughout the war of independence. And his early advocacy of a dual monarchy strategy was to apparently affect his crucial role as one

of the plenipotentiaries bargaining with the British in 1922. Lloyd George had relatively little difficulty in cajoling Griffith to accept the Crown as head of the Irish Free State, a fact noted by Anti-Treatyites quick to point out his pre-rising Sinn Fein ideological roots.<sup>42</sup> Being the apostle of self-reliance the withdrawal of British troops coupled with the Free State's fiscal autonomy<sup>43</sup> more than compensated for loose Commonwealth ties. (Along with other "moderates" he counted on a proposed boundary commission to remedy the inclusion of solid Catholic areas in the six "Protestant" countries of the North.<sup>44</sup> Supposedly this would force a nonviable "state-let" into an all-Irish political framework.)

#### Economic independence

Economic independence had been coupled with "absentionism" as the cornerstone of the pre-1916 Sinn Fein Party. Griffith advanced a particularly rigid, staunchly capitalist, protectionism, gleaned from the writings of the German tariff advocate Frederich List, as the economic panacea for a nation whose nascent industry had been stifled by the British industrial giant.<sup>45</sup> It was a capitalist vision attacked for overlooking the plight of the poor, in general, and the squalid condition of the working class, in particular. At minimum the Sinn Fein program was criticized for subordinating social welfare needs to a narrowly conceived "nationalist" focus. For some the indictment was more severe. Griffith was the virulently anti-labor reactionary who set the tone for the next sixty years of Irish economic development.<sup>46</sup> In either case, what's most interesting for

our purposes is Sinn Fein's early identification with a conservative brand of capitalism. It immediately brings to mind the utilization of a "social and economic radicalism" variable (see below) for our elite background analysis.

One could contrast this succession of Irish events with the role played by moderate revolutionaries among the Algerian elite. The parallels are rather instructive. Ferhat Abbas, who as late as 1936 lacked a belief in the Algerian nation,<sup>47</sup> was a convert to the revolutionary cause after the 1954 rising. Like Griffith he entered a broad coalition of diverse nationalist types but Abbas was eventually shunted aside by more radical leaders. Coalition politics in both cases had similar dynamics, but engendered opposite groups of political "winners." Quandt and Farrell have both suggested that Algeria's and Ireland's respective "blood sacrifices" necessarily gave rise to umbrella organizations that would have a realistic chance of defeating the home country. In Algeria,

the attempts of more extremist groups to use violence to decimate the colonial system very nearly ended in disaster and it was the regrouping of all nationalist forces including the moderates . . . and coopting new elements into the political elite, that the Algerian revolutionaries were finally able to gain independence for their country after more than seven years of guerrilla warfare.<sup>48</sup>

Describing the formation of the reconstituted (October 1917) Irish national front, Sinn Fein, Farrell notes,

The mood of conciliation, moderation, and compromise. . . . Mention of another armed insurrection was greeted with laughter. . . . Griffith's insistence in his address as outgoing president that "differences on minor points must be subordinated to the great issues and responsibilities cast upon the delegates" had evoked a rosy response. It remained to incorporate the most militant group, the Volunteers, into

the new national movement; this was accomplished on the following day at the 3rd Convention of the Volunteers . . . when deValera was elected President.<sup>49</sup>

At this historic juncture all sorts of advanced nationalists were united under the new compromise formula,

Sinn Fein aims at securing the international recognition of Ireland as an independent Irish Republic. . . . Having achieved that status the Irish people may by referendum freely choose their own form of government.

But even at this time, more than a year before the outbreak of hostilities, Sinn Fein Republicans would settle for nothing less than the sovereign republic declared at Easter 1916. Thus outward unity masked a coalition racked by sharp divisions. Quoting Sinn Fein leader Father O'Flanagan's retrospective view from the 1930s, Farrell points to the potential for elite schism among the elected officers of Sinn Fein.

The two vice-presidents selected were the two men of opposite views who formed the nucleus of the provisional committee [i.e., Griffith and Father O'Flanagan]. The two secretaries elected were Austin Stack and Darrell Figgis. The two treasurers were Laurence Ginnell and William Cosgrave. The highest votes for membership of the Standing Committee were given to John MacNeill and Cathal Brugha. When the so-called Treaty<sup>50</sup> came one of the original vice-presidents of the organization became its foremost champion. The other remained on the side of the Republic. One of the secretaries became an eloquent spokesman of the Free State cause, the other fought against it to his last breath. One of the treasurers became for many years the leader of the Free State party. The other died in harness in the ranks of the Republic. Of the two who came first in the list for the Standing Committee, the name of one will go down into Irish history as that of the outstanding hero martyr of the Republican cause, that of the other as the leading intellectual champion of the policy of compromise. We had only one President. The President found it impossible to divide himself in two.<sup>51</sup>

But quite unlike the Algerian revolutionary situation the "moderates" were ultimately successful in inheriting the mantle of governmental

authority from the British. Ironically, they inherited a truncated "state" that may not have satisfied the demands of even home rule parliamentarians. Even though the Algerian revolution accepted and utilized the constitutionalists who had looked to the liberal/left parties of France's National Assembly for reform, their fate was to have minimal impact on the wholly independent state emerging from the Evian settlement.

Generally speaking, there seems to be a natural tendency for radicals to dominate in broadly conceived national liberation fronts in the twentieth century. Perhaps maximalist demands more readily tap anti-colonialist passions. In any case, Ireland is one example that appears to contradict this common wisdom.<sup>52</sup> Of course, as we suggested earlier: (1) the level of Irish development and the pervasiveness of ameliorating economic and social reform, and (b) the relatively early "timing" of Ireland's national war of independence before the post-World War II deluge (the independence ante was raised for nationalists having higher expectations and a hindsight view of past successes and failures), make this a somewhat unique case.

In sum, Sinn Fein passed through a number of distinct phases, representing varying degrees of nationalist opinion at different times. From 1905 to a short period just after the rising it was abstentionist regarding the United Kingdom's Parliament but monarchic-oriented.<sup>53</sup> This policy focus was to change rapidly. Three by-elections for the British Parliament were contested by Sinn Fein between February and July of 1917, and incredibly, Redmond's parliamentary party went down to defeat. Though

it's not exactly clear what policies were espoused by Sinn Fein candidates, the election of Count Plunkett (Roscommon), the father of rising participant Joseph Plunkett, the victory of Joe McGuinness (Longford) while incarcerated for his role during Easter Week, and deValera himself, returned from East Clare, all underlined the drift toward "the complete independence and Liberty of Ireland."<sup>54</sup>

The electorate was disenchanted with the failure of Home Rulers at Westminster, outraged by the British overreaction to the rising, and feared that conscription of Irishmen was in the works. In this crisis atmosphere the national front Sinn Fein was born (October 1917), and by the post-World War I "Khaki" election (December 1918), Redmond's party was swept off the nationalist map. This coalition displayed remarkable unity until the treaty debates (December 1921 - January 1922). From the civil war onward Sinn Fein reversed its coalescing tendencies (the republican "losers" were the custodians of the Sinn Fein title), splintering a number of times over the next half-century. The divisive issues were to be the extent of republican purity, participation in the Free State Dail, the proper role of radical economic and social policies, and the adoption of a correct "military" (terrorist?) strategy to drive the British from Ireland. Thus the years from 1917 to 1922 were certainly the only period when Sinn Fein could claim the overwhelming support of Catholic nationalist opinion in Ireland.

### The Irish Republican Brotherhood

The IRB shall await the decisions of the Irish Nation, as expressed by a majority of the Irish people, as to the fit hour of inaugurating a war against England and shall, pending an emergency, lend its support to every movement calculated to advance the cause of Irish Independence, consistently with the preservation with its own integrity.

from the revised IRB Constitution  
of 1873

In the presence of God, I . . . do solemnly swear that I will do my utmost to establish the national independence of Ireland and that I will bear true allegiance to the Supreme Council of the Irish Republican Brotherhood and Government of the Irish Republic and implicitly obey the Constitution of the IRB and all my superior officers and that I will preserve inviolate the secrets of the organization.

The Secret IRB Oath, 1916 Version

It is not unfair to say at this stage (author: on the Rising's eve), after more than a half century of existence, the IRB had achieved no practice result whatever. The suggestion that it could lay claim to having brought about the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland in 1869, and the passing of the land set of 1870 is hardly worth considering.

Leon O'Broin55

Having organized and trained her manhood through her secret revolutionary organization, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, and through her open military organizations, the Irish Volunteers, and the Irish Citizen Army, having patiently perfected her discipline, having resolutely waited for the right moment and, supported by her exiled children in America and by gallant allies in Europe, she strikes in full confidence of Victory.

from the Proclamation of the Irish Republic, Easter 1916, Dublin's  
General Post Office

The IRB tradition: From strict  
republicanism to compromise

If Sinn Fein's abstentionist policies and the formation of a Dail Eireann reflect a deeply felt parliamentary tradition, then the IRB represents a rich history of (a) oath-bound, violent, secret societies, and (b) republican-inspired insurrections. Both traditions were fused in the IRB's waffling "Long March" (1850s-1922) toward the elusive republic.

Firstly, physical force secret organizations were a common feature of the harsh Irish countryside. The clandestine Whiteboys, Rightboys, Robbonmen, etc. of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries displayed a brand of rural terror rooted in the severe agrarian conditions faced by Irish peasants, or, more precisely, the hardships endured by landless laborers. To a large degree these were "primitive rebels,"<sup>56</sup> to use Eric Hobsbawm's term, pre-political men, "who have only begun to find a specific language in which to express their aspirations about the world."<sup>57</sup> The murder of rack-renting landlords, agents, and farmers who sublet plots to impoverished laborers; terrorizing "black-legs" (the farmer that violated the code of his class by taking up the evicted tenant farm<sup>58</sup>); the nightly exploits of the ubiquitous Captain Moonlight; the outrages of Rory from the Hills ("who always warns before he kills"<sup>59</sup>) were all part and parcel of rural Irish life until the ownership of the land was transferred to the peasantry through land reform. And though hardly "primitive," as we shall see, nonetheless the Irish Republican Brotherhood was linked to this secretive, oath-bound, physical force

social landscape.

The other tradition more directly responsible for the rise of the IRB is that of the republican-oriented insurrection. Wolf Tone of the United Irishmen (1798), Robert Emmett (1803), the Young Irelanders (1848) were all failed rebels whose republican martyrdom set the stage for the IRB's emergence and defined its political goals. The IRB would reverse this record of failures, as they were directly responsible for planning and carrying out what proved to be the successful 1916 rising. Furthermore, the organization remained burrowed within the Sinn Fein/IRA front (1919-22) as the repository of ultra-republican orthodoxy. But, ironically, their historic role, as perceived by republican intransigents of 1922, and radicals thereafter, was to destroy the long-awaited Irish republic by taking a moderate pro-treaty stance.

The IRB: Nineteenth-century failed revolutionaries and reformers

The Irish Republican Brotherhood, first called the Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood, was formed in Ireland (1858) by James Stephens and Thomas Clarke Luby. A radical "popular secret organization," it was a lineal descendant of the defeated 1848 rebels<sup>60</sup> who the authorities suppressed rather easily. John O'Mahony was instrumental in setting up a similar organization in the United States, referred to as the Fenian Brotherhood, one that supplied Irish revolutionaries with funds but often prescribed different tactics. Leon O'Broin's above quoted summary of a half-century of wasted activity aptly describes their underground revolutionary performance,

and abortive efforts at rebellion often took the most bizarre forms on both sides of the Atlantic. For instance, in 1867 an attempted invasion of Canada and an ill-conceived rising in Ireland proved to be fiascos. (In the same year three Fenian agents were executed by the Crown--the "Manchester Martyrs"--for killing an English policeman guarding an IRB prisoner in transport). They gained some notoriety by implementing a dynamite campaign (1883-85 peak) aimed at such famous English political landmarks as the House of Commons. According to Fenian O'Donovan Rossa their rather grandiose aim was nothing less than to drive the British from Ireland using "Dynamite, Greek-fire, or hell-fire, if it could be had."<sup>61</sup> Obviously they failed miserably. But as T.P. Coogan notes, the wholly unsuccessful dynamiting affair was, in the long run, important as the "political nursery"<sup>62</sup> for Tom Clarke, a "father" of the Easter Rising, and as a link with future IRA bombing campaigns against England during the war of independence, World War II and beyond. Thus, in a real sense, the IRB kept alive the seed of physical force republican separatism with the expectation of an insurrection at the propitious moment.

A significant divergence from the IRB's violence and secrecy was their uneasy participation in the "New Departure" political movement of 1879. This alliance of constitutional, home rule-oriented, Parnellite Parliamentarians--militant obstructionists at Westminster--with the rural mass protest of the Land League,<sup>63</sup> was joined by John Devoy's American Fenians and certain dissidents within the IRB. Here was a potential world-beating coalition of nationalist forces

combining elements of Wolfe Tone's republicanism, parliamentary militancy, widespread agrarian unrest featuring the "boycott" (Captain Boycott was an actual landlord's agent ultimately driven from Ireland), rent strikes, and the Captain Moonlight variety of terror and retribution. The spectre of another Great Famine haunted the Irish countryside of the late 1870s, perfect conditions for developing such an alliance. Potato crop failures, rent gouging on subdivided acreage and tenant insecurity were still the dominant features of an impoverished predominantly Catholic peasantry.<sup>64</sup>

Michael Davitt, the one-armed, ticket-of-leave, ex-felon, and driving force behind the Land League, described this seemingly potent union of forces, the New Departure. It was to be "an open participation in public movements by extreme men . . . bringing an advanced nationalist spirit and revolutionary purpose into Irish public life."<sup>65</sup> Parnell enunciated the dual strands of their policy in terms of a federal demand for home rule and a "vigorous agitation of the land question on the basis of peasant proprietorship, while accepting concessions tending to abolish arbitrary convictions."<sup>66</sup> The Fenians and IRBers viewed all this land agitation and constitutional maneuvering as merely fuel to raise the political climate to "white heat," the proper temperature for a nationalist revolution. But the New Departure proved to be a poor vehicle for attaining radical IRB goals.

Parnell, at heart a constitutionalist despite his radical posturing, outflanked both Davitt's increasingly militant agrarian demands (i.e., nationalization of the land), and the IRB's program

of total separatism. The net result was a series of land reforms undercutting Davitt's militancy, a reduction in rural violence and two failed home rule bills that occupied center stage in nationalist political dialogue. Thus, in T.P. Coogan's words, a moribund IRB faced the 1890s afflicted with the disease of "heroic nostalgia."<sup>67</sup> Neither dynamiting nor coalescing with above-board constitutional parties and mass agrarian movements brought this secret organization one step closer to the Irish republic. Ironically, the IRB would only begin to embark on a serious program of revolutionary insurrection once the overriding land problem was more or less solved.<sup>68</sup> The IRB would see to it that a relatively satisfied small holding peasantry would not remain politically quiescent.

#### The IRB: Plans for an insurrection

The re-invigoration of a failing IRB organization is usually marked by the influx of militant "young squirts"<sup>69</sup> like Ulstermen Bulmer Hobson and Denis McCullough (1907). In league with such older figures as the dynamiter Thomas Clarke they established the radical publication Irish Freedom (1910), promoting an uncompromising republican separatist line.<sup>70</sup> They jumped at the opportunity afforded by respectable Professor Eoin MacNeill's somewhat vague call for nationalists to follow the Ulster Volunteer Force's armed response to home rule. If Protestant "ultras" could drill in defiance of a devolution settlement certainly nationalists could form up in defense of Crown legislation. Here was a perfectly respectable reason for creating a mass movement attractive to moderate Home

Rulers and more advanced separatists alike, and, of course, infiltrated and manipulated by a core of IRBers. The IRB had always been impressed by Carson's bellicose unionist statements (Irish Freedom proclaimed Carson "the only member of parliament that has any backbone"<sup>71</sup>) and Ulster Protestant tactics could be adopted for their own revolutionary ends. Surreptitiously they urged MacNeill to form an open Volunteer movement and immediately tried to pack the Volunteers' executive. Denis McCullough, president of the IRB's Supreme Council, succinctly described the organization's thinking: "We regarded MacNeill and everyone else like MacNeill as instruments we could use for our purposes."<sup>72</sup> Similarly, on the cultural front, the Gaelic League, comprised of mostly nationalist Irish language enthusiasts, was infiltrated and converted by 1915 into an IRB-dominated political machine.

If clandestine maneuvers were an IRB trademark, then their internal intrigues in preparation for the rising exemplify this tendency taken to extremes. Robert Kee has likened the central actors of Easter Week to the innermost segments of a "veritable Chinese box" of ever-more-radical nationalist factions.<sup>73</sup> Firstly, MacNeill's Volunteers, by the war's outbreak constituted a mere fraction of the overall movement. The vast majority of the membership had followed Home Ruler John Redmond and his pro-British war policy, calling themselves the National Volunteers. And even the extreme MacNeill rump, known thereafter as the Irish Volunteers, were ignorant of the plans for insurrection, as were almost all

IRB members including the President of the Supreme Council, Denis McCullough! In fact, the Easter Rising was the work of a tiny conspiratorial clique revolving about such men as the aging Tom Clarke, the poet and schoolmaster of St. Edna, Padraic Pearse, Sean MacDermott, Joseph Plunkett, Tom MacDonagh, and James Connolly, the co-opted leader of the Citizen Army. Needless to say, this was not a popular mass rebellion.

In the fall of 1914 the Supreme Council had decided on an insurrection sometime before the end of the war. England's "difficulty," as always, would be Ireland's "opportunity." Authority was delegated to a "small committee of which Sean MacDermott and Thomas Clarke were the effective members . . . to examine the prospects and report back."<sup>74</sup> According to Bulmer Hobson, who was forcefully restrained as a security risk on the rising's eve, this committee "never reported back." It completely superseded Supreme Council authority and "proceeded to co-opt whom they pleased and consult whom they pleased. . . this secrecy was maintained until a few days before the insurrection."<sup>75</sup> Kevin Nowlan has noted how the "niceties of the IRB constitution were forgotten; there was no question now of awaiting the decision of a majority of the Irish people as to 'the fit hour of inaugurating a war against England.'"<sup>76</sup> McCullough's account of events after a January 1916 Supreme Council meeting similarly describes the loss of authority to a secretive "inner council" of conspirators: "I presided at the meeting at which it was decided to have a Rising; I was never told a further word about it."<sup>77</sup>

Members of the Supreme Council--Bulmer Hobson, Pat Macartan and P.S. O'Hogarty--were outraged by the violent turn of events; their dissent representing a cross-section of anti-rising opinion within the organization.<sup>78</sup> The masses were certainly not behind a rebellion; there was little chance of success, and meaningful consultation within the organization had been nonexistent. (Interestingly, as will be shown in Chapter 7, all three IRBers were to appear as moderates in 1922, demonstrating a continuity of political attitudes from pre-rising days.)

#### The IRB: The rising and aftermath

The final call for the rising, in the guise of a general mobilization of Volunteers, met the resistance of Eoin McNeill, whose countermand order sharply limited the rebellion's scope. After a week of fighting in Dublin, and abortive risings in isolated areas, the insurrection was crushed. All the major figures of the Military Council were executed. Irishmen, shocked by the rebellion (revolutionaries were jeered at, or ignored, while being carted off to detention camps), were further surprised to find that the supposedly defunct IRB had instigated the events of Easter Week and actually had the audacity to declare the existence of an Irish republic!

As any student of revolution might expect, the wholesale executions and mass arrests did not spell the end of the IRB influence and plotting. (The British disregarded Machiavelli's axiom, "An enemy should be destroyed or bought--and never made a martyr.") Only a few short months after the rising, a revived organization was

launched among the prisoners in such prison camps as Frongoch. Michael Collins, a young postal clerk, who had surrendered to the British at the General Post Office, was to emerge as the most dynamic IRB leader, and eventually become its head. This position was formally the same as President of the Irish Republic, a political detail that would conflict with the desire for an open revolutionary movement shared by other Sinn Fein/IRA leaders. Thus, throughout the war of independence, deValera was the "elected" president of the Sinn Fein Party, President of the republican Dail Eireann parliament, and leader of the Volunteers (designated the Irish Republican Army), but the IRB remained a clandestine alternative authority potentially challenging his position. The loyalties of IRB members were split between the Sinn Fein/IRA--the open movement--and the secretive Brotherhood. Depending on the specific leader, area of the country, and time period, the choice of primary allegiance to one or the other revolutionary organ was often confused and ambiguous.<sup>79</sup>

In any case, the IRB leadership with Collins at the helm, is almost universally perceived as instrumental in successfully lobbying for the adoption of the treaty in 1922. The secret society tipped the balance, in other words, toward moderation. F.S.L. Lyons has suggested that these political "pressures" may have merely been a function of treaty advocate Collins's personal reputation among all revolutionaries (he was the super-efficient Finance Minister of the Dail, IRA Director of Intelligence, Director of Organization, and romantic underground figure par excellence), rather than the policy "diktat" of the IRB

organization.<sup>80</sup> Whichever revolutionary hat Collins was wearing in 1922, his influence is beyond dispute, and the IRB clandestine framework could in many cases transmit the Supreme Council's decision to "circles" in the hinterland. Thus the one physical force republican-oriented organization that endured the politically quiescent post-famine periods, the one not assuaged by the great land reforms nor diverted from their insurrectionary path by the promise of home rule was, in the final analysis, amenable to compromising the full separatist demand.

#### James Connolly and the Irish Citizen Army

An armed organization of the Irish working class is a phenomenon in Ireland. Hitherto the workers of Ireland have fought as parts of the armies led by their masters, never as a member of any army officered, trained and inspired by men of their own class. Now, with arms in their hands, they proposed to steer their own course, to carve their own future.

James Connolly, The Worker's Republic, October 30, 1915<sup>81</sup>

"We are going out to be slaughtered," he told William O'Brien as he passed down the stairs to Liberty Hall. "Is there no chance of success?" asked O'Brien. "None whatever."

Easter Monday, Dublin, 1916<sup>82</sup>

We went out to break the connection between this country and the British Empire, and to establish an Irish Republic. We believe the call we then issued to the people of Ireland, was a nobler call, in a holier cause, than any call issued to them during the war.

James Connolly at his May 9, 1916 court martial which sentenced him to death<sup>83</sup>

They [socialists] will never understand why I am here. They will all forget I am an Irishman.

Connolly to daughter Nora<sup>84</sup>

### The Irish revolution: Nationalism triumphant

The Irish Citizen Army, characterized in some quarters as Europe's first Red Army,<sup>85</sup> provided the socialist dimension to an otherwise nationalist-oriented<sup>86</sup> Easter Week insurrection. But just prior to the rising this workers' army ran out the nationalist green flag, symbolizing the confused ordering of economic and political priorities pervasive on the "left." Why must class grievances take a back seat to the consuming drive towards independence? Wasn't the British connection the cause of all social misery? If labor boards the nationalist bandwagon will the socialist vision be muted forever? In a sense, this confusion was a preview of the 1916-22 period when labor's goals would be subordinated almost totally to the purely separatist struggle. Connolly, the Citizen Army leader of 1916, had intuitively foreseen the conservative course of the revolution (and echoed Karl Marx after the 1848 debacle)<sup>87</sup> when he warned his men of Easter Week, "In the event of victory, hold onto your rifles, as those with whom we are fighting may stop before our goal is reached. We are out for economic as well as political freedom."<sup>88</sup> Some six years later Connolly's instructions were only partially obeyed by the most extreme noncompromisers. For marxists it is one of the consummate ironies of Irish history that those "holding onto their rifles" were concerned largely with "oath to the Crown," "republican status" and "partition,"

and not socialist issues. Thus even radical republicans, ready to indulge in civil war rather than negotiate, failed to heed martyred Connolly's progressive social thought.

#### The roots of the Citizen Army: The Dublin Lock-Out of 1913

The Irish Citizen Army grew out of one of the great labor conflicts of European history, the Dublin Lock-Out of 1913. Its formation and growth may be attributed to the tireless efforts of Ireland's most famous labor leaders, James Larkin and Connolly. The charismatic Larkin, an energetic organizer, founded the Irish Transport and General Workers Union in 1909 after being expelled from the National Union of Dock Labourers, a body of proven respectability. In the next four years the unskilled ITGWU was strengthened considerably (10,000 members by 1913), a development directly related to the appalling living conditions shared by Dublin workers. George Dangerfield graphically describes the plight of those sentenced to perhaps the worst slum in Europe:

Nearly 26,000 families out of a city of 300,000 were huddled together in the Dublin slums, the verminous haunts of drunkenness, immorality, disease and crime. Of the 5,332 tenement houses, 1,156 were said to be structurally sound and fit for habitation, 2,228 were on the borderlines of unfitness, and 1,518 were not only unfit but absolutely beyond the possibility of reclamation. Baths were unknown; water was located only in the yards; the few privies were disused and choked up. It is no wonder that the Dublin death rate was a horrible 24.8 per thousand, chiefly due to infant mortality and tuberculosis . . . both were higher than anything that could be found in Great Britain, itself no sanitary paradise. At the root of all this lay unemployment, casual employment, sweated labor, social indifference, and the Dublin Corporation, one of the most corrupt city governments in Europe.<sup>89</sup>

In August 1913 a momentous contest of wills developed between Larkin's union and the Federation of Employers, some 400 strong led by arch-capitalist William Martin Murphy ("meeting combination with combination"). Many Home Ruler businessmen and more advanced nationalists failed to support,<sup>90</sup> or were vigorously opposed to the workers' "sympathetic strike" tactics which eventually embroiled 20,000 Dublin union men in the Employers' Federation Lock-Out. The very lives of 100,000 men, women and children hung in the balance.

Throughout the strike Larkin was ably assisted by his lieutenant James Connolly, a socialist who had already pursued a long career in trade unionism and revolutionary syndicalism. Connolly began his affiliation with workers' organizations in his native-born Scotland: "the Scottish Socialist Federation, the Social Democratic Federation, and, from 1893, the Independent Labour Party which described itself as being, 'an uncompromising socialist organization.'"<sup>91</sup> He set up in Dublin (1896) the Irish Socialist Republican Party which sought the "Establishment of an Irish Socialist Republic based upon the public ownership by the Irish people of the land, and instruments of production, distribution and exchange."<sup>92</sup> Destitute, he followed the time-honored pauper's emigrant route to the United States (1903) where he helped create the International Workers of the World,<sup>93</sup> and his own Irish Socialist Federation and paper, The Harp. Connolly returned to Ireland for a lecture tour (1910) and remained as an organizer for the newly created Socialist Party of Ireland. With this latter activity slow-going, he accepted Larkin's

offer to represent the ITGWU, in the north (late 1911) and "was soon involved in strikes on behalf of dockers and women workers"<sup>94</sup> while also lecturing and writing on socialist doctrines. And then, "At the annual convention of the Irish Trade Union Congress in Clonmel in 1912 he proposed the formation of the Irish Labour Party, in which he was supported by Larkin, and had the resolution carried."<sup>95</sup> Briefly, this was Connolly's history of labor activism until his participation in the great strike of August 1913.

Union members were isolated and starved into submission by the end of the year, failing to broaden the strike to include British working men. Some food and funds had been forthcoming, but not the sympathetic strike, and so, according to Connolly, the ITGWU and militant brethren were forced "to eat the dust of defeat and betrayal."<sup>96</sup> Murphy and company would allow them to return to work on condition that they would labor side by side with non-unionists, eschew the contagious sympathetic strike strategy, and drop the ITGWU affiliation.<sup>97</sup> The defeat seemed total.

From a revolutionary standpoint, one positive aspect of the abortive labor struggle was the formation of an army of locked-out men (November 1913) to fight "police protected armed scabs,"<sup>98</sup> assaults by the police themselves, and the dreariness and boredom of unemployment. Larkin has implicitly called for its creation on the very fight night of the strike. (Note, once again, the striking effect Carson's Unionist call to arms had on Irish radicals.)

If it is right for the men of Ulster to arm, why should it not be right and legal for the men of Dublin to arm themselves to

protect themselves? You will need it. I don't offer advice which am not prepared to adopt myself. . . . So arm, and I'll arm. You have to face hired assassins. If Sir Edward Carson is right in telling the men of Ulster to form a provisional government in Ulster, I think I must be right, too, in telling you to form a provisional government in Dublin. But whether you form a provisional government or not, you will require arms.<sup>99</sup>

Connolly, on November 13, 1913, went further, proclaiming,

I am going to talk sedition. The next time we set out for a route march, I want to be accompanied by four battalions of trained men. I want them to come out with their corporals and their sergeants and people to form fours. Why should we not drill and train in Dublin as they are drilling and training in Ulster?<sup>100</sup>

The workers' "army," 200 strong, attracted the services of Captain Jack White,<sup>101</sup> the son of a famous British field marshal. He led his proletarian troops through preparedness drills, route marches, and anti-baton charge maneuvers. Once the strike was broken, though (February 1914), the Citizen Army's raison d'être was undermined; the ranks thinning out to "skeleton" proportions.<sup>102</sup> But the force was re-invigorated in March 1914, replete with a formal constitution suggested by Sean O'Casey ("the ownership of Ireland, moral and material, is vested in the people of Ireland"<sup>103</sup>), and a new non-strike focus on the apparent "partition sell-out" of Asquith, and Redmondite Home-Rulers, ". . . the betrayal of the national democracy of industrial Ulster."<sup>104</sup> (Labour solidarity notwithstanding, one must remember that the Protestant working class in the north was flocking to Carson's Ulster Volunteer Force and obviously was dead-set against all-Ireland home rule. Connolly's strong words, "Let it be heard and understood that Labour stands for the unity of Ireland-- and Ireland united in the name of progress, and who shall separate

us,"<sup>105</sup> really reflected the sentiments of only the Catholic working class, north and south.)

As for Jim Larkin, before leaving for the U.S., a move assuring the post-strike ascendancy of Connolly as the premier labor leader, "He appealed to every union affiliated to the TUC to establish a company and during the spring and summer held recruiting meetings throughout Co. Dublin."<sup>106</sup> His departure for the duration of the revolutionary period (until 1923), Jack White's fall after advocating a formal connection to MacNeill's Volunteers, Sean O'Casey's organizational defeat in his personal quarrel with the "Red" Countess Markievicz,<sup>107</sup> and pacifist-socialist Francis Sheefy-Skeffington's disapproval of the Army's "growing belligerence,"<sup>108</sup> left the force basically in Connolly's revolutionary hands.

#### The Citizen Army: Preparation for the rising

The tragic outbreak of World War I had a sobering effect on a whole generation of idealistic socialists. Workers of this world slaughtered each other on Europe's nationalist battlefields rather than unite, as marxists predicted, behind the international red banner; a turn of events that deeply affected Connolly:

If the working-class soldiers had but the moral courage to say to the diplomats that they would not march against their brothers across the frontiers . . . there would have been no war, and millions of homes that are now desolated would be happy.<sup>109</sup>

Since European-wide revolution was not in the offing, Connolly's political gaze shifted to the "local conditions" of an oppressed

Ireland. By December 1915 Connolly was frantic, realizing that European peace might be restored before Ireland's "blood protest" could be delivered to Great Britain. "Where does Ireland come in? What has she done to deserve separate discussion in the peace terms?"<sup>110</sup> He therefore decided to plan for an insurrection before the war's end utilizing the Citizen Army as the strike force. He inconcistently derided MacNeill's conservatism and the moderate nature of the Irish Volunteers, being unaware of the IRB's conspiratorial plotting within the upper reaches of that organization. In fact, throughout 1915 Connolly's militant posturing and barbs aimed at the Volunteers ("Revolutionists who shrink from giving blow for blow . . . exist in two places--the comic opera stage and the stage of Irish national politics."<sup>111</sup>) made IRB conspirators wary of a premature Connolly-inspired rebellion. Finally, during the latter part of January 1916 the ultra-nationalism of the Fenian clique and the citizen army's revolutionary drive were joined together in the countdown to Easter Week. Depending on one's source, Connolly was either enticed, cajoled, or outright kidnapped to a fateful meeting with members of the IRB Military Council (January 19 - January 22), and "was told for the first time of the Council's existence and of its pleas for a Rising on Easter Sunday . . . he was offered an alliance; that he accepted."<sup>112</sup>

On Palm Sunday 1916, the green flag emblazoned with the Irish harp--the republican tricolor would evoke suspicions of the alliance with militant IRB/Volunteers--was unfurled over the ITGWU headquarters, Liberty Hall, and later that week citizen army officers were informed

of the proposed Sunday Rising. The confusion among McNeill and IRB leaders, the famous countermand order, Sir Roger Casement's failure to provide either German arms or men (i.e., the "gallant allies in Europe" mentioned in the Rising Proclamation), all were of small moment to the ultra-disciplined, tiny "army of labour." An apocalyptic Connolly would not miss this chance for insurrection, rescheduled for Monday. "If we don't fight now . . . all that we have to hope and pray for is that an earthquake will come and swallow up Ireland."<sup>113</sup> With headquarters in the central General Post Office in Dublin, Commandant-General Connolly displayed extreme heroics in the face of overwhelming numbers of British troops and his own grievous wounds. Pearse felt he was the veritable "brains" of the rebellion although some would attribute the almost suicidal, static, defensive tactics of the rebels to Connolly's absurd belief that the bourgeois ruling class would refrain from shelling "their" buildings. In any case, the insurrectionaries held the heart of Dublin for the week; finally surrendering to the Crown forces bent on a determined policy of deterrence and retribution.

Within months after Connolly's execution he became a candidate for Ireland's crowded pantheon of nationalist martyrs. Continental socialists expressed regrets and disbelief that one of their comrades had made the supreme sacrifice for that "Sinn Fein business."<sup>114</sup>

The executions and arrests decimated radical labor ranks in the south, and the center of gravity of the working class movement shifted to the northern Irish Socialist Party; a shift away from

direct Connolly-like collaboration with the nascent revolutionary/ guerrilla organs Sinn Fein/IRA. As we have mentioned earlier, labor's interests would be subordinated to purely national goals (true, Connolly at times acknowledged that a national revolution must necessarily precede the socialist revolution); a state of affairs that might characterize the politics of Ireland to the present day. And yet Connolly's and the Citizen Army's legacy to our "Irish revolutionary elite" (Dail Eireann's Democratic Programme, and other progressive economic trappings were adopted largely for show<sup>115</sup>) was a socialist consciousness embodied in such leaders as the Countess Markievicz, Liam Mellows, Dr. Frank Ryan et al. In that sense Connolly was to play a role in the 1922 leadership split, since virtually every Sinn Fein revolutionary previously associated with his labor militancy opposed the Free State compromise.

### The Irish Volunteers and Irish Republican Army

Hurrah! 'tis done--our freedom's won  
 Hurrah! for the Volunteers  
 the North began; the North held on  
 The strife for native land;  
 Till Ireland rose and cowed her foes--  
 God bless the Northern land.

The Song of the Volunteers of 1782,  
 Thomas Davis<sup>116</sup>

The North began . . . There is nothing to prevent the other twenty-eight counties from calling into existence citizen forces to hold Ireland for the Empire. It was precisely with this object that the Volunteers of 1782 were enrolled, and they became the instrument of establishing Irish self-government.

Eoin MacNeill (1913) in An Claidreamh Soluis, Gaelic League Magazine<sup>117</sup>

'tis good to be in Ireland these times  
 . . . hundreds of young fellows who could  
 not be interested in the National Movement  
 . . . are in these Volunteers and are  
 saying things which prove that the right  
 spot has been touched in them by  
 Volunteering. Wait till they get their  
 first clutching the steel barrel of a  
 business rifle and then Irish instincts  
 and Irish manhood can be relied upon.

Tom Clarke (November 1913)<sup>118</sup>

The history of the last hundred years in  
 Ireland might be described as a hopeless  
 attempt of a mob to realize itself a  
 nation. Today we have an opportunity of  
 rectifying the mistakes of the past. We  
 go back therefore to the policy of the  
 Volunteers (of 1778).

Padraic Pearse at inaugural meeting  
 of the Irish Volunteers (November  
 25, 1913)<sup>119</sup>

#### The Irish Volunteers: The nascent IRA

The roots of the Irish Volunteers, formed in 1913, can be traced  
 back in history to its 1780s' namesake,<sup>120</sup> or perhaps more appropriately,  
 to the rebellious United Irishmen of 1798. Joining militia ranks in,  
 "defense of the Crown," and then promptly demanding political freedoms  
 is indeed a time-honored Irish tradition! The Volunteers' political  
 and military legacy for Ireland's future was to establish an armed  
 revolutionary movement that has intermittently functioned right up to  
 the present headlines. Obviously in terms of sheer longevity the IRA  
 rates near the top of twentieth-century anticolonial "national  
 liberation armies," though the past half century of guerrilla warfare  
 against the Crown and her Irish "supporters" has certainly been less  
 than a total success.

Begun as an open mass movement to ensure the fruits of Asquith's home rule reforms (note MacNeill's euphemistic phrase, "to hold Ireland for the Empire" quoted above), it harbored from its very inception the clandestine IRB seed of insurrection. It provided the manpower for the rising, was then resurrected after the Easter Week debacle, and in its IRA form engaged the might of the British Empire (1919-21). The tenuous connection between this military arm of revolution (i.e., commandants in the field) and the political Sinn Fein movement helped widen the elite civil war split. A sizeable segment of the IRA ranks (the exact proportions are a matter for debate) would remain independent and republican after the Dail's approval of the treaty. Regrouping once again after the civil war loss to the moderate Free State supporters, splinter IRA factions would devote themselves, in the ensuing decades, to a policy of eradicating the partition and British presence through innumerable terror campaigns. In recent years the IRA's visibility and emotional impact would seem far in advance of their actual leadership role for the Irish nation.<sup>121</sup> But this was not always the case. Between 1913 and 1922, the period of our interest, virtually every important militant nationalist leader was in some way intimately involved with the Irish Volunteers and the successor Irish Republican Army. If, as we have noted, the Sinn Fein political front had totally eclipsed the Parliamentary Party home rule reformists by 1918, then the Volunteers and IRA--whose leadership often was interwoven with the political movement--was the cutting edge of this process of radicalization.

### The early Volunteers and Ulster Volunteer Force

As we have already noted, the militant lead of Carson's Ulster Volunteer Force and the behind-the-scenes "push" from the IRB were the forces behind Professor MacNeill's call for a Volunteer organization. The Solemn League and Covenant signed by the Protestant UVF and other Unionist opponents of home rule (January 1913) ("Being convinced in our conscience that Home Rule would be disastrous to the material well-being of Ulster . . . subversive of our civil and religious freedom . . . perilous to the unity of the Empire . . ." <sup>122</sup>), coupled with the threat of a unilateral declaration of independence by an Ulster Provisional Government, reflected the militancy of Northern Protestants. So if the "North began" the paramilitary threat (Orangemen were also drilling in Dublin to protect "Protestant liberties"), why shouldn't the predominantly Catholic nationalists copy their efforts in pursuit of home rule? "Carson had shown the way by appealing to force: MacNeill also appealed to force but in his case the Irish Volunteers were to be summoned in a defense of the constitution and to suppress the rebellious attitudes of Ulster Orangemen and British Tories." <sup>123</sup> Arming would mean formally protecting Westminster legislation. Even Arthur Griffith's moderate Sinn Fein reacted to Carson's posturing and the liberal's vacillation by drifting closer to physical force.

While the British government would in normal circumstances have intervened promptly at any manifestation of physical force by the nationalists, it postponed indefinitely any interference with the Orangemen. Each aggressive step forward by the Ulster Unionists could therefore be matched safely by some similar move by the nationalists. It was more than a coincidence that

following the decision of the Ulster Unionist Council in mid-January 1913 to merge the anti-home rule volunteers into one body, which would be known as the "Ulster Volunteer force," a militant resolution was passed by the National Council of Sinn Fein at its quarterly meeting in O'Rahilly and Eamonn Ceant, stated that it was the duty of all Irishmen to possess a knowledge of arms. Resolutions were not adequate, and a few weeks later the Sinn Fein Council authorized Ceant to secure a lease of a shooting gallery in Harold's Cross. There, on Sunday mornings during the summer of 1913, members of Sinn Fein began to learn how to use a gun.<sup>124</sup>

Describing this charged political atmosphere, F.X. Martin notes, "The idea of a National Volunteer was in the air," and, in fact, MacNeill had ample precedent for such a call to arms.

Pearse . . . had in March 1912 urged Irish-speaking patriots to form an association as part of the physical force movement; O'Rahilly, in his article in the August 1912 issue of Irish Freedom<sup>125</sup> exhorted the separatists to establish a national militia; on 8 March 1913 Sean O'Casey called for a people's army, but he was thinking mainly in terms of social revolution; Roger Casement while applauding in September 1913 the proposed formation of the Irish Citizen Army, expressed the fervent hope that it would lead to a widespread national volunteer movement. D.P. Moran in the Leader of 25 October 1913 . . . noted the foundation of the Midland Volunteers and recommended that their example be followed throughout the country. . . . Pearse later related that by October 1913 he and a group of his friends had decided to found such a body, but were looking around for a leader who could command the allegiance of the moderates.<sup>126</sup>

But this sample picture of increasing militancy should not be overdrawn. The parliamentary party, which enjoyed the broadest backing throughout nationalist Ireland, remained committed to constitutional action; at least until the Irish Volunteers proved to be widely successful.

Thus Professor MacNeill, the Irish language enthusiast of the nonsectarian Gaelic League, launched himself in the direction of physical force at a propitious moment in Irish history. Apparently

he was aware of the unintended, possibly revolutionary, consequences of his new-found militancy, and similarly aware of the IRB's desire to manipulate the Volunteers for their republican ends. Commenting upon IRBers Bulmer Hobson's secretive role urging a Volunteer organizational meeting, and the role of The O'Rahilly--wrongly assumed to be a member of the Brotherhood--MacNeill wrote in his memoirs,

I had no doubt in my mind that both these men came to me from the old physical force party, whose organization was the IRB, and I also had little doubt of the part I was expected to play.<sup>127</sup>

Furthermore, he added these thoughts in a private letter criticizing the account of the "IRB approach" in a biography of Carson:

I knew well, and would have been very stupid if I did not know, that the Volunteer movement would create the opportunity for the old physical force party that they had never been able to create for themselves--and this again was due to Carson. . . . It was also certain that the secret organization of that party would make the fullest use of that opportunity--who could doubt it? When I told my old friend Dr. Sigerson . . . what I was about, he said, "Yes, but will you be able to control it?" I said that I had no such expectation.<sup>128</sup>

#### The Volunteers' growth and organizational crisis

The Irish Volunteers were founded at an overflow meeting at Dublin's Rotunda Concert Hall, November 25, 1913, and steadily grew to approximately 10,000 members by the year's end. The organization was ostensibly nonsectarian, defensive in character, and distinctly law-abiding (i.e., abiding by Crown "law" that would implement home rule!). Its found manifesto read

The object proposed for the Irish Volunteers is to secure and maintain the rights and liberties common to all people

of Ireland. Their duties will be defensive and protective, and they will not contemplate either aggression or domination. Their ranks are open to all able-bodied Irishmen without distinction of creed, politics, or social grade.<sup>129</sup>

Perhaps noteworthy, when compared to the Protestant Ulster Volunteer Force oath, is that the Volunteer manifesto neglected any mention of being loyal subjects of "His Gracious Majesty King George V." Here was a portent of the future, if the British authorities cared to look closely. Their policy declaration assiduously avoided any direct separatist pronouncement, but their role as guarantors of an all-Ireland home rule government proved to be anything but defensive, nonsectarian, and moderate.

The greatest period of growth for the Volunteers coincided with another round of Carson's rejection of even a partitioned home rule settlement. Also the semi-mutinous Curragh incident showed the distance Asquith's Liberal government would travel to avoid "coercing" Ulster. By the Spring of 1914 the ranks had been enlarged to approximately 100,000 mostly unarmed men. Drilling throughout the country, a vastly increased membership, and major gun-running episodes --though rather small operations when measured up to the UVP's Larne gun-running of April 1914--characterized the Volunteer organizational growth on the eve of the war.

The development picture, though, was not all that rosy. Two sets of tensions were to permeate the movement throughout the pre-rising period: (a) the extremist IRB versus moderate MacNeill supporters, and (b) Redmond's Home Rulers turned Volunteers versus the more radical MacNeillites and IRBers. The former conflict,

as we have already mentioned, extended right up to Easter Week 1916. The IRB's prior expectations were fully met when they succeeded in packing the executive Volunteer Committee with a hardcore of secret plotters--Pearse, Macdermott, Ceannt, and Plunkett et al. "The fully constituted committee of thirty had in the beginning twelve IRB members, but the balance shifted when three of the eighteen non-IRB members, MacDonagh, Pearse and Plunkett, joined the brotherhood.<sup>130</sup> Pearse assumed the duties of Director of Organization while President MacNeill held the position of Chief of Staff. For T.D. Williams, these two figures symbolized the inherent conflict between the home rule open movement--albeit a radicalized one not solely wedded to parliamentary activities--and the secret IRB organization bent on insurrection. The upshot of these intrigues was that the clandestine infiltrators far surpassed even the original intentions of IRBer Bulmer Hobson--to direct the Volunteers--and certainly caught a wary MacNeill napping at Easter Week.

The IRB clique utilized the Volunteers to the best revolutionary advantage. Williams points out the obvious fact that "the Rising could not possibly have taken place without the mass support of the Volunteers and the guns secured by them in July 1914 and without the military training they had engaged upon."<sup>131</sup> The IRBers' actual plans for rebellion deceived MacNeill completely. Some days before the rising he sanctioned "defensive" violence to thwart the authorities' supposed plan to "arrest" and "dissolve" the Volunteers. In fact the published revelations of this official

"threat," known thereafter as the Castle Document, was a hoax, probably conjured up by the same insurrectionaries intent on a rising.<sup>132</sup> In any case, by the weekend before Easter Monday MacNeill finally confronted Pearse with knowledge of a rebellion, and countermanded the mobilization orders for Sunday, to avert what he perceived as an imminent massacre. (Meanwhile, to make matters worse for the rebels, Roger Casement sailing from Germany with a supply of arms was captured and the weapons sunk.) Only a fraction of the Volunteers turned out on Monday, thoroughly confused by their Chief of Staff's countermand. But enough came "out" to hold strategic points in Dublin for a week. Most interesting was MacNeill's underestimation of IRB duplicity, even after the execution of the rising's leaders and the imprisonment of a good portion of "his" Volunteers (compare this to initial fears of IRB intrigues). At his May 23 court martial he apparently continued to believe that "the decision to suppress the Volunteer was the cause of the insurrection on Easter Monday. They were truthful and honourable men. They gave me that assurance. . . . I have no reason to doubt it."<sup>133</sup>

Strangely, after committing the original countermand sin MacNeill survived and prospered as a member in good standing of the revolutionary elite. Thrown in prison along with the rebels (the British stupidly failed to differentiate between moderates and radicals, dubbing them all Sinn Feinners, immeasurably aiding the republican cause), he was welcomed back into the fold, later was elected to the post-rising united Sinn Fein Executive, and

served as a revolutionary Dail Eireann minister and later as a Free State minister. His checkered career poignantly demonstrates the movement's ability to incorporate very diverse political elements under its wing; at least until the treaty divide.

Tellingly, the old accusations deriding MacNeill's traitorous 1916 behavior were hurled by anti-Treatyites in the acrimonious atmosphere of the January 1922 Dail debates. And it is not without historical irony to note that the IRB--the successor to the organization of Pearse, Plunkett, Clarke, et al.--were firmly on MacNeill's side a scant six years after the great betrayal.

In marked contrast to the IRB's secret maneuvers, John Redmond's above-board bids to at first pack the Volunteer Executive with Parliamentary Party members, and then urge his followers to split off from the organization to support Britain's WWI effort were initial successes but long-term policy disasters. In the Spring of 1914, Redmond, previously aloof from the paramilitary organization,

issued an ultimatum to MacNeill, denouncing MacNeill's movement as unrepresentative of the country as a whole. He demanded that twenty-five members nominated by him be added to the committee of the Volunteers. At first glance, Redmond appeared to be the stronger party and the country looked as if it were overwhelmingly behind him on the Home Rule Bill. MacNeill and a majority of the existing twenty-five committee members submitted to that ultimatum. Nine only protested. These included Pearse and other IRB men.<sup>134</sup>

With this victory, it appeared that the nationally preeminent Parliamentary Party would outflank the more militant nationalists by flooding the Volunteer ranks, identifying with the movement's original goals, and securing an effective stranglehold on its decision-making. Clearly the inevitable split that occurred after the War's outbreak

seemed to confirm--at least in terms of numbers--the relative strength of contending factions. Redmond rallied to the British assuring them that the Volunteers would defend Ireland "against Germany no less than against Carson."<sup>135</sup> He supported recruiting for the Crown's army, though on a voluntary basis, since World War I had been

undertaken in defense of the highest principles of religion and morality and right, and it would be a disgrace forever to our country, and a reproach to her manhood, and a denial of the lessons of her history, if young Ireland confined her efforts to remain at home to defend the shores of Ireland from an unlikely invasion, and shrunk from the duty of proving on the field of battle that gallantry and courage which has distinguished our race all through its history.<sup>136</sup>

MacNeill responded by leading a relatively small secessionist group of some 13,000 men away from what was perceived as the fawning allegiance of the Redmondite majority. This paltry number represented less than one-tenth of the avid Home Rulers who rallied around Redmond in the dominant new militia, the "Irish National Volunteers." (Their logic was simple--and faulty: Wouldn't the British be more apt to implement all-Ireland devolution once services were rendered on the battlefield?)

In fact, a home bill had finally wriggled its way through Parliament in the Fall of 1914 and National Volunteers confidently flocked to recruiting depots--50,000 Irish Catholics never returned from Flanders, Verdun, the Somme, etc.--to demonstrate their worthiness for the awaited reform measure. John Dillon, a colleague of Redmond's, wasn't thinking of casualties when he actually thanked Asquith's government for the chance to prove their mettle in

His Majesty's service:

We have now got an opportunity . . . and we shall avail ourselves of the opportunity of proving to the people of Great Britain and of Britain's Empire that the friendship of Ireland is worth the price. . . . England will learn and learn in her hour of need that Ireland never broke faith in her history.<sup>137</sup>

Sacrifices notwithstanding, they would all be sorely disappointed by suspensory and partition clauses appended to the home rule bill.

An all-Irish government of any sort was not forthcoming. Despite the National Volunteer's vital contribution to the war effort, and its representative mass base, the British Cabinet's resolve to avoid "coercing" Ulster was never so much as dented. And, of course, Protestant Unionists had little reason to abandon their virulently anti-home rule position. After all, weren't Redmond and company merely performing their duty as citizens of the United Kingdom? And if the Crown was worth defending was it so strange that Protestants felt secure being constitutionally tied to it?

The violent answer to official waffling and duplicity came from the Volunteer splinter that had shunned military service like the plague it was. If Redmond had the numbers, MacNeill's faction had always been more active militarily where it counted--at home. As the war raged in Europe they continued to drill and procure arms, harboring, all the while, the IRB clique intent on an armed rebellion.

In sum, the war destroyed the very flower of the moderate National Volunteer movement and the aborted home rule dream drove others into the arms of the radicals. Later, when the British

created martyrs out of the rising's leadership and they unwisely pursued compulsory conscription, the final kiss of death was applied to the once powerful Parliamentary Party.

#### The post-rising Volunteers/IRA

The Easter Week prisoners were released by June 1917 and quickly began regrouping as Volunteers. In fact, just like in other anti-colonialist struggles,<sup>138</sup> the prison camps themselves became the spawning ground for a renewed physical force organization attractive to even moderates caught in the British net. Following closely in step with the politicians--and in many cases participants were involved simultaneously in both movements--the Volunteers planned a convention to coincide with the initial Sinn Fein Ard-Fheis (October 1917) that created a broad republican-oriented front. An Army convention elected De Valera President, Cathal Brugha Chief of Staff, and most important for future developments,

the IRB was prominently represented on the Staff: Collins was Director of Organization, Diarmud Lynch Director of Communication, and Sean McGarry General Secretary. With the formalities concluded, the Volunteers returned to the countryside to continue the routine of training for the next round, while the Sinn Fein delegates prepared for the next by-election, hopeful that abstentionism would obviate the necessity for military solutions.<sup>139</sup>

Once again the British helped generate recruits. If Carson's militance and Asquith's ineptitude had fostered the growth of the early Volunteers (1914), then Lloyd George's Conscription Bill (April 1918), more than anything helped sky-rocket recruiting for what was to be the Irish Republican Army. Bowyer Bell notes that this act of folly "in one stroke united every Irish faction" without

producing a single soldier for the war effort.<sup>140</sup> The coalition cabinet had devised a strategy to obtain the worst of both political worlds. J.C. Beckett has vividly described this momentous unification around the advanced nationalist Sinn Fein/IRA center.<sup>141</sup>

A conference called by the lord mayor of Dublin asserted that the proposal was a "declaration of war on the Irish nation"; the home rule party withdrew from the house of commons (this writer's emphasis); the Roman Catholic bishops issued a statement condemning the government's policy, and affirming that "the Irish have a right to resist by every means that are consonant with the law of God"; a one day strike, effective everywhere except in the north-east, was a clear indication of national solidarity. In the end, conscription was not extended to Ireland, and public opinion gave the credit to Sinn Fein; the home rulers, indeed, by their withdrawal from Westminster, had virtually admitted their impotence, and accepted the Sinn Fein argument against constitutional co-operation with the British.<sup>142</sup>

British ineptitude--or the unintended consequences of confused strong-arm tactics--did not end with the conscription disaster. The authorities responded to the burgeoning nationalist militance by rounding up (on May 17th and 18th, 1918) over seventy Sinn Fein and IRA leaders (De Valera, Arthur Griffith, and Count Plunkett were among them). Supposedly a treasonous "German Plot" was uncovered; a replay of Sir Roger Casement's intrigues with the Hun. The evidence to support these charges was simply nonexistent and all sides were aware of this fact. Since the most radical physical force proponents of that time, Collins, Brugha, Harry Boland, Piaras Beaslai, et al., went "on the run" rather than allow the British to capture them, the "German Plot" masterstroke effectively buttressed Sinn Fein/IRA extremism! Both of these organizations, along with the Gaelic League, were banned, and over 1,000 arrests occurred

during 1918, all of which only exacerbated the seditious mood.

Lest we overemphasize a ubiquitous groundswell of pro-Sinn Fein and IRA sentiment during the Spring of 1918, Kee interjects a cautionary note in the inevitably spiraling radicalism formula.

Even during 1917 when disappointment with the Home Rule failure was so rapidly breathing life into the new movement the British Army, without any particular campaign at all, had managed to secure 14,013 voluntary recruits from Ireland. Now, in the peculiarly unfavorable atmosphere produced by the conscription threat, the German plot and the arrests of the leaders in addition to the systematic campaign against recruiting so efficiently managed by Sinn Fein, it succeeded in getting more than eleven thousand recruits in eleven weeks.<sup>143</sup>

The "Khaki-Election": Sinn Fein/IRA ascendant

The war ended (November 1918), removing the conscription crisis as the issue of nationalists politics. Now the focus was on electoral politics, and Sinn Fein astounded everyone, including themselves, with a smashing victory in the December post-war election contesting British parliamentary seats. (The ballot and not the armed Volunteers were now the card to play.) Sinn Fein swept twenty-four of thirty-two counties, and elected seventy-three deputies on vague platforms of "abstentionism" and a hint of republicanism. ("The people have voted for Sinn Fein. What we have to do now is to explain to them what Sinn Fein is,"<sup>144</sup> said their vice-president Michael O'Flanagan.) Ulster Unionists won merely twenty-six seats which could hardly justify, as Kee observes, the Northeast's exclusion in a home rule settlement.

In the Province of Ulster there was a Unionist majority on the popular vote in only four of the historic nine counties, and in only one of these (County Antrim) was it as high as

two to one. . . . Special treatment would itself create a much larger (Nationalist) minority within those six counties than the Unionists of those six counties represented within the whole of Ireland.<sup>145</sup>

In short, John Redmond's reformist politics was all but dead. The Parliamentary Party that "held sixty-eight in the House of Commons at the dissolution of Parliament, was now reduced to six seats, four of which it held in Ulster only thanks to a local electoral pact with Sinn Fein."<sup>146</sup> The eclipse of constitutional nationalism that dominated Irish politics since Parnell's days was virtually total. And, "For the first time in Irish history a party demanding total sovereign independence for Ireland dominated both the political scene and Irish public opinion."<sup>147</sup>

The revolutionary parliament: Dail Eireann

Dail Eireann was formed (January 21, 1919), composed of these victorious abstentionist Sinn Fein deputies. The British naturally viewed it as a somewhat ludicrous enterprise.

Twenty-seven men in a provincial capital declared the independence of a non-existent Republic in the presence of overwhelming British power and position. The government of the new Republic were men on the run or in prison cells. The army was invisible, clumsy peasants and clerks with few weapons and no training. Continued subversion and sedition were likely, even probable; but the Dail Declaration would have little real effect.<sup>148</sup>

A Democratic Social Programme of dubious intent was formulated, eventually Dail loans were floated, republican courts were instituted to replace Crown law, the Volunteers were now dubbed The Irish Republican Army, and, in sum, an alternative to British authority had been successfully launched. These leaders not only carried

through the war of independence, but for the next thirty years manned the two major parties of Ireland rooted in the treaty split (i.e., De Valera's Republican-oriented Fianna Fail and the Cumann na Gaedheal/Fine Gael backed by treaty "moderates").

Appeals to the post-war Paris Peace Conference and the American government and electorate were the Dail's major political strategies for 1919. Needless to say, Sinn Fein delegates did not get in the conference door. In the United States, De Valera's extended tour (June 1919 - December 1920) garnered headlines, much needed financial support, allowed the President of the "Irish Republic" to address Congress, evoked a statement of sympathy from congressmen, but alas, President Wilson--the apostle of self-determination--would not recognize Sinn Fein aspirations. (Why should an anglophile disturb his British ally?)

#### The War Begins: The IRA Moves

Meanwhile on the military front, a flagging IRA replaced the "resistance to conscription" appeal to force with their own unilateral declaration of guerilla warfare.<sup>149</sup> On the very day the Dail was convened, four IRA gunmen--Dan Breen, Sean Treacy, Seumas Robinson, and Dan Hogan--shot two RIC police officers guarding a shipment of gelignite in transit. It was the opening salvo in a war that grew slowly but spiralled inexorably toward widespread bloodshed. Every instance of repression engendered increased resistance, and the cycle went unbroken. The IRA attacked isolated RIC barracks, assassinated some of the 9,000 RIC "familiar with the

area and loyal to the Crown"<sup>150</sup> (from May to December 1919, eighteen armed police were killed), raised arms depots, and even attempted to shoot Lord French, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. A formidable IRA intelligence system was developed by Collins and this spy network extended throughout the entire country including the seat of British authority, Dublin Castle. He formed an elite execution "squad" which one day would execute, virtually eradicate, the entire contingent of British undercover agents in Dublin. Some IRA actions bordered on the grandiose. For instance, on Easter Sunday 1920, 100 inland revenue posts and 350 abandoned barracks were razed in a disciplined operation. In general, though, it was a period of assassination in the city and ambush in the countryside. The British answered with raids, arrests, retaliations, and finally acceded to officially sanctioned terror to defeat "murder from the safety of the ditch." By the summer of 1920 the infamous "Black and Tans" and 1500 auxiliaries under General Crozier were sent to bolster a beleaguered RIC force. In turn, they assassinated the Lord Mayor of Cork, fired the center of that city, razed numerous creameries and Republican homes, and, in all probability, pushed many lukewarm nationalists and fence-sitters into the arms of the IRA. Republican "flying columns," fleetingly engaged large bodies of British soldiers, but usually they were undermanned, underarmed, and did well merely to avoid annihilation. Bell points out the real value of a terror that couldn't possibly drive the British from Ireland in a military sense.<sup>151</sup> (By June 1921 there were some 35,000 to 40,000 soldiers in Ireland.)

What they could and did do was keep the country in an uproar, drain off a substantial portion of the British forces at great cost in time, nerves, and gold, and through a series of pinpricks, delight the Irish and enrage the British. Since the enraged British now took their vengeance openly and violently, every IRA action almost guaranteed that there would be a further instance of British misconduct to be retailed to the world and to an increasingly uneasy public in Britain. And each example of Tan terror renewed the determination of the Irish people to resist Saxon arrogance and brutality.<sup>152</sup>

At this point a word should be said about the relationship of the IRA to the Dail's constituted authority (or even their own GHQ) throughout the war. The tenuous lines of authority challenge the image of a totally cohesive and disciplined movement and presage the Treaty conflict. Not until August 1919 was the IRA directed to take an oath to the Irish Republic and Dail Eireann--not that their own oath ignored the Republic--and become at least formally subordinated to the authority of the Dail ministry. In some cases this oath was administered only a year later to IRA men who were extremely wary of such a connection and reluctant to limit their operations and fervent Republicanism. (Revolutionaries may have sworn allegiance to the Republic a number of times--as IRB men, Dail deputies, or IRA Volunteers; loyalties to be sorted out after January 1922). The Dail's nominal authority was in fact delegated to the IRA/GHQ (a Collins IRB stronghold) which in turn only loosely controlled the most active IRA brigades and divisions of the south and west. Carson, himself a Dubliner, answered this plea for moderation with the same intransigence displayed in the 1912-14 period; a retort that would be prophetic for the future of Ireland. "We will have

nothing to do with Dominion Home Rule, or any other Home Rule. . . . We avoid it as a thing unclean, we fling it back at them."<sup>153</sup> His harsh words were backed by the credible threats of Orangemen who, by the Spring of 1921, were embarking on "medieval pogroms" against Catholics in Belfast.

Carson knew well enough that the government would have to offer something eventually, but he was determined that the sacrosanct position he had built up for the exclusion of six counties of Ulster should not be tampered with. Bargaining from immense strength he actually called for a Repeal of the Home Rule Act and said that if there were an attempt to impose it he would summon his provisional government and call out the Ulster Volunteers.<sup>154</sup>

(Remember that Dominion Home Rule was not formally acceptable to the Sinn Fein Republicans, but, in fact, a partitioned variant of this solution was eventually the Treaty compromise that split Sinn Fein ranks.)

The political initiative put forth by Lloyd George and the British government was a sorry rehash of 1912 devolution, falling short of even Plunkett's formula. On December 22, 1919, another Home Rule Bill began winding its way through the House of Commons, one whose chief defect--or virtue, according to your communal affiliation--was partition of the six Northeast Ulster counties. A new wrinkle in this "Partition Bill" would be the establishment of devolved Home Rule parliaments in both the southern twenty-six countries and the six Ulster countries. As irrelevant as it seemed to militant Republican opinion at the time, Lloyd George's bill laid the basis for a Protestant dominated, rigidly sectarian, Ulster regime for the next half century.<sup>155</sup> Two other features

of the bill were noteworthy; a Council of Ireland comprised of twenty members would enable either "state-let," independent of Westminster, to plan for the political unification for Ireland, and the six-county partition line could be redrawn to allow Catholic and Protestant border communities their choice of political affiliation. Neither of these provisions, we might add, ever brought Ireland one step closer to unity or one inch nearer to a fair boundary line! Thus after innumerable Catholic World War I casualties, the Easter Week rebellion and martyrdom of its leaders, the Sinn Fein electoral landslide, and a countrywide guerrilla war having Republican goals, Lloyd George was offering a solution unacceptable to Redmond's Parliamentary Party in 1914! It would be safe to say, I believe, that no Sinn Fein/IRA leader could be found at the July 1921 truce date to approve of such a basis for negotiation. (A partitioned Dominion Home Rule was rejected by De Valera, the Cabinet, and the Dail, in the first abortive peace initiative Summer 1921.) Not that all politicians were unhappy with this state of affairs. The ineffectual chain of command eased the consciences of moderate Dail members who had ambivalent feelings toward terrorist strikes. Of course, deputies such as Collins and Brugha sanctioned IRA violence from day one. President of the Dail De Valera waited until 1921 to formally acknowledge and bear official responsibility for all actions taken in the "field."

Bell has suggested that President De Valera's long stay in America may have undermined "civilian" control of the military arm. On the other hand, it is difficult to imagine commandants

such as Liam Lynch, Tom Barry, Ernie O'Malley, Oscar Traynor, et al., being deterred from unlimited strikes in the countryside or urban attacks on public institutions,<sup>156</sup> officials, and informers. It will be argued in Chapter 5 that the tension between a semi-independent military in the field and central political control--Dail and GHQ--helped shape the lines of division in the civil war conflict.

#### The British and Ulster Protestants Respond to the Guerrilla War

Quite predictably Northern Unionist reaction to the guerrilla war only exacerbated the spiral of hostilities. And Lloyd George's political concessions, balancing the hardline Black and Tan policy, were really the familiar case of too little too late. Firstly, Southern Unionists quite naturally loathed a partition isolating them from the Protestant-dominated North, and therefore were willing to loosen the British tie in exchange for all-Irish territorial integrity. They rallied behind Sir Horace Plunkett's Dominion Home Rule compromise which would at least preserve Irish unity.

#### Peace Negotiations: A Leadership Divided

Sinn Fein/IRA and the British finally agreed to a conference on October 11, 1922 in London, free of any preconditions unacceptable to either party (i.e., recognition of Republican status or prior approval of the Crown tie). A vague face-saving formula suggested

that they were to ascertain, "How the association of Ireland with the Community of Nations known as the British Empire may best be reconciled with Irish national aspirations." A complete discussion of these complex Treaty negotiations can be found in Frank Pakenham's Peace by Ordeal, the lengthy verbatim records of the twelve days of Dail debates, autobiographies and biographies of Irish leaders, and from such British accounts as Churchill's The Aftermath and Tom Jones's Whitehall Diaries. The point to be emphasized is that very different versions of the London Conference events abound in the historical literature. Officially, Ireland was to be tied to the Crown, its Free State deputies would swear allegiance to the Monarch, the six countries of Northeast Ulster could opt for their own state-let (a Boundary Commission would rectify sectarian inequities), the Free State would have a measure of fiscal autonomy, and be free of British troops except for some strategic "Treaty" ports. Even the content of these formal provisions, though, are subject to vigorous argument. For instance, would a Boundary Commission dare challenge the borders of sacrosanct Ulster?

The basic issues, of course, were Ireland's relationship to the Crown and the question of Northeast Ulster. Essentially the Irish delegation's (Collins, Griffith, Robert Barton, E.J. Duggan, George Gavan Duffy, Erskine Childers) game plan at the outset was to force Great Britain to break with them over "Irish Unity" if their Republic was unattainable. The British, on the other hand, wouldn't budge on the issue of "allegiance to the Crown," and also wound up defusing (confusing?) the partition issue. Thus Lloyd

George, Birkenhead, Churchill, et al., won the negotiating battle on both fronts. Nevertheless, there are a myriad of opposing viewpoints concerning the extent of victory, the methods employed in affecting such a "compromise," and the motives of all participants. The various points of view were ultimately translated into civil war positions.

Firstly, let us briefly outline the numerous Pro-Treaty rationales:

1. Agreeing to participate in the Conference was tantamount to some degree of compromise. When De Valera decided to remain in Ireland and distance himself from the plenipotentiary delegation he was merely avoiding the taint of necessary compromise. He himself was not a dogmatic Republican, having a record of "pragmatism" on the form of Ireland's government and noncoercion of Ulster.

2. The Treaty was only a "stepping stone," which, according to Collins, gave the Irish nation the "freedom to achieve freedom." In any case, the war might always be continued at a more propitious moment after the British forces had cleared out of Ireland.

(Ironically, De Valera, the anti-Treatyite, would utilize the "stepping-stone" formula from 1932 onwards to undermine the limitations of the Free State and gradually move nonviolently toward the Republic.)

3. The military situation was disastrous. Arms were scarce, manpower was at a premium, and the imminent build-up of even greater Crown forces was in the offing. (Churchill supported the introduction of 100,000 more soldiers, and blockhouses to ring the countryside,

rather than witness the destruction of the Empire.) GHQ could evaluate the uneven struggle more objectively than well-meaning, but limited, commandants isolated in the field. Lastly, Lloyd George's threat of "immediate and terrible war" as the inevitable alternative to not signing the treaty document was credible, not to be tested.

4. Fiscal autonomy was no small achievement, especially for Arthur Griffith and early Sinn Fein types.

5. The Boundary Commission would reduce the Northeast Ulster state-let to an area more homogeneously Protestant. This further truncated entity would lack political and economic viability and be forced to consider unification with the Free State. (Ironically, Carson had a very different notion of "viability"; the Southern twenty-six counties could not survive without the economic dynamism of the North!)

6. The signing of the Treaty by the Plenipotentiaries was no act of treason, since the Cabinet and the entire Dail Eireann would have a chance to fully debate its merits and either ratify or reject it.

And from the anti-Treaty side:

1. De Valera remained in Ireland for the sake of national unity and to convince die-hard Republicans that an independent Ireland "externally associated" with the Commonwealth was acceptable. Anything less, such as a semi-sovereign free state within the Commonwealth, had been rejected previously by the Dail vote.

2. Plenipotentiaries were instructed to report back to the Cabinet prior to signing a treaty. They had no authority, Lloyd

George's war threat notwithstanding, to make any such decision.

(Robert Barton later wondered why he had not been arrested coming off ship from England.) And what of the convenience of the telephone?

3. Lloyd George's negotiation trickery coupled with the ineptitude of essentially inexperienced Irish politicians undermined the Republican goal. For instance, Arthur Griffith was singled out by the "Welch Wizard" as a delegate amenable to his private deals. (What right did a King, Lords, and Commons man have to represent Republican aspirations, in the first place?) Lloyd George requested an "informal" written assurance from Griffith that the Boundary Commission Provision would suffice so as not to break on Irish "unity." Supposedly this note was to be utilized by the Prime Minister --a political favor--to "smite the die-hard" Unionists of the Conservative Party. Since Griffith was ready to accept the tie with the Crown, Lloyd George could produce this forgotten note at the precise moment to preclude an unwanted break over the exclusion of Ulster. Backed into a corner, Griffith would not break faith with this political magician, exclaiming, "I have never let a man down in my whole life and I never will."

Furthermore, Lloyd George's "immediate and total war" ploy was either: (a) a totally fabricated deception to coerce confused and intimidated delegates into a hasty decision (evidence suggests that pro-Liberal newspapers were already privy to information that an impasse had been reached and that Lloyd George would support a cooling-off period as a prelude to further negotiation), or, (b) a serious challenge that must be accepted by the IRA. In

either case, these were not the words of reconciliation, rather further proof of British duplicity or their traditional armed force response to Irish nationalist aspirations.

4. The Boundary Commission idea was a farce. The six counties were given devolved authority under the Government of Ireland Bill (1920) and would obviously opt out of the Free State. They would then hardly agree to a diminution of their truncated state-let. (Churchill, for instance, had commented on the passage and implementation of the Partition Bill, "From that moment the position of Ulster became unassailable."<sup>157</sup>) Sir James Craig, the Unionist political leader, had openly and defiantly asserted the Ulster policy on the rectification of inequitable boundaries, "not an inch"--and "not an inch" it had been for the last fifty-eight years.

5. Fiscal autonomy has little real meaning since the Free State will continue to trade at disadvantageous terms with industrial Britain.

6. The "strategic" Treaty ports given to the Crown, British troops stationed in Ulster, and paramilitary groups armed by British in the North--the special constabulary--are all examples of how Ireland remains under the Treaty an occupied land.

7. And perhaps most importantly, the noxious oath to the British Crown flies in the face of the Dail Eireann/IRA oaths to the Republic, the "ratification" of the Republican goal by the populace in 1918 and 1921, and the sacrifices of the martyred dead who had fought expressly for the established independent

Republic. Reading the accounts of the Dail debates one is struck by the lack of argument concerning the partition of Ireland, and the endless raging for and against the "oath." Even the sole instance of a comprehensive alternative to the "sell-out" Treaty posed by De Valera--Document #2 advancing an "externally associated" sovereign state--did not really differ from the signed Anglo-Irish Treaty in respect to the excluded six Northeast Ulster counties.<sup>158</sup> And, of course, the irony of this skewed anti-Treaty emphasis is that the partition line remains firm while purging the oath [1932] and the Republic [1949] were attained gradually without the force of arms.)

And views from the Protestant North:

From the Ulster Unionist perspective they accepted the Government of Ireland Bill's truncated state-let as a distant second choice to a united Ireland integrated within the United Kingdom under the Act of Union (1801). Devolution of authority was merely a fallback position, leaving Southern Unionists stranded in a Catholic-dominated state, but at least assuring an "unassailable" Ulster. Therefore, the London Conference lacked authority to change this boundary and certainly should not promote the coercion of Ulster into an all-Irish government.

The British Coalition Cabinet Ministers' views varied and might include the following characteristics:

1. A negotiated settlement was necessary since manpower and finances were being drained while the British image was suffering woefully at home and abroad. All this and repression had certainly

not caught "murder by the throat." For better or worse, the Sinn Fein/IRA must be recognized as representatives of the majority of Irish people, and moderate elements within their revolutionary ranks should be engaged in a dialogue.

2. Dominion Home Rule for twenty-six counties would indeed be a generous offer to a partially successful Republican revolutionary movement. And if this offer did not suffice to halt the rebellion then infinitely greater military would be employed in Ireland to break the IRA's back.

3. Whether or not Lloyd George was the consummate political trickster or a fellow Celt sympathetic to Irish grievances, the fact remained that Conservative and Liberal opposition would destroy the Government if it dismembered the Empire (i.e., allowed an independent Republic to be established) or "coerced" the six Northeast counties into an all-Irish government of any type. Precisely on this latter crucial point, Tom Jones the Cabinet Secretary argued that Lloyd George's Boundary Commission was a sincere improvisation to placate Conservatives dead set against "coercion," while laying the groundwork for eventual Irish unity.<sup>159</sup> Republicans, as we noted, viewed the Commission was yet another example of the "Welsh Wizard's" tricks and divide and rule tactics. Apparently he had convinced Collins that "very large areas" in Tyrone, Fermanagh, Down, Derry, and Armagh would be included in the Southern Free State, while simultaneously assuring Sir James Craig of the six country boundary's integrity!

### The Intra-Elite Conflict Grows

After a prolonged and vituperative debate the Dail ratified the Treaty 64 to 57 on January 4, 1922. Anti-Treatyite De Valera was replaced by moderate Arthur Griffith as President, and the embryo Free State began to take shape with the establishment of a provisional government. Republicans continued to recognize the original Dail Eireann which, in their view, lacked authority to move one inch from the Republican form. And outside the Dail the country also began to choose up sides. The twenty-six countries were:

divided along similar lines, doctrinaire Republicans, De Valera moderates, the men of the stepping-stone, and solid Treaty men. Everything indicated that most Irishmen belonged to the last two categories, as did the newspapers, the business community, the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, the southern unionists and men of substance. However, the largest and most powerful of the "institutions" of the Republic, the IRA, over 100,000 strong, was assuredly not happy with the Treaty.<sup>160</sup>

The Chief of Staff of the IRA and Pro-Treaty Dail Deputy representing Clontarf, Richard Mulcahy, had closed out the debates asserting that, "The Army . . . remained the Army of the Republic." Similarly, die-hard Republican Cathal Brugha, Minister of Defense, had assured the Dail that the IRA would remain united in the future. Both men were incorrect. Segments of the IRA would violently oppose the nascent Free State since,

it was the "Army" acting quite regardless of the people's approval who had brought about the situation in which there was a Treaty to be debated at all. And not illogically, many of them failed to see why they should be any more responsible to the people now than they had been in the past two and a half years. The IRA had never been very respectful of its nominal allegiance to Dail Eireann and had often been remarkably independent even of its own headquarters

leadership. The IRA was now better armed than ever before; its ranks were swelled by new eager young warriors anxious to emulate their elders; its veterans were flushed with what felt like victory over the British, and enjoying the public adulation which easily came their way. The IRA was the effective force in the country whatever happened on the political level.<sup>161</sup>

General headquarters was split down the middle: "moderate" IRBers supporting Collins versus Republicans. In the field, the most active Southern divisions--to name but a few--remained faithful adherents to the Republican cause. (Chapter 5 will discuss in detail this crucial process of choosing sides among the IRA ranks.) The fateful lines were being drawn.

The post-Treaty events that led to actual civil war hostilities can be outlined very briefly. The Provisional Government undermined the role of the simultaneously existing Dail Eireann (the assembly recognized by Republicans) by hiring a police force, recruiting a new army and, in general, carrying on as if the Free State was a going concern. In fact, the momentum was shifting towards the forces of moderation due, in part, to the pro-Treaty sentiment of a populace growing accustomed to the peace. Thrown off balance and clearly outflanked by the Free Staters, the IRA took the initiative by establishing yet another contending pole of authority within the twenty-six countries; the Military Executive. The Provisional Cabinet had prohibited any such IRA body meeting but Republicans like Ernie O'Malley, Liam Lynch, Oscar Traynor, Rory O'Connor, Liam Mellows, et al.--some "233 delegates representing 23 divisions with a listed strength of 112,650"<sup>162</sup>--held a General Army Convention on March 26, 1922. A move to sanction a military

dictatorship barely failed, but the IRA firmly declared allegiance to their own Executive Committee. (Was this evidence of Farrell's posited "civic culture" values triumphant, even among extremists, or a hint of those elements never reconciled to the parliamentary tradition?)

Both the forces of the Provisional Government and the IRA "irregulars" skirmished throughout the winter and early spring, the latter robbing post offices and banks, attempted to take over barracks with the odd shot and militant posture, but basically sought to avoid outright civil war. The Free Staters answered in kind also hoping for ultimate reconciliation. One area of agreement was a common program to aid Catholic nationalists in the North facing Unionist-inspired pogroms. But the "irregulars'" occupation of the Four Courts, in the middle of Dublin, was a harbinger of deteriorating future relations between the antagonists. Perhaps there was still time to avoid outright civil war. An electoral pact for the June 16th national elections was proposed between the Free Staters and a resurrected Republican Sinn Fein Party. The status quo ante would be maintained, with Dail seats and Cabinet positions apportioned according to the 64 to 57 Treaty vote thereby avoiding hostilities. The results, though, were a resounding victory for pro-Treatyites. Republicans felt the vote was illegitimate since Free Staters had openly urged voters to break the pact, the register was not updated since 1918, and an incessant propaganda campaign from the pulpit, newspapers, and monied interests had duped the populace. There seemed to be no

turning back at this point. The assassination of Sir Henry Wilson, military advisor to Sir James Craig and symbol of intransigent Unionism, was viewed as the work of those Four Courts "irregulars." Pressure therefore mounted for the Free State to assert governmental authority, evict the Four Courts' rebels, and decisively act to assure the implementation of the Treaty. Tragically, the opening salvo was fired by the Free State from a borrowed British cannon, and the slaughter was on. "Irregulars" held a losing static position in Dublin for days--shades of the Rising--but were able to break out to the countryside. Afterward Republicans fought a rearguard guerrilla war until the following spring, but even with their great numbers they failed to take the offensive and never advanced a viable plan of action to unseat the Free State Government. It was a bloody year: the Free State executing far more Republicans than the British ever dreamed of, and a whole new set of martyrs became the inspiration for IRA militants of succeeding decades. Robert Kee has aptly described this historical period with one telling word--Nemesis.

So there it was: a decimated leadership hopelessly divided and embittered, and a partitioned Ireland; a far cry from the heady days of formal Sinn Fein Republican solidarity. Could the Free State realistically expect to entice the Protestant North into one harmonious state after ravaging their own Catholic brethren? (Republicans of course would respond by holding Unionists and their British backers responsible for the internecine bloodletting.) Thus, the Irish Revolution ended in tragedy and the great Free State/Republican schism continues to haunt the countryside of South

Armagh, the glens of Antrim, and the urban neighborhoods of Belfast and Derry.

What we have tried to show in this barebones account of an exceedingly complex story is that the roots of an Irish revolutionary elite can be traced back to four strands of advanced nationalism:<sup>163</sup> the Irish Republican Brotherhood, Arthur Griffith's Sinn Fein, The Citizen Army, and the Irish Volunteers. Members of these organizations coalesced in a broad Sinn Fein political front and manned the IRA. With a few notable exceptions (e.g., Lawrence Ginnell), they virtually swept the dominant Home Rulers off the Irish political stage, almost totally ignored Labour, and enjoyed a monopoly of power from 1918 onwards. And sadly, approximately half of them became renegades in their own country, interned, shot, hunted down, and, in some cases, driven to exile. In the next chapter we shall discuss which among these numerous leaders qualify as the elite. Once we can establish a sensible elite sample we can then proceed to an examination of their backgrounds to uncover clues about their fateful political choices.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Kee, The Green Flag, p. 463.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 470.

<sup>3</sup>Martin, "MacNeill and the Volunteers," p. 102.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 111.

<sup>5</sup>Richard Rose (Governing Without Consensus, p. 33) uses the term "ultra" to describe "an individual who supports a particular definition of the existing regime so strongly that he is willing to break laws, or even take up arms to recall it to its true way." Rhodesian whites and Algerian colons shared the "ultra" outlook as well as Northern all-Ireland Home Rule legislation (1886, 1893, 1912) was treason against the United Kingdom. The logic of the 1912 "ultras" was interesting: Liberals had duped the British people by gathering electoral support for their war against the House of Lords (1911) on the social issue of the People's Budget (1909). Once the Lords were hamstrung they paid off their Irish Nationalist allies in Commons by pushing through a Home Rule Bill. The electorate would not have supported such a bill in a general election. Of course, this is a strange view of parliamentary democracy, requiring the government to partake in referenda on any given issue. See Kee, The Green Flag, p. 468; Dangerfield, The Damnable Question, p. 53.

<sup>6</sup>The insurrection of 1798 was the last time that substantial numbers of the Protestant community (mainly dissenting Presbyterians radicals in the northeast) would make common cause with Catholics in a joint nationalist venture against the Crown.

<sup>7</sup>"The Imperial Parliament would retain full control over all matters relating to the Crown, peace, or war, treaties, and foreign relations, and new customs duties" (Dangerfield, The Damnable Question, p. 62). The last provision is relevant to the 1922 Treaty debate, since fiscal autonomy was given to the Free State by Lloyd George as an enticement to accept less than Republican status. Also, the Royal Irish Constabulary were to remain under the Imperial Parliament for six years, in the 1912 version, and forty-two members would represent Ireland at Westminster. (In 1922 the Free State would not send members to the British Parliament and had complete control over "their" Protestant northeast police force.) Dangerfield argues (pp. 62-63) that this weak Home Rule Bill was attractive to Redmond and company in 1912 since the

Imperial Parliament would continue to pick up the bill for Old Age Pensions, Unemployment Insurance, etc., an outlay that had virtually shifted the traditional inequitable flow of tax revenues towards an Irish advantage.

<sup>8</sup>Erich Strauss, Irish Nationalism, p. 9. He compares the Irish system of tenure unfavorably with the continental feudal system. Essentially, the Irish peasant lived in the worst of both capitalist and feudal worlds; little protection from the marketplace, exorbitant rents without traditional forms of tenure, and very low levels of productivity.

<sup>9</sup>Greaves, Liam Mellows (p. 13) supports the genocidal view of the Famine, "the most grotesque act of expropriation in the history of Europe." Nearly a third of the population either starved, died from epidemic or emigrated, while total exports of crops not affected by the potato blight (i.e., rents) were continually increasing throughout the disaster. A more moderate view of the events would note that Sir Robert Peel's government had met the crisis with an unprecedented--for that time--policy of ameliorative measures; Poor Law soup kitchens, grains distributed, etc.

<sup>10</sup>Karl Marx, "Outline of a Report on the Irish Question," in Ireland and the Irish Questions, eds. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (New York: International Publishers, 1972), p. 131. He provides statistical evidence that the Act of Union (1801) was responsible for destroying a number of nascent industries that had been protected by tariff legislation of the Grattan Parliament (1783-1801) (e.g., in 1800 there existed ninety-one woolen manufacturers, and by 1840 the number had dwindled to twelve). Though the Grattan Parliament was solely manned by Protestants, its partial independence served as an example to future nationalists of the early twentieth century.

<sup>11</sup>Basil Chubb, Government and Politics in Ireland (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 23.

<sup>12</sup>Gladstone's Liberal Party was not alone in implementing social reforms. During the latter part of this thirty-year period Conservatives attempted to "kill Home Rule with kindness" and actually completed the transfer of land to a peasant proprietorship. J.C. Beckett notes (Making of Modern Ireland, p. 406) that "it was A.J. Balfour who, as Chief Secretary, made land purchase the distinctive conservative policy of Ireland." The 1903 Wyndham Act fostered 270,000 purchases by 1909 and was the final blow against land-lordism.

<sup>13</sup>For instance, the Algerian land was firmly controlled by the colons, and representatives to the French Parliament were inequitably elected along communal lines (Horne, Savage War, p. 70).

Both these conditions existed just prior to the 1954 outbreak of hostilities.

<sup>14</sup>Philip Magnus, Gladstone (New York: Dutton, 1964), p. 75. Ireland was to be the acid test of British morality and political wisdom. "Ireland forces upon us these great social and religious questions. God grant that we may have the courage to look them in the face!"

<sup>15</sup>Dangerfield, The Damnable Question (quote from R. Barry O'Brien, The Life of Charles Stewart Parnell [London: 1899], I:129).

<sup>16</sup>Magnus, Gladstone, p. 357. Joseph Chamberlain led 93 Liberal "Unionists" against the measure. (Gladstone had argued futilely that he was preserving not destroying the Empire.) Home Rule was defeated 343-313. Strauss' (Irish Nationalism, pp. 193-94) general thesis that the struggle with Ireland shaped the development of British democratic system is confirmed by the Home Rule defeat for Gladstone's Liberals. The loss of Liberal businessmen (i.e., Unionists opposed to dissolution of the Empire) forced them to bury their differences with a class of Conservative leaders that were their natural allies. "Landowners and capitalists... formed a united front of property owners in defense of England's imperial position which was a vital part of their privileges."

<sup>17</sup>For instance, see Conor Cruise O'Brien, States of Ireland, p. 87. He believes Carson's threat was credible in 1913, and equally so a half century later. Andrew Boyd ("What if England Pulls Out?" The Nation, 25 December 1972) argues that the present IRA would be overwhelmed by Protestant "ultras" in the case of a British withdrawal. The successors to Carson's Volunteers would indeed defend Ulster from the Republican threat.

<sup>18</sup>Kee, The Green Flag, p. 461.

<sup>19</sup>Winston Churchill, The People's Rights (New York: Taplinger, 1970). This compendium of speeches by Churchill, while serving as the Liberal President of the Board of Trade in Asquith's Government, is a classical polemic against the landowners of the Lords undermining social justice for the British people. Nine out of ten members of the upper house were Conservatives with narrow partisan interests.

<sup>20</sup>Kee, The Green Flag, p. 466 (citing Montgomery Hyde, Carson [London: 1942], p. 283).

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 469.

<sup>22</sup>Martin, "MacNeill and the Volunteers," p. 101.

<sup>23</sup>Kee, The Green Flag, p. 484.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 476.

<sup>25</sup>Dangerfield, The Damnable Question, pp. 85-86.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 111.

<sup>27</sup>Kee, The Green Flag, p. 479.

<sup>28</sup>Till the present day militant Republicans usually point to the first by-elections after the Rising, or the 1918 post-WWI Khaki Election as the great electoral turning point for eliciting a mass response for Republicanism. Though authors such as Farrell and Kee question the members and motives associates with a Sinn Fein victory--were people only demonstrating their anger against an abortive Home Rule policy?--the individual's choices were ultimately reduced during 1919-22 to Republicanism or support of the British.

<sup>29</sup>O'Luining, "Arthur Griffith," p. 54.

<sup>30</sup>Calton Younger, Ireland's Civil War (London: F. Muller, 1968), p. 156.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 220.

<sup>32</sup>Griffith formed Cuman na Gaedheal on September 30, 1903 to "unite a number of existing open national societies . . . to be the nucleus of his later party known as Sinn Fein."

<sup>33</sup>O'Luining, "Arthur Griffith," p. 62. "The right to bear arms is the first right of civilized manhood."

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 54.

<sup>35</sup>Colum, Arthur Griffith, p. 169.

<sup>36</sup>Lyons, Ireland Since the Famine, p. 248. Daniel O'Connell (1843), Thomas Davis (1844), and Parnell's left wing (1888) all urged a policy similar to Griffith's "new" Hungarian policy.

<sup>37</sup>O'Luining, "Arthur Griffith," pp. 66-67.

<sup>38</sup>Colum, Arthur Griffith, p. 135. The author suggests that Griffith was attuned to Unionist feelings of allegiance to the Crown, and royalty in general. He claimed that privately Griffith supported the Republican goal.

<sup>39</sup>Kee, The Green Flag, p. 450.

<sup>40</sup>O'Luining, "Arthur Griffith," p. 59.

<sup>41</sup>Kee, The Green Flag, p. 450.

<sup>42</sup>Greaves, Liam Mellows, p. 276. The Countess Markievicz, for instance, raged at Griffith for selling out to bourgeois Unionists.

<sup>43</sup>Colum, Arthur Griffith, p. 296.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 296. The greater parts of Tyrone, Fermanagh, and portions of South Down and South Armagh, according to the author, were those areas envisaged by Griffith as eventual parts of the Free State.

<sup>45</sup>For another interpretation claiming that Griffith was not simply an arch-capitalist without social concerns, see, for instance, O'Luing, "Arthur Griffith," p. 61. The charge against Griffith is usually associated with his virulent anti-labor stance during the great Lock-out of 1913 (see below, p. 326) and his abhorrence of James Larkin's radical syndicalism. See, for instance, Lyons, Ireland Since the Famine, p. 276.

<sup>46</sup>A well known recent attack formulated by former minister Noel Browne basically charges that Griffith was a bigotted anti-labor reactionary who set the tone for the Sinn Fein revolutionaries and the future major parties of the Free State and Republic. This appears to be an oversimplification, although Sinn Fein was far from a radical economic and social party. A number of leaders (see below) who were moderates on the Treaty issue were to the left of Griffith in social areas. In fact, Griffith would represent only the extreme pole of Sinn Fein's conservative wing.

<sup>47</sup>"I have interrogated history; I have interrogated the living and the dead; I have visited cemeteries--no one spoke to me of it" (Humbaraci, A Revolution That Failed, p. 26).

<sup>48</sup>Quandt, Revolution and Political Leadership, p. 14.

<sup>49</sup>Farrell, Founding of Dail Eireann, pp. 20-21.

<sup>50</sup>As a Republican intransigent, Father O'Flanagan did not recognize the legitimacy of the "so-called Treaty."

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>52</sup>Though not of the guerrilla war variety, the events surrounding the Congo's independence suggest this natural advantage of maximalist demands. Crawford Young (Politics of the Congo [Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1965], p. 278) notes that a nationalist coalition was circumscribed by the ABAKO party's slogan "immediate independence," which "establish the framework for competition. . . . The absence of a single, comprehensive

nationalist movement rendered inevitable the triumph of the most radical demand. In the highly competitive atmosphere of 1959, no movement could long bear the animus of 'moderation.'" Yet, on the other hand, in another anticolonial setting, Ho Chi Minh was able to outflank his radical adversaries, and sign the compromise Fountainbleau Accords (1946) ("I am going to sign my death warrant" --Michael Collins had the exact same thoughts in 1922; only his sentiments became reality), and the Geneva Accords (1954). In 1946, "He returned home to force his comrades on the left to accept the disappointing pact. They did so largely because of the force of his personality and their mutual appreciation of his analysis" (Nina Adams, "Man in the Middle," New York Review of Books, 11 September 1969, pp. 43-45). Perhaps we might add that Ho probably assured his radicals that deference to France was merely a temporary expediency. In his words, "Better to sniff the French dung for awhile than eat China's all our lives." Of course, the charismatic Ho had a fairly cohesive Viet Minh at his back, compared to the situation in the Congo that featured a plethora of disparate ethnic/tribal/party affiliations with a number of "leaders."

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>54</sup>Kee (The Green Flag, pp. 596-97) notes, "Plunkett stood on no very clear policy at all, stating frankly that his claim on them was, 'as the father of his dead boy and his two sons who were serving penal servitude.'" As for McGuinness, again sympathy with the Rising participants was stressed in the campaign slogan (p. 598), "Put him in to get him out." De Valera (p. 601) assured voters during the campaign that another Rising wasn't even remotely possible, but was vague concerning the methods for attaining complete independence. Though Sinn Fein would appeal to the Paris Peace Conference, "while waiting they would be able to do a good deal in making John Bull uncomfortable."

<sup>55</sup>O'Broin, Revolutionary Underground, p. 140.

<sup>56</sup>Joseph Lee ("The Ribbonmen," in Secret Societies in Ireland, ed. T. Desmond Williams [Dublin: Gill & MacMillan, 1973], p. 31) notes that Ribbonmen outrages were, in fact, quite well planned and "rational," invariably concerned with a specific issue --a particular eviction, a rise in rents, a protest against the employment of laborers from another country. A number of their attributes call into question Hobsbawm's identification of secret rural violence and a political primitivism. "Perhaps the most enduring single impression left by Ribbonism is its efficiency-- its calculation, even its sophistication. Ribbon societies indulge in little of the impulsive, indiscriminate violence characteristic of sectarian riots or faction fights." Furthermore, "The Ribbonmen were parasitic neither on agriculture nor on travellers. . . . No charismatic leaders were needed to steel their resolve. They shared few of the illusions of European peasant rebels from the Atlantic to

the Urals that the 'good king' was on their side . . . felt no sense of identity with the British state" (p. 32). And in other ways Ribbonmen might be distinguished from Hobsbawm's Rebels. "Little anti-industrial or anti-urban feeling animated them . . . the strangers who roused Ribbon ire usually came from other rural communities. No genuine millenarian movements, endemic in most peasant societies, swept the Irish countryside . . . had as little in common with antiquarian dreamers wishing to restore a putative Gaelic Commonwealth as they had with continental banditti, . . . shared few of the egalitarian communalistic aspirations of . . . Andalusian peasant movements" (p. 33).

<sup>57</sup> Eric J. Hobsbawm, Primitive Rebels (New York: W.W. Norton, 1959), p. 2. The author also notes (p. 166) that the IRB fits into the continental patterns of secret brotherhoods, and is the longest existing example of its type. Marx singled out the Brotherhood as having special qualities of a "negative" socialism --it will appropriate land for the peasants--and an important role to play in the struggle against imperialism. So, "face to face with the old power of the sea," they will forge a Republic. (See Karl Marx, Capital [London: Wishart & Lawrence, 1970], I:chap. xxv). In general, though, he disavowed all secret brotherhoods as organizations embodying "superstitious authoritarianism" (Hobsbawm, Primitive Rebels, p. 169). Interestingly, the League of Communists, the organization that Marx wrote the Communist Manifesto for, was derived indirectly from the League of Outlaws, just such a group.

<sup>58</sup> Lee, "Ribbonmen," p. 29.

<sup>59</sup> Kee, The Green Flag, p. 373.

<sup>60</sup> T. Desmond Williams ("The Irish Republican Brotherhood," in Secret Societies in Ireland, ed. T. Desmond Williams [Dublin: Gill & MacMillan, 1973], p. 42) argues that the IRB were "far more humble in their social origins" than either the United Irishmen (1798) or Young Irelanders (1848). These were not middle-class idealists or aristocratic Protestants. Furthermore, these two predecessor movements "had begun as constitutional and reformist movements and were only driven to ally themselves with physical force by circumstances, sometimes by idealism, sometimes by revenge, but rarely by ideology."

<sup>61</sup> Coogan, Ireland Since the Rising, p. 8.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Formed in October 1879, its objectives were to reduce rents for tenant farmers (note that farm laborers were not included in this formulation), protect those threatened with eviction, and finally affect ownership of the land by compensating landlords with rents for a given number of years.

<sup>64</sup>Protestant farmers of Ulster did have the benefit of the Ulster Custom providing compensation for improvements and some degree of tenure security.

<sup>65</sup>O'Broin, Revolutionary Underground, p. 20.

<sup>66</sup>Kee, The Green Flag, p. 368.

<sup>67</sup>Coogan, Ireland Since the Rising, p. 8.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>70</sup>Kevin Nowlan, "Tom Clarke, MacDermott, and the IRB," in Leaders and Men of the Easter Rising: Dublin 1916, ed. F.X. Martin (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967), p. 112.

<sup>71</sup>Nicholas Mansergh, The Irish Question, 1840-1921 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1940), p. 228.

<sup>72</sup>O'Broin, Revolutionary Underground, p. 166.

<sup>73</sup>Kee, The Green Flag, p. 532.

<sup>74</sup>O'Broin, Revolutionary Underground, p. 167.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid.

<sup>76</sup>Nowlan, "Tom Clarke," p. 115.

<sup>77</sup>O'Broin, Revolutionary Underground, p. 168.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., p. 170. Hobson cited limits of Constitution, and notes that national consciousness of Irishmen is being raised in a slow process. Furthermore, a junta within the Supreme Council is responsible for the ill-founded policies.

<sup>79</sup>For instance, Florence O'Donoghue, in No Other Law: The Story of Liam Lynch and the Irish Republican Army, 1916-1923 (Dublin: Irish Press, 1954), p. 188, notes how the IRB had only a "nominal" influence in Lynch's area of operations in the southwest, for months prior to the Treaty. IRA men close to Dublin and General Headquarters (Collins, Mulcahy, Diarmud O'Hegarty, et al. were IRB men; see below p. ) may have felt more pressure from the organization.

<sup>80</sup>Lyons, Ireland Since the Famine, p. 438.

<sup>81</sup>P. Berresford Ellis, ed., James Connolly: Selected Writings (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1973), p. 23.

<sup>82</sup>C. Desmond Greaves, The Life and Times of James Connolly (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1961), p. 410.

<sup>83</sup>Pruinsias Mac an Bheatha, James Connolly and the Workers' Republic (Westport, Ireland: FNT, 1978), p. 64.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid., p. 65.

<sup>85</sup>Ellis, James Connolly, p. 22.

<sup>86</sup>F.S.L. Lyons points out that Pearse, the "blood sacrifice" poet, was the leader closest to Connolly's socialist vision. They differed, though, as to the crucial role to be played by the proletariat; the more "nationalist" Pearse positing all classes as equally relevant to the process of national redemption (Ireland Since the Famine, p. 333).

<sup>87</sup>Michael Harrington, Socialism (New York: Bantam, 1972), p. 57. The author cites Marx writing in 1850 warning that expedient alliances with petty bourgeois elements can lead to disaster: "From the very first moment of the victory, the workers must distrust not only the defeated reactionary party, but its former comrades as well." Greaves notes (Life and Times, p. 403) that Connolly was warning his comrades of the MacNeill faction of Volunteers, not Pearse, Clarke and other IRB members.

<sup>88</sup>Mac an Bheatha, James Connolly, p. 49.

<sup>89</sup>Dangerfield, The Damnable Question, p. 100.

<sup>90</sup>Sean O'Casey's "ode" to Mr. Murphy conveys the isolation apparently felt by members of the Citizen Army and ITWGU in their labor struggle: "What thou doest, we will do, what thou sayest we will say. Thy profits will be our profits; and thy god, ours too. And so it was. And so it was. Catholic, Protestant, Quaker and pagan employer joined hand and foot, flung their money into one bag, and with bishop and priest, viceroy and council, infantry man and cavalry trooper, and bludgeon-belted policeman, formed a square circle triangle and crescent to doom the workers" (Drums under the Window [London: Pan Books Ltd., 1973], p. 191). We have already mentioned Griffith's extreme aversion to Larkinite tactics. Furthermore, even IRB revolutionary leaders such as Bulmer Hobson (see, for instance, Strauss, Irish Nationalism, p. 220) were against exacerbating "class war" by aiding the strikers.

<sup>91</sup>Mac an Bheatha, James Connolly, p. 11.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>93</sup>John Dos Passos, in his famous novel The 42nd Parallel (the first of the U.S.A. trilogy), appears to recognize the radical Irish element in the Wobblies' development. Fenian O'Hara McCreary, or "Mac," is sympathetically portrayed as the "workin' stiff" hitting the roads and rails, eventually involved with the syndicalist movement. The unlearned "Fenian" (another name for an IRB member) acquires a class consciousness in his battles for the underdog worker. In reality, Fenians did not officially support the locked out workers of 1913, a policy that drove O'Casey to attack Bulmer Hobson as a reactionary.

<sup>94</sup>Mac an Bheatha, James Connolly, p. 16.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid., pp. 16, 18.

<sup>96</sup>Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>97</sup>Lyons, Ireland Since the Famine, p. 282.

<sup>98</sup>Greaves (Life and Times, p. 324) notes that the authorities armed the scabs once Connolly had issued a manifesto against "black-legs" and scabs imported from Liverpool. The key to their efforts would be the mass strike; anathema to the authorities. Connolly's manifesto reads: "Fellow workers, the employers are determined to starve you into submission and if you resist to club you, jail you, and kill you. We defy you. If they think they can carry on their industries without you, we will, in the words of the Ulster Orangemen, take steps to prevent it. Be men now, or be forever slaves" (note the almost universal references to the arming of the Ulstermen).

<sup>99</sup>Martin, "MacNeill and the Volunteers," pp. 121-22.

<sup>100</sup>Dangerfield, The Damnable Question, p. 196 (quote from Jacqueline Van Voris, Constance de Markievicz [Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1967], p. 121).

<sup>101</sup>White's Protestant background, Larkin's Liverpool birthplace, Connolly's Edinburgh birthplace, and Sean O'Casey's Protestant background, hint at the possible connection between "marginality" (see Chapter 10) and leadership of this most radical armed force.

<sup>102</sup>Dangerfield, The Damnable Question, p. 109. The author cites the work of Sean O'Casey for a description of the one depleted company remaining after the strike.

<sup>103</sup>Dangerfield, The Damnable Question, p. 109 (quote from R.M. Henry, The Evolution of Sinn Fein [Dublin: Gill & MacMillan, 1920], p. 193).

<sup>104</sup>Greaves, Life and Times, p. 341 (quote from Irish Worker, 14 March 1914).

<sup>105</sup>Ibid., p. 343.

<sup>106</sup>Ibid., p. 342.

<sup>107</sup>The Countess manned a soup kitchen during the lock-out, participated in the Rising, was the first woman elected (1918) to Westminster but served as Labour Minister in the revolutionary Dail Eireann and was a firm anti-Treatyite. O'Casey derided her efforts at feeding workers, criticized her lack of discipline in failing to master Gaelic, accused her of play-acting as a soldier, and wanted her off the Citizen Army Council. O'Casey (Drums, p. 213) writes: "No part of her melted in the cause of Ireland, nor did she ever set a foot on the threshold of Socialism. . . . But the movements were no more to her than the hedges over which her horses jumped. . . . She rushed into Arthur Griffith's arms, near knocking the man down; she danced into the Republicanism of the Irish Brotherhood; she stormed into the Gaelic League, but quickly slid out again, for the learning of Irish was too much like work; she bounded into the Volunteers one night, and into the Citizen Army the next. She then pounced on Connolly, and dazzled his eyes with her flashy enthusiasm." Aside from the specifics of a personal quarrel, one aspect of his tirade against the Countess is of particular interest for this study; namely, the multiplicity and fluidity of organizational ties cautions the researcher against making any grandiose correlations between "organizational membership" and the Treaty position.

<sup>108</sup>Dangerfield, The Damnable Question, p. 109. Sheefy-Skeffington was to meet a tragic fate during Easter week. He was picked up on the street and eventually executed by a deranged British Captain. (The officer spent less than two years in prison and retired to Canada--with a pension.)

<sup>109</sup>Greaves, Life and Times, p. 375.

<sup>110</sup>Dangerfield, The Damnable Question, p. 154 (quoted from James Connolly, Labour and Easter Week, ed. Desmond Ryan [Dublin: Gill & MacMillan, 1949], p. 91).

<sup>111</sup>Ibid., p. 153.

<sup>112</sup>Ibid., p. 155.

<sup>113</sup>Greaves, Life and Times, p. 407.

<sup>114</sup>Ibid., p. 423. Interestingly, Lenin applauded this nationalist Rising: "Whoever expects a pure social revolution will never live to see it. . . . The misfortune of the Irish was that they rose prematurely, when the European revolt of the proletariat had not yet matured."

<sup>115</sup> According to J.A. Murphy (Ireland in the Twentieth Century, p. 9), the Program was merely a concession to Labour. (Perhaps also to international socialist groups which did recognize Sinn Fein.) Also, it is a well-known fact that the original Programme drawn up by Thomas Johnson was watered down to make it acceptable to leaders such as Collins. Strangely, a marxist, Eric Strauss (Irish Nationalism, p. 263), cites the adoption of the Program as proof of radicals' ascendancy in the Dail (those that escaped the British "German Plot" round-up).

<sup>116</sup> Kee, The Green Flag, p. 201.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., p. 499.

<sup>118</sup> Martin, "MacNeill and the Volunteers," p. 175.

<sup>119</sup> F.X. Martin, ed., The Irish Volunteers, 1913-1915 (Dublin: James Duffy, 1964), p. 113.

<sup>120</sup> Originally formed to defend Ireland against a French invasion, "after regular troops had been withdrawn for the American war, and numbered some 40,000 by the end of 1778. Their physical force threat "strengthened the hand of men like Grattan... and other leading Protestant Patriots in their attempts in Parliament to get the commercial restrictions rescinded and the Irish claim to legislative independence acknowledged" (Kee, The Green Flag, pp. 31-32). By 1782 the Volunteers had grown to some 80,000 men, and extracted from the British authorities the recognition of the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland (i.e., Grattan's Parliament that would legislate for Irish affairs).

<sup>121</sup> For instance, the accepted figure for IRA support often quoted by moderate politicians in Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic is something like 2 percent of the population. A BBC-supported 1978 survey came up with such a low figure, thus justifying the suppression of this "terror" organization. The most recent survey carried out by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) published some shocking data in the Fall of 1979. Some 20 percent of the entire Irish population support, to some degree, the Provisional IRA, a figure denounced vehemently by leaders like Prime Minister John Lynch of the Irish Republic. True, there are some important qualifications to this startling evidence. Only 8 percent are moderate to strong supporters, while 13 percent are lukewarm, and in both cases one can merely be rubber-stamping the organization's goals rather than tactics. Still the figures are alarming for those committed to a nonviolent solution to the Irish problem. Lest we exaggerate the threat to "law and order," it should also be mentioned that some 50 percent of Northern Ireland's Catholics are willing to accept a political settlement within the United Kingdom, partition and all. This evidence does not warm the heart of IRA supporters. In other words, if some form of

equitable power-sharing executive can be negotiated between the two communities, the minority Catholics might accept the border laid down during the fateful days of the war of independence.

<sup>122</sup>Martin, "MacNeill and the Volunteers," p. 172.

<sup>123</sup>T. Desmond Williams, "Eain MacNeill and the Irish Volunteers," in Leaders and Men of the Easter Rising, ed. F.X. Martin (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967), p. 139.

<sup>124</sup>Ibid., p. 164.

<sup>125</sup>Though the Irish Freedom was an IRB periodical, O'Rahilly, due to his religious beliefs, had never joined the organization.

<sup>126</sup>Williams, "Eain MacNeill," p. 134.

<sup>127</sup>Ibid., p. 136.

<sup>128</sup>Ibid., pp. 136-37.

<sup>129</sup>Martin, "MacNeill and the Volunteers," p. 171.

<sup>130</sup>Ibid., p. 151.

<sup>131</sup>Ibid., pp. 135-36.

<sup>132</sup>Ibid., pp. 147-48.

<sup>133</sup>Ibid., p. 148.

<sup>134</sup>Ibid., p. 144.

<sup>135</sup>Ibid.

<sup>136</sup>Kee, The Green Flag, p. 519.

<sup>137</sup>Ibid., p. 520.

<sup>138</sup>Alistair Horne (A Savage War, p. 96) notes the similar dynamics characterizing the Algerian revolution and a number of anti-British struggles (Cyprus, Palestine, Ireland): "First comes the mass indiscriminate round-up of suspects, most of them innocent but converted into ardent militants by the fact of their imprisonment; then the setting of faces against liberal forms designed to tackle the root of the trouble; followed finally, when too late, by a new, progressive policy of liberalisation." In one sense, I would disagree with Horne; Britain really never moved beyond a partitioned settlement, at any time. Dan Breen, the IRA "gunman" writes (My Fight for Irish Freedom [Dublin: Talbot Press, 1930], p. 12): "in throwing men into

prison at that time England was really giving them an excellent opportunity of exchanging views, discussing plans for the future and generally turning the prison into a 'University for Rebels.'

<sup>139</sup>Bell, Secret Army, p. 17.

<sup>140</sup>Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>141</sup>It would be difficult to pinpoint exactly the moment when the populace shifted toward the Sinn Fein/IRA axis. Robert Kee notes, for instance, that at least six months after the Rising a Sinn Fein candidate was defeated handily at West Cork. But it would be safe to say that some time prior to the Conscription crisis the populace perceived all-Ireland Home Rule as a dead-letter; a crucial perception (The Green Flag, p. 591).

<sup>142</sup>Beckett, Making of Modern Ireland, pp. 444-45.

<sup>143</sup>Kee, The Green Flag, p. 623.

<sup>144</sup>Ibid., p. 627.

<sup>145</sup>Ibid., pp. 626-27.

<sup>146</sup>Ibid., p. 626.

<sup>147</sup>Ibid.

<sup>148</sup>Bell, Secret Army, p. 19.

<sup>149</sup>One could argue that British actions such as the "German plot" arrests or their determination to "occupy" Ireland (northeast partition) were acts of war against the Republic.

<sup>150</sup>Bell, Secret Army, p. 20.

<sup>151</sup>This state of affairs can be compared in some ways to the Algerian revolution. By 1958 the French Army had defeated the FLN in the urban guerrilla game (the Battle of Algiers), while the Merville Line held the forces of the "exterior" (Tunisian and Moroccan redoubts) in check. What they failed to do was completely crush the FLN bands throughout the interior "wilayas." The rest is history. French public opinion and world opinion limited precisely the tactics necessary for a "final solution."

<sup>152</sup>Bell, Secret Army, p. 24.

<sup>153</sup>Kee, The Green Flag, p. 653.

<sup>154</sup>Ibid.

<sup>155</sup>After sectarian rioting over civil rights issues and the employment of British troops (1960)--who quickly became identified with Protestant interests--the devolved government of Ulster, the Stormont Parliament, finally was replaced by direct rule from Westminster (March 1972). At the present time (Fall 1979), all parties involved in the conflict advance very different ideas of how to overcome this direct rule impasse. For instance, the Official Unionists are toying with the idea of complete integration with Great Britain rather than form a local government based on "power-sharing." The Catholic-based Social Democratic and Labour Party proposes that Britain should withdraw their traditional blanket "guarantee" to Protestant of "non-coercion" and support unification with the southern Republic. The Provisional IRA, in some ways the lineal descendants of a section of our anti-Treaty leadership, simply wants the "Brits Out" so that good Irishmen can solve their own problems. I remember well residents of a small IRA stronghold, Crossmaglen, in South Armagh, complaining that their British garrison was obviously an army of occupation but that direct rule was still necessary to assure the civil rights of, say, Belfast Catholics. Others wanted power-sharing and still others would never rest until the partition line was eradicated. Interestingly, troops or no troops, the flag of the Irish Republic is still flown about town.

<sup>156</sup>On May 25, 1921, the "greatest urban operation of the war" was carried out by Traynor's Dublin Brigade "destroying the Custom House, the seat of nine British administrative departments including two taxing departments and the Local Government Board" (Bell, Secret Army, p. 26). This occurred after De Valera returned from the United States with the supposed policy orientation of toning down the guerrilla actions.

<sup>157</sup>Macardle, The Irish Republic, p. 451.

<sup>158</sup>Sean O'Casey's caustic wit captures the apparent absurdity of "trifles" launching internecine division and blood-letting. As for Dev's document #2, he notes that "there was as much difference between the document flourished in the upper air by De Valera and the folio of the Treaty spread out on the ground at the feet of the people by Griffith and Collins as there would be between two eggs laid by the same hen at the same time" (Irishfallen, p. 87). On the other hand, Dangerfield argues that document #2 was a viable alternative that, if accepted by the British (a "big if"), may have forestalled the Civil War and engendered a united Ireland (The Damnable Question, pp. 316-17).

<sup>159</sup>Jones, Whitehall Diary, III:158.

<sup>160</sup>Bell, Secret Army, p. 31.

<sup>161</sup>Kee, The Green Flag, p. 732.

<sup>162</sup>Bell, Secret Army, p. 32.

<sup>163</sup>Perhaps we should have added the Gaelic League and Gaelic Athletic Association, as most of our leaders were also involved in these cultural and sports organization.

### Chapter III

#### A DEFINITION OF THE IRISH REVOLUTIONARY ELITE

##### Who Are the Elite?

From Mosca to Michels to C. Wright Mills, from Pareto to Harold Lasswell to Robert Dahl--social scientists of very different ideological persuasions have tried to come to grips with the thorny questions: "Who actually rules society?" and "How are we to identify the elite?"<sup>1</sup> The universal claims of the French Revolution generated a new urgency to this age-old question. For some, irresponsible (or indeed criminal) radical Jacobins had fostered a false egalitarian spirit among the masses of non-rulers, while others sought to justify the implementation of revolutionary gains or raise the ante in a new broadside attack on bourgeois rule. In some sense, then, the varied theorists mentioned above all represent a dialogue with Karl Marx, the intellectual giant, who peered beneath the formal ruling institutions of capitalist society to uncover what he thought to be the key characteristic of the elite--ownership of property. Marx's egalitarian vision of a utopian classless society, where oppressed proletarians would en masse usurp bourgeois society's narrowly restricted leadership roles, launched all sorts of polemical attacks, theoretical reactions, and qualifying statements. From the traditional "right" we learn that a small minority has always

ruled and, indeed, should continue to govern. Disciplines of the "left" expand Marx's definition to include non-property owners, who shouldn't be exerting a dominant influence in capitalist societies, while also pointing to an ossified, bureaucratic, New Class emerging in what are erroneously termed "socialist" countries. The liberal center has, for the most part, challenged Marx's denunciation of bourgeois democracy by demonstrating how key decisions are actually made by heterogeneous widely dispersed, elites, that should play "their vaunted roles" in pluralist societies.

Firstly, the conservative assault against socialist egalitarianism was led by such elite theorists as Gaetano Mosca, who wrote,

Among the constant facts and tendencies that are to be found in all political organism, one is so obvious that it is apparent to the most casual eye. In all societies --from societies that are very meagerly developed and have barely attained the dawns of civilization, down to the most advanced and powerful societies--two classes of people appear--a class that rules and a class that is ruled. The first class, always the less numerous, performs all political functions, monopolizes power and enjoys the advantages that power brings, whereas the second, the more numerous class, is directed and controlled by the first, in a manner that is now more or less formal, now more or less arbitrary and violent.<sup>2</sup>

According to T.B. Bottomore, Mosca along with Weber, Pareto, Michels et al.

intended above all to refute Marx's theory of social classes on two essential points: first, to show that the Marxist conception of a "ruling class" is erroneous, by demonstrating the continuous circulation of elites, which prevents in most societies, and especially in modern industrial societies, the formation of a stable and closed ruling class; and secondly, to show that a classless society is impossible, since in every society there is, and must be, a minority, who actually rules.<sup>3</sup>

And Robert Michels's classic study of the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) apparently proves just that; an "iron law of oligarchy" is at work forging a small bureaucratic leadership even within this supposed bastion of social democratic egalitarianism.<sup>4</sup> (Of course, one might inquire whether all German institutions, including the SPD, weren't infused with the widely held societal values of hierarchy and authoritarianism, thereby tarnishing his example, to a degree.)

At the opposite political pole, men with such diverse interests and backgrounds as C. Wright Mills and Milovan Djilas pinpoint elite power in their respective societies with the purpose of radically updating Marx (or "marxist" practitioners) by calling for greater participation of citizens in both the West and Soviet Bloc. The American sociologist Mills, for instance, "distinguishes three major elites in the USA--the corporation heads, the political leaders, and the military chiefs,"<sup>5</sup> which are virtually insulated from popular controls such as voting and demonstrate a unity of purpose, as well as "homogeneity of social origins."<sup>6</sup> Djilas, too, is unwilling to accept as necessary and unalterable what he describes as the New Class's assumption of power in the so-called socialist countries. A party hierarchy deriving its perquisites and power from party membership, rather than from the "ownership" of the means of production is the dominant feature of the Stalinist Party State.<sup>7</sup> And others have also traveled along Djilas's critical path in different settings. Many commentators have criticized a growing "political class" in newly independent African States (Fanon has termed them "the spoiled children of yesterday's colonialism"<sup>8</sup>),

those displaying bourgeois trappings without any real entrepreneurial function; a leadership class owing their preeminence to acquired political niche.

As for the democratic center, it is represented by such liberal pluralists as Robert Dahl, a political scientist whose description of elite power in the United States markedly differs from the radical or conservative critiques. Utilizing the city of New Haven as a microcosm of society, his book Who Governs? concludes that various elites do, in fact, "rule," depending on the specific issue at hand. Since access to the decision-making process is fairly open to competing elites, the world of pluralism remains viable and equitable.<sup>9</sup>

Suffice it to say, "how to identify the elite?" is indeed a difficult question. A bureaucratic elite, economic entrepreneurs, a "political" class, etc., or some combination of all of these, are the leadership. How are we to choose

#### Who Is an Irish Revolutionary Leader?

At first glance, we have no such problem when identifying an Irish revolutionary elite. For the period 1919-22, it is fairly obvious that the men who constituted the Sinn Fein/IRA were a political and military leadership that were effectively "allocating values" for society. The British administration was successfully challenged by Dail Eireann, the Dail courts, and IRA attacks on the Royal Irish Constabulary and British soldiers; the Anglo-Irish ascendancy class was more or less ignored or attached;<sup>10</sup> labour was

virtually without representation in the movement; big business may have supported the Treaty, but they certainly weren't calling the shots during the War; Sinn Fein/IRA radicalism was always one step (or two!) in front of the Catholic hierarchy; and the Parliamentary Party, which had dominated Irish politics for a generation, was totally demolished by the 1918 Khaki election, supplanted by the would-be revolutionaries. To restate an important point, the Sinn Fein/IRA countrywide support--minus Ulster Protestants and southern Unionists--was arguably greater than in any other twentieth-century revolutionary struggle. This democratic sanction was demonstrated at least twice in the polls; the second Dail Eireann (1921) elections (utilizing Lloyd George's Government of Ireland Bill electoral machinery) rubber-stamped a leadership that already had engaged the country in a guerrilla campaign.

Still, we are faced with the task of precisely delimiting the most important actors among this revolutionary elite. How are we to identify the Sinn Fein/IRA leaders?

If we take an instructive glance at the more recent "elite studies" literature, we find two general standards employed to select the leadership: (a) institutional criteria and (b) functional criteria. The former has been criticized for its narrow boundaries; researchers merely tallying up lists of the central committees, parliaments, etc. with little attention paid to political actors not formally members of governing institutions, but powerful nonetheless. Functional criteria, on the other hand, are often paid lip-service compliments, but it is an approach difficult to operationalize.

Dankwart Rustow, for one, warns that the search for functional criteria that identify the "actual" elite may "open a veritable Pandora's Box of arbitrary decisions."<sup>11</sup> The danger of inherent circularity in the scholar's reasoning is readily apparent since "to study politics beneath the facade he wants to examine the real leaders, but to do so, he must already know enough about the real process to identify them."<sup>12</sup> In short, what are the "functional" standards that discriminate between "leader" and "non-leader"? How does the researcher pare down the seemingly infinite number candidates for elite status, once his scope widens beyond an institutional framework? Usually, it seems that the practical rule of thumb is to use whatever data sources are available, which means most often an institutional sample. Very few scholars have the good fortune of a Daniel Lerner to come upon a Fuehrer-lexikon, which neatly packages biographical sketches of the most important Nazis from all walks of life.<sup>13</sup>

Some have been partially successful in combining the two criteria in their work. For instance, Frederick Frey in his study of the social characteristics of the dominant political elite of Turkey (i.e., the Grand National Assembly) chose to qualify the institutional definition by functionally differentiating between formally equal deputies.<sup>14</sup> Others, such as Wendell Bell, in his background analysis of Jamaican leaders broadens the leadership group to include "persons occupying the command posts" of society (businessmen, educators, etc.), as well as official officeholders.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, Lasswell and Lerner pursue the "functional" imperative in

their "contextual" definition of political elites.<sup>16</sup> They take into account such leadership categories as "all individuals who, though holding no high office, or any office, are perceived as highly influential in important decisions." Each of these, of course, still lay themselves open to Rustow's criticism.

### The Sinn Fein/IRA Elite

Our elite will be chosen from essentially an "institutional" standard--only the formally leading members of the various revolutionary organs--accompanied by qualifications that restrict the leadership somewhat further. Every leader must be mentioned at least twice in the index sections of four of the following varied and representative works: (Republican-oriented) Dorothy Macardle's The Irish Republic, C. Desmond Greaves's Liam Mellows and the Irish Revolution, Robert Brennan's Allegiance, Frank Gallagher's Four Glorious Years; (Free State-oriented) P.S. O'Hegarty's The Victory of Sinn Fein, Piaras Beaslai's Michael Collins and the Making of a New Ireland, Padraic Colum's Ourselves Alone; (more impartial accounts) Robert Kee's The Green Flag, George Dangerfield's The Damnable Question, F.S.L. Lyons's Ireland Since the Famine, Calton Younger's Ireland Civil War, Leon O'Broin's Revolutionary Underground.

The institutional categories would include:

1. Members of the Sinn Fein Executive (October 1917 uniting Ard-Fheis)
2. The Volunteers (IRA) National Executive (formed October 27, 1917)
3. Members of the IRB Supreme Council (from 1914 onward)

4. IRA General Headquarters Staff (throughout the war)
5. All Cabinet members of the First and Second Dail Eireann
6. The most important Dail Eireann deputies (i.e., utilizing the "index" criteria)
7. The most active IRA commandants in the field (i.e., again utilizing the "index" criteria)

1. As we have already mentioned, the October 1917 Sinn Fein Ard-Fheis created a broad front of advanced nationalists and, therefore, its Executive represents a cross-section of militants and moderates who all basically rejected the abortive Home Rule strategy.

President: Eamon De Valera  
 Vice-Presidents: Arthur Griffith, Father O'Flanagan  
 Honorary Secretaries: Austin Stack, Darrell Figgis  
 Treasurers: Lawrence Ginnell, William Cosgrave  
 Executive: Michael Collins, Eoin MacNeill, Cathal Brugha, Richard Hayes, Fionan Lynch, Sean Milroy, Countess Markievicz, Count Plunkett, Piaras Beaslai, J. Harry Boland, J.J. Walsh, Mrs. Tom Clarke, Diarmuid Lynch, Sean T. O'Keilly, Sean MacEntee, Mrs. Joe Plunkett

Those not meeting the index requirement include: Joe MacGuinness, Dr. K. Lynn, Fr. Matt Ryan, Fr. Wall, D. Kent, Dr. T. Dillou, Joseph Macdonagh

2. The Irish Volunteers Executive (October 1917) was the military body complementing the Sinn Fein political arm, although it developed somewhat independently. Note that the old, pre-Rising Volunteers and Sinn Fein were headed by Eoin MacNeill and Arthur Griffith respectively; moderates now superseded, but nonetheless, coopted into only the above political front.

De Valera, Brugha, Mulcahy, Sean McGarry, Rory O'Connor, Michael Collins, Diarmuid Lynch, Con Collins, Sean MacEntee, Eoin O'Duffy, Eamonn Duggan, Georoid O'Sullivan, Diarmuid O'Hegarty, Austin Stack

3. The Supreme Council members included such leaders as the ouster Bulmer Hobson and Denis McCullough, obvious choices for at least fomenting the revolution.

Bulmer Hobson  
 Denis McCullough  
 (Pres.) Michael Collins )  
 P.S. O'Hegarty ) 1920 Executive  
 Sean O'Muirthile )  
 Liam Lynch  
 Diarmuid Lynch  
 Harry Boland  
 Eoin O'Duffy  
 Dr. Pat Macartan  
 Diarmuid O'Hegarty  
 Sean McKeon  
 Austin Stack  
 Pat O'Keefe (Sec.)  
 Georoid O'Sullivan  
 Sean McGarry  
 Liam Mellows

4. The First Dail Eireann met on January 29, 1919, only twenty-five attending this historic meeting. Thirty-four elected deputies were absent courtesy of the Crown's jailers. Therefore, a full Sinn Fein contingent would have undoubtedly yielded a different mix of Cabinet Members.

#### First Dail Eireann

Speaker: Sean T. O'Kelley  
 President: De Valera  
 Home Affairs: Arthur Griffith  
 Foreign Affairs: Count Plunkett  
 Defense: Cathal Brugha  
 Labour: Countess Markievicz  
 Local Government: William Cosgrave  
 Finance: Michael Collins  
 Agriculture: Robert Barton  
 Propaganda: Lawrence Ginnell  
 Trade and Commerce: Ernest Blythe

#### Second Dail Eireann (August 26, 1920)

Speaker: Eoin MacNeill  
 President: De Valera

Foreign Affairs: Arthur Griffith  
 Home Affairs: Austin Stack  
 Defense: Cathal Brugha  
 Finance: Michael Collins  
 Local Government: William Cosgrave  
 Economic Affairs: Robert Barton

Ministers outside the Cabinet:

Fine Arts: Count Plunkett  
 Asst. Local Government: Kevin O'Higgins  
 Propaganda: Desmond Fitzgerald  
 Education: J.J. O'Kelley  
 Labour: Countess Markievicz  
 Trade and Communication: Ernest Blythe  
 Agriculture: Art O'Connor (doesn't meet "index")  
 Fisheries: Sean Etchingham

5. The IRA General Headquarters Staff (Summer 1921):

Mulcahy: Chief of Staff  
 Eoin O'Duffy and J.J. O'Connell: Assistant to  
 C/S (Stack was Deputy C/S for a time)  
 Georoid O'Sullivan: Adjutant General  
 Diarmuid O'Hegarty: Director of Organization  
 Sean MacMahon: Quartermaster General (doesn't  
 meet "index" requirement)  
 Michael Collins: Director of Intelligence  
 Liam Tobin: Asst. Director of Intelligence  
 Emmett Dalton: Director of Training  
 Rory O'Connor: Director of Engineering  
 Liam Mellows: Director of Purchases  
 Sean Russell: Director of Munitions  
 Piaras Beaslai: Director of Publicity  
 Seumas O'Donovan: Director of Chemicals  
 (doesn't meet "index" requirement)

6. Aside from leaders already listed, other important Dail

Deputies would include:

Erskine Childers  
 Frank Gallagher  
 Sean Moylan  
 Gerry Boland  
 Seumas Robinson  
 Dr. James Ryan  
 Robert Brennan (Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs)  
 Mary MacSwiney  
 Mrs. O'Callaghan  
 Mrs. Pearse

Grace Plunkett  
 George Gavan Duffy  
 Batt O'Connor  
 Sean Hales  
 Frank Fahy  
 Tom Derrig  
 Michael Hayes  
 P.J. Little  
 Sean Moylan

7. The most active IRA officers (i.e., those not included in above categories):

Frank Aiken  
 Tom Barry  
 Florence O'Donoghue  
 Oscar Traynor  
 Michael Brennan  
 Frank Aiken  
 Dan Breen  
 Charles Dalton  
 Liam Deasy  
 Ernie O'Malley  
 Sean Lemass  
 Sean O'Hegarty  
 Peadar O'Donnell  
 Maurice Twomey  
 Frank Ryan  
 Joe McKelvey  
 P.J. Rutledge  
 Tom Hales  
 Richard Barrett

(See Table I for organization affiliations of members of the leadership; see Table II for a Republican/Free Stater breakdown.)

A few qualifying remarks should be directed at this selection process. First, a number of important nationalists are excluded on somewhat arbitrary grounds. Take, for example, William Butler Yeats. The towering poet of the period had in September 1913 declared, "Romantic Ireland's dead and gone," only to reassess Ireland's revolutionary potential in The Easter Rising ("All changed, changed

TABLE I: The Leadership

	Sinn Fein Executive	Volunteers Executive	IRB Supreme Council	IRA GHQ	Dail Eireann Cabinet Members	Other Dail Members	(non-Dail members) most active IRA commandants
Frank Aiken							★
Richard Barrett							★
Tom Barry							★
Robert Barton					★		
Piaras Beaslai	★		★	★	★		
Ernest Blythe					★		
Gerry Boland						★	
Harry Boland	★		★		★		
Dan Breen						★	★
Robert Brennan						★	
Cathal Brugha	★	★			★		
Erskine Childers						★	
Mrs. Tom Clarke	★					★	
Con Collins						★	
Michael Collins	★	★	★	★	★		
William Cosgrave	★				★		
Charles Dalton							★
Emmet Dalton				★			

(continued)

TABLE I, continued

	Sinn Fein Executive	Volunteers Executive	IRB Supreme Council	IRA GHQ	Dail Eireann Cabinet Members	Other Dail Members	(non-Dail members) most active IRA commandants
Liam Deasy							★
Tom Derrig						★	
Eamon De Valera	★	★			★		
George Gavan Duffy						★	
Eamonn Duggan		★				★	
Sean Etchingham					★		
Frank Fahy						★	
Darrell Figgis	★						
Desmond Fitzgerald					★		
Frank Gallagher						★	
Lawrence Ginnell	★				★		
Arthur Griffith	★				★		
Sean Hales						★	
Tom Hales							★
Michael Hayes						★	
Dr. Richard Hayes	★					★	
Bulmer Hobson			★				
Pat Hogan					★		
Sean Lamass							★

TABLE I, continued

	Sinn Fein Executive	Volunteers Executive	IRB Supreme Council	IRA GHQ	Dail Eireann Cabinet Members	Other Dail Members	(non-Dail members) most active IRA commandants
P.J. Little						★	
Diarmuid Lynch	★	★	★			★	
Fionan Lynch	★					★	
Liam Lynch			★				★
Dr. Pat Macartan			★			★	
Sean MacEntee	★	★					
Sean MacEoin			★				
Sean MacGarry		★	★			★	
Eoin MacNeill	★				★		
Mary MacSwiney						★	
Countess Markievicz	★				★		
Denis McCullough			★				
Joseph McGrath						★	
Joseph McKelvey							★
Liam Mellows				★		★	
Sean Milroy	★					★	
Sean Moylan						★	
Richard Mulcahy		★		★		★	
Mrs. O'Callaghan						★	

TABLE I, continued

	Sinn Fein Executive	Volunteers Executive	IRB Supreme Council	IRA GHQ	Dail Eireann Cabinet Members	Other Dail Members	(non-Dail members) most active IRA commandants
J.J. O'Connell				★			
Batt O'Connor						★	
Rory O'Connor		★		★		★	
Peador O'Donnell						★	
Florence O'Donoghue							★
Eoin O'Duffy		★		★		★	
Father O'Flanagan	★					★	
Diarmuid O'Hegarty		★		★		★	
P.S. O'Hegarty			★				
Sean O'Hegarty							★
Kevin O'Higgins					★		
Patrick O'Keefe			★				
Sean J. O'Kelley					★		
Sean T. O'Kelley	★				★		
Ernie O'Malley							★
Sean O'Muirthile			★				
Georoid O'Sullivan		★	★			★	
Mrs. Pearse						★	
Count Plunkett	★				★		

TABLE I, continued

	Sinn Fein Executive	Volunteers Executive	IRB Supreme Council	IRA GHQ	Dail Eireann Cabinet Members	Other Dail Members	(non-Dail members) most active IRA commandants
Mrs. Joe Plunkett	★					★	
Seumas Robinson						★	
Sean Russell				★		★	
P.J. Rutledge						★	
Frank Ryan						★	
Dr. James Ryan						★	
Austin Stack	★	★	★		★		
Liam Tobin				★			
Oscary Traynor							★
Maurice Twomey							★
J.J. Walsh	★					★	

TABLE II: The Leadership: Elite Republicans  
and Free Staters

Republicans	Free Staters
Frank Aiken	Piaras Beaslai
Richard Barrett	Ernest Blythe
Tom Barry	Con Collins
Robert Barton	Michael Collins
Gerry Boland	William Cosgrave
Harry Boland	Charles Dalton
Dan Breen	Emmet Dalton
Robert Brennan	Eamonn Duggan
Cathal Brugha	Darrell Figgis
Erskine Childers	Desmond Fitzgerald
Mrs. Tom Clarke	Arthur Griffith
Liam Deasy	Sean Hales
Tom Derrig	Michael Hayes
Eamon De Valera	Dr. Richard Hayes
George Gavan Duffy	Bulmer Hobson
Sean Etchingham	Pat Hogan
Frank Fahy	P.J. Little
Frank Gallagher	Fionan Lynch
Lawrence Ginneil	Dr. Pat Macartan
Tom Hales	Sean MacEoin
Sean Lemass	Eoin MacNeill
Diarmuid Lynch	Denis McCullough
Liam Lynch	Sean McGarry
Joe MacDonagh	Joe McGrath
Sean MacEntee	Sean Milroy
Mary MacSwiney	Richard Mulcahy
Countess Markievicz	J.J. O'Connell
Joe McKelvey	Batt O'Connor
Liam Mellows	Eoin O'Duffy
Sean Moylan	Diarmuid O'Hegarty
Mrs. O'Callaghan	P.S. O'Hegarty
Rory O'Connor	Kevin O'Higgins
Peadar O'Donnell	Patrick O'Keefe
Florence O'Donoghue	Sean O'Muirthile
Father O'Flanagan	Georoid O'Sullivan
Sean O'Hegarty	Liam Tobin
Sean J. O'Kelley	J.J. Walsh
Sean T. O'Kelley	
Ernie O'Malley	
Mrs. Pearse	
Liam Pilkington	
Count Plunkett	
Mrs. Joe Plunkett	

utterly: A terrible beauty is born") and his ode to "blood sacrifice,"

The Rose Tree:

"But where can we draw water,"  
Said Pearse to Connolly,  
"When all the wells are parched away?  
O plain as plain can be  
There's nothing but our own red blood  
Can make a right Rose Tree."

Later on in his life, he wondered in print whether poetic images had not driven the 1916 martyrs towards the firing squad. Clearly, his ultranationalist plays, like Caitlin ni Houlihan, added heat to the revolutionary atmosphere, but was he an actual leader? We have decided that he was not. Also excluded are well-known writers like Sean O'Casey (an IRB dropout and Citizen Army enthusiast), who were aloof from the struggle, while being important in the "mobilization," and cultural nationalists, such as Douglas Hyde. Labour leaders, Thomas Johnson, William O'Brien, et al., were omitted for reasons previously stated. And, in general, the Sinn Fein/IRA are the revolutionary organs that delimit the elite.

Secondly, there are some real difficulties involved with applying an "index" criteria. The sample standard, "frequency of times cited" does not discriminate between important references to individuals and just passing mention, tends to inflate the numbers of Republican diehards that met with often sensational and tragic fates after the Treaty divide (i.e., Free State executions); and it may overstate the relevance of leaders who are listed as formal officers and high ranking members of various organizations, but were largely figureheads or lackluster political actors. Furthermore,

revolutionaries who would one day be major figures in Ireland are perhaps given a hindsight nudge toward 1916-22 fame. (Would Sean Lemass's name be noted frequently if he were not to become Prime Minister more than forty years later?)

Problems notwithstanding, this writer feels the following overall list of Irish revolutionaries holds up rather well as a fairly exhaustive elite sample. We have broken the leadership down along their Civil War positions. (Note that in some cases, like Robert Barton, Treaty vote was not a leader's final decision.)

In the following chapters, the background characteristics of these leaders will be examined to determine which are linked to their Treaty position. The next five chapters will discuss those factors associated with the elite's adult revolutionary performance (Easter Rising participation, "military" versus "political" job role, friendship circles, IRB membership, and economic and social attitudes); those variables deemed most suggestive as explanations for Sinn Fein/IRA behavior. The last chapters will examine background factors associated with a more distant period in the lives of the elite not rooted in the struggle itself, or characteristics simply part of an individual from birth (family background, education, age, occupation, "marginality"--Protestant religion, foreign birth, Ulster upbringing, feminine gender). As a group, these variables are less helpful for explaining elite behavior in 1922.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Cohan (The Irish Political Elite, pp. 9-10) begins his timely discussion well before the period of Marx, Mosca, Michels, et al. In fact, he notes that from Aristotle on most theorists asked the questions "who should rule" and "how should they rule." We begin our discussion with the focus on sociologists interested in pointing out "who does rule."

<sup>2</sup>T.B. Bottomore, Elites in Society (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1972), p. 9.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 17-18.

<sup>4</sup>Seymour Martin Lipset writes in the introduction to Michel's Political Parties (New York: Collier Books, 1962) of the author's views of the SPD: "Michel's predictions that the behavior of the party leaders would reflect bureaucratic conservatism rather than adherence to ideology or defense of their members' interests, were seemingly validated just three years after the book was published. The great German Social Democratic Party, the pride of the Socialist International, the defender of international peace, which opposed the policies of the Kaiser's government and promised to call a general strike in the event of war, supported the war as soon as it was declared in 1914."

<sup>5</sup>Bottomore, Elites in Society, p. 33.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>7</sup>Milovan Djilas writes (The New Class [New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1969], p. 42) of Soviet society and Party rule: "The monopoly which the new class establishes in the name of the working class over the whole of society is, primarily, a monopoly over the working class itself. . . . Former sons of the working class are the most steadfast members of the new class. It has always been the fate of slaves to provide for their masters the most clever and gifted representatives. In this case a new exploiting and governing class is born from the exploited class."

<sup>8</sup>A phrase used in Fanon's Wretched of the Earth.

<sup>9</sup>Robert Dahl (Who Governs? [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961], pp. 190-220) outlines a number of patterns of leadership that "governed" New Haven at various times and on different issues. The patterns include the pre-Mayor Lee (1953) "independent sovereignties" to an "executive-centered coalition," etc.

<sup>10</sup>When the dreaded Black and Tans began to fire Catholic nationalist homes, for instance, the great Anglo-Irish mansions became targets for retribution. Be that as it may, it is a striking fact of the Irish Revolution how little real violence was aimed at the historically privileged class. As mentioned previously, Sinn Fein members, like Griffith, were attacked for supposedly toadying to this group during the Treaty debate period.

<sup>11</sup>Rustow, "The Study of Elites," p. 701.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Lerner, et al., "The Nazi Elite."

<sup>14</sup>Frey, Turkish Political Elite, p. 23.

<sup>15</sup>Wendell Bell, Jamaican Leaders: Political Attitudes in a New Nation (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964), p. 63.

<sup>16</sup>Lasswell and Lerner (World Revolutionary Elites, p. 6) state: "The approach must be contextual; if arbitrary characterizations are to be avoided, it must locate power elites in the context of the relevant process."

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

## Chapter IV

BACKGROUND VARIABLE: PARTICIPATION IN  
THE EASTER RISING

Ideas ripen quickly when watered by the  
blood of martyrs.

Mazzini<sup>1</sup>

Give up blood and soul  
For the sake of the hidden beauty  
to die or to conquer the mount

Hymn of Betar  
Jabotinsky's revisionist  
Zionists<sup>2</sup>

I do not grudge them; Lord, I do not grudge  
My two strong sons that I have seen go out  
To break themselves and die, they and a few,  
In bloody protest for a glorious thing.

from The Mother by  
Padraic Pearse<sup>3</sup>

The Insurrection though it has failed will  
leave a wonderful effect on the country.  
We will die but it will be a different  
Ireland after us.

Thomas Clarke<sup>4</sup>

How does participation in a semi-suicidal "blood sacrifice" affect the survivors' attitudes toward political extremism and Republican intransigence? Are the lessons learned from a personal reprieve that of moderate and the sensibility of negotiated compromise, or an increasing reliance upon the most radical course

of action? William Quandt, for one, tells us that Algeria's FLN were more apt to accept moderate elements in their leadership front after the pieds noirs and French Army's fierce reaction to the 1954 rising. (Horne implies quite the opposite thesis.<sup>5</sup>) And Brian Farrell similarly views the Irish events of Easter Week 1916 as a turning point toward broad coalition-making and lesser ideological purity for Sinn Feiners. Survivors were to be eminently moderate revolutionaries.<sup>6</sup> In the case of Ireland, at least, these general assertions do not hold up under the close scrutiny of a head count. The evidence described in detail below suggests that the "Men of the Rising" (1916) were no more disposed to an "irregular" hard-line Civil War position in 1922 than any number of Sinn Fein revolutionaries (1919-21) who were not Easter Week insurrectionaries. Yet those moderate critics of the seemingly doomed rebellion are indeed closely associated with the compromise Free State. Thus, in this case, correlations between background and behavior are partially helpful for understanding the eventual leadership schism.

#### Historical Background of the Rising: Ideologues of the "Blood Sacrifice"

Such diverse movements as nineteenth-century Italian nationalism, the right-wing Zionist campaign to create Eretz Israel, the Algerian FLN, the Palestinian Liberation Organization, and other national liberation fronts, all share with the Easter Week leaders a similar notion of a "blood sacrifice" resurrecting a real or imagined nation.<sup>7</sup> Certainly it is a costly gesture; the price paid for

redeeming a lost or flagging nationalism and breaking with the colonizer. In the Irish experience the "sacrifice" may be considered the very outset of revolution, although some would stress the continuity of the entire 1912-23 nationalist period, and the aberrant nature of the Rising. It has been designated Ireland's finest hour, or seen as an event whose violent mystique has straight-jacketed the thinking of future generations of Republicans. F.X. Martin has suggested the vocative term, "blood protest,"<sup>8</sup> to differentiate the Easter Week events from a revolution aimed at an actual overthrow of governmental authority. Basically a limited insurrection, the Rising participants were mystically pursuing the suicidal gesture that ultimately proved successful beyond their wildest dreams.

The notion of a "blood sacrifice" was the brainchild of that small group of IRB conspirators--Pearse, Clarke, Plunkett, MacDonagh and company. As F.S.L. Lyong observes, "In the years immediately before 1916 we find each of them emphatically and deliberately giving to his nationalism a religious quality . . . a religion of Apocalypse."<sup>9</sup> Their writing, and especially their poetry (Crane Brinton's radical "men of words" personified?) gives every indication of their pursuit of martyrdom.

The nationalist schoolmaster of St. Enda's, Padraic Pearse, is clearly the major ideologue of the sacrifice mentality. Suffering, redemption, blood as a cleanser of humanity (surely a pre-Somme, Verdun, Gallipoli, etc. theme!), and Christ the violent avenger, are all central motifs of his voluminous writings.

We may make mistakes in the beginning and shoot the wrong people [author's note: Camus' Rebel had a very different standard]; but bloodshed is a cleansing and sanctifying thing, and the nation which regards it is the final horror has lost its manhood. There are many things more horrible than bloodshed; and slavery is one of them.<sup>10</sup>

And the ode to World War I (not dissimilar to those of the Italian "futurists" or D.H. Lawrence):

The last 6 months have been the most glorious in the history of Europe. . . . It is good for the world that such things should be done. The old heart of the earth had to be warmed with the red wine of the battlefields. Such august homage of millions of lives given gladly for love of country.<sup>11</sup>

The Holy Christian genre is also well represented:

Ireland will not find Christ's peace until she has taken Christ's sword. What peace she has known in these latter days has been the devil's peace, peace with sin, peace with dishonor. . . . Christ's peace is lovely in its coming, beautiful are its feet on the mountains. But it is heralded by terrific messengers; seraphim and cherubim blow trumpets of war before it. We must not flinch when we are passing through that uproar; we must not faint at the sight of blood. Winning through it, we (or those of us who survive) shall come unto great joy.<sup>12</sup>

Pearse's IRB Military Council comrades, and fellow Proclamation signatories--Thomas MacDonagh and Joseph Mary Plunkett--were similarly creators of the poetic imagery of the religious "blood protest." Lyons observes that MacDonagh accentuates "not divine love but divine justice" in his poem, "Wishes for my son":

Wild and perilous holy things  
Flaming with a martyrs blood,  
and the joy that laughs and sings  
Where a foe must be withstood,  
Joy of headlong happy chance  
Leading on the battle dance.<sup>13</sup>

As for Plunkett, Lyons notes that "in the 'Little Black Rose Shall Be Red At Last,' Plunkett, whose own last act upon earth was to

marry Grace Gifford in his cell the night before execution, addressed himself to the dark rose, the traditional image of conquered Ireland."<sup>14</sup> A few lines should suffice to demonstrate a deeply felt impulse for martyrdom:

And we two lovers, long but one in mind  
And soul, are made one only flesh at length;  
Praise God, if this my blood fulfills the doom  
When you, dark rose, shall redden into bloom.<sup>15</sup>

And even the hard-headed socialist James Connolly, who had scathingly attacked the "blitherin' idiot" Pearse for his "red wine of the battlefield" nonsense, was, in part, wedded to the idea of a "blood sacrifice." The tirade against Pearse came in the January 30, 1915 The Worker:

there is no such thing as a humane or civilized war. War may be forced upon a subject race or class to put an end to subjection of race, class or sex. When so waged it must be waged thoroughly and relentlessly, but with no delusion as to its elevating nature, or civilizing methods.<sup>16</sup>

Yet, he retreats from this eminently realistic assessment of the role of violence, and sounds more like the "sacrifice" poets writing in the February 1916 The Workers' Republic: "[W]e recognize that of us, as of mankind before Calvary it may be truly said, 'without the shedding of blood there is no redemption.'"<sup>17</sup> Remember, too, Connolly had attacked the General Post Office with absolutely no chance--in his words "none whatever"--of actually attaining the Republic.

#### The Eve of the Rising

Thus the secret IRB Military Council clique, and the Citizen's Army's Connolly, those called by Jacques Maritain the "prophetic shock

minority,"<sup>18</sup> had clearly enunciated their future insurrectionary plans in poetic religious imagery. The message was certainly underestimated, if not ignored, by the Dublin Castle authorities. Throughout 1915 and early 1916, Volunteer and Citizen Army drilling was permitted, while arrests of advanced nationalists were limited. Dangerfield observes that Augustine Birrell (Chief Secretary for Ireland) and Sir Matthew Nathan (Undersecretary for Ireland and effective head of British Administration), "pursued their policy --on the whole a sensible one--of 'minimum action and maximum inaction.'"<sup>19</sup> Birrell was particularly nervous that a universally despised Conscription Bill for Ireland would ignite the potentially revolutionary atmosphere. Yet, on the very eve of the Rising the Chief Secretary was secure that a policy of "conciliation" and "firmness"<sup>20</sup> had forestalled any possible rebellion.<sup>21</sup> A scant two weeks prior to Easter Monday, Sir Matthew Nathan naively assessed advanced nationalist strength: "Though the Irish Volunteer element had been active of late, especially in Dublin, I do not believe that its leaders mean insurrection or that the Volunteers have sufficient arms if the leaders mean it."<sup>22</sup> And given the Castle's knowledge of MacNeill countermanding the orders for the Volunteers' Easter Sunday mobilization; the scuttling of the Aud with its cargo of 20,000 rifles (old Russian models captured by Germans in 1914), 10 machine guns, and one million rounds of ammunition, on April 22; and the capture of the "renegade Englishman," Sir Roger Casement, on the west coast without a hint of German soldiers or an Irish Prisoner of War brigade (by then a disillusioned Casement, misled by the

Germans, had written in his diary that the Rising was "the maddest most ill-planned enterprise . . . militarily . . . beneath contempt"<sup>23</sup>); there seemed little cause for concern Easter Monday.

### Insurrection!!

The events of the following week are well known. On Easter Monday the Republic was declared on the steps of the General Post Office, Dublin, and thereafter the insurrection was basically restricted to the capitol, although "side-shows" did occur in areas such as Galway and Wexford. With Dublin holding center stage for a week, some 1300 Volunteers and Citizen Army insurgents defended static positions and defied the Empire with consummate bravery. Shelled from a gunboat on the Liffey and bombarded by incendiary artillery,<sup>24</sup> cut off from the countryside, and unable to halt the steady reinforcements of the undermanned British troops (only 2500 available on Easter Monday), the leaders of the declared Republic were forced to surrender. The cost of fighting was great in terms of money and human life. The price of destroyed property was approximately £2,500,000: "116 military killed and 368 wounded; . . . 318 civilians and insurgents killed [note: perhaps as few as 56 revolutionaries] and 2,217 wounded."<sup>25</sup> In the Rising's aftermath more than 2,000 advanced nationalists of all types--including Griffith and MacNeill--were rounded up and interned; a veritable British recruiting program for the "schools" of revolution at Frongoch and Dartmoor prisons.<sup>26</sup>

From the perspective of hindsight, a few general points might be made concerning this momentous event. First, as Nicholas

Mansergh suggests, the major historical irony was that the leaders declared a secular all-Ireland Republic with a healthy dose of socialism. The commitment was particularly firm on the one-nation ideal. What eventually emerged from this period, of course, was a very different creation; a partitioned island having a Catholic-dominated 26-county Southern State, a 6-county Protestant "statelet" to the North, and capitalist economies on either side of the sectarian border. The "blood protest" could not rally a Protestant community to any all-Ireland government, rather it hardened communal lines of cleavage and division.

Secondly, the "sacrifice" might well have engendered a countryside Catholic insurrection given a number of historical "ifs"; "if" the original Volunteer mobilization order was not cancelled; "if" the arms aboard the Aud were distributed to the Volunteer rank-and-file; and "if" the early successful rebels could break out of their static Dublin positions. Perhaps the "blood sacrifice" was not a pre-ordained suicidal gesture but a victim of unforeseen accidents and mistakes. On this score, F.X. Martin suggests that the IRB conspirators' secrecy, which assured against the Irish revolutionary's traditional nemesis--betrayal--also nullified the usefulness of the IRB's nationwide network of "circles."<sup>27</sup>

Thus, we might describe the Rising as a short-run disaster, almost universally condemned, while the martyrdom of its leadership eventually transformed it into an event of mythic proportions promoting independence for at least the South. P.S. O'Hegarty, a member of the Supreme Council of the IRB, outlines

the "disaster" portion of the story:

Irish regiments fought against their own country; in some areas the Redmond Volunteers offered their services . . . for police duties and for guarding bridges and railroads; the people of Dublin welcomed the incoming forces, slobbered over them, and fed them; Volunteers being marched through the streets after the surrender were looked on coldly and sometimes hostilely.<sup>28</sup>

English papers, Unionist-oriented Irish dailies, such as The Irish Times, and the Nationalist Party's press, The Freeman's Journal, along with Home Rule spokesmen, all heartily condemned the insurrectionaries. The London Times April 26th issue somberly noted, "It is evidently the result of a carefully arranged [emphasis added] plot, concocted between the Irish traits and their German confederates."<sup>29</sup> Two days later the Irish Times began publication with conservative bravado: "The Dublin insurrection of 1916 will pass into history with the equally unsuccessful insurrections of the past. . . . Seditious must be rooted out of Ireland once and for all."<sup>30</sup> The May 5th edition of the Freeman's Journal not surprisingly praised those Irish soldiers who had previously rallied to Redmond's call for World War I recruits--to prove Ireland's worthiness for Home Rule--and were now again proving their loyalty to the Crown. "They were met on the first onset by Irish regiments--not regiments of professional soldiers of the old stamp, but the reserves of the Irish Brigade . . . true Irish Volunteers."<sup>31</sup> And General Maxwell--"Bloody Maxwell" to many Irishmen--in the May 4th Times also applauded Irish valor: "I especially wish to express my gratitude to those Irish regiments which have so largely helped to crush the rising."<sup>32</sup> John Redmond, their Nationalist Party leader, envisioned a lifetime of

moderate demands being washed away by the radicals' and traitors' actions: "This attempted deadly blow at Home Rule carried on through this section is made the more wicked and the more insolent by the fact that Germany plotted it, Germany organized it, Germany paid for it."<sup>33</sup>

The pronouncements of the "left" were no less critical of Easter Week. For instance, T.A. Jackson notes that, initially, "antiwar socialists to the left of the Labour Party were, most of them, either bewildered or condemnatory."<sup>34</sup> Glasgow leftwingers wondered, "How could Connolly be associated with that rising?"<sup>35</sup> and Ramsay MacDonald was critical of the "militaristic" character of the Easter Week events.<sup>36</sup> Lenin was somewhat sympathetic; reluctant to brand the Rising as a mere "putsch," yet it was Ireland's misfortune that they rose "prematurely."<sup>37</sup> (A year or so later an elite group of Bolshevik revolutionaries were to "prematurely" attempt a proletarian revolution in a largely peasant nation!)

If the "left" was at best lukewarm, one could imagine the critical posture of the Catholic Church, a hierarchy that denounced Wolfe Tone's republican United Irishmen in 1798, the Young Irelanders of 1848, and the Irish Republican Brotherhood insurrectionaries of 1867. According to Professor John Whyte, the theological textbook sanctioned revolution only when "the evils of the regime are intolerable and can be removed in no other way," there is "a real prospect of success," and it is not carried out by "oath-bound, secret societies."<sup>38</sup> (The Lenten regulations of the Dublin diocese

sheds light on the last provision: "As secret societies are seriously detrimental to public order, as well as to the interests of religion, successive Sovereign Pontiffs have pronounced sentence of excommunication not only against members, but also against all who in any way promote the interests of those unholy organizations."<sup>39</sup>) Since a secret oath-bound IRB were the participants, they admitted to the small chance of success, their ranks included atheistic Citizen Army rebels as allies (in fact, Connolly was a staunch Catholic), and Home Rule reform would apparently serve to rid the "evils" of the regime, Church condemnation was a foregone conclusion.

And, most obviously, the Protestant Church of Ireland was outraged by this separatist threat. The Archbishop of Dublin proposed in local papers (May 8th) that, "This is not the time for amnesties and pardons . . . it is the time for punishment swift and stern."<sup>40</sup> And, of course, punishment was forthcoming.

#### The Rising's Aftermath: A Terrible Beauty Was Born

The pervasive hostility to the actions and goals of the rebels was dramatically transformed, in the short run, by the execution of the leadership group, and, in the long run, by the threat of conscription and the failure to implement all-Ireland Home Rule. As for the executions, Cyril Falls has argued that the martial law retribution of General Maxwell was not an overreaction when viewed in the context of Britain's overall World War I struggle. Could an insurrection of traitorous rebels go unpunished by any warring power? What of the Allies' morale?

The French were by no means out of the woods yet at Verdun; the Russians had suffered heavy defeat, and no one foresaw Brusilov's great victories; and the Austrians were mauling the Italians. As regards Britain itself, the defeat of the Gallipoli Peninsula had been accompanied by vast losses and grave deterioration of prestige.<sup>41</sup>

And what of the fact that there were some eighty Irish soldiers in the British army for ever Sinn Feiner "out at Easter Week"?<sup>42</sup>

(Proportionally, Catholics comprised the dominant group even when compared to their respective populations in Ireland.<sup>43</sup>) Given their valiant sacrifices for the Crown, how could this German-supported conspiracy not be brutally suppressed? If the logic seems impeccable, the fact remains that a broad spectrum of Catholic nationalist opinion was outraged by the shootings ordered by "Bloody" Maxwell--especially the execution of a wounded Connolly too weak to stand.

Chief Secretary Birrell, before being drummed out of the Cabinet for his shortsighted weakness, was quick to grasp the danger of delivering victory to the failed rebels by instantaneously creating martyrs: "It is not an Irish rebellion. . . . It would be a pity if ex post facto it became one, and was added to the long and melancholy list of Irish rebellions."<sup>44</sup> The Home Rule parliamentarian James Dillon urged his colleague Redmond to warn the British of the "extreme unwisdom of any wholesale shooting of prisoners."<sup>45</sup> On May 11th, in the House of Commons, Dillon scathingly denounced the mounting executions, bestowed a mantle of legitimacy upon the insurrectionaries, and perhaps wrote the obituary for the Nationalist Parliamentary Party and the Home Rule movement:

You are . . . letting loose a river of blood, and make no mistake about it, between two races who, after three

hundred years of hatred and strife, we had nearly succeeded in bringing together.... Is that nothing.... It is the fruit of our life-work. We have risked our lives a hundred times to bring about this result. We are held up to odium as traitors by the men who made this rebellion ... and you are washing out our whole life work in a sea of blood.... I am not ashamed to say it in the House of Commons, that I am proud of these men.... I say I am proud of their courage and if you were not so obtuse or stupid ... you could have had these men fighting for you.<sup>46</sup>

Certain sections of the hierarchy were similarly moved by the apparent cruelty of the execution policy; a policy ratified by a War Cabinet which included Bonar Law and Edward Carson, Unionists par excellence. Dr. O'Dwyer, Catholic Bishop of Limerick, for instance, responded to a request by Maxwell to "silence certain priests in his diocese" (May 17) in the most negative manner:

You took care that no plea for mercy should interpose on behalf of the poor young fellows who surrendered to you in Dublin. The first intimation we got of their fate was the announcement that they had been shot in cold blood. Personally, I regard your action with horror; and I believe that it has outraged the conscience of the country.<sup>47</sup>

English consciences were also touched; the Manchester Guardian proclaimed that the slaughter was "becoming an atrocity,"<sup>48</sup> and such social critics as George Bernard Shaw--hardly a republican supporter--identified with their fellow Irishman's courage.

I am bound to contradict any implication that I can regard as a Traitor any Irishman taken in a fight for Irish Independence against the British Government, which was a fair fight in everything except the enormous odds my countrymen had to face.<sup>49</sup>

Indeed, the fifteen leaders shot, and the hanging of Casement, a Knight of the Realm, proved to be costly mistakes for the British. By Christmas, the first batch of prisoners returned to Ireland, an Ireland slowly moving away from Redmondite goals. Sean O'Casey's

prose captures the changing spirit which embraced the failed rebels as heroes and which marked the beginnings of the legitimization of the soon-to-be Sinn Fein/IRA revolutionaries.

The convicts warned by the spitting and hissing of their departure to their prisons, hoped they'd steal quietly through the city to fireside and bed; but the people had changed utterly, and thronged their streets to cheer. The wail of the Irish ochone had changed into the roar of the Irish hurrah. Again the felon's cap had become the noblest crown an Irish head could wear. Nothing could be too good for the boys. When one spoke, all had to remain silent. They led at all meetings, dominated committees, won at cards, got everything anyone had to give, and were everywhere forced to lay down the law on all philosophy, patriotism, foresight, prophecy, and good manners. Was he out in Easter Week? became the touchstone of Irish life. . . . So for a long time, Easter Week became the Year One in Irish history and Irish life.<sup>50</sup>

One of those arrested and released was Eoin MacNeill--a strange choice for detention given his countermanding role--who was later to write of the Rising participants that "Not even they could have dreamed that English stupidity would transform their forlorn hope from ignominious failure into brilliant success."<sup>51</sup> But if Professor MacNeill had paid more attention to the poetry of "blood sacrifice" he may well have qualified his assessment of the scope of their dreams.

#### Participation in the Rising: A Background Variable

Now that we have briefly surveyed the ideological roots of the "blood protest," and described the major features of and reactions to Easter Week, let us actually examine the links between the individual's participation in the insurrection and his subsequent civil war stand. Two plausible lines of argument appear to be

challenged by our conclusion; that participation does not predispose the rebel to either moderation or intransigence. First, Brian Farrell is one analyst who implies that a tendency for compromise was fostered in those surviving what seemed like almost certain death.<sup>52</sup> The other sensible hypothesis, of course, stresses that insurrection is a socializing experience that promoted a distinctly radical political orientation (i.e., if one is willing to pay the supreme price there is no turning back).

As for the former notion, Farrell essentially argues that the Rising was an aberration; an event distinctly apart from the "civic culture," parliamentary tradition of nationalist protest. This formulation holds that moderation and the impetus for broad-based coalitions were both fostered by the exorbitant price exacted from protesting rebels. On the other hand, perhaps Farrell has exaggerated the aberrant nature of the Rising, and a number of the "men of Easter Week" continued their leadership roles throughout the war of independence period with attitudes basically unchanged. Thus, one might conceptualize Rising participation as a revolutionary activity that heightens the leaders' emotional debt to the martyred "dead generations," bolstering Republican intransigence. Certainly there are ample statements made by 1922 anti-Treatyites to demonstrate their continued commitment to the notion of "blood sacrifice." For instance, the central idea of Erskine Childers' last written words revolved about redemption through sacrifice and a continuity with past suffering and struggle. He was executed by the Free State government in November 1923, ostensibly for owning a weapon--a

pistol given to him by Michael Collins!--although evidence suggests that his "damn Englishman" status, his role as chief propagandist for Republican "irregulars," and the need to set an example against anti-constitutional "terror" all contributed to his harsh sentence. At Childers' trial he somberly commented, "Whether I am to live or die it must help Ireland. The Way is clear for me. I am serene."<sup>53</sup> And later in his cell awaiting execution he wrote, "Some day we shall be justified when the nation forgets its weakness and reverts to the ancient and holy tradition which we are preserving in our struggle, and may God hasten the day of reunion amongst us all under the honoured flag of Ireland."<sup>54</sup> For Liam Mellows, facing the firing squad a month later, his was "the road of our Savior . . . the road of sacrifice." The Republic remains alive; death makes "that a certainty."<sup>55</sup> And the post-Truce sentiments of Commandant O'Malley, a leader who escaped a Free State death sentence, further demonstrates the survival of Pearse's tradition of sacrifice and homage due the dead generations: "We had given ourselves to this land with death or imprisonment as a reward. Other generations had done this. The dead, what did they think?"<sup>56</sup> With all this said it is rather interesting that Rising participants were not any more likely than nonparticipants to adopt such a 1922 radical line.

Before presenting a list of the elite (see Table III), who were either Men of Easter or nonparticipants, Republicans and Free Staters, some important qualifications are in order:

1. A leader who may have opposed the tactics of a "blood protest" might have been involved through the force of circumstance.

2. A leader may have been a likely candidate for the Rising but resided in a distant--from the Dublin center--county that was relatively politically quiescent. Or, a leader may have lived outside the country at that point.

3. A well-intentioned leader, amenable to "sacrifice," may well have obeyed the countermand order as a disciplined Volunteer without knowledge of the IRB's political intrigues and the decisive split with Volunteer leader MacNeill.

4. A budding leader may have been too young in 1916 to participate but subsequently joined the movement as a rabid and unyielding Republican.

5. A potential rebel may simply have not heard of the call for mobilization, or be incapacitated by illness.

### Conclusion

On the face of it, we find that both groups--pro- and anti-Treatyites--seem to be fairly evenly represented at Easter Week 1916 (18 Free Staters and 17 Republicans). There is little evidence to suggest that participation in the Rising is linked to future intransigent political behavior. Furthermore, it appears that chance events rather than ideological predispositions to radical behavior are the crucial factors for determining such participation for a number of leaders. For instance, veritable fire-eating, physical force proponents (e.g., Dan Breen) were confused by conflicting orders, while reluctant revolutionaries (e.g., Michael Hayes) found themselves thrust into the center of the struggle.

TABLE III: Men of the Rising--Republicans and Free Staters<sup>57</sup>

Participants	
Free Staters	Republicans
Michael Collins	Gerry Boland
William Cosgrave	Harry Boland
E.J. Duggan	Robert Brennan
Darrell Figgis	Cathal Brugha
Desmond Fitzgerald	Eamon De Valera
Michael Hayes	Tom Hales
Dr. Richard Hayes	Sean Lemass
Dr. Pat Macartan	Sean MacEntee
Denis McCullough	Countess Markievicz
Sean McGarry	Liam Mellows
Joe McGrath	Rory O'Connor
Richard Mulcahy	Ernie O'Malley
Diarmuid O'Hegarty	Sean Russell
Kevin O'Higgins	Dr. James Ryan
Sean O'Muirthile	Austin Stack
J.J. Walsh	Oscar Traynor
Nonparticipants	
Charles Dalton	Tom Barry
Emmet Dalton	Robert Barton
Arthur Griffith	Dan Breen
Bulmer Hobson	Erskine Childers
Eoin MacNeill	Lawrence Ginnell
J.J. O'Connell	Liam Lynch
P.S. O'Hegarty	Count Plunkett
Lack Information	
Ernest Blythe	Frank Aiken
Michael Brennan	Frank Barrett
Liam De Roiste	P.J. Barrett
Sean Hales	Frank Fahy
Pat Hogan	Joe McKelvey
P.J. Little	Florence O'Donoghue
Fionan Lynch	Sean O'Hegarty
Sean MacEoin	Sean J. O'Kelley
Sean Milroy	Seumas Robinson
Eoin O'Duffy	P.J. Ruttledge
	Maurice Twomey

Some were in the wrong area of the country, others were on vacation, ill, or too young to join at Easter Week. If the most radical fellows are kept from the insurrection, why would participants in the rebellion be linked to the Republican 1922 position? And the assumption that the Rising experience itself tends to produce future extremists is not born out by the facts. Yet there seems to be a demonstrable link between those expressly critical of the Rising from within the Sinn Fein/IRB/Volunteer movements--whether rebels or nonparticipants--and a firm pro-Treaty position. (Nonparticipants Arthur Griffith, Eoin MacNeill, Bulmer Hobson, J.J. O'Connell, and P.S. O'Hegarty; participants Dr. Macartan, Michael Hayes, and Denis McCullough.) No critics from within the advanced nationalist movement were to adopt a Republican stance in 1922. As far as our research can determine, those anti-Treatyites who were obviously against the Rising--British officers Robert Barton and Erskine Childers<sup>58</sup>--and perhaps initially Lawrence Ginnell, given the Home Rule orientation of Nationalist Parliamentarians, were only later converts to the Sinn Fein/IRA movement. (Is the late blooming convert perhaps more extreme in his behavior than established separatist leaders?) It would seem, then, that the background variable, "rising participation," has a certain utility; those explicitly against such a "blood sacrifice" are somewhat predictably against the continuation of the struggle in 1922 to garner total independence.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Quoted in M.J. MacManus, Eamon De Valera (Dublin: Talbot Press, 1944), p. 47.

<sup>2</sup>Bowyer Bell, Terror Out of Zion (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1975), p. 16.

<sup>3</sup>Quoted in Lyons, Ireland Since the Famine, p. 338.

<sup>4</sup>Quoted in White, Kevin O'Higgins, p. 19.

<sup>5</sup>Horne, Savage War, pp. 94-104.

<sup>6</sup>Farrell, Founding of Dail Eireann, pp. 23-24.

<sup>7</sup>Mazzini looked askance at nineteenth-century Irish nationalism criticizing the wane of their Gaelic language. And in the twentieth century De Valera was particularly attuned to the critical role of the Gaelic language as a veritable proof of nationhood (see Mansergh, The Irish Question, p. 14). As for the Algerians, Ferhat Abbas, a nationalist moderate, could not "find" the Algerian Nation apart from the French metropole, as late as the 1930s. The nation was seemingly formed during the independence struggle. Palestinians question the rights of a Jewish "nation" based on biblical communities, a small religious settler community throughout the ages, and an oppressed Diaspora forever reciting, "Next Year in Jerusalem." Obviously, Israelis find justification for Eretz Israel in such a past.

<sup>8</sup>F.X. Martin, "The 1916 Rising--a coup d'etat or a 'bloody protest,'" Studia Hibernica, no. 8 (Dublin, 1968): 24-36.

<sup>9</sup>Lyons, Ireland Since the Famine, p. 335.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 336.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 337.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 335.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 336.

<sup>16</sup>Quoted in Ellis, James Connolly, p. 45.

<sup>17</sup>Quoted in Kee, The Green Flag, p. 596.

<sup>18</sup>Quoted in F.X. Martin, "1916--Revolution or Evolution," in Leaders and Men of the Eastern Rising: Dublin, 1916, ed. F.X. Martin (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967), p. 251.

<sup>19</sup>Dangerfield, The Damnable Question, p. 161.

<sup>20</sup>Volunteer organizers like Desmond Fitzgerald and Ernest Blythe (1922 pro-Treatyites) were arrested for offenses under the Defense of the Realm Act.

<sup>21</sup>Dangerfield, The Damnable Question, pp. 161-63.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 161.

<sup>23</sup>"From Casement's Diary: Dilemma in Berlin," in Dublin, 1916, ed. Robert Joseph McHugh (London: Arlington Books, 1966), p. 4.

<sup>24</sup>Sean MacDermott imagined that "Unionist" owned buildings would be exempt from British bombardment, while Connolly mistakenly believed that the forces of British imperialism would refrain from shelling Dublin's "capitalist" structures! See P.S. O'Hegarty, A History of Ireland under the Union, 1801-1922 (London: Methuen, 1952), p. 700.

<sup>25</sup>Dangerfield, The Damnable Question, p. 207.

<sup>26</sup>The authorities never seem to learn this lesson. Alistair Horne (Savage War, p. 410) writes of the 1950s and 1960s: "Like the detention centres of Northern Ireland where I.R.A. members blatantly drilled and trained before the eyes of British troops, the French prisons were transformed into recruiting grounds and staff-colleges for the F.L.N."

<sup>27</sup>Lyons, Ireland Since the Famine, pp. 342-43, cites Martin's article, "The 1916 Rising--a coup d'etat or a 'bloody protest?'"

<sup>28</sup>O'Hegarty, History of Ireland, p. 703.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 704.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 705.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 706.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 708.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 707.

<sup>34</sup>Jackson, Ireland Her Own, p. 390.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 391.

<sup>38</sup>John H. Whyte, "Revolution and Religion," in Leaders and Men of the Easter Rising, p. 215.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 216.

<sup>40</sup>Quoted in F.X. Martin, "1916: Myth, Fact and Mystery," Studia Hibernica, no. 7 (Dublin, 1967): 113.

<sup>41</sup>Cyril Falls, "Maxwell, 1916, and Britain at War," in Leaders and Men of the Eastern Rising, p. 212.

<sup>42</sup>This type of argument was heard in the Algerian Revolution. The number of "harkis" (allegiant Muslims) fighting for the French were greater than the forces available to the FLN, thus justifying, in some minds, the crushing of the rebels with increasing ferocity.

<sup>43</sup>Falls, "Maxwell," p. 213.

<sup>44</sup>Kee, The Green Flag, p. 573.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

<sup>46</sup>F.S.L. Lyons, "Dillon, Redmond, and the Irish Home Rulers," in Leaders and Men of the Easter Rising, pp. 32-33.

<sup>47</sup>Jackson, Ireland Her Own, p. 390.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., p. 388.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid.

<sup>50</sup>O'Casey, Irishfallen, p. 9.

<sup>51</sup>Talbot, Michael Collins' Own Story, p. 34.

<sup>52</sup>In a comparative perspective--and background variables should in some way be readily comparable cross-nationally--Quandt (Revolution and Political Leadership) suggests the general case of a "sacrificial uprising" (Setif [1945] or the initial Algerian rebellion [1954]) engendering a period of moderate coalition-making. The apparent high price for short-run failure creates the need for new revolutionary strategy. Diverse nationalist elements, including moderate reformist types, are welded together in an umbrella

nationalist front to assure victory. (In Ireland, the Sinn Fein uniting Ard-Fheis [October 1917]) was precisely this category of organization.) But before concluding that Quandt supports a variant of the "Rising participation yields moderate political behavior" formula, we must remember that a central tenet of his work is that artificial leadership cohesiveness sows the seeds for long-run elite divisiveness and conflict. Thus radical attitudes and behavior may be hardened in the long run by the apparent moderating process stemming from a post-sacrifice policy re-evaluation. In any case, Quandt's message like Farrell's appears to be somewhat confused, laying the groundwork for a number of contrasting hypotheses.

<sup>53</sup>The Times of London, 27 November 1922, p. 12d.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid.

<sup>55</sup>Gallagher, Four Glorious Years, p. 380.

<sup>56</sup>O'Malley, The Singing Flame, p. 42.

<sup>57</sup>See Appendix for a more complete description of individual leader's specific roles in the Easter Rising.

<sup>58</sup>Childers' (1916) evaluation of, and prescriptions for, dealing with the insurrectionaries are instructive: "The typical rebel is often half crazy and half starved, a neurotic nourished on dreams. We should shoot a decent number." But he does argue that their actions were somewhat justified since Home Rule was derailed by Protestant Unionists in league with British Conservatives and segments of the Liberal Party. Thus, "people denied freedom will rebel, the responsibility for the tragic results resting on those who deny the freedom." See Burtin Wilkerson, The Zeal of the Convert (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1976), p. 149.

## Chapter V

BACKGROUND VARIABLE: THE MILITARY MAN  
VERSUS THE POLITICIAN

The soldiers I felt would keep the politicians on a straight track.

Commandant Dan Breen<sup>1</sup>

The Army has to hew the way for politics to follow.

Commandant Liam Lynch<sup>2</sup>

We started this war with hurleys, but, by heavens, it seems to me we will finish it off with fountain pens.

Commandant Sean Moylan<sup>3</sup>

The opposition he characterized as fanatics or men, "unfitted by the struggle for any kind of life except that of excitement and violence."

Thomas Jones, British Cabinet Secretary, speaking of Lionel Curtis<sup>4</sup>

The simple equation between the most active distinctly "military" leaders and Republican extremism holds up rather well. Having different revolutionaries roles than their "political" counterparts, it is our contention that the "military" men had more to lose when "peace broke out," and, therefore, opted to carry on the struggle. These "military" commandants, often from the far off south and west,

effectively isolated from Dublin, Dail Eireann politicians, and the IRA General Headquarters, inhabited a rarefied world at once oppressively danger-ridden, but also a safe, familiar "emotional shelter." Their idealistic bubble burst during the London Conference. In a limited sense, their "jobs" were threatened by compromise, but on a far deeper level, a way of life was being destroyed for the sorry gains of a tawdry political deal. They naturally formed up as the core of Republican opposition to the emergent Free State.

In the following discussion, we shall (a) define just who can fairly be labeled a "military" man or "politico"; (b) describe how the leaders themselves perceived their revolutionary roles and how both Free Staters and Republicans recognized this "military" versus "politician" leadership split; and (c) utilize a number of theoretical assumptions concerning extra-constitutional military intervention into politics (i.e., the anti-Free State violence will be defined as such) to explain, in part, the reasons for the radical commandant's civil war behavior.

### The Military Man versus The Politician

Irish historians have pointed out that the most active and independent IRA commandants, especially from the Southern Divisions of the southwest, were the staunchest Republican advocates of 1922.<sup>5</sup> Tom Barry, Liam Lynch, Ernie O'Malley, Florence O'Donoghue, et al. were the legendary guerrilla fighters later to participate in a General Army Convention (March 26, 1922) of rabid anti-Treatyites. Here an

IRA Executive was established--soon to be designated "irregulars" by Free Staters--that challenged the pro-Treaty stance of Dail Eireann. If armed force was necessary to halt the "whittling away" of the existing Republic, so be it. Popular sentiments, Dail majorities, electoral mandates, and religious pronouncements from the hierarchy were of small moment to the IRA hard liners. Their Republican purity was the ideological fuel for the civil war; a purity that appears to be forged by their main revolutionary activity as "gunmen" in the hills. Thus for our leadership group, a strictly defined active "military" background is one attribute correlated with political intransigence.

This is not to say that pro-Treatyites, who were actively involved in the war of independence, a famous commandant such as Sean MacEoin (also a Dail member), Chief of Staff Richard Mulcahy, or "Mick" Collins himself, were not "military men." After all, in the course of a guerrilla struggle, a cabinet minister or GHQ officer would take part in street fights, daring escapes, and, in general, lead the life of the "gunman." Furthermore, there were obviously many Dail Eireann "politicians" who vigorously opposed the compromise Treaty (i.e., the 64-57 vote). Yet, it does make sense to pose the ideal-type "military vs. politician" dichotomy as a way of explaining the most active and independent IRA leaders' anti-Free State position. Commandants spending full time in the field, not sharing in an elective Dail role or Army Staff position, and those incurring the greatest casualties for the most part opted for strict Republicanism in 1922.

This fact of Irish revolutionary history is well documented by the major historians of that period. We shall elaborate on this theme by suggesting explanations for this link between individuals' backgrounds (i.e., "job" role) and Treaty preference. (Note that this background characteristic is tied directly to the revolutionary process, rather than being a leadership trait associated with their earlier life.)

The Military Man vs. The Politician:  
Views of the Leadership

Interestingly, revolutionary participants themselves drew sharp distinctions between the "military" and "political" leader to score points against their opponents. For instance, Arthur Griffith was a sharp critic of the "military mentality," a somewhat reluctant late comer to physical force, and certainly had an ambiguous attitude toward IRA "terror" throughout the war. He was never committed to strict Republicanism. (Lloyd George had lamented the counter-productive post-Rising incarceration of leaders such as Eoin MacNeill and Griffith, correctly assessing their moderate non-violent tendencies: "They are sheep, not gunmen. It was a pity to have imprisoned them at all, but men suspected of being mixed up in murder, I would keep in."<sup>6</sup>) Griffith was concerned that the IRA's mindless militancy couldn't possibly grasp the nuances of diplomacy, long-run political objectives, or the practical constraints imposed on Irish revolutionaries challenging an Empire.

The military mind is the same in every country. Our military men are as bad as the British. They think nothing but of their own particular end, and can't be brought to consider the political consequences of their proceedings.<sup>7</sup>

Quoting Standish O'Grady, Griffith expressed his lack of enthusiasm for deifying the role of the "gunmen" during the war of independence:

The digger and the ditcher, hewer and stitcher are as human as the soldier, and only to boys, novel-readers, and sham statesmen is the rifle a whit more heroic than the spade.<sup>8</sup>

Similarly, P.S. O'Hegarty ascribes to the military mentality an irresponsible violent extremism that he sees as a root cause of the civil war bloodbath. This member of the IRB Supreme Council, and a future historian of note, argued that the moral collapse of Ireland was due to the indiscriminate use of firearms by immature Volunteer "gunmen."<sup>9</sup> During the war of independence, they had become a law unto themselves, deriving an exalted status as soldiers of the Republic, a role they would not relinquish to the constitutional authority of a Dail bent on compromise. And Kevin O'Higgins, who was one day to be assassinated for his part in executing "irregulars," comments on the pure "soldier's" opposition to the Dail Treaty vote:

in the Army itself were many who took no part in politics, who during the fighting did very much what they pleased in their own areas, and who now saw themselves about to become subordinate to a government which had, in their view, lowered the flag.<sup>10</sup>

Though Republican Commandants would certainly not abide by Griffith's, O'Higgins or O'Hegarty's negative characterization of gunmen, they do acknowledge their corporate group identity apart

from "politicians." Tom Barry, for instance, notes that

At no time did Dail Eireann accept responsibility for the war against the British. The IRA was left to act on its own initiative and neither the political wing of Sinn Fein nor the general public wanted the war. The Dail was little more than a hindrance to the military conduct of the campaign, a faint-hearted body dedicated to appeasement and compromise.<sup>11</sup>

Or, for example, Ernie O'Malley, in a candid autobiographical work, voiced his alarm that Michael Collins's Republican fervor might well be tarnished by his budding relationship with the politician Arthur Griffith. He readily admits that his concern reflected "the pseudo-military mind of the IRA and its fear of constitutional respectability."<sup>12</sup>

A number of anti-Treaty Dail politicians were also suspect by the "military" diehards, and during the March Army Convention, the Earl of Longford and T.P. O'Neill claim, "Commandants and officers had no time for politicians of either party."<sup>13</sup> De Valera himself, the President of the Republic, and firm anti-Treatyite, only belatedly joined the "irregulars"--during the Four Courts siege--and then, only in a subaltern role. This fact may account for their overall lack of political direction throughout the civil war period and, certainly, points to the military's insularity and reluctance to co-opt the major politicians into their ranks. In any case, this wariness toward even their republican brethren further demonstrates the depth of the "military's" self-identification.<sup>14</sup>

"Military" vs. "Politicians":  
Post-Civil War Cleavages

If, for a moment, we look to the years immediately after the Free Stater's civil war victory, we again find IRA "military" and Sinn Fein "political" divisions within the hard-line Republican camp. An abstentionist Sinn Fein party, now refusing to enter the Dail, just as the earlier united Sinn Fein had boycotted the House of Commons, was resurrected in 1923 despite their battlefield defeat. It garnered surprising electoral support while loosely coalescing with IRA "irregulars" who had dumped arms, but not their Republican ideals. It was a strained relationship from the start, and according to Peter Pyne, the military/political tensions ultimately caused yet another leadership schism.<sup>15</sup> Just prior to De Valera's heretical entrance into the Free State Dail (1927) that attracted a sizeable portion of Sinn Fein, the IRA had withdrawn its support for even "moderate" abstentionist politics. They would not then be tainted by even a peripheral connection with the "renegades" of the "usurping legislature," better known as the Free State Dail. Pyne notes that "the organization was reverting to its original position as an independent force . . . military distrust of politicians has always been a distinction of the Republican movement."<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, aside from Republican purity, Pyne claims that baser motives separated the IRA from the Sinn Fein politicians:

While Army men felt superior to the politicians and though the IRA never had any real respect for the Republican government, it was prepared to give allegiance to it as long as the government was able to provide it with funds raised abroad.<sup>17</sup>

And funds were drying up from Republican sources in the U.S. Again, the point to be made is that military/political categories seem relevant for explaining political behavior, as scholars and revolutionary participants have shown.<sup>18</sup>

The Military vs. Politician: A Comparison  
the Algerian Revolution

Quandt's study of the FLN's quarrels also underscores the usefulness of categorizing "military" and "political" revolutionary types and ascribes specific behavior patterns to each group. In his view, the "military's" specific socialization--their entrance into politics as "soldiers"--sets them at odds with these other groups, and most interestingly, their attitudes and political behavior during the Evian negotiations mirrors the position taken by our anti-Treaty IRA commandants in 1922. In other words, military types in both situations display similar attitudes based on similar "job roles."

Quandt writes:

The Military were quite intransigent, fearing that the Politicians would sacrifice at the bargaining table what they had fought for over six years to obtain, namely full and complete sovereignty over all of Algeria. Barring the granting of total independence, the military seemed willing to fight on indefinitely.<sup>19</sup>

Compare Quandt's observations with those of Commandant Liam Lynch, who feared a "sell-out" by Dail Eireann negotiators. The IRA had earned the right to

expect that the government would resist any attempt to abate the national demand with the same determination and courage as that displayed by the Volunteers who had fought and died for the Republic.<sup>20</sup>

Seumas Fitzgerald, IRA man from Cork, seconds Lynch's warning: "those who bore the brunt of the fighting were almost unanimously against the Treaty, war or no war."<sup>21</sup>

Dan Breen stresses both their independence and sacrifices as the chief reasons for the IRA's mistrust of any and all "politicians":

I was convinced that if we could show that the army was standing solid for what it had fought to achieve, the Dail would not betray the Army. The soldiers I felt would keep the politicians on a straight track, I would not bring myself to believe that the Dail would take upon itself the responsibility of making a compromise when it had never taken responsibility for the Anglo-Irish War. . . . The very men who were most bitterly opposed to the few who began the war were now the strongest supporters of the Treaty.<sup>22</sup>

Note that Quandt contrasts the role and behavior of Algeria's independent "military" maquisards in the field, as opposed to a distant and remote General Headquarters, a situation somewhat comparable to the conflict between Dublin's GHQ and the virtually autonomous theaters of war in the south and west. (See below, p. 235, for a complete discussion of these tensions.)

The "maquisards" distrusted and disliked the Politicians and were skeptical of the Revolutionaries, especially when the latter tried to direct the war from Tunis rather than from the interior.<sup>23</sup>

In both wars of independence, the Staff Officers were suspect, given their distance from actual "military" action (real or imagined) and the political nature of their roles.

The IRA Military Man's Radicalism: A Framework  
for Understanding His Behavior

If, in fact, "military" and "political" roles are markedly different--a difference noted by a wide variety of revolutionary

actors and analysts--how do we explain the "military's" preference for the Republican hard line? In other words, what is unique about their guerrilla war experience that sets them apart from a sizeable portion of Dail "politicians," their own GHQ, and many of the less active commandants? Obviously, we can only hazard an educated guess on this subject, but their motivations and thinking are revealed, to some extent, by their memoirs and odd statements which allow the researcher to reach some understanding of a critical pattern of revolutionary behavior.

Before we begin groping around the military leaders' backgrounds, we should be specific about what we are looking for. To uncover the roots of a particular type of activity--military intervention into politics--is the goal. And, by defining the "irregulars'" civil war behavior in such a manner, there is a large body of social scientific literature that provides helpful clues as to "why" military elites are likely to intervene in political affairs.

First, though, we would encounter sharp criticism from Republicans who would balk at such a description of their violent opposition to the usurping legislature set-up by the English law in Ireland. For the "legion of the rearguard" Free State authority was clearly illegitimate on a number of counts. The electoral support for the Treaty was based on propaganda purveyed by monied interests, the press, the Catholic hierarchy, and the duplicity of pro-Treatyite leaders, especially Michael Collins. He had broken the election pact (June 1922) that would return Dail deputies in the 64-57 status quo proportions of the Treaty vote. Also, free and fair elections could

not be held under the British threat of "immediate and terrible war." In any case, the register had not been updated since 1918, and was, therefore, invalid. Thus, in their minds, the actual coup d'etat was carried out by the Free State as they usurped the functions of the Second Dail. The creation of a well-equipped Free State Army to replace the IRA was the most glaring evidence of their traitorous actions. (The marxist C.D. Greaves argues that the "thermidorian reaction" to the Irish Revolution can be delimited precisely by the Free State's attempt to disarm the IRA, the army of the people.<sup>24</sup>) And, on a deeper level, far beyond arguments concerning the accuracy of electoral registers or broken promises, Republicans would necessarily deny the legitimacy of any governmental authority that made the slightest inroads on the "established Republic."

#### The Military's Extra-Constitutional Intervention in Politics

Yet, we would suggest that the "irregulars" can be thought of as an anti-constitutional force intervening in politics against the established regime. The evidence for such a controversial description of the IRA irregulars' civil war struggle stems, in part, from the very pronouncements of their leaders. At times, they seem quite aware of the anti-democratic tendencies inherent in strict Republicanism.

For instance, the most famous and oft-quoted example of this awareness was elicited from Rory O'Connor, a future leader of the breakaway IRA military executive. He had repudiated allegiance to

the Chief of Staff and the Dail majority, and even to fellow anti-Treatyite President De Valera. When questioned (March 1922) whether the IRA alternative to the Dail might take the form of a military dictatorship, O'Connor replied: "You may take it that way, if you like."<sup>25</sup> C.D. Greaves, the radical apologist, plays down the meaning of O'Connor's supposedly off-the-cuff impolitic remarks, arguing that the reactionary Free Staters were all too ready to utilize such words "as a retrospective excuse for proclaiming the convention."<sup>26</sup> Since, according to Greaves, "in counterrevolution constitutions are but scraps of paper,"<sup>27</sup> dictatorship versus democracy was not the issue. But, democracy and the "will of the majority" were precisely the issues.

Or take, for example, the actions of Tom Barry, Commandant of the Cork #3 Brigade, and one of the most daring, innovative, and ruthless leaders of IRA "flying columns." At the Army Convention (March 26, 1922), he actually proposed the establishment of a military dictatorship--a proposal again dismissed by Greaves as a political indiscretion of youth, "but basically correct"<sup>28</sup>--and the resolution was barely turned aside by a close vote.

On June 18, 1922, Barry was among those urging the IRA "irregular" executive to immediately renew the war against the British.<sup>29</sup> Beaten, once again, he, along with other IRA radical dissidents--Joe McKelvey replacing Liam Lynch as the Chief of Staff--withdrew to the Four Courts stronghold. Both Republican factions were reunited by the Free State's attack on this seat of the "Republican government." In short, the very least one might say

of Barry's opposition role, would be to question his advocacy and adherence to democratic electoral norms.

Dan Breen similarly looked askance at the electoral process for recording the sentiments of the populace, since "in any country which was recovered by war, the masses of people will always accept a compromise."<sup>30</sup> Ironically, when Breen followed the lead of De Valera into the Free State Dail (January 1927) he was roundly condemned by the "pure" Republicans for participating in illegitimate majoritarian politics. "Irishmen will regret that he should have overshadowed his other days by his crime,"<sup>31</sup> was the pronouncement of Republican orthodoxy.

And lastly, Liam Lynch, a leading Commandant who appeared less intransigent than his IRA Executive comrades (i.e., he voted against the resolutions calling for a "military dictatorship" and immediate warfare against the British enemy) had hoped against all hope that Free Staters and Republicans might reconcile their differences. Perhaps in drawing up a constitution, the compromisers, could "knock the Treaty sideways" and undercut the British intent of maintaining a strong "oath of allegiance" and constitutional tie. Moderation notwithstanding, Lynch's half-hearted support for the June 16, 1922 Collins-De Valera "pact" election reveals a preference for the staunch republicanism of the IRA "irregulars" over majoritarian head counts.

I will do my best at the elections to keep Ireland from handing away the Republic as the least portion of her birthright. If we fail at the election I hope to have the Army united under an executive and not giving

allegiance to any party or government. If the army stands together . . . we can save the country and the Republic . . . if we can force the Treaty party to draw up a Republican Constitution we are A-1 again. This I consider quite possible.<sup>32</sup>

Six months prior to this election, Lynch had reacted in a similar way to the Dail's imminent ratification of the Treaty. In a letter written to his IRA comrade, Florence O'Donoghue (December 11, 1921), he states his belief "that the treaty will be carried by a majority of the Dail. The position I have taken up I mean to stand by, even if the whole division turns it down."<sup>33</sup> His thoughts appear confused, given the lip-service previously paid to constitutional norms. "The minority in the Dail will fall in and act on the decision of the majority. The same must apply to the Army or we are lost."<sup>34</sup> In the end, the "pact" election was an outright Republican defeat, the Constitution drawn up by Free State drafters included a repugnant "oath" and limited Dominion status for Ireland, and Lynch paid with his life for consistently opposing the majority viewpoint.

Thus, Rory O'Connor, Tom Barry, Dan Breen, and Liam Lynch, the very heart and soul of Republican intransigence, were all touched by the authoritarian elitist brush. Unlike most revolutionaries of this century, they had a nationwide head-count (however tainted in their eyes) to help interpret the "will of the people," and they still chose to follow the path of minority idealism.<sup>35</sup>

Free Staters Also View "Irregulars"  
as Anti-Democratic

Quite naturally, the pro-Treatyites pointed to the anti-democratic tendencies of their Republican adversaries. On one

level, though, there was an element of hypocrisy in their holier-than-thou pronouncements, especially since leaders, such as Collins, had hardly appealed to democratic sanction when pushing guerrilla warfare in early 1919. And surveying the past attitudes of other "moderate" Free State democrats, note that such leaders as Dr. Macartan and Denis McCullough acknowledged the necessity of first organizing for insurrection and "trusting people afterwards." Ernest Blythe, a "politician," who in 1922 urged the strictest measures against breakaway "irregulars," had advocated, prior to the establishment of the Dail, the assassination of R.I.C. men ("all . . . having assisted the enemy must be shot or otherwise destroyed with the least possible delay"<sup>36</sup>). This harsh directive, appearing in the first edition of the IRA paper an Toglagh (August 18, 1918) was clearly not based on any popular groundswell of opinion supporting a terror campaign. (The killing of two R.I.C. men by Dan Breen and company [January 21, 1919] was universally seen as a dastardly act.<sup>37</sup>) In short, Collins and his followers had previously interpreted the "people's will" to suit themselves, and by the Spring of 1922, "irregulars" were threatening to dish out the same medicine-- autonomous authority and Republican terror.

Why should the Dail place constitutional restraints on the "renegade" IRA, when its vitality and independence had been implicitly sanctioned just months before? After all, as Kee observes, "it was the Volunteers, the Army, acting quite regardless of the people's approval, who had brought about the situation in which there was a Treaty to be debated at all."<sup>38</sup>

In any case, hypocritical or not, Free Staters did view the "irregulars" as an extra-constitutional threat to legitimate governmental authority in '22, a perception that bolsters the case for conceptualizing IRA intransigence in the general term of "the military's intervention into politics." The extremists of the past, who were now advocating the Free State line, were soundly convinced of their impeccable democratic credentials. For instance, Michael Collins, himself responsible for foisting a guerrilla war upon a reticent population, proclaimed self-righteously during the Treaty debates, "I would not be one of those to commit the Irish people to war without the Irish people committing themselves to war."<sup>39</sup> And Kevin O'Higgins reacted violently against De Valera's famous "wading through blood speech,"<sup>40</sup> of March 1922, trotting out the ideal of democratic majoritarian rule. (He viewed the 1918 Sinn Fein Khaki election victory as a vote for "separatism," but hardly a mandate for a Republic.)

[I]f civil war occurs in Ireland it will not be for the Treaty. It will not be for the Free State versus anything else. It will be for a vital fundamental democratic principle--for the right of the people of Ireland to decide any issue great or small, that arises in the politics of this country.<sup>41</sup>

As for known "moderate leaders" of 1919-21, the condemnation of the Republican "irregulars" was similarly (less hypocritically?) couched in the language of democratic constitutionality. For example, Arthur Griffith commented, "I see no difference between English government in Ireland and the attempt of a minority to deny the Irish people the right of expressing their opinions."<sup>42</sup>

The Moderate Republicans' Critique of the  
Military's Anti-Democratic Behavior

From the other side of the political fence, De Valera's ambivalent role in opposition to the Treaty is also instructive for understanding the anti-democratic attitudes of the "military men." One could argue that his reluctance to join the Military Executive and his conciliatory gestures toward the Free Staters--the "wading through blood" speech aside--stemmed from a deeply felt sense of allegiance to majoritarian politics. When forced to choose sides in a violent struggle he came down on the side of Republican purity,<sup>43</sup> and neatly forgot his democratic ideals. (Some would say, of course, that "Dev's" refusal to remain as a loyal opposition in the Free State Dail, created the conditions whereby a "moderate" anti-Treatyite faced such a difficult choice. But, in any case, the Military Executive was set against the "destruction of the Republic" whatever the make-up of its replacement.) "Dev's" admissions and second thoughts concerning the "majority's will" versus the "legitimacy of minority violence" display in bold relief the apparent anti-Democratic ethos of the breakaway IRA "irregulars." In a letter to Joseph McGarrity, the American Fenian leader (September 10, 1922), he succinctly describes the basic political quandary:

If the Republicans stand aside and let the Treaty come into force, acquiescence in it means the abandonment of National sovereignty. . . . If the Republicans do not stand aside . . . resistance means armed opposition to what is undoubtedly the decision of the majority of the people.<sup>44</sup>

Note that, in De Valera's words, the acceptance of the Treaty is not

automatically tainted by the Republican's version of the masses' false consciousness. And "Dev" could not be accused of playing to his audience as McGarrity was a hard-liner from first to last.

Furthermore, Robert Brennan, his Republican comrade, claims that "Dev" had refused the Commander-in-Chief position offered by the Military Executive's Oscar Traynor and "regretted that he had not gone further, and condemned Rory O'Connor's action in repudiating the authority of the Dail."<sup>45</sup>

Lest we overemphasize the constitutional distance between De Valera and the "military" die-hards, it may be argued that he, too, was at the time, hardly a proponent of the electoral process for ratifying or rejecting compromise. In a statement to the press, just after the Treaty vote, De Valera was quoted as saying, "There are rights which a minority may justly uphold, even by arms, against a majority."<sup>46</sup> Also, he felt, "the people have never the right to do wrong."<sup>47</sup> And a letter written to Joseph McGarrity some days before divulges, "I have been tempted several times to take drastic action, as I would be entitled to legally [emphasis added], but then, the army is divided and the people wouldn't stand for it, and nobody but the enemy would win if I took it."<sup>48</sup> The fact that the people wouldn't stand for it was not apparently a prime consideration for the leaders of the Military Executive. In sum, the "irregular" military's intransigent posture seems far less ambivalent than De Valera's, and further along the road toward anti-democratic opposition. Thus, the "military" vs. "politician" divide may well be valid even among Republicans.

### Explaining the Military's Behavior

Now that we have presented the case for conceptualizing the breakaway "irregulars" as an anti-constitutional force--with important qualifications--let us finally turn our attention to the question of explaining the military's Republican extremism. A variety of explanations--some plausible, others not--are suggested by an abundant literature dealing with the political involvement of military elites. Remember that the "military's" corporate group interests--more emotional than material--are the factors that make the most sense in answering this question. Before focusing on this theme, we shall briefly survey and reject other types of explanations for the military's intervention.

#### The Military's Disposition to Intervene in Politics

- I. The military's unique attributes and skills
  - a. the modern military man: literate, efficient, non-corrupt, technically oriented, disciplined, etc.
  - b. specific class backgrounds and perceptions of class interest
- II. The corporate group interest of the military
  - a. material rewards, jobs, positions
  - b. the military group as a psychic shelter, the role of status
  - c. cumulative effect of extended fighting and bearing losses

Scholarly interest in "military intervention" has been fostered, to a great extent, by the epidemic of post-independence coups in the developing nations. In areas of the Third and Fourth Worlds, the military coup has been the "modal form of regime change,"<sup>49</sup> a fact which has led to numerous studies of the "causes" of such political behavior. The above categories are but a partial listing of these research orientations and approaches, and propositions gleaned from this literature are helpful for analyzing the Irish experience. In addition, the developing world focus, once again, conceptually ties a European Ireland to the wars of national independence that punctuate the history of twentieth-century decolonization. The Irish experience of decolonization was complicated, in a sense, by similar military threats to the established regime.

One could further argue that "military intervention" is a universal political phenomena, not solely restricted to the less developed countries. A glance at the "developed" European heartland of parliamentary institutions, especially its periphery (Southern, Eastern, Europe, and Iberia), reveals a rich history of military involvement in politics. Forging military dictatorships (post-1918, Marshal Mannerheim in Finland, Admiral Horthy's regime in Hungary, Pilsudski's Poland, Franco's Spain, the Greek Colonels' coup of 1967), crushing political revolution (the German Freikorps' semi-independent action, with complicity of Social Democrats, to halt the Spartacists [1918]), failed attempts to unseat constitutional democracy (Kapp Putsch [1920], the French army-pieds noirs alliance [1958, 1960, 1961]), and a revolutionary attack on

dictatorship (Portugal's Armed Forces Movement [1974]), are all variants of this heritage. Thus the analysis of the IRA "irregulars'" civil war behavior may proceed by incorporating the insights and explanations acquired in both the developed and less-developed political environment. The aim is to isolate those attributes of military leaders that might differentiate them from "politicians" and explain their propensity for intervention.

A word of caution: The attitudes and ideas of only a handful of IRA men, culled from autobiographical and biographical sources, will provide the evidence for supporting any number of the above themes. At most, then, we are seeking clues, suggestions, and directions for further inquiry rather than definitive explanations for the military's extremist involvement.

#### The "Military Modernizer"

One school of thought argues that the positive intervention role played by the military, particularly in modernizing countries, is a function of the special skills and attributes acquired by army men--and scarce skills, at that. Halpern finds them more efficient and less corrupt than Middle Eastern politicians;<sup>50</sup> for Johnson they appear to be a reservoir of technocratic-managerial talents in Latin America,<sup>51</sup> and, in general, as Lucien Pye notes, they are progressive forces armed with modern techniques quite naturally assuming authoritative roles.<sup>52</sup> On the face of it, such sweeping propositions are irrelevant to Irish politics where the distribution of scarce "modern" skills permeates all levels of society.

Furthermore, the supposedly progressive nature of the military may be a poor explanatory factor even for those countries within the LDCs' orbit. Eric Nordlinger, for example, has argued that the advent of the military's rule does not presage more efficient government,<sup>53</sup> and case studies, such as Robert Price's analysis of the Ghanaian military's performance, claim the very opposite.<sup>54</sup> And finally, to confuse matters all the more, a broad cross-national study by McKinley and Cohan finds there is little evidence to demonstrate any of the above claimed relationships between the coup and implied modernization skills.<sup>55</sup>

#### The "Lower Class" Progressive Military Man

A more fruitful line of inquiry centers about the concept of "class." All sorts of propositions have been advanced to link the class backgrounds of the military--lower, middle, and upper--with their general propensity for political involvement.

1. The lower-middle and middle class composition of the officer corp fosters a responsiveness to the grievances of the exploited masses and creates the potential for their vanguard role in modernization and revolution. Thomas Bruneau recognizes the roots of Portugal's Armed Forces Movement's (MFA) revolutionary impulse in threats to the junior officer corps and also argues that their specific class backgrounds shaped the course of their involvement:

Whereas in the past those officers were recruited from the upper and the upper middle class, those predisposed

to be "subjectively" loyal to the regime, by the time of the African wars, and increasingly after, because of the needs for more officers the class composition dropped to the middle class and urban lower-middle class whose professional concerns diverged from those of the higher officer corps who, they felt, were more concerned with making money and swearing fealty to the regime than with fighting the wars.<sup>56</sup>

Ultimately, these disgruntled junior officers were more readily influenced by the propaganda of various rebel groups in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau, class affinities permitting such revolutionary identification.

2. Similarly, Samuel Huntington has argued that the lower class "modest rural" backgrounds of the Korean military (1940s and 1960s) who "have known poverty at close range"<sup>57</sup> fosters an empathy for the poor peasant which, in turn, bolsters their tendency to political intervention.

3. The Free Officer's coup in Egypt 1952 was led by an officer corps described as "solidly Egyptian and rural; its officers were of the rural middle class."<sup>58</sup> In contrast to the foreigner Farouk and his aristocratic upper class satraps, General Naguib--the brief ruler of the new government--noted that his military cohorts were "largely . . . the sons of civil servants and soldiers and the grandsons of peasants."<sup>59</sup> In short they were reformers attuned to the problems of the "fellahin" and enraged by official corruption. A famous passage in Nasser's Philosophy of the Revolution describes his Negev (1948) military adventures to "liberate Palestine." His thoughts were directed homeward where the real struggle would take place, a battle against a degenerate

regime that had failed the army and the oppressed "fellaah." After the coup, the peasant mass comprised the backbone of the officer's support, whether in the form of the mob's shrill voice begging Nasser not to forsake them (1967), or in the quiet approval of Sadat's highly visible and advertised retreats to his simple village on the Nile, Mit Abuel Kom. Again the connection between the officer's class background and the propensity (ability?) to intervene in politics is plausible.

4. Nor does military intervention, circumscribed by class attributes, necessarily produce reformist political behavior. Indeed, monstrous developments have ensued from such army activity. Ali Mazrui has argued, for instance, that the overthrow of the educated middle class "politician," Milton Obote (1971), who essentially ruled through an alliance of the military and intelligentsia, was conditioned by the ethnic and class backgrounds of Idi Amin and his insurgents.<sup>60</sup> They represented a "coalescence of guns and numbers against brains"<sup>61</sup> that could attract mass peasant support. Amin's "rural upbringing among the Kakwa"<sup>62</sup> and his fellow officers being "sons of peasants" and thus less removed from the village than even Egyptian officers of 1952 were important factors for solidifying power. Ultimately, ethnic divisiveness and perhaps individual pathology led to genocidal slaughter. But, in any case, the initial impetus for military intervention had a dimension of class conflict.

5. Lastly, on this "lower and lower-middle class military" theme, Quandt offers a rather complicated analysis of the effect of

characteristics on leadership behavior. Remember, his general thesis subordinates class, ethnic, regional, etc. factors to those political socialization variables--differing entrance points, roles played, and skills acquired during the revolutionary struggle--for explaining leadership conflicts. Even so, the author does argue that the military's intransigence, extremism, and political intervention is related to their lower-class self-perceptions, and identification with the masses not shared by reformers, intellectual, and politician types.<sup>63</sup> The military's firm opposition to a "political" sell-out compromise during the Evian negotiations--a stance somewhat analogous to the IRA "irregulars'" anti-Treaty opposition--appears to bolster the proposition that class attributes played a part in their political involvement.

6. From another perspective, upper class backgrounds and identifications have also been deemed explanatory factors for army officers anti-democratic behavior. Our previous discussion of the Curragh Incident (Mutiny?) is instructive. Those Conservative-oriented gentry types that were the backbone of the general staff and officer corps, opposed to the dismemberment of the Empire in general, and the Home Rule blow against the Protestant Ascendancy in particular, chose to rebel against the constitution rather than coerce Ulster. Of course, ethnic identification played no small part in the incident. Sir Henry Wilson, the British Field Marshal, and later James Craig's (1922) military advisor to the Northern Ireland Protestant "state-let" was first and foremost an Ulsterman. A similar link made many other officers leery about serving the

Crown in Ireland. Certainly, though, the class lines were drawn: Tory aristocrats, titled military, officers from landed families, et al. were the important elements in this treasonous activity.

How relevant are these bits and pieces of "class" evidence for understanding the IRA's opposition to the Treaty? In fact, why should we be interested in the IRA irregulars' class background at all? For one thing, C. Desmond Greaves claims that the IRA's alternate locus of power was representative of the "lower orders," and indeed were legitimately attempting to complete a potential social revolution. Now, this rather debatable proposition is supported, in a way, by Peter Pyne's profile of the modal Republican supporter--the poorer smallholders, etc. Was there a mutual "lower order" identification between the masses and the military elite? Certainly it is a question well worth asking. (In another chapter we shall demonstrate that the anti-Treatyites in general, politicians and military men, were more apt to be economic and social radicals.) Though the Republic, oath, and partition appear to be the constricted limits to the "irregular's" political vision--a self-defeating strategy at that--this narrow nationalism may have masked the implicit class message. After all, it was hardly a secret that big business, the press, Unionist and Catholic landowners and monied interests in general were solidly lined up behind the Treaty. Was, then, the IRA "irregular's" extremism prompted, in part, by their identification with the "lower orders"?

The evidence suggests that the core of the distinctly "military" hard-liners was a cross-section of Irish life--lower,

middle, upper-middle class--indistinguishable from either their anti-Treaty comrades or moderate Free Staters. If "class identification" helped determine their actions it was not due to their individual backgrounds. (Pre-War of Independence occupations and family status are the indicators of a general class position.)

For instance:

1. Ernie O'Malley, medical student at Trinity College, father a civil servant.
2. Peador O'Donnell, a "provincial writer."
3. Frank Aiken managed the family farm, father a builder and a member of the County Council.
4. Liam Lynch, hardware apprentice, at 17 began a "commercial career in a prosperous trade."
5. Dan Breen, employee of the Great Southern and Western Railroad.
6. Rory O'Connor, son of a Dublin solicitor, engineer for the Dublin Corporation.
7. Oscar Traynor, composer, father a well-known Dublin bookseller.
8. Liam Deasy from "humble stock."
9. Sean O'Hegarty had been dismissed from post office because of nationalist activities.

#### The Military's Corporate Group Interest

Another general approach for explaining the military's intervention in politics shifts from a focus on the army leadership's special, often "progressive," attributes (i.e., skills or class

identification) and emphasizes their particular material and psychological corporate group interests. Firstly, the threat of job loss, diminution of rank and position, lack of rewards or equipment, or a perception of improper level of remuneration, are seen as prime reasons for their anti-governmental behavior. Eric Nordlinger, for instance, argues that once in power their pay schedules inexorably rise, along with other forms of military expenditures, which might include such expensive gadgets as the Mercedes-Benz staff cars. Throughout the non-western world, the military coup seems to entrench a new class of political actors far less concerned with the corruption of former "politicians" than with job security and financial emoluments.<sup>64</sup> Similarly, Sam DeCalo has suggested that the material interests of often hypocritical army leaders assuming an "above dirty politics" stance are at the root of the myriad post-independence African coups and failed coups. The claim is that material motives are the key independent variables for explaining the officers' behavior. Analyses advanced by such scholars as Aristide Zolberg<sup>65</sup> and Samuel Huntington<sup>66</sup> that point to the fragility of the political system--especially the absence, except on paper, of a well-developed party--as the prime determinant of military intervention, are simply mistaken.

The core analytic flaw is the confusion of the very real and existing systemic tensions in African states (which are, however, the universal backdrop of all political life in the continent) with other factors--often the prime reasons for a military upheaval--lodged in the internal dynamics of the officer corps. It is both simplistic and empirically erroneous to relegate coups in Africa to the

status of a dependent variable, a function of the political weakness and structural fragility of African states and the failings of African civilian elites.<sup>67</sup>

And this phenomenon does not appear to be restricted solely to the political milieu of the modernizing world. In a decidedly "developed" European setting, Daniel Lerner notes that right-wing anti-Weimar Nazi paramilitary groups drew great support from precisely those demobilized lower officers who were functionally unemployed since the end of World War I when "peace broke out."<sup>68</sup> Anti-constitutional military behavior was engendered, in part, by their loss of status and means of earning a living. Also, from the left, the origins of Portugal's MFA was, to some degree (see above), rooted in the fear that jobs and status were being challenged by interlopers unfairly swelling their hard-won officer corps ranks.

As for the Irish civil war and the political intervention of the IRA "irregulars," jobs, positions, and rank were certainly critical issues in 1922, but whether material concerns fostered support for Free State "constitutionalism" or Republican "anti-constitutionalism" is a matter for debate. In one formulation, the most active commandants of the guerrilla war were excluded from high army posts in the Free State's rapidly developing force at Beggar's Bush. Late-comers to the IRA's struggle whose professional military credentials often included WWI British Army service, the pro-Treatyite majority at General Headquarters (Collins, Mulcahy, O'Sullivan, et al.) and "politicians" in general were usurping the preeminent position of the IRA in the field. And one author, T. Desmond Williams, has bluntly characterized the ensuing spiral toward civil war as

essentially a "conflict over jobs."<sup>69</sup>

During the Truce period (July 11, 1921 - Treaty), Commandant Ernie O'Malley dryly commented on this state of affairs and lends credence to this variant of the corporate group interest thesis:

The movement was not becoming respectable, success had driven in many who had not even a half belief. I saw a new paid bureaucracy being built in Dublin, and I heard the comments of some, who looked down on the fighting men.<sup>70</sup>

And in his later autobiographical work, The Singing Flame, O'Malley continues the attack on the late-comers:

It was safe to parade now. Many who had sneered at the country boys who had served faithfully, unobtrusively for the past four years were now anxious to become officers.<sup>71</sup>

(An IRA "irregular" handbill of the post-Treaty period summarizes this widespread fear that the most vigorous fighting men were being shunted aside by opportunists: "Be very careful you people who lately became Free Staters because the Crowd and the jobs were on that side."<sup>72</sup>)

O'Malley assumed that the GHQ officers who supported the Treaty did so with not entirely pure motivations. The approval of the Treaty "would naturally strengthen their political positions by reason of their army rank. Three of them were members of Dail Eireann."<sup>73</sup>

His logic appears sound; once the fighting stopped the compromising political negotiators and GHQ men would assume center stage in Irish politics and undermine the positions of the field commandants. In a sense, then, peace was seen as a threat to one's job.

The major problem with this line of argument, though, is that the loss of one's job or exclusion from a high military post

were largely consequences of a militant anti-Free State position rather than the cause of anti-constitutional posturing. In crass terms of basic economic security the active IRA leaders in the field merely had to follow Dail Eireann's Treaty vote to assure themselves a role in the Free State Army. T.P. Coogan suggests that this shaking-out process, in fact, occurred on a large scale, attracting precisely those IRA men seeking material rewards:

The Truce had a curious psychological effect on many of them. When it came, and the then still united Sinn Fein party started to build up a paid national army, they suddenly found themselves with uniforms, pay and increased life expectancy. This new and unexpected circumstance decided many IRA men in favour of accepting the Treaty.<sup>74</sup>

It seems highly unlikely that jobs per se were a root cause of the "irregulars" intransigence since extreme republicanism would obviously bar them from Free State employment. Of course, once the civil war lines began to be drawn their "outsider" status and the fact that "opportunists" had paid positions only exacerbated the conflict. To better understand the proper order of cause and effect it is rather instructive to recount a conversation during the Dail Treaty debate period between O'Malley and a future Free State general, J.J. "Ginger" O'Connell. Jobs were enthusiastically being offered to O'Malley and his comrades, an enticement which bordered on sacrilege for die-hard republicans:

We'll be allowed to have 20,000 men, and, "We expect to get many a good battalion from the 2nd Southern for the Free State Army," said O'Connell. The icy reply was a prophetic warning, "you'll have to fight in our area if you are false to your oath. That is where you'll meet with immediate and terrible war."<sup>75</sup>

In short, moderation was the sure-fire route to steady employment, a path rejected from day one of the Truce by the core of military hard-liners. Initially, job security hardly challenged Republican purity as "the" overriding issue.

But before rejecting the "corporate interest" thesis we should briefly examine the non-material, emotional group needs of the IRA "irregulars." It is our belief that this elusive area of inquiry holds a key for explaining the military's intransigence. These men were cut off--by distance and allegiance--from Dublin GHQ and the Dail, were on the run in some of the most remote sections of Ireland, participated in fairly large pitched battles, and suffered by far the highest losses to the "Tans" and "Auxies."<sup>76</sup> The guerrillas companies and "flying columns" provided the intense camaraderie of those hunted and sentenced to death, created the in-group insularity and rarefied atmosphere based on a continual sacrifice of blood, and indeed provided a veritable psychic shelter that faced destruction once "peace broke out"--especially a peace so marred by weak-willed compromise. Unlike the GHQ officers or "politicians," his "world of midnight tramping on lonely hillsides, of secret drillings, of absolute loyalty and immaculate purity"<sup>79</sup> would end abruptly with acceptance of the ignominious Treaty. And as those who bore the brunt of British repression--had not the Crown shifted her main forces to face the IRA Southern Divisions at the height of the war?--could they now simply stack their arms in accordance with Dail Eireann's vote?

Perhaps Erich Maria Remarque's classic literary statement describing the potent brotherhood of men at arms applies to all such participants in combat, the guerrilla variety included.

It is a great brotherhood, which to a condition of life arising out of the midst of danger, out of the tension and forlornness of death, adds something of the good fellowship of the folksong and of the feelings of solidarity of convicts, and of the desperate loyalty to one another of men condemned to death.<sup>78</sup>

To be sure, IRA "irregular" leaders spoke the language of Remarque. Tom Barry, for instance, stressed the deep kinship felt among the men of the "flying columns":

In the billets I was "Tom" one of themselves and entitled to no more favorable treatment. Yet somehow these fine fellows would ensure that I had the best bed. . . . I often wondered at the great luck which had cast my lot amongst such comrades and their fineness only made my responsibility the greater.<sup>79</sup>

Ernie O'Malley was even more direct and laudatory when reminiscing about the exalted life on the run in Army Without Banners:

I lived on a mountain top where there was no need for speech even. I felt an understanding, a sharing of something bigger than ourselves, and a heightening of life. People would be more expressive, natural, and affectionate. They were direct, and immediate contact was not difficult.<sup>80</sup>

And yet, in a second autobiographical work, The Singing Flame, the author discusses the inherent dangers of living on "mountain tops." Perhaps he unintentionally reveals the basis of his totally uncompromising stand against the Free State.

I was told stories of myself, what I had said or done in different places. I could not recognize myself for the legend. That was a difficulty. The confusion between the legendary and the real self. Time jumped a gap with us. People saw us as a myth, which bore little relation to ourselves; and our real selves, how could we find them?<sup>81</sup>

Finally, when besieged by the Free States at the IRA "irregulars'" Four Courts headquarters in the middle of Dublin, O'Malley once again is rapturously transported back to the comradeship of his Southern Division days: "The feeling of comradeship in common danger bound us closer together, it helped us to comprehend our deeper feelings and ideals; gave us more understanding as we became less impersonal."<sup>82</sup>

Similarly, Brigade Adjutant Florence O'Donoghue describes the lofty feelings of fellow IRA leader Liam Lynch (for a time Chief of Staff of the Republican "irregulars") and, in doing so, seems to hint at his own strongly felt sentiments:

With the Army alone he seemed to be completely happy, perhaps because there he had tested the sincerity of men's faith and the depths of their convictions . . . he found an atmosphere congenial, ingenious, warmed by human friendship that was an emanation of a simple conception of an unselfish service to the nation, in sharp contrast to some of the things he was beginning to perceive outside its ranks.<sup>83</sup>

Lynch was well aware of his division's isolation from the Dail and GHQ, and even from large segments of County Cork's population that were ready to buy the Treaty compromise. Still, in his own words, he had "declared for an Irish Republic" and would not "live under any other law," a decision once accepted by his tightly knit command ("All my division hold the one view."<sup>84</sup>) had for him the sanction of supreme authority. Their sacrifices and suffering had bestowed upon them this mantle of legitimacy.

I don't give a damn about these people when it comes to praise or notoriety, and they are making the hell of a mistake if they think I forget their actions during the war. I remember at one time in the best areas where it was next to impossible to find a bed to lie in.<sup>85</sup>

As for Dublin, Lynch was at first willing to believe that Michael Collins's "stepping-stone" argument might quickly lead to the sought after Republic, and was not hostile to GHQ individuals that rubbed shoulders with politicians or were Dail members. "I admire Mick as a soldier and a man. Thank God all parties can agree to differ."<sup>86</sup> The Free Staters attack on the Four Courts and a constitution drawn up that confirmed die-hard republicans' worst fears--a strict oath of allegiance to the Crown and Dominion Home Rule status--were the final straws for Lynch.

Another way of demonstrating the insularity and the "emotional shelter" attributes of the most active IRA field units might be to describe some of the actual tensions between them and the GHQ. The perception of easier life-style and lesser sacrifices of Dubliners are depicted by Southern Division IRA men in negative terms. Whether a correct assessment or not, these criticisms appear to be accurate indicators of the depth of their feelings of heroic "purity," and the distance they had climbed up the Republican "mountain top" (and perhaps an intimation of the "fall" after the cessation of hostilities).

Commandant Tom Barry asserted the necessary total independence of the "flying column," a state of affairs that, in some ways, presaged the eventual break with the GHQ and the Dail:

The Command of the flying column was absolute. The Column Commander could not be interfered with by any one. His decisions were personally subject to no authority whatever, written or outside the column.<sup>87</sup>

Yet, ironically, complete independence from GHQ, in terms of material

and logistic support, was at the very heart of their grievances and feelings of separateness--and superiority. Barry wanted the GHQ to "extend fighting to the East, North, and Midlands" to relieve the pressure in their area, pleaded for supplies of scarce ammunition and argued that the creation of a Southern Division on paper ("no unit larger than a brigade was viable"<sup>88</sup>) was an inept cover for the lack of sound strategy and real backing. The Headquarters document establishing the First Southern Division was, in Barry's view, "so divorced from the realities of the situation in the South that most of us were in an angry mood . . . we were all at a loss to understand how its establishment on paper would help these Brigades at the most critical period of their existence."<sup>89</sup> Sean O'Hegarty was similarly outraged at this "paper" dictate from those far removed from their day-to-day struggle:

[H]e asked why Collins, Mulcahy, or some of the senior officers had not come along to the meeting instead of sending a messenger, why no GHQ officer had ever visited the Southern fighting units . . . why GHQ had done nothing towards extending the fight to the inactive areas and why GHQ had not yet imported the arms and ammunition so badly needed.<sup>90</sup>

Ernie O'Malley was angered by the paucity of materials trickling down to this critical front, and again strikes out at the secondary role of the politicians:

Why didn't the staff supply us with small artillery, trench mortars, Stoke guns, machine guns, or rifle grenades, even with decent land mines? Why didn't the Staff pay attention to pure staff work, leaving the political field to others. The Chief of Staff is a member of the Dail, Director of Intelligence the Minister of Finance, Director of Organization was Secretary to Dail, and the Director of Engineering was Secretary to the local government board.<sup>91</sup>

He further comments,

We had to pay GHQ for the small dribblets of arms that came to us, but our main sources of supply were the enemy sources of supply we captured in action. Our GHQ did not send us money to buy office supplies or to clothe columns.<sup>92</sup>

And like O'Hegarty he was especially peeved at GHQ's failure to take a personal, on-site interest in the details of their guerrilla war theater: "Many members of the GHQ Staff did not know the country. They depended on information or reports which were forwarded by some areas only, and then never in detail, and on the spasmodic visits of officers in Dublin."<sup>93</sup>

One such visit, Tom Barry's sole journey to Headquarters during the 1919-21 period, elicited a number of telling criticisms from a commandant caught out of his familiar environment of the distant West Cork countryside. Firstly, on the most basic level of physical appearance, Barry contrasted the ascetic simplicity of his men with the apparent middle class tastes of the Staff, "dressed like businessmen, carrying brief attache cases, with their pockets full of false papers."<sup>94</sup> Of a more serious nature was Barry's initial sharp reaction to the daredevil and seemingly frivolous risks taken by the Staff (the failure of Collins and Georoid O'Sullivan to post scouts led to a search of their entire party by "Auxies"), "it was all very well for himself and Georoid who were T.D.'s since the British had an unexplainable idea that Members of Parliament should not be executed."<sup>95</sup> Life was certainly different in Dublin. (Later he came to understand their looseness, risk-taking and dress. These were the only real protective devices for urban guerrillas who were constantly

mingling among the populace and the British forces.<sup>96)</sup>

Along these same lines, O'Malley was repulsed by what he viewed as "high-living" at the Dublin center when the men on the vital fronts were under-equipped, under-fed, and facing greater dangers. During the Truce he sarcastically mentioned to Rory O'Connor (an IRA Republican die-hard from Dublin that had carried out the greatest operation of the war--destruction of the Customs House): "Headquarters should give you a car. In Dublin there is no lack of cars, some for joy-riding only."<sup>97</sup> And when the Treaty negotiations were held in London, O'Malley paid a call on the Irish "politicians" at Hans Place, his observations underline a generalized attitude of contempt for the soft life of those formulating policy, and the integrity of their own difficult trial in the field: "Champagne, wines and whiskey were unstinted but neither of us drank. I thought of my staff at Dinny Kelly's hut, running breakfast and lunch together to economize."<sup>98</sup> Soon he would reside in a Free State jail participating in a Republican hunger strike.

### Conclusion

In sum, then, the GHQ/field IRA divide appears to be another variant of the enmity between "politician" and "army man." The "irregular's" isolation, high level of activity and sacrifices, specific life-style, and self-identity as a purely "military man," all contribute to their reluctance to abide by the Dail majority or orders from their own Staff. In a sense, the breakaway Military

Executive--a body we have designated as anti-constitutional--was derived from a very special socialization experience. And their highly emotional corporate group needs best explain their violent republic and protest.

Two other much discussed "causes" for military intervention have been mentioned in passing: (a) Huntington's "weak party" thesis and (b) Finer's "political culture" focus. Rather than hastily reject these analyses we have implicitly subsumed them under our explanatory categories. In Huntington's formulation, "military intervention" is merely a function of the lack of political institutional development, "Praetorian politics." Translated into Irish terms, Dail Eireann's inability to assert control in large portions of the country (i.e., the military's autonomy and isolation during war) was the key factor for engendering the eventual IRA challenge to the Free State. Once the pro-Treatyites were victorious on the battlefield, firmly "institutionalized" in the Cumann na Gaedheal Party and "authoritatively allocating values" for society, the IRA military threat was forever transformed from a critical danger to the regime. But their continued existence right up to the present brings us to a second explanation for the "irregulars'" intransigence, that of a non-democratic political culture. (Of course, partition and the British presence in Northern Ireland fuels such continued violence. Rather than apologize for the British we are interested in explaining why a specific group chose a most extreme course.) We might hazard a guess that the secret oath-bound society tradition circumscribed the actions of the IRA in 1922 as well as Republicans

during the next half-century. The IRA's challenge to notion of an overriding Irish "civic culture" is substantial. The irregulars' war of independence roles as ascetic Republican warriors appears to have dove-tailed with this long held non-democratic folk tradition and hence the probability of civil war was raised.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup>O'Donoghue, No Other Law, p. 86.
- <sup>2</sup>Breen, My Fight, p. 241.
- <sup>3</sup>Tom Barry, Guerrilla Days in Ireland (Dublin: The Irish Press, 1949), p. 159.
- <sup>4</sup>Jones, Whitehall Diaries, p. 65.
- <sup>5</sup>For instance, Bell, The Secret Army, p. 31.
- <sup>6</sup>Jones, Whitehall Diaries, p. 65.
- <sup>7</sup>O'Hegarty, History of Ireland, p. 275.
- <sup>8</sup>Colum, Arthur Griffith, p. 180.
- <sup>9</sup>O'Hegarty, History of Ireland, p. 276.
- <sup>10</sup>White, Kevin O'Higgins, p. 35.
- <sup>11</sup>E. Butler, Barry's Flying Column (London: L. Cooper, 1971), p. 93.
- <sup>12</sup>O'Malley, Army Without Banners, p. 246.
- <sup>13</sup>Longford & O'Neill, Eamon De Valera, p. 187.
- <sup>14</sup>Of course, post-Treaty "self-identification" cannot be utilized as evidence of a particularly "military" background characteristic, although it apparently points to a clear continuity of attitudes and behavior from the pre-Treaty period.
- <sup>15</sup>Pyne, "The New IRA," p. 43.
- <sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 152.
- <sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 43.
- <sup>18</sup>Of course, there are limits to employing these ideal-types and stretching the "intransigent military" thesis. For instance, when De Valera finally entered the Dail he was able to attract substantial support from the ranks of the IRA. For our purposes, though, we are less interested in these ever more rarified schisms than the basic Treaty split; a conflict, to some extent, understandable in terms of the military's and politicians' attitudes.

- <sup>19</sup>Quandt, Revolution and Political Leadership, p. 152.
- <sup>20</sup>O'Donoghue, No Other Law, p. 179.
- <sup>21</sup>Macardle, The Irish Republic, pp. 633-34. In Lynch's Southern Division, 193 officers and men were casualties, and 200 were interned and sentenced up to the trace (July 11, 1921).
- <sup>22</sup>Breen, My Fight, p. 241.
- <sup>23</sup>Quandt, Revolution and Political Leadership, pp. 114-15.
- <sup>24</sup>Greaves, Liam Mellows, chap. I.
- <sup>25</sup>White, Kevin O'Higgins, p. 81.
- <sup>26</sup>Greaves, Liam Mellows, p. 253.
- <sup>27</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 300.
- <sup>29</sup>O'Donoghue, No Other Law, p. 246.
- <sup>30</sup>Breen, My Fight, p. 242.
- <sup>31</sup>Bell, The Secret Army, p. 59.
- <sup>32</sup>O'Donoghue, No Other Law, p. 228.
- <sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 190.
- <sup>34</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>35</sup>The "irregulars," of course, represented a rather healthy minority. This was not a potential Bolshevik "putsch" that would overthrow Kerensky, later dissolve the Constituent Assembly and drive the majority Social Revolutionaries from Russian politics. In the case of Ireland, even the civil war losers were co-opted into the constitutional process and became the base for the dominant Fianna Fail party of Eamon De Valera, Sean Lemass, and now Prime Minister Jack Lynch. If their "intervention in politics" had been successful in 1922-23, perhaps Free Staters would have been interned, executed, persecuted, and driven to emigrate, but there is little chance that the "moderates," and their majority constituency, wouldn't emerge in another political form. In other words, repression of antagonists occurred on a vastly different scale in Ireland; as awful as reprisal executions were, the sum total of losses to both sides wouldn't add up to the single worst day in either the Russian, Chinese or Algerian struggles.
- <sup>36</sup>Bell, The Secret Army, p. 18.

<sup>37</sup> RIC men were most often Catholics with large families; well known and popular within their patrol districts. For Breen, though, the action was justified by the British proclaiming South Tipperary a "military area," tantamount to the promulgation of martial law: "Our little band had unmasked England. She had now come out in the open and let the world see that she held Ireland by naked force, and by force alone" (Breen, My Fight, pp. 48-49).

<sup>38</sup> Kee, The Green Flag, p. 732.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> F.S.L. Lyons (Ireland Since the Famine, p. 452) quotes the most relevant and inflammatory lines of this Thurles speech: "If they accept the Treaty, and if the Volunteers of the future tried to complete the work the Volunteers of the last four years had been attempting, they would have to complete it, not over the bodies of foreign soldiers, but over the dead bodies of their own countrymen. They would have to wade through Irish blood, through the blood of the soldiers of the Irish Government and through, perhaps, the blood of some of the members of the Government in order to get Irish freedom." De Valera's admiring biographer, M.J. MacManus, dismisses the inflammatory nature of these words comparing them to Lincoln's dire warning of the inevitability of bloodshed unless the course of U.S. antebellum events were changed. The claim is that "Dev" was issuing a "prophetic warning" rather than an "incitement to civil war," and Free Staters purposefully misconstrued his meaning. Furthermore, he "sent an immediate protest against the misrepresentation of his speech to the Press." Whatever the intent, it obviously was a dangerous statement for that crucial post-Treaty period (De Valera, p. 197).

<sup>41</sup> White, Kevin O'Higgins, p. 98.

<sup>42</sup> Arthur Griffith, The Resurrection of Hungary (Dublin: Whelan & Son, 1918), p. 112.

<sup>43</sup> Actually, De Valera always appears to have hedged his bets when it came to the question of the full Republican demand. Thus it is ironic that he found himself eventually fighting side by side with die-hard Republicans. His Document Number 2 alternative to the Treaty was essentially a partitioned Free State "externally associated" with the Commonwealth. And, prior to the Treaty split, his waffling on strict Republicanism characterizes his entire career. For instance:

1. In his very first electoral campaign for Sinn Fein (Summer 1917), running for the E. Clare Commons seat on an abstentionist platform, De Valera was careful not to appear dogmatic on the issue of the Republican form. "We want an Irish Republic . . . because if Ireland and her freedom, it is, I believe, the most likely form of government. But, if the Irish people wanted to

have another form of government, so long as it was an Irish form of government, I would not put in a word against it" (Lyons, Ireland Since the Famine, p. 384).

2. "Dev" was elected President at the uniting Sinn Fein Ard-Fheis (October 1917) on a compromise platform that would appeal to both staunch Republicans and less extreme advanced nationalists.

3. Throughout his extended tour of the U.S. he gave hints of his less than Republican views; often to the consternation of the Dail Cabinet meeting in Dublin. On February 6, 1920, he gave his famous "Cuban interview" to a reporter of the Westminister Gazette. Essentially, he proposed that Britain declare a Monroe Doctrine for their neighboring island which would protect the Crown's flank, while granting Ireland some form of independence. According to his colleague, Dr. Macartan, he had "consulted none of us," and the proposal "came as a thunderbolt" (Pat MacCartan, With De Valera in America [Dublin: Fitzpatrick Press, 1932], p. 153). It was a clear diminution of a free, sovereign Republic, and would hinder efforts to have an Irish State recognized by the U.S. The editorial in the Boston Globe went so far as to state the Republican demand had been withdrawn by the official representative of the Irish people (Longford & O'Neill, De Valera, p. 103). The Dail met hurriedly to affirm the sovereign Republic (all but Griffith); condemn De Valera's disastrous policy pronouncement (Brugha, Plunkett, Markievicz); or excuse De Valera's poor choice of off-the-cuff political analogies (Collins, Griffith). At other times, Macartan suggests that "Dev" assumed the stance of President of the Irish Republic, well aware of the effect of such a political gesture on moderates back home. On June 23, 1919, for example, De Valera had reversed his original "self-determination" theme, and came out squarely for the Republic. "From today, I am in America, as the official head of the Republic established by the will of the Irish people" (With De Valera, p. 153). His comment to Macartan was: "I wonder what Griffith will say when he reads that I came out in the press as President of the Republic." And yet, on his return to Ireland, he was hardly optimistic concerning the acceptance of such a Republic. During a January 1921 Dail meeting, he stated, "If I were the President of the United States myself, I could not, and would not, recognize Ireland as a Republic" (With De Valera, p. 232). With this in mind, he stressed that the guerrilla war burden should be lightened for the Irish people. Ironically, Collins, who was later to accept the Treaty compromise, chided "Dev" for his inability to recognize that areas that were most active were not "getting worse hammering."

4. There are a number of claims that De Valera was actually trapped by the "straightjacket" of the full Republican demand and privately assured moderates of his wish to be freed. For instance, there is an account in the April 28, 1922 Freeman's Journal of an acrimonious public exchange between De Valera and Griffith in the Dail, where the latter essentially justified his Free State position by noting De Valera's behind-the-scenes admission of the impossibility of achieving a Republic. Griffith remembered the exact words: "Get me out of the strait jacket of the Irish Republic;

I cannot get it." "Dev's" rejoinder was a straightforward, "that is an absolute falsehood." P.S. O'Hegarty also recounts that De Valera admitted his unease with a full Republican demand, and was looking for some formula (i.e., Document Number 2) acceptable to die-hards like Cathal Brugha (Kee, The Green Flag, p. 721). General Jan Smuts, a Commonwealth leader from South Africa, interceding on Lloyd George's behalf, claimed that De Valera stated to him, "If status of a Dominion is offered, I will use all our machinery to get the Irish people to accept it" (Harold Nicolson, George V [London: Constable & Company, 1952], p. 351). And, Roger Casement's brother was supposedly informed by De Valera that the Republic was "out of the question" (Margery Forester, Michael Collins: The Lost Leader [London: Sedgewick & Jackson, 1971], p. 196). Furthermore, in an instructive letter to Joseph McGarrity (December 21, 1921, just prior to the Treaty vote), he admits candidly that the nation would accept a Dominion status on the order of Canada or Australia ("on paper at least") with assurances for naval defense for Great Britain and safeguards for Ulster (Cronin, McGarrity Papers, pp. 104-105). This admission, coupled with his statement to a secret Dail meeting, to the effect that each county of Ulster might vote themselves out of an all-Ireland settlement, casts doubt on his hard-line post-Treaty stance. To say the least, De Valera appears inconsistent, ambivalent, if not downright confused or shifty. Ironically, the more steady Republican record of Collins, that often contrasted to De Valera's waffling moderation (e.g., the "Cuban speech" episode) did not stop him from supporting compromise. Sean O'Casey, who never missed a chance to lambaste a weakness or hypocritical posture, harks back to 1917, uniting Ard-Fheis to expose what he saw as De Valera's sorry political acrobatics; later seen again in his Document Number 2 gymnastics (O'Casey, Irishfallen, pp. 9-10): "Spirals of political movement began to appear with Michael Collins dancing a jib in one; Arthur Griffith doing a new Irish Hungarian dance in another; and Eamon De Valera, a fresh young fellow, a bit of a dancer himself, side-stepped from one group to another, hands on hips, advising them to join hands, and foot it feately here and there, pointing a pliant toe himself to show others the way-now glide! De Valera was very supple."

<sup>44</sup>Coogan, The IRA, pp. 38-39.

<sup>45</sup>Robert Brennan, Allegiance (Dublin: Browne & Nolan, 1950), p. 337.

<sup>46</sup>Younger, Ireland's Civil War, p. 241.

<sup>47</sup>Colum, Arthur Griffith, p. 335.

<sup>48</sup>Cronin, McGarrity Papers, p. 109.

<sup>49</sup>Aristide Zolberg, "Political Conflict in the New States of Tropical West Africa," American Political Science Review 42 (April 1968): 77.

<sup>50</sup>Manfred Halpern, The Politics of Social Change in the Middle East and North Africa (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963).

<sup>51</sup>John Johnson, The Role of the Military in Underdeveloped Countries (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1962).

<sup>52</sup>Lucian Pye, Aspects of Political Development (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1968).

<sup>53</sup>E. Nordlinger, "Soldiers in Mufti: The Impact of Military Rule upon Economic and Social Change in Non-Western States," American Political Science Review 44/4 (December 1970): 1131-49.

<sup>54</sup>Robert Price, "Military Officers and Political Leadership," Comparative Politics 8/1 (October 1975): 1-31.

<sup>55</sup>A. McKinley and D. Cohan, "Performance and Instability in Military and Non-Military Regimes," American Political Science Review 20/3 (September 1976): 850-65.

<sup>56</sup>Thomas Bruneau, cited in Bernard Brown, ed. The European Left Confronts Modernity (New York: Irvington Press, 1972).

<sup>57</sup>Samuel Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 241.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 242.

<sup>60</sup>Ali Mazrui, "Ethnic Stratification and the Military Agrarian Complex: The Ugandan Case," in Ethnicity: Theory and Experience, eds. Nathan Glazer and Daniel Moynihan (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), pp. 420-44. As in the case of Portugal the most immediate surface explanation for the coup was a threat to the officers' status. It was "partly to stop the demotion of the military to an even more junior partnership with the educated elite" (Ibid., p. 437).

<sup>61</sup>Huntington, Political Order, p. 240.

<sup>62</sup>Mazrui, "Ethnic Stratification," p. 442.

<sup>63</sup>Quandt, Revolution and Political Leadership, p. 64.

<sup>64</sup>Nordlinger, "Soldiers in Mufti," p. 1136.

<sup>65</sup>Zolberg, "Political Conflict," p. 77.

<sup>66</sup>Huntington, Political Order, p. 242.

<sup>67</sup>De Calo, Coups and Army Rule, p. 13.

<sup>68</sup>Lerner, "The Nazi Elite," p. 18.

<sup>69</sup>Williams, The Irish Struggle, p. 122.

<sup>70</sup>O'Malley, Army without Banners, p. 34.

<sup>71</sup>O'Malley, The Singing Flame, p. 34.

<sup>72</sup>LO P117, National Library of Ireland.

<sup>73</sup>O'Malley, The Singing Flame, p. 48.

<sup>74</sup>Coogan, The IRA, p. 37.

<sup>75</sup>Greaves, Liam Mellows, p. 272.

<sup>76</sup>Bell (The Secret Army, p. 28, n. 10) characterizes the respective war efforts of Dublin/Southwest in a quite different fashion: "Although all the romance is on the side of Barry, Breen, O'Malley, Sean McKeon, and the lads on the hillside, the core of Irish resistance was Dublin. The administrative was staffed by extremely capable men with, perhaps, less dash but vast amounts of disciplined drive. In addition the long campaign of street shootings may have done as much as anything to convince the British that Ireland could not be controlled solely by force. When it was no longer possible for a British officer to walk from his tea at the Shelbourne Hotel to an office at the Castle without risking a bullet in the back, then times were indeed black." Still, we should remember that: (a) Collins and others were also the political backbone of the Dail--in contrast to, say, Liam Lynch; (b) Dublin may have been a greater problem for the British--a debatable thesis--but the Southern Division lost the most men; (c) the gap between the two might be far more important than the relative success of either. The perceptions of the "boys in the hills" count most in this case, rather than their actual performance. For instance, Southern Division officer Florence O'Donoghue writes (No Other Law, p. 179): "The Southern Division had brought the British to the table... [they] had shifted their forces to Munster the last six months."

<sup>77</sup>Martin, "1916: Myth," p. 23.

<sup>78</sup>Erich Maria Remarque, All Quiet on the Western Front (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1930), p. 162. In a sequel to this great novel, members of his famous platoon were thrust back into society when "peace broke out" in 1918. Remarque's The Road Back (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1931) paints a bleak picture of the adaptation to civilian life once the great brotherhood disintegrated. The horrors of battle have, in a sense, permanently cut them off from the rest of humanity. Suicide, jealous rages,

bar fights, attraction to the insurrectionary left of Luxemburg and Liebknecht, service for reactionary paramilitary groups, were the violent activities pursued by those literally lost without their former "psychic shelter."

<sup>79</sup>Barry, Guerrilla Days, p. 134.

<sup>80</sup>O'Malley, Army without Banners, p. 61.

<sup>81</sup>O'Malley, The Singing Flame, pp. 274-75.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid., p. 88.

<sup>83</sup>O'Donoghue, No Other Law, p. 184.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid., p. 190.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid.

<sup>86</sup>Ibid.,

<sup>87</sup>Barry, Guerrilla Days, p. 24.

<sup>88</sup>Ibid.

<sup>89</sup>Ibid., p. 160.

<sup>90</sup>Ibid.

<sup>91</sup>O'Malley, Army without Banners, p. 253.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid., p. 381.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., p. 345.

<sup>94</sup>Barry, Guerrilla Days, p. 178.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid., p. 179. Barry seems to be quite wrong on this score, since Collins was the most wanted man in the Empire--dead or alive--with a £10,000 reward on his head. Commandant Sean MacEoin, who also happened to be a Dail Member, was sentenced to death, awaiting execution at the time of the Truce; negotiations being the only thing that saved his neck. Of course, Barry's perceptions are of most interest to us than the reality or unreality of "immunity" of politicians.

<sup>96</sup>Ibid., p. 186.

<sup>97</sup>O'Malley, Army without Banners, p. 62.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid., p. 64.

## Chapter VI

## BACKGROUND VARIABLES: FRIENDSHIP CIRCLES

"I'm an old comrade of yours . . . the young man pleaded."

"Sure I know that well," said the Colonel heartily, "and I'll say this much for the sake of oul' times, we won't let you suffer long."

"Jesus!" whimpered the half-dead lad, "yous wouldn't shot an old comrade."

Sean O'Casey<sup>1</sup>

Can you imagine me on the run from Mick Collins?

Harry Boland

Harry--it has come to this! Of all things it has come to this!

Mick Collins

Few people would dispute the commonsensical notion that close ties of comradeship, particularly in a revolutionary, life or death situation affect one's political behavior. Just how this elite background variable--"friendship"--circumscribed political decision-making, though, is certainly a complex problem. In the case of the Irish Civil War a first impression is that all the rules of friendship were suspended during an orgy of bloodletting--buddies turning on each other with such regularity and intensity that one questions the

depth of emotional commitment and allegiance previously displayed by the leadership. Yet, on closer examination, we find that clusters of comrades, in fact, tended to adopt a Free State or Republican stance. In other words, this particular background factor is clearly correlated with one's ultimate ideological stance and political actions.

#### Fratricide: Ireland, 1922

Civil war is indeed a dirty business. Friend versus friend, brother pitted against brother, households split apart, violent retribution aimed at former comrades, the decimation of a leadership whose talents were sorely needed to build a (partially?) independent Ireland--such were the tragic consequences of an elite divided along Republican and Free State lines.

Cathal Brugha is riddled with bullets as he fails to surrender to Free State troops in the opening Civil War battle near the Four Courts. A small automatic pistol given to Erskine Childers by Collins as a token of friendship is the damning evidence that assures a death sentence from the Free State authorities. A broken-hearted Griffith is felled by a stroke. Kevin O'Higgins's best man and godfather to his child, Republican Rory O'Connor, faces the reprisal execution ordered by O'Higgins's own Cabinet. Commandant Tom Hales takes to the Republican redoubt of the southern hills, while his brother Sean, a Free State deputy, is gunned down on a Dublin street by "irregulars." Free Stater Sean McGarry's house

is fired--with his child inside. A fatal ambush in his "home" County Cork abruptly ends the brilliant career of Collins. Harry Boland "on the run" is shot dead. Liam Mellows is taken quietly from a Free State cell and executed. And the legendary IRA man, Liam Lynch, the irregulars' Chief of Staff, is felled in battle. One would hardly know that the British Army had abandoned Ireland.<sup>4</sup>

This gruesome story has all the bitter flavor of classic Greek tragedy, splitting Ireland for the last half-century as deeply as the physical line of partition. (Ironically, a sense of Christian tragedy, featuring possible alternatives, does not seem to fit this most Catholic of nations.) Only in 1967 did De Valera finally shake the hand of Richard Mulcahy, his former Chief of Staff during the War of Independence. Boland, Collins and a host of others never had a chance to reconcile lost friendships and move on to serve Ireland.

Again, our aim in this chapter is to qualify this picture of deep friendships torn asunder over an idea, even an idea as potent and contentious as allegiance to an "existing" Republic. We shall demonstrate that, in general, close personal relationships--"friendship circles"--coincide with the respective positions held by IRA/Sinn Fein leaders.

In short, friendships circumscribed political preferences. Certainly, this claim in no way diminishes the very real tragedy of "buddies" (Boland/Collins; O'Higgins/O'Connor, et al.) falling out; rather, it supports the simple proposition that among a broad leadership group mutual attractions will affect political behavior.

Now, whether political affinities form the basis of a particular relationship or are consequences of friendships rooted in less worldly matters is a cause-and-effect sequence most difficult to unravel. Do leaders holding similar political ideas gravitate towards one another, or does familiarity--whatever the appeal--breed a coincidence of ideological positions. Is unfailing loyalty to friends the operative principle, or do leaders naturally choose comrades that will not test their political beliefs? In either case, the fact of mutual antipathy or attraction, acts as a summary variable representing a host of subtle attitudes that, indeed, appear to be linked with Treaty preferences.

In part, one becomes a Republican or Free Stater because one's friends are Republicans and Free Staters, though in some cases these ideas of "purity" and "moderation" formed the basis for the original relationship. More often, though, the way one behaves at meetings, offers criticisms, carries himself, and "relates" appear to be crucial in forming friendships, especially when so many of the leaders had impeccable Republican credentials prior to the fateful Treaty negotiations.

For instance, Michael Collins's abrasive style (robust and endearing to some) alienated a sizeable segment of the leadership at a time when no one questioned his Republicanism. Reprehensible manners were really the issue. For those disgusted by Collins's antics, it was that much more difficult to abide by his compromise "stepping-stone" thesis. And, of course, his pals could more easily proclaim, "If it's good enough for Mick, it's good enough for me."

There is little doubt, for example, that Collins's GHQ coterie, who were personally devoted to this charismatic revolutionary and, say, Cathal Brugha and Austin Stack, both thoroughly outraged by the Big Fellow's bravado and posturing,<sup>5</sup> helped to polarize the leadership conflict. These are perhaps the most famous examples of a fairly widespread phenomenon. Biographies and memoirs referring to less widely recognized tensions and attractions will provide evidence for supporting the thesis that, to a large degree, friendship patterns shaped the division of Free Staters and Republicans in 1922.<sup>6</sup>

Of course, the best way of demonstrating such a thesis would be to map out the relationships--characterizing each and every leader and showing how they predict the Treaty positions. This type of inquiry is far beyond the scope of this study. But, by utilizing the three giants of the revolution as focal points--Collins, Griffith, and De Valera--we find that the clusters of friends and enemies that revolve about them roughly take into account a representative portion of the elite.

Their lives intersect in the most complex ways--numerous friends and foes playing varying roles in all three instances. Allegiances shift throughout the war years, and in some cases comrades-in-arms are transformed into bitter enemies. But, a broad pattern does emerge in such a description: by and large, friends weathering the War of Independence and civil conflict as a group. Notable exceptions are the stuff of Irish tragedy, but they appear to be just that--exceptions.

The centrality of Michael Collins to the Free State cause goes without saying, and therefore an examination of his personal relationships provides an important test of the "friendship circle" thesis. Aside from Harry Boland, Robert Barton and Tom Hales, a surprising number of his Treaty foes had already pronounced judgment on his character during the 1919-21 period. And, conversely, his loyal following of dedicated comrades seem to be swept along by the force of his personality--or at least nudged over the Republican line on a different issue. "If it's good enough for Mick, it's good enough for me" was the end result of years of strong personal ties. A cursory glance at either group--friends or foes--is instructive (see Table IV).

### Friendship Circles

#### Leaders Hostile to Collins

The enmity between Brugha and Collins is legendary, but the dynamics of their personal animosity can also be found in Collins's relationships with such other die-hards as Austin Stack, Ernie O'Malley, Robert Brennan, Gerry Boland, Liam Mellows, and Seumas Robinson. The student of Irish revolutionaries' memoirs/biographies cannot help but be impressed--however small the sample--by often petty antagonisms being linked with an eventual political position. Perhaps there is a tendency to retroactively remember the worst of a civil war enemy, or inflate the early friendship of Free State colleagues. In any case, their personal statements give a rough estimate of who stood

TABLE IV: Friendship Circles--Michael Collins

Close Friends	
Free Staters	Republicans
Arthur Griffith	Harry Boland
Piaras Beaslai	Robert Barton
Richard Mulcahy	Tom Hales
Sean MacEoin	
Georoid O'Sullivan	
Batt O'Connor	
Sean O'Muirthile	
Fionan Lynch	
Kevin O'Higgins	
Liam Tobin	
Emmett Dalton	
J.J. O'Connell	
Diarmuid O'Hegarty	
Kevin O'Higgins	
William Cosgrave	
Enemies or Somewhat Hostile	
Free Staters	Republicans
Darrell Figgis	Cathal Brugha
	Austin Stack
	Liam Mellows
	Robert Brennan
	Ernie O'Malley
	Seumas Robinson
	Gerry Boland

where, when, and for what reasons.

First off, take Brugha's indictment of Collins. On the face of it, these two hardly seem like candidates for backbiting and coarse invective (again, note a rather one-sided flow of hostility from Brugha). Both fought in the Rising, were the staunchest of Republicans, rubber-stamped the 1919 guerrilla activities, which made other Dail members quite nervous, and were given to the most extreme forms of "terror" reprisals. Brugha was ready to machine-gun the British Cabinet, theatre crowds and the like; Collins's personal hit "squad," virtually eradicated the Secret Service in Dublin, along with an assortment of touts, spies, R.I.C. men and other dangerous opponents. Far from being kindred spirits, though, their personal clash operated on a number of levels--organizational conflicts, contrasting styles, and perhaps outright jealousy. By Collins garnering a multitude of revolutionary roles (Director of Intelligence, Director of Operations, Finance Minister, President of the IRB) through efficiency and hard work,<sup>7</sup> not to mention an expansive ego, he set himself on a collision course with the Defense Minister, Cathal Brugha. De Valera's biographer, the Earl of Longford, depicts this clash in dry neutral terms:

In military matters, Collins should have acted as Brugha's subordinate, but as Cabinet Minister he was Brugha's equal. It is difficult to be an equal and a subordinate at the same time, and it rarely works.<sup>8</sup>

A more partisan view from Collins's admiring biographer Frank O'Connor appears somewhat more relevant to their clash. Brugha, less a ministerial type than a brave street-fighter (the "courage

of a lion" say all) refused to even draw his salary. As O'Connor notes, "This should have been warning enough for anybody that Brugha's acceptance of office would be little more than nominal."<sup>9</sup> And, however, "real" Brugha fashioned his ministerial role; he most likely would have been overwhelmed by Collins's insatiable drive and technocratic skills. Certainly, there was nothing inevitable about such a clash, given the right personality ready to defer to Collins. For instance, Richard Mulcahy, formal Chief of Staff, and a Collins devotee, never appeared to mind the Big Fellow's unofficial, but very real, position as Commander and Chief of the IRA. But Brugha was personally offended by Collins's ubiquitous dealings, going so far as to advance a thinly veiled charge of financial misappropriation<sup>10</sup> against a man who almost singlehandedly floated a clandestine National Loan and who never tired of smuggling arms--whatever the price. The confusion of IRB and IRA funds (remember, Collins ran both) was at the heart of Brugha's apparent pettiness, for the Defense Minister abhorred the dual authority of a secret society. Here Brugha was, in fact, on more solid ground, but, characteristically, his battering ram tactics missed the important point.

The erosion of Defense Minister Brugha's turf was but one aspect of their conflict; style was another. Collins, the romantic charismatic leader, gathered the headlines, public acclaim, and a price on his head that was the highest in the Empire. (From this writer's perspective, all three were fully warranted.) Brugha was a more introverted solitary figure who allowed Collins's notoriety to drive him to issue all sorts of outrageous statements concerning the

"overrated" Mr. Collins. Did he ever actually fire a gun in the service of Ireland? Wasn't his fame a packaged, artificial product of the media? He was merely a subordinate to the Defense Minister in his many IRA roles and guises, such as the invective that spilled out during the Treaty debate. Even their propensity for terrorism was of a very different nature, causing further animosity. The pragmatic Collins could well justify the shooting of secret service men, informers and other Crown agents--the historic bane of past rebellions. But to sweep the House of Commons or a London cinema with gunfire is quite another matter.<sup>11</sup> Desmond Fitzgerald, recounting the events of a 1920 Cabinet meeting sheds light on this intense quarrel, noting the small-mindedness and personal nature of the political attacks. After Collins rejects out of hand random attacks on the English civilian population, Brugha responds, "That's all right. I want none of your men. I'll get my own."<sup>12</sup> The Defense Minister even turned on Arthur Griffith to boot:

Everybody knows where you stand, Mr. Griffith. We have no illusions about it. We don't expect you to follow us. We don't want your assent for anything.<sup>13</sup>

This is quite a bravura performance considering that an ostensibly united Sinn Fein/IRA never allowed the enemy to imagine such differences in tactical language and personality rent Sinn Fein. Thus, Collins and Brugha, two very different types of "extremist" physical force men were at each other's throats well before the ultimate Treaty divide.

Of course, it is difficult to determine the actual effect that these tensions had on their later political behavior. Can we

imagine Brugha being swayed to the side of moderation by close friends ready to accept the Free State compromise? Probably not. Yet, this die-hard Republican accepted De Valera's abortive External Association alternative--limited external tie to the Commonwealth--in part, one feels, because of the close relationship between these two. The exact same proposal coming from Collins would more than likely have been rejected in the Defense Minister's usual caustic manner. In this indirect sense, personalities appear all important.

To a lesser degree, Collins also managed to alienate such IRA/Sinn Fein luminaries as Stack, O'Malley, Mellows, Gerry Boland, Frank Gallagher, Seumas Robinson, and Robert Brennan--all of whom went on to oppose his "stepping stone" argument for supporting the Treaty. Was this merely a coincidence? Or perhaps hard-liners sized up Collins and found his Republican credentials out of order. In fact, the record shows clearly that the criticisms aimed at the Big Fellow focus mostly upon the nonpolitical defects of his character, rather than upon perceived tendencies for compromise.

Austin Stack, Dail Eireann Minister of Home Affairs and hunger-striker extraordinnaire, is one example of this type of antagonist. Collins's brutally direct criticism of his ministry and perhaps his subtle references to Stack's ineffective Rising performance appear to be the basis for the steadily growing schism between these two. Early on in the war, Collins thought the world of this indomitable spirit, a man who wreaked havoc with the orderly world of prison warders. Writing to a recently released Stack (August 11, 1919), Collins seems ecstatic at the prospect

of enlisting him into the fold: "My own idea would be that you'd be indispensable in Dublin and I don't think any consideration would change my mind in this regard."<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, in a conversation with Robert Barton, he is quite specific concerning Stack's prospective role: "We have Austin now and, we will make him attorney-general [over] . . . the new law courts."<sup>15</sup> Collins appears to have lived to regret both statements. The Home Affairs Department, never measured up to Collins's standards of efficiency, the Big Fellow calling it a "bloody joke" straight to Stack's face. Although there is some debate as to the validity of this rather nasty charge (Stack's biographer J. Anthony Gaughan defends him on this score<sup>16</sup>), it obviously soured their relationship.

Like the falling out with Brugha, continued hostility and backbiting was not Collins's style. In fact, the Big Fellow played the role of protector towards Stack, who had managed by 1921 to warrant a £2000 reward for his capture. Gaughan notes that he "would have been arrested were it not for the vigilance of Collins, who was able to inform him of plans which were being prepared for his betrayal and capture."<sup>17</sup>

Furthermore, Padraic Colum suggests that Collins may have blamed Stack for his failure to rescue Roger Casement after his ill-fated Kerry landing just prior to the Rising.<sup>18</sup> For a time, Stack seems to have been his own harshest critic. In a letter to John Daily, an old veteran of the IRB (June 14, 1916), he frankly states, "I am ashamed of my abortive efforts to serve my country, and I envy the brave men who fell in the fight."<sup>19</sup> And, at a

meeting sponsored by the Gaelic League (July 29, 1917), Stack deprecates his Easter Week role: "The little I had to do in the matter of 1916 was somewhat of a failure."<sup>20</sup> ("It was a success,"<sup>21</sup> was the crowd's vocal response.) Gaughan calls his rather meek surrender to the R.I.C. at Tralee (Good Friday 1916), an "inexplicable lapse" in a career noted for the most extreme forms of resistance (i.e., hunger strikes) to British rule.<sup>22</sup> Whatever his actual 1916 performance, rank-and-file nationalists accepted him as a "leader" of the Easter Rising, and an early 1917 inquiry authorized by the Volunteer Executive found his behavior beyond reproach. Small wonder, then, that later on Stack would be particularly sensitive to any hint of criticism concerning this delicate matter. And Collins was certainly not subtle in his jibes and attacks.

One need not have been "inept" to run afoul of Mr. Collins. Aversion to his manners, or more specifically to his lack of them, is a recurrent theme in his relationships with Ernie O'Malley, Gerry Boland and Robert Brennan. What was for some boisterous, good-natured, exuberant behavior appears to have been shocking and repulsive to other more staid souls. In Army Without Banners, O'Malley recounts bitterly the seamy side of the Big Fellow's persona:

He had a habit of baiting Tom Cullen, the assistant quartermaster, and a few of the Dublin men. That I hated. . . . One day, I told Collins I could not stand it, and I left the room in a rage. He never baited anyone in my presence afterwards.<sup>23</sup>

In another incident, Collins berates a group of IRA officers for

hijacking arms during the Truce, but O'Malley will have none of this bluster and posturing: "I'm sorry . . . but the officers here are accustomed to being spoken to politely." And fellow Volunteer Brian Shanahan adds, "No man is going to talk to me as if I were a dog."<sup>24</sup>

But, O'Malley was a different sort than Brugha, separating personal dislikes from a fair assessment of Collins's work, admitting that "He always backed up an energetic man, and would stand firmly by him in difficulties."<sup>25</sup> Nevertheless, his negative views of the "driving force behind the IRA" are quite striking to the reader.

Robert Brennan, another fan of Collins's prodigious efforts as revolutionary, was repelled by the man's "pretentiousness" from their very first meeting (1917):

This initial dislike of Collins, I never quite got over. I tried to do so later, because I had a lively appreciation of the great work he was doing, and the risks he ran. His energy was terrific, and his self-confidence unbounded. Though he was dynamic, he was never flurried. . . . I knew all this and yet I could not bring myself to like him. Perhaps it was because he was ruthless with friend and foe; because he could brook no criticism or opposition. He drove everyone hard, but none harder than he drove himself.<sup>26</sup>

And, in Brennan's memoir, Allegiance, he writes of hearing Gerry Boland charge Collins with being a "braggart and bully"--quite a contrast to brother Harry's unmitigated praise for the Big Fellow. Gerry remembered Collins well from their days together in the post-Rising internment camps. Mick's high-handed and strutting posture (he refused to be second at anything, from an argument to a jumping

contest) was found to be offensive to the younger Boland brother.<sup>27</sup>

Two other Republicans also held Brugha-like critiques of Collins's behavior--Liam Mellows and Seumas Robinson. Mellows was annoyed by Collins's tendency to keep information from his comrades and attempt to run the guerrilla war by himself. Take, for example, the "Squad's" November 21, 1920 action, which wiped out the British secret service's "Caigor gang" (new faces brought in from the Empire and housed as civilians). Though working close to Collins, Mellows was more than a little surprised by the executions rocking the city. According to C.D. Greaves, "he detested a streak of vanity" that was implied by this secrecy and, pointedly stated that he "didn't entirely trust him."<sup>28</sup> This is rather strong reaction considering that Collins's coup, on a practical level, was certainly one of the great blows against the British "occupation" in Irish history.

And, Seumas Robinson<sup>29</sup> adhered to the other side of Brugha's anti-Collins thesis: the charismatic hero was a fraud, simply a creation of the media.<sup>30</sup>

### Collins's Friends

A somewhat longer list of revolutionaries were admirers and close friends of the Big Fellow and joined him in accepting the Free State compromise.

First off, Batt O'Connor (Dail Member) and Piaras Beaslai (Dail Member and IRA Publicity Director), whose later biographical works were, respectively, With Michael Collins in the Fight for Independence and Michael Collins and the Making of a New Ireland, are

among the easiest to designate as staunch comrades. In one anecdote after another, O'Connor recounts Mick's close shaves with the British, the role of his own home at One Brendan Road (Dublin) as a "safe house" for the Big Fellow, and his unabashed, undying love for the man. ("I was standing beside his bier alone; gazing fondly with an aching heart upon all that was left of the grandest character in the world."<sup>31</sup>) Beaslai is not far behind O'Connor in his admiration for Collins:

When I try to recall my first meeting with Collins, the principal thing that strikes me, is how rapidly and completely I found myself on terms of the greatest intimacy with him. . . . I was first impressed by his frank friendliness, his infectious gaiety and rollicking high spirits. He held at the moment no position of authority, his manner was free from pretentiousness [writer's note: compare this statement to Brennan's description of his first encounter!] and, no occasion had arisen to call forth a display of his extraordinary qualities of intellect and character. But, even at this stage, he displayed his genius for making friends, and attaching men to himself by the strongest bonds of affection.<sup>32</sup>

We might add that he also displayed a talent for making enemies.

Another writer, P.S. O'Hegarty, the IRB Supreme Council member, who produced such historical works as A History of Ireland under the Union: 1801-1922, has been described as the "subtlest of all his friends"<sup>33</sup> by Frank O'Connor. In the Big Fellow, he claims that Collins discussed with O'Hegarty "every plan that required brains" which, of course, did not exempt this intellectual confidant from being playfully "dragged about the floor by the hair."<sup>34</sup> Part buffoon and cut-up, and part organizational genius, Collins's unique personality apparently endeared him immediately to the likes of Beaslai, Batt O'Connor, and O'Hegarty. (One could hardly imagine

a Brugha being dragged anyplace by another human.) Why was Collins extremely attractive to some and repulsive to others? Whatever the deep-seated individual reasons, various constellations of friends and foes hung together in the spiral towards civil war.

The IRA General Headquarters had its share of Collins's devotees. Fellow IRBer, Chief of Staff Richard Mulcahy,<sup>35</sup> was arguably the closest to him--no mean feat, considering that Collins usurped more than his share of actual authority--and was certainly aware of his critical revolutionary role. Chosen to speak at Mick's funeral, he told Irish men and women, "To each of you falls his unfinished work,"<sup>36</sup> a fitting testament to the special place Collins possessed in Mulcahy's life and the life of the Irish nation.

Georoid O'Sullivan, IRA Adjutant General, has been described by Kevin O'Higgins's biographer as the "right hand man of Collins";<sup>37</sup> others, like Diarmuid O'Hegarty, Liam Tobin, Eoin O'Duffy and Fionan Lynch, were tied to the Big Fellow through their IRB involvement.<sup>38</sup> And, while on the subject of the IRB, aside from P.S. O'Hegarty, such Fenian stalwarts as Sean O'Muirthile, Sean McKeon,<sup>39</sup> and Joe McGrath were all intimates of Collins.

Special mention should be made of the unlikely friendship between Collins and Arthur Griffith. Separated by quite a few years in age, differing styles (the "rowdy" vs. the "proper" honorable gentleman) temperaments, IRB involvement, and propensity for violent reprisals, these two became fast friends, particularly after the Truce and during the Treaty negotiations. Now, it is hard to know whether these two Cabinet Ministers were thrown together by Brugha's

and Stack's personal attacks, or by the strict Republicanism espoused by more radical Cabinet colleagues (Collins and Griffith were reportedly attracted to Lloyd George's first Dominion Home Rule offer in the summer of 1921), or perhaps by more subtle mutual appeal. Neither is it possible to precisely evaluate which of these two leaders had a greater effect on the political attitudes and behavior of the other. On the face of it, one would assume that it would have been infinitely more difficult for Collins to rationalize the "stepping-stone" approach in his own mind without the presence of the moderate Griffith, who was, candidly, a King, Lords and Commons man. In any case, we have evidence from two very different sources--the die-hard Ernie O'Malley and the very conservative Dail Minister Eoin MacNeill--that their intimacy, however incongruous or threatening, was a growing fact of political life. O'Malley was fearful that this relationship might taint Collins's strict separatist ideals,<sup>40</sup> and, on the other hand, MacNeill was duly impressed by the pair: "They were genial, witty, playful, and at all times, the best of company."<sup>41</sup> Obviously, after the Treaty split, there were good reasons for their friendship to blossom further.

Other Cabinet Ministers--William Cosgrave and Kevin O'Higgins--were also close to Mick, although Collins thought little of chiding Cosgrave unmercifully.<sup>42</sup> Yet, unlike Stack, he bore the brunt of his nasty remarks with equanimity. O'Higgins was wholly devoted to the Big Fellow, his "friend and chief."<sup>43</sup> Commenting on Collins's death, O'Higgins lamented that "the greatest man that ever served this nation's cause, lies cold in death."<sup>44</sup> In a telling statement,

this Free State Minister noted that he had merely to imagine what Collins would have done in a given situation to arrive at the correct course of action.<sup>45</sup> This political rule of thumb may have severe limitations, but it is certainly a fine tribute to the Collins-O'Higgins relationship.

#### Collins's Friends: 1922 Republicans

Now, what of Collins's buddies that rejected the Free State compromise? The most notable of these, of course, was Harry Boland;<sup>46</sup> weaned from the Big Fellow's orbit on the De Valera tour of the United States, he was nonetheless intimate with Collins up to and including the Treaty period. Frank O'Connor poignantly describes the original basis for the relationship:

They were well matched. They were of the same age, and temperamentally, there was an extraordinary kinship between them. They were both pugnacious, both charmers, both touched by the spirit of the gasconade. From this time, until Boland's departure for America, they slept, ate, wrestled, and hurled together.<sup>47</sup>

Boland would defend his mate even against the charges of his own brother,<sup>48</sup> and, in short, they were inseparable through much of the war. Again, the use of the conditional tense in historical inquiry is hazardous, but one cannot help but wonder if Boland had remained in Ireland, plotting and cavorting with Mick, whether the "stepping-stone" argument would not have swayed him.

The case of Robert Barton--a Protestant landowning British lieutenant, turned revolutionary--is also rather interesting. That he was particularly close to Collins is beyond doubt. On hearing

of Barton's recapture (January 1920), Collins wrote to De Valera:

He is an irreparable loss to us, and apart from that, I am smarting under a feeling of great personal sorrow, as we had been in such close association on pretty well all things during the past difficult year.<sup>49</sup>

And, as we have already mentioned (see p.     ), Barton's recognition of Mick's superior traits, especially laudatory since he had long since stated his opposition to the Treaty. Barton, remember, had signed the document under the duress of Lloyd George's threat of "immediate war," but along with cousin<sup>50</sup> Erskine Childers and George Gavan Duffy, represented the hard-liner faction in London. Apparently, he was able to break with Collins. Still, we might ask, did Mick's signature --with all the personal weight it carried--sway Barton to add his own? According to Frank Gallagher, he was "stunned" by Collins's capitulation, which may have contributed to his loss of political balance.<sup>51</sup> (He was later to wonder why he had not been arrested for treason when disembarking in Ireland.)

One other friend-turned-civil-war-enemy might be mentioned: the Commandant of Cork #3 Brigade, Tom Hales. Piaras Beaslai calls him "a close friend of Collins, hailing from the same part of the country,"<sup>52</sup> who frequently visited the Big Fellow in Dublin. According to Collins's biographer, Collins mentioned to him in a private conversation that "I'd rather have Tom Hale with us than twenty others." Hales's break with the likes of Collins was part of the general tragedy that saw the Hales brothers choose opposite Treaty sides.

Collins's Enemies: Free Staters, 1922

We have come across but one leader that displayed marked hostility to Collins--and, in this case, the feelings were reciprocated --who went on to support the Free State: Darrell Figgis. In Recollections of the Irish War, Figgis summarizes his ambivalent attitude towards the Finance Minister. At a meeting of the Sinn Fein Executive (March 1920), Collins rose to inform his colleagues that "the proper body, the Irish Volunteers" had assumed responsibility for welcoming De Valera<sup>53</sup> to Dublin as the head of an independent state. This triumphant return would obviously be prohibited by the British authorities, and Figgis foresaw the inevitable clash leading to civilian casualties. Collins, in his customary defiant stance, would not be "deterred by weaklings and cowards."<sup>54</sup> (Griffith, too, was among the crowd and particularly stung by the tirade.) Figgis describes his outrage against Collins's highhandedness with words tinged with a certain amount of respect. No one can mistake, though, Figgis's basic aversion to his non-democratic politics:

He had always a truculent manner, but in such situations, he was certainly candour itself. As I looked on him while he spoke, for all the hostility between us, I found something refreshing and admirable in his contempt for us all. . . . He was a great foeman when he fought thus--a worthier foeman than when he manipulated organizations.<sup>55</sup>

Ironically, Figgis later joined this "manipulator" in the Free State venture, while Collins succumbed to an "irregular" ambush--gunmen who branded him weak and cowardly, if not traitorous.

For his part, Donald Akenson and J.F. Fallin, note that Collins "disliked Figgis and was highly suspicious of him."<sup>56</sup> One wonders whether dislike stemmed from Figgis's foreign education,

upper crust manners, cosmopolitan dress, opposition to the IRB, or some other peculiarity.

### Arthur Griffith

It is not overly surprising that Griffith's friends and admirers (see Table V) by and large accepted Dominion Home Rule. When compared to the career of Michael Collins, his pre-1916 Sinn Fein leadership and later Dail Eireann role can be characterized as clearly moderate. There are no surprises in Griffith's acquiescence at the London conference.

One would expect Griffith to attract compromising Free State types, and, conversely, his well-known Dail Monarchy formula and aversion to insurrection and terror<sup>57</sup> would be formidable ideological barriers for hard-line Republican intimates. (Of course, universal lip service is given to Griffith's critical early performance as the father of self-sufficiency, abstention from Parliament, and the resurrection of the Irish nation.)

In the Republican category, we have already alluded to Brugha's disdain for his moderate fellow Cabinet member and, in Chapter X, Griffith's loathing for that "damn Englishman," Erskine Childers<sup>58</sup> are recorded. Interestingly, Robert Brennan argues that it was Childers's "meticulousness" that caused the conflict, rather than Griffith's narrow definition of who may qualify as an Irish revolutionary.<sup>59</sup> According to Brennan, when Childers first threw in his lot with Sinn Fein, Griffith remarked, "He's a good man to have . . . he has the ear of a big section of the English people,"<sup>60</sup> and the relationship went smoothly up until the Truce

TABLE V: Friendship Circles--Arthur Griffith

Close Friends	
Free Staters	Republican
Sean Milroy Ernest Blythe Darrell Figgis Michael Collins Desmond Fitzgerald Michael Hayes Richard Mulcahy William Cosgrave Joseph McGrath Denis McCullough	Maud Gonne
Enemies or Somewhat Hostile	
Free Staters	Republicans
	Cathal Brugha Erskine Childers

period. Padraic Colum's account is quite different. In March 1921, De Valera proposed that Childers's stand-in for the jailed Desmond Fitzgerald as Director of Publicity. Griffith was vehement in his rejection of the English candidate and, furthermore, was firmly opposed to his very presence in Dail Eireann as member for Wicklow-Kildare. (Childers was raised with the Bartons of Wicklow.) "If I had not been in gaol . . . I would never have let it happen."<sup>61</sup> In either version, Griffith's hostility was a political fact of life prior to the Treaty negotiation, and certainly helped to split the plenipotentiaries into varying cliques in London (Barton-Childers-Duffy vs. Collins-Griffith-Duggan).

On the other side of the friendship ledger, Desmond Fitzgerald's attraction to Griffith provides an example of a long-standing relationship that may have yielded political cohesiveness. In his memoir, Fitzgerald remembers his reverence and admiration for the Sinn Fein leader in his youth, and glowingly recounts his first meeting (1914) with his idol:

Indeed, looking back now, it seems that the strong affection that bound us together in after years, began during those few days in Dublin. . . . I realized that one could admire him, not merely because of the clarity of his thought, but also for the beauty of his character, his utter selflessness in his devotion to Ireland, and his extraordinary modesty. . . . he was able to transcend his environment and to understand all Ireland, and to love her, not as an abstraction, or as a locality, but as a living reality.<sup>62</sup>

Obviously, Griffith's signature on the London document must have meant a good deal to this disciple.

Darrell Figgis's autobiography also attests to a similar evaluation of Griffith's character espoused by this Sinn Fein

moderate. Before being shunted aside by the IRB clique, Figgis was involved in selecting the proper candidate for an East Cavan by-election. The choice was simple: Arthur Griffith.

In coming to this decision, I had (though I will not pretend with what success) endeavored to put out of my mind the love I bore for Arthur Griffith. I did not endeavor to put out of my mind my deep faith in him, my respect for him, for these were essential to any decision of such importance.<sup>63</sup>

And Griffith appears to have had quite a high opinion of this Protestant aesthete,<sup>64</sup> successfully pushing for his appointment to the Free State Constitution's drafting committee over the objections of Michael Collins.<sup>65</sup> You might say that Griffith rescued him from the political obscurity earned by his refusal to play IRB politics in 1917--a type of political banishment that would obviously evoke sympathy from this other IRB dropout.

A number of Griffith's closest friends can be identified by their association with the definitive biographical work of Padraic Colum. In addition to Desmond Fitzgerald, Free Stater Sean Milroy, a comrade of Griffith's from early pre-1916 Sinn Fein days, heads the list. Also, Joseph McGrath, William Cosgrave and Richard Mulcahy. Michael Hayes (the "most zealous of all in obtaining, arranging and caretaking of material"<sup>66</sup>), and his old prison mate, Denis McCullough, are all pro-Treatyites, who have strong links with Griffith's past. The one exception was the fierce Republican, Maud Gonne. She first met Griffith more than a decade before the founding of Sinn Fein, when his energies were harnessed to the nationalist Celtic Literary Society. She certainly was impressed by him:

"He was a fair, shy boy one would hardly notice, but I was at once attracted to him. I hardly know why, for he did not speak."<sup>67</sup>

Later, Griffith would join her circle of intellectuals (Stephen MacKenna), Irish enthusiasts (Douglas Hyde), marxist revolutionaries (Connolly), and, of course, W.B. Yeats.<sup>68</sup> They were on the most intimate of terms--Griffith, pleading with her not to marry the ill-fated John MacBride, or chivalrously thrashing an errant editor for some nasty remark hurled at this latter day Cathleen Ni Houlihan. (What of the freedom of the press that Griffith would fight to uphold against a British censor?) For other female hard-liners, such as the Countess, Griffith was an archcapitalist, fellow traveler of Southern Unionists, and the weak link of the Treaty negotiating team. Apparently the split between Griffith and Maud Gonne was free of such vituperative statements.

### Eamon De Valera

Frankly, differentiating between De Valera's closets friends and mere revolutionary colleagues, is a task well beyond the abilities of this writer. His relationship with Erskine Childers does stand out, though, both in terms of the idealization of this man's character, and the seemingly momentous political consequences that flowed from it. Childers, we may recall, was the austere legalistic secretary at the London Conference, diligently churning out memos to the effect that any compromise would undermine minimum Republican demands. Whatever influence he had upon plenipotentiaries Robert Barton and George Gaven Duffy was also felt in Dublin cabinet

meetings, considering De Valera's high regard for his honesty (inflexibility?) and fortitude (intractable nature?). Did esteem for Childers contribute to De Valera's tilt towards Republican intransigence? (Did his daily meetings with Stack and Brugha in Collins's and Griffith's absence tip the balance even more?) Of course, one may interpret the cause and effect sequence in a different manner. Perhaps "Dev's" underlying Republican idealism hidden beneath the surface gestures of political flexibility (see p. 243) drew him to a kindred spirit. And, certainly, this former British officer turned Home Ruler, Volunteer gunrunner and, then, fervent Republican, was nothing, if not the personification of the idealist. De Valera's biographers, Frank Pakenham and T.P. O'Neill, suggest precisely such a bond between them.<sup>69</sup> In any case, their mutual identification, well before the Treaty period, was a sort of harbinger of future events.

#### Other Friendship Circles

What of the myriad friendship circles not discussed in this cursory description focusing upon Collins, Griffith, and De Valera? A number of others support our general thesis from the Free State side (e.g., Denis McCullough-Bulmer Hobson-Ernest Blythe-Desmond Fitzgerald<sup>70</sup>) or from the Republican position (Seumas Robinson-Dan Breen<sup>71</sup> or Robert Brennan-Frank Gallagher-Erskine Childers). Some obviously challenge the friendship-yields-political behavior approach. Austin Stack literally launched Kevin O'Higgins into electoral politics, and O'Higgins later made Republican Rory O'Connor his best man and godfather to his child. Free Staters

Richard Mulcahy and McCullough were brothers-in-law, but this leadership inbreeding included Republican Dr. James Ryan (sisters were Mrs. Mulcahy and Mrs. Sean T. O'Kelley, a Republican).

### Conclusion

Though the possibilities for investigation seem endless, the evidence supports the dual thesis that: (a) the leadership background factor "friendship ties" is linked closely to civil war behavior; and (b) in general, those factors derived from the revolutionary period itself (IRB involvement, Rising participation, "military" or "political" role) are the ones most likely to affect political attitudes and activities. Virtually without exception, comradeship and enmity were formed within the nationalist movement by revolutionaries devoting all their energies to separatist struggle.

These conclusions warrant some important qualifications. For instance: (a) Are not personal styles and temperament formed during one's youth the key for choosing future friends? Is it therefore false to rigidly draw an artificial line between this "adult political socialization factor" and characteristics acquired at an earlier time? (b) And, perhaps relationships are based, in part, on mutually shared political ideals, making the correlation with Treaty positions somewhat hollow and tautological (moderate people choose moderate behavior).

The former question raises thorny but not insurmountable problems. Although we can observe and tally up friendships--a

summary variable for a host of likes and dislikes--the effect of other factors upon these relationships would be near impossible to evaluate. At this point, it seems reasonable to recognize the significance of friendship circles as an (semi?) independent variable, particularly in light of their uniformly adult political origins. The second critique has been dealt with above: distinctly political attitudes and personal idiosyncracies and aversions appear to be separate bases for friendships with the latter predominating.

Lastly, we might note that the Irish political culture may be particularly amenable to such a "friendship tie" analysis. David Schmitt, in The Irony of Irish Democracy, argues that modernizing Ireland of the twentieth century exhibits a high degree of "personalism" in its political dealings--at least when compared to other industrial nations.<sup>72</sup> Friendships that "generate interpersonal trust" and "reciprocal favors" are one way to deal with the depersonalization that seems to be a concomitant of modern societies. For our purposes, this general accent on individual "connections" appears to bolster the notion that IRA/Sinn Fein leaders placed great emphasis on the attitudes and actions of their closest comrades.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>O'Casey, Inishfallen, p. 109.

<sup>2</sup>Kee, The Green Flag, p. 741.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>A Republican might bitterly reply that the British had not, in fact, done anything of the sort. Crown troops and their Irish auxiliaries ("B" Specials), were the garrison force of Northeast Ulster and continued to be the actual cause of internecine strife. This is a repeated Republican charge heard throughout succeeding decades, right up to the "Provos" assassination of Lord Mountbatten (1979). When the "Brits" leave, then Ireland will finally have peace.

<sup>5</sup>Darrell Figgis, in Recollections of the Irish War ([Dublin: Talbot Press, 1935], p. 240), goes so far as to say that Brugha's hostility literally changed "the whole course of Irish history," by forcing Collins into the arms of another Cabinet Minister, the moderate Arthur Griffith. Though, perhaps an overstatement, there is a kernel of truth in Figgis's comments. Ernie O'Malley (Army without Banners, p. 246) was particularly fearful that this new found closeness would indeed taint Collins's extremist tendencies.

<sup>6</sup>On an interesting comparative note, Quandt (Revolution and Political Leadership, p. 172) suggests that Summer 1962 post-Evian elite conflict among Algerian revolutionaries, may be ascribed to personal tensions "rather than ideological differences." It seems that Ben Bella and Boudiaf "after spending five years in jail together, couldn't stand each other."

<sup>7</sup>Among a plethora of statements attesting to Collins's superhuman capacity for organizing and wearing various revolutionary "hats," Frank O'Connor's unabashed praise in The Big Fellow ([London: Nelson Publishers, 1937], p. 53) stands out: "Beside him, Lenin, with his theories, feuds, and excommunications, seems a child, and not a particularly intelligent one. He ran the whole revolution as if it were a great business concern, ignoring all the rules. In his files can be found receipts for the lodging of political refugees side by side with those for sweeping brushes and floor polish. He might be seen a dozen times a day in shops, offices, restaurants, pubs, with solicitors, clergymen, bankers, intellectuals."

<sup>8</sup>Longford and O'Neill, Eamon De Valera, p. 116.

<sup>9</sup>O'Connor, The Big Fellow, p. 46.

<sup>10</sup>Two close friends, Piaras Beaslai and Batt O'Connor, took particular offense at this absurd change. The former leader became the major biographer of Collins and recounts (in Michael Collins and the Making of a New Ireland, II:291) the true state of his financial affairs: "The cruelty and absurdity of Cathal's insinuation will be realized when it is considered that Collins, as Minister of Finance, had the handling of about a million pounds, including 30,000 in gold, every penny of which was satisfactorily accounted for, in a time of war and exceptionable difficulties; and that, as head of the Provisional Government, he died almost a poor man." As for his hoard of gold, Batt O'Connor (in With Michael Collins) dispels any rumors that the Finance Minister was tempted by the Dail's cache. The gold was, in fact, stored in a secret compartment under Mr. O'Connor's house.

<sup>11</sup>Of course, later revolutionary movements such as the Algerian FLN subscribed to the thesis that civilians in the metropole and the colony were fair game for attack.

<sup>12</sup>Colum, Arthur Griffith, p. 223.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>J. Anthony Gaughan, Austin Stack: Portrait of a Separatist (Dublin: Kingdom Books, 1977), p. 100.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>In Austin Stack, Gaughan directly answers this charge, claiming that Home Affairs was run in a "reasonably efficient" manner from the end of 1919 to the beginning of 1922 (p. 214), and that, in any case, Stack was suffering from ill-health. Indeed, he was a prodigious worker considering his "average ability" (perhaps the basis for Collins's blunt criticism). By 1920, Stack "first set about establishing effectively the national arbitration courts, as authorized by the Dail. This involved preparing and circulating a detailed scheme for the operation of these courts and, when agreement was reached on a scheme, seeing to their establishment and organization at local level." He was able to extend their jurisdiction to criminal matters by utilizing "local units of the IRA" for policing and, by and large, effectively set the course towards supplanting the entire British legal system. Frank O'Connor's account (in The Big Fellow, p. 89) and Beaslai's account (in Michael Collins and the Making of New Ireland, I:376) are very different. For the former biographer, Stack was simply a "failure" as Minister of Home Affairs: "The Volunteers had given him a police force, but he did nothing with it, and, whenever an outbreak of crime occurred, they were compelled to deal with it from their own local headquarters, and employ men who already had enough to do in fighting England." Furthermore, the story goes that Collins was outraged at the number of complaints and unanswered requests aimed at Stack's department at a time when

this minister was satisfied with the number and performance of his staff. Beaslai criticizes the inordinate amount of time it took for Stack to barely organize his ministry. Robert Barton, who opposed the Treaty after having signed it, stated in an interview with Ernie O'Malley, "The genesis of the trouble between Stack, Collins, and Brugha, seems to be that Collins was a real worker, and neither of the other two were workers. They were inefficient at their work, and Collins above all, hated slackness and inefficiency" (Gaughan, Austin Stack, p. 275).

<sup>17</sup>Gaughan, Austin Stack, p. 118.

<sup>18</sup>Colum, Arthur Griffith, p. 264.

<sup>19</sup>Gaughan, Austin Stack, p. 66.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 274.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Interestingly, Gaughan (p. 274) points out that his capture by Free State forces "north of Lismore, County Watreford, towards the end of the civil war" also sullied his die-hard Republican credentials. To this writer, both incidents simply attest to Stack's good sense in a no-win situation.

<sup>23</sup>O'Malley, Army without Banners, p. 118.

<sup>24</sup>O'Malley, The Singing Flame, p. 33.

<sup>25</sup>O'Malley, Army without Banners, p. 118.

<sup>26</sup>Brennan, Allegiance, p. 151.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 153.

<sup>28</sup>Greaves, Liam Mellows, p. 225.

<sup>29</sup>A novel aspect to Robinson's attack was the bizarre claim that Collins and his followers planned to sell out the Republic from the very inception of Dail Eireann.

<sup>30</sup>O'Connor, The Big Fellow, p. 151. Here we are citing Robinson's tirade against Collins during the Treaty debate. Of course, this is a bit suspicious "background" evidence of hostility but seems to reflect his past thinking.

<sup>31</sup>O'Connor, With Michael Collins, p. 190.

<sup>32</sup>Beaslai, Michael Collins, I:90.

<sup>33</sup>O'Connor, The Big Fellow, p. 85.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 85.

<sup>35</sup>Interestingly, Mulcahy was disliked by Collins's opponent, Seumas Robinson. Ernie O'Malley (The Singing Flame, p. 46) writes: "There was an old antagonism between Mulcahy and himself. Seumas had too much of the French kind of inquiring, critical logic."

<sup>36</sup>Irish Times, 17 December 1971, p. 9.

<sup>37</sup>White, Kevin O'Higgins, p. 37.

<sup>38</sup>T. Desmond Williams, "The Irish Republican Brotherhood," in Secret Societies in Ireland, p. 148.

<sup>39</sup>The high regard held for McEoin was amply demonstrated by Collins's frantic efforts to rescue him from incarceration, and a British death sentence, in the Spring of 1921. In fact, the first abortive Treaty negotiations were held up as Collins, on August 18, 1921, drafted the following ultimatum: "There can, and will be, no meeting of Dail Eireann unless, and until, Commandant Sean McKeon is released. The refusal to release him appears to indicate a desire on the part of the English Government to terminate the Truce" (Beaslai, Michael Collins, II:262-63). Of all the famed field commandants (L. Lynch, Tom Barry, Sean Moylan, et al.), McEoin was the sole Free Stater--perhaps due to his personal attachment to the architect of the "stepping stone" thesis.

<sup>40</sup>O'Malley, Army without Banners, p. 246.

<sup>41</sup>Colum, Arthur Griffith, p. 178.

<sup>42</sup>Gaughan (Austin Stack, p. 276) cites a conversation between Robert Barton and Ernie O'Malley that sheds light on this baiting within the Dail Cabinet. In one post-Truce cabinet meeting, Cosgrave fell asleep, whereupon Collins verbally assaulted him: "It does not matter a damn whether you are asleep or awake." After another annoying incident, Collins disparagingly referred to his colleague as the "bloody little altar boy." These remarks, however hostile, must be placed within the context of Collins's unique brand of friendship. He apparently quickly forgot such remarks, never held a grudge, and, it seems, men like Cosgrave were more than ready to forgive these indiscretions.

<sup>43</sup>White, Kevin O'Higgins, p. 106.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>Lyons, Ireland Since the Famine, p. 481.

<sup>46</sup>Gaughan (Austin Stack, p. 68) notes that Boland was an old friend of Stack's from the 1905-1906 period "due to the deep involvement of both of them in Gaelic Athletic Association activities." We mention this point to remind the reader that Collins had no monopoly on Boland's friendship, and that future hard liners went back a lot further than Collins in their relationship with Boland. On a personal level, then, the Stack-Brugha-De Valera cabinet alliance in opposition to the Treaty, may have had a particular appeal to Harry Boland.

<sup>47</sup>O'Connor, The Big Fellow, p. 85.

<sup>48</sup>Robert Brennan (Allegiance, p. 153) recalls an interesting exchange between the Boland brothers. Gerry was imitating Collins obnoxious way of striding about a room "heaving his shoulders and tossing his head." (He had a firsthand view of Collins's mannerisms in a post-Rising internment camp.) Harry, ever the apologist explained, "Never mind . . . he's young. He'll get over that. He's a great fellow."

<sup>49</sup>Beaslai, Michael Collins, I:417-18.

<sup>50</sup>It is not surprising that Barton, signature aside, entered the Civil War period on the same side as his cousin. Perhaps these two represent the extreme case of friendship ties affecting political behavior. Frank Gallagher (Four Glorious Years, p. 121) records that Childers personally told him of his close relationship with Barton: "I am his double first cousin, a relationship nearer even than a brother, they say."

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 349.

<sup>52</sup>Beaslai, Michael Collins, II:59.

<sup>53</sup>De Valera had escaped from Lincoln Jail in Britain with the daring aid of Collins.

<sup>54</sup>Figgis, Recollections of the Irish War, p. 243.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., p. 244.

<sup>56</sup>D.H. Akenson and J.F. Fallin, "The Irish Civil War and the Drafting of the Free State Constitution, Eire-Ireland, Spring 1970, p. 13.

<sup>57</sup>At one point during his incarceration, Griffith was infuriated by a comrades assertion that the Dual Monarchy principle circumscribed his political thinking. Griffith pointed out that this moderate political form was merely a first step, one likely to attract the Protestant Unionists of Ulster, and assure a unified Ireland. As for violence, Protestant Unionists of Ulster, and assure a unified

Ireland. As for violence, Griffith certainly did not stand in the way once the guerrilla war began.

<sup>58</sup>Childers pre-Treaty relationship with Brugha calls into question the "friendship circle" thesis. Animosity changed to comradeship only after the crucial political decision. Beaslai (Michael Collins, II:168) charges the Defense Minister with hypocrisy and prejudice in this matter: "Cathal Brugha also had no liking for Childers, who he distrusted as an English ex-officer. In any dealings between him and Childers, as Army Director of Publicity, I had frequent occasion to notice his marked bias against any idea or suggestion that emanated from Childers. After the Treaty was signed, when Childers opposed it, Cathal suddenly discovered great virtues in him, and eulogized him in the highest terms during the Treaty debates--a pathetic example of the influence of prejudice." On the other hand, fellow propagandists, Frank Gallagher, Robert Brennan (along with De Valera and cousin Barton), were duly impressed by Childers's selflessness and sincerity. For instance, De Valera wrote in an introduction to Frank Gallagher's The Anglo-Irish Treaty ([London: Hutchinson, 1965], p. 11) of Gallagher's respect for this Englishman: "When working on the publicity staff of the Republican government, he was brought in touch with Erskine Childers and formed for him an admiration which made Erskine his ideal and model for the rest of his life. How often he spoke to me of Erskine's intellectual brilliance, of his wonderful equanimity and philosophy of life, of the nobility of his character, and his devotion to the truth!" This glowing statement, by the way, most probably reflects De Valera's own thinking as another great admirer of the austere Mr. Childers.

<sup>59</sup>Brennan, Allegiance, p. 253.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., p. 245.

<sup>61</sup>Colum, Arthur Griffith, p. 247.

<sup>62</sup>Desmond Fitzgerald, The Memoirs of Desmond Fitzgerald (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968), pp. 29-30.

<sup>63</sup>Figgis, Recollections, p. 202.

<sup>64</sup>Robert Brennan (Allegiance, p. 204) rages against his manners, "unbounded egotism" and "pecuniary instincts." Even the literary talents of this most cosmopolitan of revolutionaries is called into question. It seems that Figgis plagiarized large sections of Brennan's and Griffith's work; a fact that did not cause much concern for the latter, since the Sinn Fein line was propagated. Brennan, on the other hand, was not in the forgiving mood, and perhaps their Treaty differences exacerbated this tension. Would Figgis's character differences have been overlooked by Brennan if he stood by the Republic?

<sup>65</sup>Akenson and Fallin, "Irish Civil War," p. 13.

<sup>66</sup>Colum, Arthur Griffith, pp. xiii-xiv.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid.

<sup>69</sup>Longford and O'Neill, De Valera, p. 160.

<sup>70</sup>Fitzgerald (Memoirs of Desmond Fitzgerald, p. 70) notes that Hobson was "an old friend of Blythe, and Blythe always spoke of him with great respect." Fitzgerald and Bythe, of course, were organizers in Kerry together and were extremely close. McCullough and Hobson's friendship was forged in their early IRB organizing days in Ulster.

<sup>71</sup>In Breen's autobiography (My Fight for Irish Freedom, p. 26), the author observes that he and Robinson (along with Sean Treacy--killed prior to the Treaty--and Dan Hogan) "seemed perfectly balanced in temperament, age, outlook, hopes."

<sup>72</sup>L. Schmidt, The Irony of Irish Democracy (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath, 1973), p. 62.

## Chapter VII

BACKGROUND VARIABLE: MEMBERSHIP IN THE SECRET  
IRISH REPUBLICAN BROTHERHOOD

It makes me sick to think that it was the Brotherhood which was responsible for the Dail's final decision. The majority would have gone against the Treaty only for the Brotherhood's votes in the Dail. What sort of people were those who were in control of the Brotherhood?

Sean T. O'Kelley<sup>1</sup>  
(Speaker of Dail Eireann)

How far back we have been put by that fatal signing and by the machine (IRB) that prevents our retrieving in the Dail the ground that was lost in London.

letter from De Valera  
to McGarrity (December  
21, 1921)<sup>2</sup>

No trivial accident that he and Brugha severed their connection with the IRB and Collins went on to be its life and soul.

Eamon De Valera<sup>3</sup>

How does organizational membership shape one's political preferences and decisions? The IRB, which functioned throughout the war of independence as a dual revolutionary authority, quite obviously promoted the Free State cause. At the time of the Treaty

debates, IRBers, with Collins at the lead, opted for compromise, whereas critics of the organization comprised an important segment of the Republican dissident element. The irony of this turn of events is that for over a half-century the IRB embodied tough-minded Republicanism and now, strangely, they were the moderates. (This historical reversal, of course, is certainly related to the pre-eminent role of Collins heading the organization.) Surprisingly, we also found a number of good IRB men who bucked not only the Supreme Council dictates but also the Big Fellow and continued to oppose the Treaty. By and large, though, IRB membership was a good indicator of the elite's ultimate Civil War position.

In the historical chapter, "The Irish Republican Brotherhood," we already noted that this secret oath-bound organization passed through a number of revolutionary phases from its creation in the 1850s to the Civil War period. Its overall strategy of physical force republicanism took on varied forms: abortive revolution (1867); dynamiting campaigns; short-lived "New Departure" reformism which featured an alliance with the "open movement" (Land League, Home Rule Party); relative inactivity; renaissance (1907); a conspiratorial role in the formation of the Volunteers leading to the Rising; and its underground guerrilla war presence. When they acquiesced to the Free State, they still formally clung to the Republican goal; Collins's "stepping-stone"<sup>4</sup> thesis rationalizing the compromise.

Those critical of the IRB's role--supporters and impartial scholars alike--have all recognized this direct link between IRB membership and political compromise. Of course, the degree of

influence, the manner in which this influence was translated into votes and generalized support, and the motivations for such a policy are matters for debate. The IRB Supreme Council's majority (8-4 or 11-5 vote?<sup>5</sup>) held that their constitution permitted acceptance of any action "calculated to advance the cause of Irish independence consistent with the preservation of its own integrity."<sup>6</sup> Here was a loophole easily exploited by moderates. By throwing their considerable weight behind the Treaty, the claim is that IRB Dail deputies, the IRA General Headquarters Staff (Collins, Richard Mulcahy, Eoin O'Duffy, Piaras Beaslai, Diarmuid O'Hegarty, Liam Tobin, Fionan Lynch, Georoid O'Sullivan were IRBers), and segments of the field IRA were all circumscribed by the secret organization's policy dictate. A special provision allowed members of Dail Eireann to follow their individual consciences rather than the IRB guide,<sup>7</sup> a less than convincing measure of neutrality from the perspective of anti-Treatyites.

For our specific concerns, it is noteworthy that the revolutionary organ one joins--in this case "political socialization" in a clandestine oath-bound society--is apparently an important explanatory variable for understanding the leadership split of 1922. Thus, a particular institutional membership, rather than background factors more distant from an individual's entrance into politics (class origins, education, former occupation, "marginality," etc.), appears to play a larger role in determining political behavior.

Although excellent works have been written on this difficult subject (by their very nature secret societies leave

behind few records), especially Leon O'Broin Revolutionary Under-ground, this writer is unaware of any single piece of scholarship that actually demonstrates that IRB status translates to political moderation for the general leadership. Usually, either a general statement is made to that effect, a chosen list of IRBers-turned-Free-Staters are presented (Collins's GHQ Staff cronies), or passing references are made to various individual leaders linking their membership to Treaty preference. Nowhere, it seems, can one find an IRB breakdown for the respective Dail factions (64 for the Treaty, 57 against) or for the IRA commandants.

Our aim in the following section is a rather modest, but perhaps useful one: to actually count as many revolutionary IRB heads as possible and thereby support the universally held thesis that members were indeed Free State supporters. Furthermore, where possible, we shall describe the individual's IRB role and criticisms of the organization advanced by non-members and dropouts. Four categories of revolutionary actors emerge from such a leadership profile:

1. IRB members that were Free Staters (18)
2. IRB members supporting Republican intransigence (7)
3. IRB dropouts or hostile non-members-- Free Staters (8)
4. IRB dropouts or hostile non-members-- Republicans (11)

(Not surprisingly, the first group's size demonstrates the link between organization membership and pro-Treaty behavior. The

dissenters in the second category are important since some historical accounts claim that Liam Lynch was the sole Republican voice on the Supreme Council.) The latter two categories suggest that the converse of the "IRBer as Free Stater" thesis does not hold. For many of the same reasons, leaders on both sides of the Treaty divide were suspicious, if not outrightly hostile, to the IRB organization. This is an important point. Abhorrence of secret societies does not appear to be an attitude restricted mainly to anti-Treatyites, although the well-known antipathy toward the organization shared by Republicans De Valera and Cathal Brugha might lead one to believe that this is the case.<sup>8</sup> Reservations concerning the Catholic hierarchy's religious condemnation of oath-bound societies, the dual revolutionary authority implicitly challenging the "duly elected" Dail Eireann, and the IRB's Easter Rising intrigues (secrecy was assured at the price of limited participation), were felt by a wide range of revolutionary actors. From the moderates Griffith and MacNeill, to such fire-eaters as Dan Breen, the IRB was harshly criticized. Their sentiments, along with those of active IRB supporters, will provide a fuller picture of the IRB's revolutionary role.

#### IRB Members that Were Free Staters

1. Piaras Beaslai
2. Con Collins

### 3. Michael Collins

Obviously, the "life and soul" of the organization, Michael Collins heads the list of IRBers. Working as a young postal clerk in England (1914), he assumed the position of local IRB Secretary. In the post-internment aftermath of the Rising, his leadership of the National Aid Organization--ostensibly a humanitarian service aimed at the families of imprisoned insurrectionaries--was a cover for further IRB activity. According to Mary Comerford, "he was able to use some of the relief money in weekly payments to unemployed ex-prisoners who were really IRB organizers cycling through the countryside."<sup>9</sup> A resurrected IRB would be composed of realists who would avoid the mistakes of the 1916 ideologues of "blood sacrifice." Collins was firmly committed to such a new practical orientation since

the Rising was bungled terribly, costing many a good life. It seemed at first to be well organized but afterwards became subjected to panic decisions and a great lack of very essential organization and cooperation.<sup>10</sup>

Despite his awareness that the open nationalist movement, Sinn Fein, was gaining considerable momentum throughout Ireland (January 1918 Khaki elections would underline this strength), Collins foresaw a continued role for a secret organization. Many of the ideals of Sinn Fein, Collins wrote, "are but the re-weighted ideals of the IRB . . . but the IRB is respected and acknowledged by many who will think twice about the prospects of Sinn Fein."<sup>11</sup>

After a succession of post-Rising Presidents (Sean McGarry, Harry Boland), Collins became its leader, packing the IRA

Headquarters with fellow IRBers just as he had once helped assure their presence on the Sinn Fein Executive (October 1917). In one sense, his position of leadership, tantamount to President of the Irish Republic, directly challenged the authority of the revolutionary Dail and its Prime Minister, Eamon De Valera. As we shall see, both pro- and anti-Treatyites harbored misgivings about this parallel, secret organization, especially since the "open movement," perhaps for the first time in Irish history, had the backing of a majority of Irishmen.

On the other hand, IRB apologists noted that the ambiguous position of De Valera as leader of Dail Eireann was forthrightly cleared up when the organization relegated the position of Head of State to "Dev" (April 26, 1921). His designation as President of the Second Dail was finally consistent with IRB policy. Commandant Sean MacEoin, writing in an article, "The Constitutional Basis of the National Struggle," argued that this self-limitation began at the very beginning of the Dail's creation (January 1919), a not altogether convincing argument. The

Council of the IRB at once voluntarily ceded all its powers except one. The President of the IRB continued to be regarded by the brotherhood as President of the Republic. . . . This prompt and voluntary cession of its powers, in the moment of triumph, by a secret revolutionary body has few parallels in history, and nothing could demonstrate the high patriotic motives that inspired the Supreme Council.<sup>12</sup>

The late date (April 1921) of Collins's final abdication can be interpreted as evidence to support quite the opposite thesis, since the IRB leadership claimed primacy in the Republic almost right until the Truce.

In the same apologetic vein, IRBer Richard Mulcahy (IRA Chief of Staff) answered Commandant Seumas Robinson's charge of interfering with the IRA's military plans and the inability of the IRA to "serve two masters." Mulcahy claimed that far from intruding in the IRA's domain the "IRB instructed its members to join the Volunteers and take their orders from their Volunteer superior officers."<sup>13</sup> Now, depending on the area of the country both Mulcahy and Robinson may have been correct. In Liam Lynch's Southern Division sector, for instance, there was a diminished IRB role as the struggle intensified, "and in the last six months before the Truce the activities of the organization . . . were nominal."<sup>14</sup> In other areas, according to T.P. Coogan, the IRB had a greater degree of control over the IRA.<sup>15</sup> In either case, the goals of both movements were largely the same throughout the war and the issue of parallel authority did not become a major issue until the Treaty period. By then, Michael Collins's IRB role, whether President of the Republic or not, was crucial for adopting the London Conference compromise.

Some view Collins as an independent prime mover of events, whereas others, like Dorothy Macardle, liken him to a conduit through which information was passed to the secret brotherhood back in Ireland: "It seems probable in the light of after events, that the IRB, and some of the IRB leaders, had learned from him before this, the vital details of the offer and urged him to accept."<sup>16</sup> O'Broin supports this interpretation, summarizing Sean O'Muirthile's account of Collins's frequent trips from the negotiating table with British

Cabinet members to the Supreme Council in Dublin. There is no hint that Collins was merely laying down the IRB line by fiat. One thing is clear, though. The Supreme Council was certainly in the business of formulating policy:

At one stage he produced to a Council meeting, attended by 10 of the 15 members, the Draft Treaty. There was dissatisfaction with the form of oath to be taken by Deputies. Three of these present--all high ranking Volunteer officers--prepared an alternative draft which they thought would satisfy the Volunteer mind. When O'Muirthile saw the Treaty in its final form he recognized that the oath had assumed the changes suggested by the Supreme Council.<sup>17</sup>

Finally, in an overall assessment of Collins's IRB Treaty role we must again mention his varied power bases (Minister of Finance; Director of Intelligence, GHQ) and unique charisma as the most wanted man in the British Empire. It would be extremely difficult to isolate the effect of his specific IRB influence. Suffice it to say, it was considerable, surely swaying some members of a divided elite towards the Free State position. It is often dangerous to mount historical arguments in the conditional tense, especially in the case of Ireland where Lloyd George's possible military bluff and the Ulster Protestant's willingness and ability to fight an all-Ireland political entity are endlessly contested historical "might have beens." Yet, it is safe to say that "if" Michael Collins's signature was withheld from the Treaty, the Dail's vote and IRA's decision would have been overwhelmingly negative.

#### 4. Emmett Dalton

Prior to a mission aimed at breaking down Sean MacEoin out of Mountjoy Prison, Dalton was refused absolution because of his IRB membership.<sup>18</sup>

5. Eamann Duggan6. Fionan Lynch7. Dr. Pat Macartan

He joined the organization in 1901 and was a somewhat reluctant supporter of their Rising plans. ("[We must] first gain the support of the people."<sup>19</sup>) A member of the Supreme Council, he was sent to the U.S. (Summer 1916), where he argued for full Republican separatism. The "moderate" De Valera, whose nationalist language included the ambiguous phrase "self-determination," was chastised by this spokesman for the IRB. (Note their role reversals during the Treaty debate!)

Every conservative in Ireland...will do his utmost to interpret Self Determination as Colonial Home Rule, or the Act on the Statute Book...we are back to the old days of Constitutionalism. The first result will be a split in Ireland; for the IRB will stand firm for the Republic [this writer's emphasis]; while the moderate element supported by the "respectable classes" will continue to demand Self Determination; or something less, if Dev can be persuaded.<sup>20</sup>

8. Sean MacEoin (IRB Country Centre of Longford)

Although an exponent of Dail Eireann's primacy, he offered a unique rationale for a continued IRB role.

As long as the struggle continued there was danger that the elected government and Dail might, at any moment, find themselves extinguished by enemy action; should this happen, the Supreme Council held itself in readiness to carry on the fight in a caretaker government.<sup>21</sup>

After the Treaty split, MacEoin hoped the organization would help to unite respective factions, and, in fact, a number of IRB meetings were held just for that purpose.

9. Sean McGarry

He was an IRB member when participating in the Rising and became its President in August 1917.

10. Joe McGrath

11. Richard Mulcahy

12. Batt O'Connor

13. Eoin O'Duffy

He was a member of the IRB's Supreme Council during the Treaty debate period.

14. Diarmuid O'Hegarty

A member of IRA GHQ.

15. P.S. O'Hegarty

On the Supreme Council (1921).

16. Sean O'Muirthile

During 1912 he was brought into the IRB by Cathal Brugha and was a member of the Supreme Council during the War of Independence period. In his memoir he leaves us with a pragmatic rationale for the IRB's Treaty support--its "objective" assessment of the IRA's dwindling strength. Thus, for O'Muirthile it was the IRA's "bluff," and not Lloyd George's, that was finally being called in the Fall of 1921. (Remember, though, as we mentioned earlier, other IRA leaders such as Liam Lynch hotly disputed this pessimistic evaluation of their military position.) O'Muirthile writes:

The Supreme Council had perhaps the best knowledge of the actual strength or weakness of the forces operating under the Dail, because secrets that were not always available to other bodies were from time to time before the Supreme Council. In other words, a good deal of the "bluff" that was essential in public was shed in the IRB council meetings, and realities were discussed. The Supreme Council on this occasion unanimously agreed that the ends of the organization would be advanced by the representative of Ireland entering into the proposed conference and that the influence of the organization should be directed toward that end.<sup>22</sup>

He adds further,

The truce was agreed to because it was felt that the military campaign against the British could have no further success, and perhaps terms could be obtained that would put Ireland in a position from which she could develop on lines that would enable her to achieve complete independence.<sup>23</sup>

Was the Supreme Council's evaluation any more objective concerning the constellation of military forces than, say, Southern Division leaders? Distance may foster objectivity, but it may likewise distort the facts of a situation. Clearly, if Churchill's well-known threat to send one hundred thousand troops and ring Ireland with barbed wire was carried out, an under-armed IRA would be no match for such a force. They were hardly managing to keep one step ahead of the "Auxiliaries" and "Black and Tans." And yet, guerrilla wars seem to have their own dynamics. Higher levels of repression and military "victories" are often translated into public relations disasters and eventual political defeat (e.g., by 1957 the French had "won" in Algeria). In any case, who would have thought the British, indefatigable World War I victors, could be forced to the bargaining table by gunmen who simply commit murder "from the safety a ditch."

17. Georoid O'Sullivan

A member of IRA GHQ.

18. Liam Tobin

A member of IRA GHQ.

IRB Members: Anti-Treaty

1. Harry Boland

One of the Supreme Council dissenters, he felt that the rank and file of the IRB and IRA abhorred the Treaty. Given this strong anti-Treaty sentiment, he was willing to withhold funds given by the American Fenian group, Clan Na Gael, to the IRB--aid that would one day help finance the "irregulars'" struggle against the Free State.<sup>24</sup>

2. Liam Deasy

As an IRA brigade officer, he visited Dublin (Easter 1921) for discussion with the General Staff. He notes that they first convened in their IRB capacity "with Collins in the chair" and thereafter reassembled in their strictly IRA roles.<sup>25</sup> It is not clear whether Deasy participated in the former meeting or was merely aware of the overlapping authority.

3. Diarmud Lynch

Lynch returned from the U.S. in 1914 with two thousand dollars marked for the IRB. From his position on the IRB Executive,

he was later to support the Rising ("the people will follow"<sup>26</sup>). He was on the Supreme Council throughout the war.

#### 4. Liam Lynch

Lynch became a member of the IRB in 1918, forming a "circle" in Fermoy, and eventually rising to the position of division "centre" (March 1921). Thus, he simultaneously held the command of the Southern Division and area IRB, which afforded him an automatic slot on the Supreme Council. The IRB document supporting the Treaty (December 12, 1921) particularly outraged the dissenting Lynch, who claimed, "before the Treaty Mick assured officers that they would be consulted before any modification of the full Republican demand."<sup>27</sup> His area--IRA and IRB alike--stood firmly behind the Republican standard. By January 7, 1922, the

Country Clerk centre reported to Liam that the whole membership of the organization in the city and county was unanimously opposed to the acceptance of the Treaty proposals. Soon afterwards he had similar reports from the county organization in Kerry and Waterford.<sup>28</sup>

Lynch was straightforward in his rejection of Collins's "stepping-stone" argument and pointed out, quite correctly, that partition would provoke pogroms against the nationalist minority in the North. If the Treaty was accepted, it would be "the first time in our history [that] the people would have by their own deliberate act accept[ed] foreign domination. The country being partitioned, Republicans and nationalists, were being abandoned to the blind fury of the Orange mob."<sup>29</sup> Without giving up hope of reconciliation among revolutionary comrades, Lynch utilized the IRB framework and especially his relationship with

its leader, Collins, to hold meetings and restore unity. Collins had much the same strategy in mind when using pro- and anti-Treaty IRB officers to mobilize raids in a beleaguered Northern Ireland (May 1922) without conferring with his fellow members of the Provisional Government of the Free State.<sup>30</sup>

5. Liam Mellows

Not an active member.<sup>31</sup>

6. Sean O'Hegarty

A staunch IRB man (Cork City Circle centre leader<sup>32</sup>), he met with Collins after the Treaty split to possibly affect an army unification.<sup>33</sup>

7. Austin Stack

He was the county centre of Kerry. Tom Barry claimed that he did not remain a member of the organization until the Treaty period.<sup>34</sup> Yet, according to O'Broin, he was a Supreme Council member (December 1921).<sup>35</sup>

Hostile to the IRB: Pro-Treaty

1. Ernest Blythe

At the age of 17, he was induced into the organization by none other than Sean O'Casey. He was well aware of the nineteenth-century Fenian terror assassination campaigns and was reluctant to join an organization "engaged in murder."<sup>36</sup> (His reticence is somewhat strange given his August 15, 1916 article in An t Oglach:

"all . . . having assisted the enemy must be shot or otherwise destroyed with the least possible delay."<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, prior to his own capitulation to the Free State compromise, he stated, "The man who agrees to partition is a traitor and should be treated as such."<sup>38</sup>) In any case, O'Casey did convince him "that the IRB had nothing whatever to do with murder." After his recruiting stint in Kerry with Desmond Fitzgerald, he was designated a traveling organizer for the IRB throughout the Ulster countries. He left the organization right after the Rising.

## 2. Darrell Figgis

Figgis's critique of the IRB effectively limited his revolutionary role after the "German Plot" round-up (see p. 118), which saw the ascendancy of IRB hard-liners--Collins, Boland, et al.--who went "on the run" rather than submit to incarceration:

I had twice been offered the IRB oath and twice had declined it; since to be bound by an oath rather than a conviction seemed to me an insult, not only to a man's intelligence, but to his probing, particularly when that oath is administered by a secret society.<sup>39</sup>

## 3. Desmond Fitzgerald

Brought into the IRB (September 27, 1914), Fitzgerald labored alongside his friend Ernest Blythe in the not altogether fertile nationalist fields of Kerry, hoping to drum up support for Volunteer drilling and the more secretive activities of the IRB. (One "native" remarked, "Yearra, we all know that you and Mr. Blight [sic] are quite mad, but ye mean well according to ye're lights."<sup>40</sup>) He left the organization just after the Rising.

#### 4. Arthur Griffith

There is some confusion concerning the precise dates of Griffith's pre-Rising membership in the organization, although his strong opposition to the IRB's limit on the "full and free expression of his opinion on national affairs"<sup>41</sup> is a well-known fact. Robert Kee notes his IRB role ended in 1906<sup>42</sup> (prior to the Hobson, McCullough, Clarke renaissance). F.S.L. Lyons uses the date 1910,<sup>43</sup> and for Kevin Knowlan 1907 is the correct year.<sup>44</sup> O'Broin quotes a one-time Secretary of Sinn Fein, Patrick O'Keefe, alluding to this puzzling issue of exact dates and the reasons for Griffith's departure from the IRB: "He was never put out and never went out. There were all kinds of fellows like that."<sup>45</sup> O'Broin continues, "The IRB people wanted to squeeze Griffith, O'Keefe said, so that the paper he was editing would become their official organ, but Griffith was determined that he was not going to be tied to anyone."<sup>46</sup> The author guesses that up to about 1904-1905 Griffith attended the Teeling Circle meetings in Dublin. Prior to the Rising, according to Darrel Figgis, Griffith had been invited to join the Supreme Council of the IRB and to share its responsibility in whatever plans were made. But he had declined disliking as he did the procedure of secret societies.<sup>47</sup>

#### 5. Bulmer Hobson

In his role as a member of the IRB's Supreme Council and a leader most responsible for its resurgence, F.X. Martin has called him perhaps the advanced nationalist of the pre-Rising period.<sup>48</sup> From 1904, when Denis McCullough had sworn him into the organization, Hobson represented those radicals advocating a physical force

solution to the despised British connection. Ironically, the events of Easter Week, which he had helped prepare for, were to sweep him from the forefront of revolutionary politics. The Republican indictment of Hobson has two separate parts. First, he broke with IRBers MacDonagh and Clarke by allowing Redmondite Home Rulers to intrude on the Executive of the newly formed Volunteer organization.<sup>49</sup> It was supposed to provide a front for the IRB, not moderates. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, Hobson opposed the clandestine, elitist intrigues of that small IRB group that plotted the insurrection. One must await, as the IRB Constitution duly noted, the decision of the Irish nation before embarking on revolution, especially when nationalist mass consciousness was developing slowly along ever more radical lines. The Leinster IRB Executive responded to his moderation by arresting Hobson just before the Rising, which really marks the end of a long, successful Republican career. His words, "I had done my last to stop the Rising,"<sup>50</sup> would not endear him to future revolutionaries, although MacNeill made a successful comeback during the post-Rising period, and his opposition is a matter of record.

## 6. Eoin MacNeill

In Chapter 2, we have already described MacNeill's pre-Rising conflict with the Military Council of the IRB intent on an insurrection. MacNeill, the President of the open Volunteer movement, was clearly manipulated by the IRB clique, although he was not entirely unaware of their maneuvers.

### 7. Denis McCullough

For McCullough, too, the Rising was the turning point in an otherwise brilliant career, which featured the re-invigoration of a moribund IRB organization. Though officially President up until Easter Week, he was never told of the Military Council's plans for a Rising and subsequently left the organization in protest. (O'Broin notes that during the War of Independence Collins dispatched McCullough to the U.S. on a mission of reconciliation between IRB and the American Clan Na Gael. The implication is that McCullough either kept his membership, re-joined, or volunteered to utilize his pre-Rising prestige and contacts for a particular mission. In any case, it is not entirely clear to what extent McCullough had severed his relationship with the organization.)

### 8. Kevin O'Higgins

He resigned from the IRB because of the Catholic hierarchy's condemnation of secret societies. In his words, "either religion is nothing or it is more than anything."<sup>51</sup>

### Hostile to the IRB: Anti-Treatyites

This category of revolutionary leader either resigned from the organization or were critical non-members for many of the same reasons as the above listed pro-Treatyites.

#### 1. Dick Barrett

He was fearful of secret societies.

## 2. Gerry Boland

According to Liam Skinner, Boland had joined the organization (1904) and after the Rising called for "disbandonment," as it "had served its purpose."<sup>52</sup>

## 3. Dan Breen

In 1917, Breen broke with the organization largely because of their tactics, meddling in his anti-British schemes. While his comrade Sean Treacy was enduring a hunger strike in the Dundalk Jail, Breen devised a plan of action:

I got a brain wave. Why not capture a Peeler, bring him off to a safe hiding place, and put him on a forcible hunger strike, and keep him as a hostage for Sean's safety? . . . Forty men were mobilized to carry out the job; but for once the policemen failed to patrol the line. Later I found out that the scheme had been turned down by the Irish Republican Brotherhood, a secret organization which included the most reliable of the Volunteers, and which practically controlled the Volunteer Army. After that I severed my connection with the IRB.<sup>53</sup>

## 4. Robert Brennan

In his memoir (Allegiance), Brennan rails against secret societies in general, and is opposed to Diarmud Lynch's (Supreme Council member) specific plan to control the Volunteer movement through this clandestine organization.<sup>54</sup>

## 5. Cathal Brugha

His post-Rising resignation and hostility to the IRB stemmed from at least two sources: (a) the IRB membership had not participated in the Rising in full force,<sup>55</sup> and (b) "there was now

an open Republican party, with an open Republican army [the Volunteers] secrecy was unnecessary and dangerous."<sup>56</sup>

#### 6. Eamon De Valera

Against his better judgment and religious scruples, he joined the organization in early 1916 since it appeared that some of his junior officers in his Dublin Volunteers unit were far better informed of the insurrection plans than he. He did not attend meetings, refused to learn the identities of fellow members, but was at least permitted to receive IRB plans.<sup>57</sup> After the Rising, he did not resume membership as a protest against: (a) the contradictory orders issued to Volunteers<sup>58</sup> (he valiantly manned Boland's Mill as the most successful commandant in the Rising, although the lack of manpower sealed their fate); (b) swearing to obey an unidentified executive,<sup>59</sup> and (c) the immoral nature of secret societies.<sup>60</sup>

#### 7. Frank Gallagher

Writing under the name David Hogan, the author Four Glorious Years, Gallagher sums up the general critique of the IRB's post-revolutionary performance:

What was to prove a tragedy later for the Volunteers, and for Ireland, was that a section of the IRB continued its secret existence and its struggle for control of the Dail and the army.<sup>61</sup>

#### 8. Mary MacSwiney

Sean Cronin has cited a letter (January 1922) written to her brother Peter in New York, outlining her view of the IRB's role in undermining the existent Republic. It is hard to imagine a stronger

statement against oath-bound, clandestine organizations:

Think of the IRB setting its energies to pull down the Irish Republic. I told you before that I was told a solid block of IRB men voted for the Treaty. That's what your secret societies do for you, and everywhere I can I'll preach against secret societies and IRBs. Why can't men be Republicans openly in honour? Their secrecy gives them an opportunity to betray with their secret hold over one another.<sup>62</sup>

#### 9. Rory O'Connor

He resigned from the IRB movement on the grounds that revolutionary organs should be open and above-board.<sup>63</sup>

#### 10. Sean T. O'Kelley

He left the organization after the Rising as there was little need for a secret society. Its "dark hand" was primarily responsible for the Treaty compromise:

It made me sick to think that it was the brotherhood which was responsible for the Dail's final decision. The majority would have gone against the Treaty only for the Brotherhood's votes in the Dail. What sort of people were those who were in control of the Brotherhood?<sup>64</sup>

One could, of course, answer O'Kelley by noting that these were the very same revolutionary comrades that prosecuted the War of Independence. It makes little sense to conceptualize the IRBers as simply a mysterious force beneath the surface of the open movement. They, too, were spread throughout the Dail and IRA.

#### 11. Ernie O'Malley

When O'Malley broke into an IRB meeting in Limerick chaired by O'Muirthile, during the Truce period, he was quite critical of its parallel authority, and particularly outraged by secret plans to

recruit for the organization among untested "trucers" who might now ride the successful nationalist bandwagon. The exchange between O'Muirthile and O'Malley is instructive on both counts:<sup>65</sup>

[O'Muirthile:] What brought you here? You have not been summoned nor are you entitled to attend. I must ask you to leave the room.

[O'Malley:] . . . I am sorry . . . but this is my divisional area. My officers are present. Even some who are not officers. I am responsible for my area and for them to the Government of the Republic.

[O'Muirthile:] This order must be put into effect at once. Select the men carefully but increase the strength of the organization. Are there any questions?

[O'Malley:] Yes . . . I think it inadvisable to recruit amongst the trucers. Many officers and men who have been thoroughly tested during the war do not belong to this organization. I see some present here whom I have never considered in any way energetic. All officers in our division are fully occupied now. They have more work than time.

### Conclusion

Although the leadership profile is hardly exhaustive, it does validate the commonly held view linking IRB membership to the support of the Free State. Furthermore, the number of dissenting IRBers retaining their Republican allegiance in the face of the organization's line bring up some interesting historical questions. Just how effective was the IRB as an influence on individual leaders' behavior? Were Collins's GHQ entourage and friends and admirers in the Dail likely to follow his lead, whether pledged to a secret society or not?

Note that Harry Boland, Liam Mellows, Austin Stack, Liam Lynch, et al. had few qualms about breaking with the Supreme Council majority.<sup>66</sup>

Also of some interest is the hostility displayed by pro-Treaty moderates towards the organization, which further complicates an evaluation of the IRB's revolutionary role. One should not assume that IRB critics were wedded by common interests in their opposition to its secret decisions. The evidence suggests that objections to oath-bound, clandestine societies were advanced by roughly equal numbers of leaders from Republican and Free State camps.

In sum, then, the "institutional membership" variable is a rather complicated background factor that nonetheless goes far in explaining the conflict.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>O'Broin, Revolutionary Underground, p. 199.

<sup>2</sup>Cronin, McGarrity Papers, p. 109.

<sup>3</sup>Longford and O'Neill, Eamon De Valera, p. 148.

<sup>4</sup>After Collins's tragic death during the civil war, some sections of the pro-Free State IRA became disillusioned with the narrow interpretation of the Treaty provisions taken by the IRBers and Cabinet members. The "steps" toward the Republic seemed painfully slow, or nonexistent, to justify their past support for Collins's--and the IRB's--argument. By March 1924, an abortive Army Mutiny was in the works, led by Charles Dalton, Liam Tobin, et al., which challenged, "the direction of the Cosgrave cabinet and the position of strength enjoyed by the IRB." It poignantly demonstrates the range of deeply felt opinions on the "moderate" side of the Treaty split (Bell, The Secret Army, p. 46).

<sup>5</sup>Dorothy Macardle (The Irish Republic, p. 629) records "8 of 12" supported the Treaty, whereas Leon O'Broin's figures (Revolutionary Underground, p. 19) are eleven for and three against.

<sup>6</sup>O'Broin, Revolutionary Underground, p. 196.

<sup>7</sup>The following statement was issued by the Supreme Council six days after the signing of the Treaty (Cronin, McGarrity Papers, p. 112): "The Supreme Council, having due regard to the Constitution of the Organization, has decided that the present peace treaty between Ireland and Great Britain should be ratified. Members of the Organization, however, who have to take public action as representatives are given freedom of action in the matter."

<sup>8</sup>T.D. Williams, Introduction to Secret Societies in Ireland, p. 9. According to the author, this type of hostility "may have been a contributing factor in the development of Sinn Fein before the final division caused by the Treaty. Those hostile to the IRB's methods, organization, and secrecy, are assumed to be future anti-Treatyites facing IRB Free State advocates.

<sup>9</sup>Mary Comerford, The First Dail (Dublin: Joe Clarke, 1969), p. 106.

<sup>10</sup>O'Broin, Revolutionary Underground, p. 178.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Sean MacEoin, "The Constitutional Basis for the National Struggle," in The Kerryman (Tralee: Kerryman Books, 1922), p. 15.

- <sup>13</sup>Richard Mulcahy, "Chief of Staff 1919," Capuchin Annual 42 (1969): 344.
- <sup>14</sup>O'Donoghue, No Other Law, p. 188.
- <sup>15</sup>Coogan, The IRA, p. 37.
- <sup>16</sup>Macardle, The Irish Republic, p. 588.
- <sup>17</sup>O'Broin, Revolutionary Underground, p. 196.
- <sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 149.
- <sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 167.
- <sup>20</sup>Macartan, With De Valera, p. 98.
- <sup>21</sup>MacEoin, "Constitution Basis," p. 15.
- <sup>22</sup>O'Broin, Revolutionary Underground, p. 193.
- <sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 194.
- <sup>24</sup>Cronin, McGarrity Papers, p. 113.
- <sup>25</sup>O'Broin, Revolutionary Underground, p. 192.
- <sup>26</sup>Ibid., pp. 166-67.
- <sup>27</sup>O'Donoghue, No Other Law, p. 192.
- <sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 193.
- <sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 232.
- <sup>30</sup>Williams, "Irish Republican Brotherhood," p. 148.
- <sup>31</sup>Greaves, Liam Mellows, p. 257. The author notes that Mellows failed to attend a single meeting during the latter part of 1921.
- <sup>32</sup>Diarmuid Lynch, The IRB and the 1916 Rising, ed. F. O'Donoghue (Cork: Mercier Press, 1957), p. viii
- <sup>33</sup>Greaves, Liam Mellows, p. 314.
- <sup>34</sup>Barry, Guerrilla Days in Ireland, p. 185.
- <sup>35</sup>O'Broin, Revolutionary Underground, p. 199.
- <sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 146.

- <sup>37</sup>Bell, The Secret Army, p. 18.
- <sup>38</sup>Item #61, LO P117 National Library of Ireland.
- <sup>39</sup>Figgis, Recollections of the Irish War, p. 226.
- <sup>40</sup>Fitzgerald, Memoirs of Desmond Fitzgerald, p. 26.
- <sup>41</sup>O'Luing, "Arthur Griffith," p. 62.
- <sup>42</sup>Kee, The Green Flag, p. 660.
- <sup>43</sup>Lyons, Ireland Since the Famine, p. 245.
- <sup>44</sup>Kevin Knowlan, "Tom Clarke, MacDermott, and the IRB," in Leaders and Men of the Easter Rising, p. 111.
- <sup>45</sup>O'Broin, Revolutionary Underground, p. 150.
- <sup>46</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>47</sup>Figgis, Recollections of the Irish War, p. 128.
- <sup>48</sup>Martin, "1916: Myth," p. 88.
- <sup>49</sup>Cronin, McGarrity Papers, p. 184.
- <sup>50</sup>O'Brien, Revolutionary Underground, p. 173.
- <sup>51</sup>White, Kevin O'Higgins, p. 32.
- <sup>52</sup>Liam Skinner, Politicians by Accident (Dublin: Metropolitan Publishing Company, 1946), pp. 214-215.
- <sup>53</sup>Breen, My Fight, p. 19. The name for Royal Irish Constables who were for the most part Irish Catholics was "Peelers." Sir Robert Peel, in the early part of the nineteenth century, created this force and hence the term.
- <sup>54</sup>Brennan, Allegiance, p. 154.
- <sup>55</sup>O'Broin, Revolutionary Underground, p. 179.
- <sup>56</sup>Kee, The Green Flag, p. 610.
- <sup>57</sup>Longford and O'Neill, Eamon De Valera, p. 25.
- <sup>58</sup>Ibid., p. 66.
- <sup>59</sup>Ibid.

<sup>60</sup>O'Broin, Revolutionary Underground, p. 198.

<sup>61</sup>Gallagher, Four Glorious Years, p. 240.

<sup>62</sup>Cronin, McGarrity Papers, p. 112.

<sup>63</sup>Macardle, The Irish Republic, p. 905.

<sup>64</sup>O'Broin, Revolutionary Underground, p. 199.

<sup>65</sup>O'Malley, The Singing Flame, p. 36.

<sup>66</sup>For men such as Boland and Lynch, it was obviously much more difficult to oppose the man, Michael Collins. The former revolutionary, for instance, waited until the attack on the Four Courts before finally facing "Mick's" men. Lynch imagined that "good old Mick" was purveying the "stepping stone" ideas as a cover for a renewal of hostilities or the implementation of a de facto Irish Republic.

## Chapter VIII

## BACKGROUND VARIABLE: ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ATTITUDES

No people in the world are really less likely to turn Bolshevik than the Irish.

Winston Churchill  
February 16, 1922

We are the most conservative revolutionaries in history.

Kevin O'Higgins

The above quoted remark of Free State Minister O'Higgins ably summarizes the scant economic and social change brought about by a strictly nationalist War of Independence. Sinn Fein/IRA leaders were men consumed by the task of ridding Ireland of the British "occupation" and had little time, interest or energy to address the glaring problems of an impoverished urban working class, landless laborers in the countryside, the continued drain of emigration, or developing a skewed economy that functioned as little more than Britain's "agricultural district." Not all revolutionaries, though, were disinterested social moderates. Marxist disciples of Connolly and their sympathizers, for instance, were few in number, yet influential, in shaping the ultimate course of the civil war events. They all consistently lived by the uncompromising creed of their executed socialist mentor and were among the most vociferous Republican "irregulars" to challenge the

Free State. Thus, the constellation of attitudes that define them as "leftists"<sup>1</sup> are neatly linked to extremist political behavior. In other words, a particular set of the leadership's social and economic views are clearly associated with the hard-line Treaty position. Conversely, the most conservative leaders were apt to be compromising Free Staters, although in this case what stands out is the pervasive moderate outlook that characterized so many leaders on either side of the civil war conflict.

In sum, one's background of social attitudes is a fair indicator of Treaty preference, at least for those espousing far "right" and "left" ideas. In the following discussion we shall (a) examine the historical reasons for this widespread moderation among the elite, (b) take a backward glance at the more traditional connection between political and social radicalism to better understand the "leftists'" tendency for Republicanism, (c) decide who exactly can be called "radical" or "conservative," and (d) present evidence relating leaders' social backgrounds to their political actions in 1922.

Before proceeding, a special critical word should be said about economic and social factors as a "background" variable. In the general run of elite studies there are fairly distinct hypothesized lines of causation running between different elements of an individual's life--background characteristics such as ethnicity or religion foster attitudes which, in turn, generate specific political behavior. More sophisticated formulations posit a feedback from "behavior" to newly developing attitudes. In this case, it is

obvious that moderate or conservative social attitudes are somewhat distant from "background," perhaps closer to the behavior we are seeking to understand. This proximity of variables, of course, has all the makings of a major analytic flaw. Admittedly, we would be extremely hesitant to itemize any and all fleeting attitudes as "basic" leadership characteristics which are then simply correlated with political activity. However, the constellation of attributes that comprise a "leftist" or "rightist" Sinn Fein/IRA orientation are relatively major components of the individual's political personality, easily defined and comparable in a common-sensical way, and are not merely elusive preferences and tendencies. In fact, in the Irish experience, being a "leftist" is almost synonymous with early participation with James Connolly's Citizen Army network, and, therefore, related to other variables such as membership in the IRB, an insurrectionary experience in the Easter Rising, and a strictly "military" role throughout the guerrilla war period.

#### The Making of "Conservative" Revolutionaries

It is no great mystery why early twentieth-century Irish revolutionaries were generally conservative in matters other than national independence. For decades, Liberals and Tories had effectively diverted revolutionary separatist sentiment by implementing widespread social reforms. As we mentioned earlier, their policies were a huge success except for the dramatic failure of Home Rule--the overriding Catholic political demand. Thus, the rebels of

Easter Week and the 1919-21 conflict--at least most of them--were really protesting continued political subjugation, rather than land tenure inequities, and the like. In this sense, they were not very different from Redmond's reformist parliamentarians, the party which they so rudely swept aside, or the average Irishman.

Aside from thwarted Home Rule bills, conditions were hardly ripe for revolution. Land reform, remember--the virtual touchstone of nineteenth-century Irish protest movements--was obtained gradually and peacefully prior to the Rising, a satisfied small-holding class of farmers emerging as an effective barrier to future radicalism.<sup>2</sup> (World War I demand for foodstuffs filled their pockets and heightened "satisfaction.") And other "objective conditions" often associated with the classic Great Revolutions were obviously missing from the Irish scene. A Catholic middle class had already assumed the prominent social roles formerly occupied by the Protestant gentry of the Big House,<sup>3</sup> a conservative brand of Catholicism flourished throughout Ireland, and, even to some degree, among such professed marxists as James Connolly (the clergy was not a great landowner), and British law and the Westminster model were the institutional forms and processes that largely defined the limits of most revolutionaries' political vision. Thus, the widespread transfer of land to an impoverished peasantry, terror aimed at an exploitative gentry and clergy, and a sharp break with the political institutions of the ancient regime, or, imperialist power, were virtually absent from the struggle. Furthermore, Sinn Fein hardly qualifies as a radical vanguard party, speaking neither in the name of the working

class nor an oppressed peasantry. It obtained a level of electoral support for its policies greater, perhaps, than any such revolutionary movement and, then, restricted itself to the one issue that could unite all factions, national independence. This was not an ideological and organizational response to Lenin's What Is to Be Done?, rather a party closer to the liberal democratic tradition. Indeed, these leaders were, on the whole, petit bourgeois purveyors of the status quo seeking simply to replace the British administration at Dublin Castle with Irishmen. Many of them, of course, chose to be anti-Treatyites, reacting against Dominion status or Ulster partition, but very few were fighting for extravagant changes in the existing social system. And those apparently least interested in ameliorating social evils (i.e., in terms of anti-capitalist remedies) were to be found solidly in the Free State camp.

Radical Social and Economic Attitudes:  
An Historical View

What are we to make of the small number of bonafide "leftists" (defined below) among the elite? Why would we expect them to end up as Republican "irregulars"? First of all, it is by no means self-evident that "leftists" should necessarily oppose moderate political solutions such as partition and commonwealth status. Recently, for instance, Irish "new leftists" have challenged the unending bombing campaign to eradicate the imposed border as part and parcel of a pervasive martyrdom complex,<sup>4</sup> and the British and Irish Communist Organization at one time supported a "two-nations" theory implicitly

sanctioning the Ulster boundary. In this formulation, economic and social concerns on either side of the border are wrongly side-tracked by narrow nationalist politics. John Whyte writes:

BICO now holds that differential economic development has produced two nations in Ireland: the Protestants of the northeast, and the Catholics of the rest of the island. In these circumstances, to claim that the Protestant bourgeoisie is dividing the working class is the reverse of the truth. It is the Catholic nationalists of the south who play this role, by stirring up the Catholic minority of the north against acceptance of the state in which they live, thus preventing the development of working class unity in Northern Ireland.<sup>5</sup>

But these, of course, are post-1922 positions, developed more than a half-century after the establishment of a six-country (Ulster) mini-state. In fact, during much of the long history of British rule, one can safely argue that economic and social radicalism was indeed tied to all shades of political extremism.<sup>6</sup> Economic and political subjugation were closely intertwined and only slowly unraveled during the latter part of the nineteenth century. For instance, an eminently "political" piece of Westminster legislation, the Act of Union (1801), represented the ultimate legal sanction for British policies that could only be termed imperialist, not the least of which included the seventeenth-century wholesale settlement of "loyal" British Protestants<sup>7</sup> on Catholic peasants' land. The flow of absentee rents from Ireland, the destruction of nascent industry,<sup>8</sup> British responsibility for the Great Famine, inequitable taxation filling the British coffers, and a cultural imperialism eroding the native language, customs, etc. are felt by many to be direct consequences of this political integration within the metropole.

Surely, there are all sorts of apologies and variations on this theme: Irish Catholics had a greedy hand in landlordism, the amount and impact of absentee rent has been exaggerated;<sup>9</sup> budding industry in the south was not impeded by restrictive laws or scant capital, rather by the absence of certain entrepreneurial values;<sup>10</sup> in a laissez faire age Britain's sorry welfare performance during the Famine (1845-50) was to be expected; and the funds flowing from the British Exchequer to underwrite such social legislation as old age pensions had, by the early 1900s, reversed their exploitative direction. All this may be somewhat true, but the fact remains that political separatism was perceived by many nationalists as the sine quo non of economic and social redemption. And the more outraged one became by Britain's social and economic track record, the greater was the desire to repeal the Union in drastic ways--complete separatism. Here is the longstanding tradition of our "leftists" of 1922.

By the late nineteenth century, however, economic and political demands were increasingly separated by British reformism; the formal political tie remained firm, while the economic noose was somewhat loosened. Had not both Liberals and Conservatives literally abandoned the Ascendancy landlord class by legislating the wholesale transfer of their property back to a Catholic peasantry? (We should add, at a handsome price to the owners, gift from the British taxpayers!)

Sinn Fein, then, was a direct response to the failure of implementing even limited Home Rule to accompany land reform rather

than a reaction to a beleaguered working class or landless rural laboring force. Note that the first revolutionary parliament, Dail Eireann, had not one Labour member, as Labour had declined to interfere with Sinn Fein's electoral challenge to the Irish Parliamentary Party in the 1918 Khaki election. This may have been one of the great political blunders in Labour's history. Outside the revolutionary forum, they could not effectively influence strategy and policies. True to form, Dail Eireann rejected an active, radical role on the economic and social front. A brief look at two issues should illustrate this point well: (a) the adoption and implementation of a socialist Democratic Programme, and (b) the Dail's response to agrarian radicalism in the West of Ireland.

According to Brian Farrell, the Dail Eireann's adoption of even a watered down Democratic Programme<sup>11</sup> was merely "another political maneuver designed to win support."<sup>12</sup> Sinn Fein was looking for international backing from the "left" at the upcoming Paris Peace Conference; Labour leaders who helped in the drafting hoped for recognition at the International Socialist Conference (Berne), and it was not taken very seriously by the Dail as a whole. The hasty manner in which this document was drafted is outlined by Farrell, citing the first hand account of Sean T. O'Kelley, its actual author. It is a fair indication of the low priority given to the Programme, more akin to a haphazard gesture or a meaningless plank. On the night of January 20, 1919, only the Democratic Programme, among all documents prepared for the Dail, was not completed:

Harry Boland had undertaken to take charge of this document. But, when he came to this final meeting of our subcommittee, all he had to present to the meeting was a bundle of rough notes, which he told us he had received from a number of friends, including William O'Brien and Thomas Johnson of the Labour Party. They were in rough form and no effort had been made to put them in shape or in the form of a statement of policy fit to be put before Dail Eireann the next day. . . . Some of these statements were violently opposed by one or two members, other members equally objected to other statements. . . . No member of the subcommittee was the least bit anxious to take on the job of writing this important document. It was decided I should take all the notes and put them into shape. I was given liberty to put in what I pleased and to omit what I thought proper. I asked for and was given a promise by those present, that they would accept and stand over whatever document I produced. It was fully realized that I had little time to carry out this important commission.<sup>13</sup>

Furthermore, as we shall see, Collins and other IRB members made sure that certain "socialist" statements were deleted from the final text. In terms of intent and implementation, this progressive window dressing was a hollow measure.

Prior to the establishment of the Dail, land agitation "particularly in the west of Ireland, began driving cattle off private grasslands and commandeering it in the name of the Irish Republic, and plowing it up for food cultivation."<sup>14</sup> The Dail's eventual response to this type of rural radicalism was the decree of June 1920. It included an unambiguous statement of Dail Eireann's foursquare support of the rural status quo:

That the present time when the Irish people are locked in a life and death struggle with their traditional enemy, is ill chosen for the stirring up of strife amongst our fellow countrymen; and that all our energies must be directed towards the clearing out--not of the occupiers of this or that piece of land--but the foreign invader of our country.<sup>15</sup>

In sum, the Dail Courts, which have been discussed previously (p. 120), upheld a conservative conception of property rights that undercut a surprisingly widespread land agitation.<sup>16</sup> Political freedom was the declared goal and economic justice would have to stand aside. As we note below, Republican die-hards like Austin Stack and Sean Moylan were among those advocating a cessation of radical land-grabbing activities. Of course, Free Staters even more readily defended the sacrosanct right of ownership.

Yet, despite this pervasive moderation, the same minority of Republican "leftists" can be found clamoring for a vigorous program of social radicalism in the countryside and supportive of collectivist takeovers in factories and creameries. Their efforts failed to dent the conservative Sinn Fein front, though, as their numbers were few, and they suffered from a confused strategy. How long can social goals be held in abeyance before the delay becomes permanent? It is the quandary Connolly faced at Easter Week before joining his narrowly nationalistic insurrectionary brethren. Then, he warned his troops to hold onto their rifles for the second round of the economic struggle. In 1922, "leftists" indeed kept their arms, challenged the "conservative" Free State, but, tragically, the ground they battled over was, once again, nationalist territory --partition and Dominion status. To be fair, "leftists" did at times justify their republicanism in terms of traditional socialist concerns: entering the Commonwealth would undermine national liberation struggles in other colonies, a connection with Britain would

retard economic development, etc. But, in the final analysis, the issue of full national identity overrode their other concerns.

### Who Qualifies As an Economic and Social Radical?

How are we to recognize economic and social radicals among the Irish revolutionary elite? Certainly there is no one simple formula that can act as a guide. The task is made all the more difficult since the modal leader appears to have occupied a rather vague "centrist" position in these two issue areas. Yet, there are a number of specific "litmus test" issues which elicited varying responses from members of the elite, that may act as indicators of economic and social background attitudes. This list of issues and positions might include:

1. the degree of support for the workers involved in the Great Lock-Out of 1913 and the ITGWU leaders Jim Larkin and James Connolly;
2. one's attitude towards international communism, in general, and the Russian Revolution, in particular; (In a conversation with this writer, Sean Cronin expressed some doubt as to the worth of such an indicator. He felt that leaders would look for official recognition from any quarter, and were not choosy about the ideological propensities of any de jure regime. Even so, we would argue that various leaders had deeply felt distinct views on whether to hitch the Irish revolution to the Red Star rising in the east. In this sense, one's attitude toward the communists abroad, does not appear to be a trivial or false issue.)

3. whether one considers the Dail Eireann's Democratic Programme a meaningless sop to labour, or a viable plan for social transformation;
4. one's support, or rejection, of cattle-driving and other forms of rural agrarian radicalism that punctuated the course of the "national" War of Independence;
5. the extent of one's condemnation of British imperialism throughout the Empire, from East Africa to Egypt and India;
6. one's attitude toward labor unrest, factory and creamery takeovers, and the general issue of free enterprise versus nationalization of Irish industries;

Obviously, there are some real problems with such a "radicalism" checklist. We do not have, for instance, sufficient information concerning the attitudes of most leaders towards any number of these issues. What is available, though, are bits and pieces of evidence for some among the elite suggesting which side of the ideological fence feels most comfortable for them. A tirade against communism, or a supportive remark concerning land agitation, can certainly be taken out of context. On the other hand, such statements might presumably be a pretty fair indicator of their economic and social proclivities, a background factor that can then be measured against their later political preference.

### Backgrounds and Civil War Behavior

We have argued that even given its pervasive conservatism, at least when compared to other revolutionary movements, Sinn Fein/IRA still represented all sorts of disparate strands of economic and social thought. Archcapitalists, for instance, labored side by side with the marxist disciples of the martyred James Connolly. And between these polar extremes existed various shades of opinion obscured by a narrow focus on the national "political" question.

Again, it is not difficult to link leaders having conservative backgrounds with the compromising political stand of 1922. Similarly, there is a rather obvious connection between those of a marxist bent and the most fierce opponents of the Free State. In either case, as we shall demonstrate, the correlation is clear. Perhaps more interesting, though, is the paucity of leaders falling into either of these distinct extreme categories of right and left. Most revolutionaries' backgrounds are more difficult to define, consumed as they were by the overriding question of separatism. Is it possible to characterize this amorphous "middle" in a meaningful way? Memoirs and biographical material suggest a broad segment of the elite were a bit left of center, sympathetic to the rural laborer even if they looked askance at land agitation, sensitive to the worker's plight while simultaneously holding to the principle of "labour must wait" and leery of a laissez-faire brand of capitalism associated with British domination, but hardly ready to embrace socialism. This, of course, is a very rough description of a complex leadership

profile. Still, we might suggest that aside from the extremes of right and left there is no apparent relationship between economic and social attitudes and one's ultimate Treaty decision.

In the following pages, we shall first present some evidence for linking either "left" or "right" extremes to respective moderate or radical Treaty position and then demonstrate how the broad middle of the Sinn Fein/IRA social attitude spectrum randomly chose either civil war side.

#### Extreme Economic and Social Attitudes (Conservative and Radical) Linked with Treaty Preference.

##### Conservatives As Free Staters

Arthur Griffith. Griffith's record as an economic and social conservative was discussed, at some length, in the historical background chapter describing the development of Sinn Fein. Briefly, we might note at least three aspects of the "left's" charge against Griffith: (a) his rigidly capitalist brand of economic protectionism; (b) a general aversion to socialist measures and class conflict that might detract from the movement's united national front (and a particular hostility towards the strike leader, James Larkin, "that representative of English trade unionism in Ireland"<sup>17</sup>); and (c) his cozy relationship with wealthy Southern Unionists--Catholic and Protestant--who were nervous about the quasi-independent Free State's economic policies.

Griffith's overall performance was mixed, though, being an old trade unionist (skilled independent printer) and, at one time,

pushing for slum reforms and other progressive social legislation. Even James Connolly recognized that, to some degree, Sinn Fein self-sufficiency--however bound up in Frederick List's capitalist framework--was inherently revolutionary. In fact, looking back more than a half-century, the original leader of Sinn Fein, eschewing marxian theory, reminds us of some present-day Third World leaders railing against dependency on the industrial north. Thus, even this arch-conservative, on closer inspection, warrants some respect as a progressive nationalist. In any case, let us summarize the case for Griffith-as-conservative.

(a) The basis for List's German development formula was governmental protection of privately owned nascent industries. By adhering to this strategy, Griffith effectively alienated socialists and fellow travelers, and also angered revolutionaries that simply supported nationalization of Ireland's major resources. For some leaders, though, Griffith's notion of self-sufficiency made good sense and was not really a foreign "import." Darrell Figgis, a close friend and admirer (tellingly, a pro-Treatyite), observed that Griffith distanced himself from List's proposals and was quite sensitive to the charge of copying the German economist's prescription:

His faith was that Ireland should frame a political economy for herself, adopted to her own needs, derived from her own special circumstances, and depend upon and develop her own resources for the maintenance of her own population by the building of industries that would make her less dependent on outside markets.<sup>18</sup>

And, from the other side of the ideological fence, Connolly could

express his high regard for Griffith and ratify the general principle of Sinn Fein--with important, indeed crucial, qualifications;

Sinn Fein has two sides--its economic teaching and its philosophy of self-reliance. With its economic teachings as expounded by my friend, Arthur Griffith, in his adoption of the doctrines of Frederich List, Socialists have no sympathy. . . . But with that part of Sinn Fein which teaches that Ireland must rely upon itself, respect her own traditions, know her own history, preserve her own language, . . . be appraised for her own intrinsic value, and not as a part of the wheels and cogs of the imperial system of another people--with that side of Sinn Fein Socialists may sympathise.<sup>19</sup>

In the main, though, whether it be nationalization of fuel ("if the coal and other deposits existed it was the business of the people to attract capital to work them"<sup>20</sup>) or state-directed slum clearance, private ownership was a paramount consideration for Griffith. The government's role was to protect and nurture the growing private sector. In this sense, there could be no accommodation between Griffith and various types of socialists.

(b) Griffith had strong views concerning which specific worker demands and strategems were appropriate for nationalist Ireland. A strike such as the one leading to the Great Lock-Out (1913) was damned as pure syndicalism, merely exacerbating divisive conflicts between classes. Griffith was completely at odds with the strike leadership, questioning the supposed organic link between the workers of Ireland and Britain, and denying outright that the forces of labor and capital in Ireland were necessarily antagonistic. In his mind the various classes would join hands within the broad national front, Sinn Fein (not a narrow party but a "national composition"), and focus on the font of all economic and social

misery--the British connection. To this end, Griffith utilized his pen to condemn the militancy of labor as a misdirected effort spurred on by such irresponsible, syndicalist, rabble-rousers as James Larkin.

Again, before dismissing Griffith as a reactionary, a man who M.J. MacManus described as the sole anti-labor leader among the revolutionaries,<sup>21</sup> we might cite the account of Sean O'Luing which attempts to balance the overall evaluation:

It was an error to assume that Griffith was a capitalist's man because he disapproved of the methods of Jim Larkin. He was an intimate enough with poverty himself. He had once to forego a meeting when his only pair of shoes was being mended at the cobbler's. A tempting newspaper offer failed to lure him from Dublin and the hard fare of his dedicated task. There were few more aware than he of the grave wrongs that burdened the workers of Dublin. Long before 1913 he had pressed for extensive social and civic improvements. He produced and advocated in 1908 a detailed plan for slum clearance and the provision of housing for 45,000 people. He recommended the settlement of industrial disputes by conciliation and arbitration on the example of countries like New Zealand. His social thinking was in some respects in advance of his time. He advocated a homestead law which would secure a dwelling house to the working man and his family free forever from fear of seizure for debt. Regarding his possible future role in a Home Rule Parliament, he said, "I shall seek to increase not only the wealth of the country, which is not prosperity, but the just distribution of that wealth, which is prosperity." He declined to ally himself with either capital or labour, and held that it was the duty of the state to promote harmonious relations between them and to ensure fair treatment for the workers.<sup>22</sup>

But, in the final analysis, Griffith's reforms would have scant effect on overwhelming social problems. His biographer, Padraic Colum, succinctly makes this point:

To those with Dublin slums before their eyes, all this would seem marginal . . . to deal with the accumulation of problems presented by the Dublin slums one would have to have a national authority and the resources of the state.<sup>23</sup>

(c) Griffith's King-Lords-and-Commons background and his statzdwish to entice Northern Protestants into an all-Ireland political entity having a residual British presence were the political roots of his deference to wealthy Unionists of the south. Those looking to the British connection for security (privilege?), in Griffith's estimation, needed special assurances that the Free State would not in any way damage their financial position. (We might add that Griffith need not have worried about southern Unionists as they still comprise an elite class. Ironically, the tolerance of Catholic nationalism in the 26 counties--at least in economic matters--has not encouraged northern Protestants to eliminate the partition separating northeast Ulster from Eire.) During the Treaty debates Countess Markievicz upbraided Griffith for toadying up to a despised class, one which had embraced her very own family. In her view he stood

for that class of capitalits who have been more crushing, cruel and grinding on the nation than any class of capital-ists of whom I ever read in any other country. . . . They are the people who have combined together against the workers of Ireland, who have used the English soldiers, the English police and every institution in the country to ruin the farmer, and to send the people of Ireland to drift in the emigrant ship.<sup>24</sup>

Their land and fortunes would be protected and the upper house of Dail Eireann would affOrd them special representation, guarantees that would not endear Griffith to the left.

Eoin MacNeill. That Professor MacNeill, the respectable "front" originator of the Volunteers, was one of the most politically conservative members of Sinn Fein is beyond question. From his countermand order undermining the Rising to his support for the

Free State his sympathies were apparent to all. As for his economic and social views, even an impressive joint biographical work, The Scholar Revolutionary, hardly mentions such attitudes. A less sympathetic source, the marxist C. Desmond Greaves, attempts to build a case against the anti-Republican MacNeill by linking his political moderation to the protection of British investors. In reaction to the inquiries of London capitalists (September 1920) MacNeill supposedly assuaged any unwarranted fears they might have concerning an emergent independent Ireland: "We have no desire to harm investors in the least . . . it would be foolish on our part to do anything to alarm them."<sup>25</sup> Greaves, also the biographer of James Connolly, further claims that MacNeill had little use for Connolly's "communism" or, for that matter, any form of Gaelic socialism.<sup>26</sup> These charges, of course, are certainly speculative, but MacNeill's much earlier opposition to the Land League of the 1880s bolsters the thesis that he was among the most conservative of leaders in all phases of the nationalist struggle--political, economic, social.

Darrell Figgis. Figgis was a politically moderate supporter of Griffith and the pre-1917 Sinn Fein swept from the revolutionary stage by the more radical post-Rising IRB (Collins, Boland, et al.). It appears that he was duly impressed by the original capitalist self-sufficiency line of Griffith's. During the War of Independence, he opposed the rural radicalism of the congested districts of the west where land hunger of laborers was acute. Indeed, he recognized the problem of overpopulation that stemmed from Cromwell's infamous

banishment of rebellious Catholics to "Hell or Connacht" (the choice of Connacht province was easy), but was reluctant to offer a radical solution, like cattle drives or death threats to large landowners. Figgis writes that they "had to keep the national demand for freedom clear from class issues or be caught in the snare of class war."<sup>27</sup>

Bulmer Hobson. We have previously described Hobson's absolutely crucial IRB role right up until the Rising, whereupon his revolutionary career was virtually ended by his opposition to the conspiratorial military clique of this secret organization (Pearse, Plunkett, et al.). In terms of his economic and social views, one issue appears to stand out during these formative years: Hobson's reluctance to wed the IRB to labor struggles in general, and his distance from the General Strike (1913) in particular. F.X. Martin notes that labor radicals like Countess Markievicz and Sean O'Casey thereafter held his policy victory against him. During the 1913 Lock-out,

contrary to all IRB practice, a mass meeting of its members was held privately in a Dublin Hall, to arrive at a decision. It was Hobson, then the most powerful IRB figure in Dublin, who swayed the meeting against intervention. He argued with convincing logic that the IRB, as a democratic organization caring equally for all its citizens, should not commit itself to class warfare.<sup>28</sup>

Interestingly, O'Casey's "sociological" explanation for Hobson's victory points to the lack of workers--Hobson included--among the society's ranks. ("The IRB appeals to clerks and artisans . . . [to not] use a pick and shovel."<sup>29</sup>) It is debatable though, whether Hobson was all that conservative and anti-labor, rather than another example

of a leader, who merely shunted aside all issues that might diminish the nationalist struggle.

#### Economic and Social Radicals: Republicans

Countess Markievicz. The "Red Countess" touched base with all strands of Irish radicalism. She was a devotee of Connolly's marxism, a soup kitchen worker during the 1913 Lock-Out, condemned to penal servitude for life for her Easter Rising role as an officer in the Citizen's Army, a proponent of integrating the land question into the national War of Independence,<sup>30</sup> and a leader whose stated reasons for opposing the Treaty was, to a large extent, based on a marxist anti-imperialist worldview. She herself best summarized her marxist bent during the Treaty debates: "I stand for James Connolly's ideal of a Workers Republic."<sup>31</sup>

Liam Mellows. Like the Countess, his career was early on influenced by Connolly (the labor leader was said to remark upon meeting Mellows, "I have found a real man"<sup>32</sup>), Larkin, and the workers' struggle during the Lock-Out. An avid supporter of the Russian Revolution he came to see the Irish Revolution in class terms and in an international context. The "men of no property" would be the backbone of Republican forces, who would never compromise and thereby "participate in the Empire's shame."<sup>33</sup> The Crown tie--part and parcel of the Free State solution--would ratify British imperialist activities in India and elsewhere, and thus necessarily be rejected. According to Greaves, he recognized the difficulty of

purveying his marxist ideas, and sadly confided to Peadar O'Connell, "The workers weren't with us!"<sup>34</sup> during the Republican rebellion at the Four Courts against the Free Staters.

Peadar O'Donnell. O'Donnell was a socialist, former official of the ITGWU, and a critic of Dail Eireann's conservative stance towards rural radicalism during the war.<sup>35</sup> In his autobiographical The Gates Flew Open, he describes the post-Treaty incarceration with Mellows, Rory O'Connor, et al., supporting the former's class analysis of the Free State/Republican split.

Frank Ryan. He was a socialist colleague of O'Donnell's, a follower of the marxist principles of Connolly and Mellows.

Economic and Social Attitudes: Between the Extremes  
(No Apparent Link with Political Preference)

The following is a sampling of a few Free State and Republican leaders who all appear to be somewhere in the "grey area" center of a radicalism spectrum. The political "left" (Republicans) is apparently inhabited by fairly moderate fellows not all that different than their politically "right" (Free Stater) antagonists. Economic and social attitudes don't seem to account for their Treaty decision.

Republicans

Earnan O'Malley. Like other leaders, O'Malley recognized and critical of the revolutionaries' constricted focus on the national question. In his two autobiographical works, he is

sympathetic to a radical economic and social program, while also showing how the narrow national view was perhaps an understandable shortcoming, rather than the correct, and inevitable, strategy.

(See section on Figgis, for instance.)

Since the execution of Connolly, there had been no revolutionary leader to make contact between extreme labor and separatism . . . the Volunteer spirit in essentials was hostile to labor, afraid that any attention to its needs would weaken the one-sided thrust of force.<sup>36</sup>

He expressed little doubt as to his own proper feelings concerning this conservative state of affairs:

In our minds, Seumas and I left the building of the Irish Republic to others, . . . but we knew where our sympathies were: with the laborer and small farmer in the country, and the workers in the city. . . . I could feel my annoyance with the convictions of the purely revolutionary workers who stood outside the national movement.<sup>37</sup>

In The Singing Flame, which describes his civil war role, O'Malley appears to have strengthened his budding social consciousness, moving closer to the position of such marxists as Mellows. The Free State, for instance, was defended by what he describes as "outraged bourgeoisie" and, furthermore, there was an "economic root" to the struggle.<sup>38</sup> Of course, these are not pre-Treaty attitudes, but do seem to flow from his earlier vision of social justice for slum-dwellers, the rural poor, or even the oppressed Russian masses freed by the 1917 Revolution.

Eamon De Valera. It is hard to evaluate "Dev's" attitude toward social and economic issues. Admiring biographers such as M.J. MacManus place him at the workers' side coming from an environment that taught him the plight of the poor:

At home in Bruree, Uncle Patrick Coll was doing in a small way what Larkin was doing in Dublin. He was founder of the local branch of the Trade and Labour Organization, a body formed to further the cause of landless men, agricultural labourers, cottiers and others who had taken part in the Land War, but who gained little or nothing when victory was achieved. A "small man" himself, he was a champion of the small man . . . the rural worker.<sup>39</sup>

A more urban-oriented labor radical, like Sean O'Casey, describes his biases in a very different manner, linking him with the most conservative elements of the leadership:

He knew, like Griffith, next to nothing about the common people. He was of the house or the bow-windows, lace curtains, and the brass-knocker--planetoids to the planet of the Big House.<sup>40</sup>

In either case, whatever his base motives were, his actual position during the war was a rather moderate "labour must wait"--perhaps the modal Sinn Fein/IRA stance. A not very sympathetic C. Desmond Greaves makes this point by recounting Dev's speech before a Labour Trade Union Congress (August 1920):

He seized the opportunity of complimenting Labour on refraining from urging its own special interests while the national struggle was in progress. He promised no reward. He hinted at no collaboration. Politics was for their betters.<sup>41</sup>

Furthermore, Dev was on record as opposing any implementation of the Democratic Programme while the "forces of occupation remained in Ireland."<sup>42</sup> In sum, then, one gets the general impression that Dev was yet another leader that subsumed social tasks beneath the overriding concern with the war effort.

Cathal Brugha. Not surprisingly, the lion-hearted Brugha was transfixed by the national question and was not receptive to the

"alien" notions of class conflict and marxist systems. When the Scottish revolutionary, William Gallacher, offered his opinion to Rory O'Connor and Brugha that the struggle for independence must generate a viable social program, Brugha was said to have shot back, "Gallacher, you're always welcome in Ireland, but we don't want any of your communism."<sup>43</sup> Similarly, Brugha was later (during the Treaty debate) to stump the country with fellow Republican Liam Mellows. Whenever the relationship between national and social revolutions came into question Brugha insisted, "On their complete separation, Mellows on their close connection."<sup>44</sup> Greaves, who cites these incidents to criticize Brugha's narrow nationalism also attempts to qualify this characterization in a way that only indicts Brugha all the more:

He declared that the housing conditions of the Dublin poor were a disgrace to civilization. His remedy was to stop the payment of ground rents to England. While not unsympathetic to the working class he had little knowledge of its struggles and seemingly not an inkling of the significance of the confrontation occurring in the north.<sup>45</sup>

During the first Dail session, a general strike in Belfast, aimed at achieving the 44-hour week, was in full swing. Apparently, Brugha had failed to mention this fact while prescribing the holding back of ground rents. What this all adds up to is at least a presumption that Brugha was not attuned to the world of labor radicals.

Austin Stack. Cathal Brugha's close friend and cabinet colleague, Austin Stack, provides another example of a die-hard Republican willing to endure hunger strikes for the "Republic," but a leader who waffled in the direction of conservation when it came to social and economic issues. As we discussed previously,

Stack's role as Home Affairs Minister included jurisdiction over the Land Courts that seemed to favor the interests of the status quo. For instance, land seizures that threatened owners in Cork, Kerry and Clare during the Spring of 1920 were, according to Stack, carried out by those wishing "to create a state of anarchy which ought to be put a stop to."<sup>46</sup> Yet, on another level, Stack's Treaty speech gives some hint that he was following the general outline of the Mellows/Markievicz socialist critique of British imperialism. He compared the position of the Irish with that of "robbed and exterminated" aborigines in other Crown colonies, thus pointing to the inadequacy of Dominion Home Rule, which historically benefited only the English settler population.<sup>47</sup> This analysis, we might add, was anathema to more conservative leaders, such as Griffith, as it implied that the Irish were in the non-white category of exploited people.<sup>48</sup>

Michael Collins. By birth, upbringing and lifelong disposition Collins was clearly a man of the people--at home in the small village, moved by the sight of the "donkey and cart." On the most personal level material suffering struck a chord in his overly large heart. He was famous, for instance, for tending to the families of IRA detainees and those "on the run," often at the risk of his own capture and execution. Yet, one might make the case that the Big Fellow was quite a conservative revolutionary when it came to the world at large. Such a characterization could be based, in this writer's opinion, on three aspects of his career: (a) his opposition to a full-blooded Democratic Programme and his role in deleting the

the offending radical segments, (b) criticism of factory seizures, cattle driving, worker collectives and the like, and (c) his stated opposition to socialism (perhaps qualified by his own vision of a return to Gaelic communalism). It is a tenuous case, admittedly, but an interesting one to explore nonetheless.

(a) Collins's IRB role in relation to the Democratic Programme is ably summarized by the historian P.S. O'Hegarty, who also happened to be a fellow member of the IRB's Supreme Council. On January 20, 1919, the day after Dail Eireann's formal proclamation of independence from Great Britain, an IRB meeting was called by Collins to discuss "the documents to be presented to the Dail on the following day."

The Democratic Programme gave rise to a lively debate, the preponderance of opinion being against it. It was urged that this declaration was in fact ultra vires for the Dail, whose one and only business was to get the English out of Ireland and that all internal and arguable questions like this should be left over until the English had been got out, and, on a vote, that view was upheld. Collins then said that he would suppress the "democratic programme," and he did so; but, next morning others refused to go on without a democratic programme and the draft was handed over to Sean T. O'Kelley who finally produced what was put before the Dail.<sup>49</sup>

Collins had forced the deletion of the class conflict wording--"The Republican will aim at the elimination of the class in society which lives on the wealth produced by the workers . . . control and administration of industries [should be] by the workers of the industries."<sup>50</sup>

Note that a breakdown of actual votes, which would isolate those refusing to abandon even a watered down socialist-oriented Programme, is absent from O'Hegarty's account. For our purposes it would be particularly interesting to determine the role of Liam Lynch,

Diarmuid Lynch, Harry Boland and Austin Stack, in this debate, as they formally belonged to the Council and were the eventual Republican sympathizers in 1922. Were these Treaty hard-liners also Democratic Programme proponents in 1919?

Lastly, it would be unfair to Collins not to mention, again, that the substantive content of the Programme was never taken all that seriously by the Dail members. One could tactially support an openly socialist document to garner international recognition from the Socialist International at Berne, and sympathy for Sinn Fein's claim of Irish sovereignty at the Paris Peace Conference, without being more radical than the next fellow. On the other hand, one wonders why some leaders sought to dilute a document that functioned merely as a political strategem. Did it offend their sense of conservative propriety?

(b) Collins's record on this score is mixed, with scant evidence to go on. At one point in his career, he defined brigandage as the "seizure of factories and the red flag,"<sup>51</sup> an anarchic state of affairs that he would oppose with all the power of the nascent Irish government. And yet, he did not really trust private enterprise and big capital--both associated with the Protestant Ascendancy--to equitably develop the Irish economy. C. Desmond Greaves notes, for instance, that in the Spring of 1920 Collins "suggested that national resources should be taken over by county councils and other public bodies, so as to prevent their exploitation by private citizens."<sup>52</sup>

(c) In The Path to Freedom, written just after the Treaty debates as a justification for the Free State compromise, Collins

makes known his antipathy to what he considers the socialist creed. He conveys a folksy nostalgia for the small egalitarian farmer clinging to the hearth of tradition (what of the landless rural laborers, one might inquire), a past where "the people were the guardians of the land . . . [were] free to reap the rewards of his own labor . . . [and] monopoly must not be allowed to deprive anyone of that right."<sup>53</sup> And what constitutes monopoly? Well, aside from the political coercion of an exploitative British colonization, "state socialism" is condemned as a "monopoly of another kind," something to be carefully avoided in the future.<sup>54</sup>

Brian O'Higgins and Fionan Lynch. Both the Republican O'Higgins and Free Stater Lynch apparently agreed with Austin Stack that land seizures should be summary halted.

Sean Moylan. This IRA Republican commandant ruled against striking farmworkers in Limerick under the jurisdiction of Sinn Fein arbitration courts.

### Conclusion

This small sample of Sinn Fein/IRA social attitudes suggests that only the few extreme "right" and "left" leaders were strongly oriented to the respective moderate and radical political positions of the civil war. A glance at Irish history tells us that this correlation should be expected. For instance, nineteenth-century political radicalism aimed at the hated legislative tie, The Act of Union (1801), was a blow simultaneously being struck at the root

cause of all social misery. For the most hard-line nationalists, separatism and economic redemption were two sides of the same coin. But, as we have seen, Britain's singularly impressive record of nineteenth-century reforms (e.g., the Land Acts) undercut the base conditions for social radicalism, while their inability or unwillingness to grant the concomitant political reform--Home Rule--fostered a growing impatience with devolution. The Sinn Fein/IRA elite was "extremist" in the limited sense of having lost faith in the efficacy of Home Rule separatism, but they were not on the whole overly preoccupied by the plight of landless laborers or an impoverished urban working class. Old age pensions, unemployment insurance, health care, long-term loans for land purchase, and a generally positive net flow of British treasury funds to Ireland were the economic facts of life, making it easy for revolutionaries to focus solely on the seemingly impenetrable British connection. Again, the few radicals whose socialist critique of a British-dominated society went far deeper than Lloyd George's People's Budget or the creation of satisfied smallholders, would all fight a civil war to completely sever the United Kingdom tie.

Thus, the modal Sinn Feinner apparently lacked intense interest in economic and social issues. And this socially moderate national focus--the movement's ideological center of gravity--cut across Treaty lines and civil war sympathies. Political antagonists Collins, De Valera, et al. expressed their reserve towards labor's demands, the Red Flag, and "anarchic" land agitation, while also identifying with the plight of the common people. And slight

variations in their views do not tell us much about their propensities for a Free State or Republican stand.

Lastly, we might note in passing, that this neat logical picture of the political effects of social attitudes is not without its historical ironies. Arthur Griffith, for instance, embraced the Free State as the best bet for avoiding sectarian warfare. A political environment protective of capitalism and critical of socialist rabble-rousers would convince influential Northern industrialists that decent, level-headed Catholics were manning the reins of power, and they had little to fear from a Catholic majority Free State. The possibilities for national unification were great. And yet, the partition line separating the six Ulster counties was never so much as dented by the attraction of economic and social moderation, Griffith's anti-labor pronouncements, or his all-Irish "above class conflict" views. (We might add that the vaunted concession, the Crown tie, which would ostensibly appeal to Unionists, was similarly a case of unrequited compromise and moderation.) Communal/religious enmity was at the heart of the matter, not varying economic systems, a fact that the non-marxist Griffith should have recognized. The original Sinn Fein leader died well before the abortive Boundary Commission (1925) dealt the final blow to his line of reasoning.

And, our small number of "leftists," who had never been taken in by the Land Acts, etc. (what of the landless laborers or Dublin's oppressed proletariat?) were also tragic figures of sorts. They perceived the Treaty compromise as striking against the "lower orders" and envisioned a class struggle developing to challenge the

the Free State. But they failed miserably in generating a social program that would harness the anti-capitalist "lower orders" to the Republican cause. The ultimate irony was that they, too, were guilty of the tunnel vision nationalism that they condemned in their adversaries. A doomed Liam Mellows understood: "The workers weren't with us." A nasty question one might put to him is "Why should they be?"

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>"Left" and "right" are ambiguous terms that often obfuscate rather than clarify the actual social and economic attitudes of political actors. Either category can describe almost any individual movement or country. Walter Laquer ("Is Khomeini a Neoconservative," The New Republic, 8 December 1979, p. 10) observes that this semantic confusion stems from employing nineteenth-century terms to the very different political environment of today--especially in lesser developed countries: "A poor Lebanese mountain villager is branded right-wing (or conservative, or reactionary) because he is a Christian, whereas his equally poor neighbor from the next village is left-wing (liberal, progressive) because he is a Moslem. For similar convincing reasons, the separatist Polisario in North Africa has become left-wing, which makes the Moroccan Communists, who deny them their state 'reactionary' by necessity. Day in and day out, we are told about 'marxist' governments in places such as Congo-Brazzaville, Ethiopia, South Yemen, Madagascar, or Afghanistan. These countries may be a great many things, pro-Soviet and anti-American, they may import Cuban troops and East German policemen, but 'Marxist' they certainly are not. And, of course, the developed countries are not exempt from such arbitrary categorizations. For Mao and his successors, the Soviet leadership is merely a 'fascist clique' of reactionaries, while the U.S. has spent much time and energy countering the 'ultra-left' 'Reds' since 1917. The German SPD appears as weak-kneed party of the 'left' to Franz Joseph Strauss and singularly right-wing to marxists looking askance at the economic reformism of social democrats. Rabin, Golda Meir, et al. of Israel's Labour Party--not to mention Herut's Begin--were 'fascists' to the PLO; likewise, Arafat's terrorist actions are simply 'fascistic.' (When called 'guerrilla' warfare by sympathetic parties the image of a 'left,' progressive movement is conjured up.)" Ambiguity notwithstanding, our aim in this chapter is to sensibly define the "left" and "right" leaders of Sinn Fein/IRA using such well known indices as support of labor strikes, land agitation, and the like. The point is that these radicals have a very traditional set of socialist ideals and one does not have to stretch the imagination to identify them.

<sup>2</sup>Strauss, Irish Nationalism, p. 144. Strauss disputes this widely held thesis focusing on the Land Acts as the key to farmers' moderation. Rather, he looks to "the post-Famine social differentiation of farmers"--the growing friction between farmers and landless laborers not able to take advantage of fair rent, tenure laws, and later easy loans--as the key to future rural conservatism. In other words, well before the Land Acts began (1970s onward) the have and have-nots were shaking out in an increasingly polarized countryside. This different focus is important for Strauss as it bolsters his argument that the landless laborer of the "lower orders" were the potential backbone for the post-1922 Republican movement.

<sup>3</sup>Lyons, Ireland Since the Famine, pp. 91-92.

<sup>4</sup>For instance, the public statements of Noel Browne seek to undermine the nationalist myth of Men of Easter Week by showing their reactionary affect on the subsequent course of Irish political life.

<sup>5</sup>Whyte, "Interpretations," p. 29.

<sup>6</sup>Universally rejected by nationalists was the old argument that Britain was simply the first great industrial power and that Ireland would naturally gain by fitting into its trade requirements. This "comparative advantage" thesis does not take into account the political and military force utilized by the Crown to assure a compliant "granary" to their west, whatever the price in human terms. Interestingly, Harry Magdoff (in a foreword to Pierre Jalee's Imperialism in the Seventies [New York: Third World Press, 1973], pp. xiii-xiv) argues that even Ricardo's example of Portugal and England merrily producing their respective specialties, wine and cloth, failed to demonstrate the actual political roots of comparative advantage. In his formulation, he traces a weakened Portugal signing four commercial treaties, from 1642 to the Methuen Treaty of 1703, where "England imposed the conditions which established and enforced the 'ideal' division of labor celebrated to this day as a prime example of the virtues of objective and independent economic laws. The terms of the several treaties increasingly fostered Portugal's economic laws. The terms of the several treaties increasingly fostered Portugal's economic dependence on England-- a price Portugal had to pay for maintaining a colonial empire without adequate military power."

<sup>7</sup>Ironically, the descendants of this loyal Plantation, mainly Scottish Presbyterian dissenters, formed the core of Wolf Tone's Republican United Irishmen; the rebels of 1798 who literally frightened Britain to adopt the Union strategy. Nevertheless, the Act functioned to secure the privileges of all Protestants, not only members of the official Church of Ireland, vis a vis the oppressed Catholic population.

<sup>8</sup>Karl Marx ("Outline of a Report on the Irish Question," in Ireland and the Irish Question, eds. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels [New York: International Publishers, 1972], p. 131) provides the vital statistics on the downfall of Irish Manufacturing after the Act of Union (e.g., in 1800 there were 91 woollen manufacturers, and only 12 by 1840). The Grattan Parliament (1783-1801) established protective tariffs to the growing industry; tariffs that were suspended when Westminster abolished the Irish "representative" (i.e., for Protestants only) institution.

<sup>9</sup>Lyons, Ireland Since the Famine, p. 45.

<sup>10</sup>Joseph Lee (The Modernization of Irish Society [Dublin: Gill & MacMillan, 1973], p. 11) has argued that "Recent research has not substantiated the once fashionable belief that lack of capital frustrated industrialization." He further asks that "If adequate supplies of food, labor and capital existed, if the size of the market was increasing, to what then can the responsibility for the disappointing rate of economic growth be attributed? Both the success of Belfast and the failure of Dublin, suggest that considerable importance must be attached to the quality of businessmen" (p. 14). It would seem logical that Irish revolutionary leaders would be more apt to follow the Marxian viewpoint since they lived many years before this "recent scholarship."

<sup>11</sup>Some of the more important Programme planks would include: "It shall be the first duty of the Government of the Republic to make provision for the physical, mental, and spiritual well-being of the children, to secure that no child shall suffer hunger or cold from lack of food or clothing or shelter.

"The Irish Republic fully realizes the necessity of abolishing the present odious, degrading and foreign poor law system, substituting therefore a sympathetic native scheme for the nation's aged and infirm.

"It shall be our duty to promote the nation's resources, to increase the productivity of the soil, to exploit its mineral deposits, peat bogs and fisheries, its waterways and harbours, in the interest and for the benefit of the Irish people.

"It shall be the duty of the Republic to adopt all measures necessary for the re-creation and reinvigoration of our industries . . . to prevent the shipment from Ireland of food and other necessities until the wants of the Irish people are fully satisfied" (Dangerfield, The Damnable Question, pp. 302-20).

<sup>12</sup>Farrell, The Founding of Dail Eireann, p. 57.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., pp. 59-60.

<sup>14</sup>Kee, The Green Flag, p. 613.

<sup>15</sup>Farrell, The Founding of Dail Eireann, p. 76.

<sup>16</sup>Kee (The Green Flag, p. 679) cites the words of a Unionist peer, Lord Monteagle, who "went so far as to praise in the House of Lords the high standards of justice and equity that were dispensed there," hardly an endorsement for Sinn Fein radicalism!

<sup>17</sup>Farrell, The Founding of Dail Eireann, p. 491.

<sup>18</sup>Figgis, Recollections of the Irish War, p. 265.

<sup>19</sup>Mac an Bheatha, James Connolly, p. 68.

<sup>20</sup>Greaves, Liam Mellows, p. 192.

<sup>21</sup>MacManus, Eamon De Valera, p. 56.

<sup>22</sup>O'Luing, "Arthur Griffith," pp. 61-62.

<sup>23</sup>Colum, Arthur Griffith, p. 101.

<sup>24</sup>Greaves, Liam Mellows, p. 276.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 195.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 56.

<sup>27</sup>Figgis, Recollections of the Irish War, p. 293.

<sup>28</sup>Martin, "MacNeill and the Irish Volunteers," p. 119, n. 23.

<sup>29</sup>O'Broin, Revolutionary Underground, p. 157.

<sup>30</sup>A representative proposal advanced by the Countess in the midst of a reticent first Dail Eireann addressed the nasty question of whether or not to support rural radicalism (cattle driving, etc.) in land hungry districts: "That this Assembly pledges itself to a fair and full redistribution of the vacant lands and ranches of Ireland among the uneconomic holders and lawless men" (Comerford, The First Dail, p. 59). Furthermore, there should be "no purchase by private individuals of non-residential land in the Congested Districts, or other lands."

<sup>31</sup>J. Van Vorhis, Constance de Markievicz (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1967), p. 100.

<sup>32</sup>Greaves, Liam Mellows, p. 52.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 278.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 350.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 191. Writing in There Will Be Another Day ([Dublin: Dolmen Press, 1963], p. 85), O'Donnell called the Dail's abortive agrarian policy "the first time the power of the Dail was directed against masses."

<sup>36</sup>O'Malley, Army without Banners, p. 59.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 163. The Seumas mentioned here is Seumas Robinson, an IRA commandant who interestingly was one of the few leaders with a background as a rural laborer.

<sup>38</sup>O'Malley, The Singing Flame, p. 154.

<sup>39</sup>MacManus, Eamon De Valera, pp. 28-29.

<sup>40</sup>O'Casey, Inishfallen, p. 11.

<sup>41</sup>Greaves, Liam Mellows, p. 291.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 176.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., p. 269.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 270.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 173.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 191.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., p. 274.

<sup>48</sup>Racism dies hard, even among national liberation front leaders. On a trip to an Ulster IRA stronghold (1978) in the village of Crossmaglen, this writer was impressed by militant supporters of the IRA (members?) singling out "niggers" among the British "occupation" troops as a particularly odious fact of life. There was no mention of the British colonial role adversely affecting the lives of black men throughout the world, and nothing said about race problems within Britain.

<sup>49</sup>Farrell, The Founding of Dail Eireann, p. 60.

<sup>50</sup>Collins, Path to Freedom, p. 23.

<sup>51</sup>Greaves, Liam Mellows, p. 329.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 192.

<sup>53</sup>Collins, Path to Freedom, p. 122.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 133.

## Chapter IX

### BACKGROUND VARIABLES: AGE, EDUCATION, OCCUPATION, AND FAMILY BACKGROUND

In this chapter, four background variables that have been commonly employed in elite studies--age, education, occupation, and family background--will be evaluated for their possible role in explaining political behavior. Unlike those previously discussed --Rising participation, IRB membership, military or political role, economic and social attitudes, and friendship circles among the elite-- this group of factors are derived from a comparatively distant period in the leaders' lives, apart from their revolutionary experience. In a sense, these four, along with the "marginality" variable, comprise a somewhat distinct category separate from "adult political socialization." Remember that one of our goals, along with judging which specific factors best explain individuals' civil war positions, is to decide whether "revolutionary experiences" are the basis for elite factions and conflict. Or, perhaps, a man's educational background, previous job roles, etc.--facts of life prior to his entrance into the revolutionary movement--circumscribe his political decisions. The evidence presented below suggest that as a group these factors are less likely to be linked with civil war behavior than those of the "adult political socialization" variety.

### Age

There is little doubt that the Sinn Fein/IRA represented a new generation of leadership, largely supplanting the older elite of the reformist Irish Parliamentary Party. If Home Rulers were the grand old men of Irish politics, often having been involved in the distant events of the Parnell split,<sup>1</sup> then it is striking how young men thrust the Republican demand center-stage in the nationalist arena.

Obviously, there were a number of famous exceptions. Among the executed "Men of the Rising," Tom Clarke's terrorist career and years as a suffering felon reached back to the dynamiting campaign of the early 1880s. James Connolly had a hand in organizing the American IWW ("Wobblies") at the turn of the century, when he was already in his mid-thirties. Eoin MacNeill, Erskine Childers, Countess Markievicz and Arthur Griffith were all at least fifty by the Civil War period. Lawrence Ginnell, age 68, was, in fact, an old Parliamentary Party convert, and Count Plunkett had reached the advanced age of seventy before opposing the Treaty. But the modal revolutionary appears to be decidedly "youthful." Frank Gallagher surveyed the nationalist crowd of the Sinn Fein "uniting" Ard-Feis (October 1917) and concluded that "The vast majority of the delegates were young men and young women in their early twenties. There were hardly more than a dozen grey heads."<sup>2</sup> Colum notes that the first Dail was "almost exclusively young men,"<sup>3</sup> and the commandants of the IRA--for good and bad--are universally described as extremely youthful. McCracken's landmark study, Representative Government in Ireland, provides evidence

of youth's domination of the Dail:<sup>4</sup>

<u>First Dail Eireann (1919)</u>	<u>Second Dail Eireann (1921)</u>
33% under 35	38% under 35
73% under 45	75% under 45

(Note that many Dail members are not included in our leadership group and that McCracken presents no data concerning non-Dail members, who were IRA and IRB "leaders." In any case, his institutional sample obviously points to a generalized tendency for youthfulness to be a characteristic of all elements of the elite.)

None of this, of course, is all that exceptional or surprising given the usual age-analysis of revolutionary elites. By their very definition, "Young Turks" of all societies are comparatively young, whether they be "modernizing" military officers in the Mideast or Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin American revolutionaries, FLN cadres in Algeria, or actual Turks under the guidance of Mustafa Kemal.<sup>5</sup> The young men who fought the Irish national War of Independence are also cast in this mold. For our specific concerns, though, the interesting question is, "Are there significant age differences among Republicans and Free Staters?" In other words, if there is a generalized correlation between youth and radicalism, would there also be a link between this background variable and extremism, within the elite group? Do the older men of the revolution gravitate towards Free State moderation? Do the youngest tend to be die-hard Republicans?

As far as we can tell, the average age of both groups (which included 24 Free Staters and 33 Republicans) was almost identical:

36.9 versus 36.6 years of age at the beginning of the Civil War. (Remember, this date is for some ten or twenty years--or more--after that initial involvement in nationalist politics.) The age-category breakdown is as follows:

<u>Free Staters</u>		<u>Republicans</u>	
25 or under	2	25 or under	4
26 - 30	3	26 - 30	8
31 - 35	8	31 - 35	4
35 - 40	5	36 - 40	8
41 - 45	2	41 - 45	2
46 - 50	2	46 - 50	1
51 - 60	2	51 - 60	1
60 or older	0	60 or older	2

Though the averages are remarkably alike, it is perhaps noteworthy that the 26-30 group had at least eight Republicans (Seumas Robinson, Sean O'Hegarty, Peador O'Donnell, Tom Hales, P.J. Rutledge Frank Barrett, Liam Pilkington--all Republicans that are probably somewhere in this young group, but have been omitted since we lack data; they would bring the total to 15 in this under-30 category). This can be explained in part by listing a good portion of the break-away Military Executive (April 1922), who represent, by and large, the cutting edge of active, violent, anti-Treaty opposition:

Rory O'Connor	28
Liam Lynch	29
Ernie O'Malley	23
Sean Moylan	33
Liam Deasy	26

Dan Breen	28
Joe McKelvey	26
Liam Mellows	29
Florence O'Donohue	28

The average age for this most militant of groups is 27.7, almost a full ten years less than their revolutionary brethren on either side of the Treaty split.

In this restricted sense, then, age does appear to be linked to extremism. By examining segments of the Republican faction, it is possible to identify very youthful ultra-radicals, a relationship that does not hold for the general run of Republican hard-liners.

#### Education

Students of modern revolution have universally noted the disproportionate number of well-educated leaders that have carried the banner of the exploited, dispossessed, and colonized.<sup>6</sup> In general, revolutionary elites are not composed of simple workers chained to bourgeois wage slavery, starving land-hungry peasants, or the average non-intellectual harboring inchoate feelings of anti-colonialist nationalism.<sup>7</sup> The well-informed, often armed with university degrees, as well as revolutionary fervor, have been the vanguard leadership class in almost every conceivable war of national independence.

The experience of Ireland also conforms to this model: a relatively high incidence of university educated leaders when compared to the general population and certainly a group not averse to picking up the pen. But aside from this rather typical leadership

characteristic, is the background variable "education" specifically related to either side of the intra-elite divide? There are at least two ways to approach this subject. First, the type of educational experience might be deemed critical in fostering moderation or extremism. Translated into the Irish tradition, one might compare leaders attending the religious Christian Brothers' School<sup>8</sup> to those enrolled in wholly state-supported, secular National Schools--the former institutions dishing out heavy doses of Catholicism and Irish nationalist history, and the latter steering clear of the "Papist" religion and a past strewn with Irish martyrs. One evokes nationalist ferment; the other tends to integrate the student into the United Kingdom. As plausible as this may seem, the fact is that secular education did not provide an effective barrier to Catholic nationalism. The glorious past of Irish insurrections often found exponents in non-religious National Schools. For instance, Diarmuid Lynch, a future Republican and past student of one such secular institution, fondly recalls his education at the hands of a Mr. Michael McCarthy:

Though Irish history was not on the curriculum, and was in fact taboo by the then pro-British Commissioner of Education in Ireland, he never missed an opportunity to relate some stirring incident in Ireland's fight against the invader.<sup>9</sup>

A more fruitful line of reasoning focuses upon the level of education attained by a leader as a possible measure of extremism or moderation. But which political attitude would be linked to a high level of education (i.e., university education)? One social scientist, Peter Pyne, guesses that approximately one-quarter of

the general university level population supported the Republican Treaty position.<sup>10</sup> Their class position would, in this formulation, circumscribe their political thinking. Might we infer from this fact that the better educated among the elite would gravitate toward moderation? Perhaps not. After all, formal learning often is a precursor to the most violent of revolutionary activities, and the very nature of the revolutionary "leader" apparently insulates the individual from his "objective" class interests. In any case, our data present no such correlation between "education" and either side of the Treaty divide. The relatively large number of university graduates is by and large spread quite evenly among the two groups. Note, also, that CBS graduates also appear evenly distributed across Free State and Republican lines (see Table VI). Thus, to become an IRA/Sinn Fein leader, one tended to have a fairly high level of education. (Post office workers were obviously more literate than most, perhaps playing the role of medical attendants that were so prevalent in African nationalist movements.) But this background factor in no way explains a leader's Treaty and civil war bent .

A qualifying note: The proportion of university educated leaders among either category is definitely exaggerated since memoirs and biographical notes are more apt to mention attendance at Trinity College, etc., than to dwell on one's CBS experience. Approximately one-half of the Free Staters and one-third of the Republicans are not accounted for in Table VI, and we would guess that a large majority of these did not attend the university. Moderates such as Sean Milroy, Denis McCullough, Paddy O'Keefe, Emmet Dalton (fought

TABLE VI: Educational Backgrounds--Republicans and Free Staters

REPUBLICANS	(University)	FREE STATERS	(University)
Robert Barton	(Oxford)	Eamonn Duggan	(CBA and University)
Robert Brennan	(Royal University)	Michael Hayes	(National University)
Erskine Childers	(Cambridge)	Dr. Richard Hayes	
Tom Derrig		Patrick Hogan	(National University)
Eamon De Valera		Fionan Lynch	(National University)
George Gavan Duffy		Dr. Macartan	
Frank Fahy		Eoin MacNeill	
Lawrence Ginnet		Richard Mulcahy	(Trinity Medical School dropout)
P.J. Little		Kevin O'Higgins	(National University)
Rory O'Connor	(Royal University)	Georoid O'Sullivan	
Ernie O'Malley	(Trinity Medical School dropout)		
Count Plunkett			
Dr. James Ryan			
REPUBLICANS: Other Higher Education		FREE STATERS: Other Higher Education	
Cathal Brugha	(Belvedere College)	Piarras Beaslai	(Jesuit College)
Sean MacEntee	(St. Malcahy's College, Belfast)	Darrell Figgis	(English schools)
Mary MacSwiney	(Blackrock Teachers')	Desmond Fitzgerald	(educated in France)
Countess Markievicz	(private governess & Paris art school)	Eoin O'Duffy	
Grace Plunkett	(Art school)		

(continued)

TABLE VI (continued)

REPUBLICANS: Christian Brothers School	FREE STATERS: Christian Brothers School
Frank Aiken Tom Barry? Gerry Boland Harry Boland Dan Breen Sean Lemass Liam Lynch Austin Stack Oscar Traynor Maurice Twomey            (& National School)	William Cosgrave Arthur Griffith P.S. O'Hegarty
REPUBLICANS: National Schools	FREE STATERS: National Schools
Diarmuid Lynch Liam Mellows            (Portobello Garrison Sean T. O'Kelley Maurice Twomey            (& CBS)	Michael Collins Bulmer Hobson            (Quaker School) Batt O'Connor

throughout World War I "student days"), Sean McKeon (village blacksmith), Ernest Blythe (boy clerk at fifteen), Sean McGarry (electrician), Joe McGrath (early union organizer in ITGWU and later accountant firm), J.J. O'Connell, Sean Hales, et al., are leaders not associated with any form of higher education in the standard biographies, or, obviously pursued quite different career plans not involving years of formal study. The same holds true for Republicans: Tom Barry (at 18 a soldier in the British Army), Liam Deasy, Tom Hales, Joe McKelvey, Sean Moylan (no formal education but according to Sean Cronin certainly a first-rate thinker), Florence O'Donoghue, Peadar O'Donnell, Sean O'Hegarty (post office clerk), Seumas Robinson, et al., also display not a hint of higher education. Still, the academic achievements of the entire revolutionary elite bolsters the general notion that intellectuals played an inordinately large role in the emancipation of oppressed classes and nations in the twentieth century. In this specific case, though, it tells us little about intra-elite conflict.

#### Occupation

How relevant is a leader's occupation to his eventual political behavior? Since a number of individuals joined the revolution in their teens or early adulthood and others are thought of as simply nationalist propagandists and writers, the tendency is to overlook or downplay the role of early-acquired jobs. Their work was simply "revolution." And yet, following the logic of the "lower orders as Republicans" thesis, we might expect, for instance, members of

the elite who were workers or poor farmers to demonstrate a bias against compromise. In the preceding section, it was shown that high educational levels (i.e., professions and intellectuals) are not correlated with civil war behavior. What of other occupations, particularly those of the "lower orders"? Here, too, there are no apparent correlations to be found.

Some important points should be emphasized before presenting this type of "job profile." (a) Just because a leader churns out endless nationalist tracts for years (e.g., Griffith), it is still valid to look beyond this intellectual-writer role to his past--even distant past--job history. This is precisely the analytic focus of the sociocultural background approach. One author, Brian Farrell, mistakenly categorizes the likes of James Connolly (originally an Edinburgh carter) as simply a marxist intellectual, glossing over the important fact of his early destitution and lifelong with his fellow workers. (Similarly, Sean O'Casey's toil with pick and shovel cannot be merely submerged under the heading of "writer"--at least in a background analysis.) Thus, if we can identify a man's job prior to his nationalist writing and propagandizing, this should be duly recorded. (b) Two men that are classified as "workers" (carpenter Sean Moylan and stonemason Batt O'Connor) were later to become "contractors" hardly resemble their American counterparts (a few men might be working together on a project): O'Connor identified himself as a "worker" and, apparently, Moylan's "entrepreneurial phase" was a post-Treaty phenomenon. Though Robert Barton was a British officer, Erskine Childers a secretary in the House of

Commons and World War I intelligence officer and the Countess Markievicz arguably an "artist," all three, for all intents and purposes, lived the life of landed gentry of independentwealth. It makes little sense to separate "class" from "occupation" in these cases. (See Table VII.)

A few observations are in order. First, aside from the independent landed wealth category in Table VII, each occupational designation has almost exactly the same numbers of Republicans and Free Staters. There is no apprent tendency for clerks, tradesmen, workers, etc., to opt for either Treaty position. The relatively few workers and almost nonexistent farmers among the entire elite is striking, particularly in a country that still has about one-third the population in farming activity as of 1979.

Furthermore, there is a surprisingly high proportion of post office clerks among the general revolutionary elite, nationalists finding employment in the British civil service. In keeping with other twentieth-century anti-colonial struggles, the United Kingdom apparently afforded sustenance for their most vociferous critics.

#### Family Background

Despite a burgeoning literature, it is far from clear which aspects of youthful "political socialization" have the greatest effect on developing specific political attitudes. In fact, as we noted above, "youth" may not be the critical period at all. Social

TABLE VII: Occupational Backgrounds--Republicans and Free Staters

REPUBLICANS	FREE STATERS
Professionals, Intellectuals, Writers & Teachers	
<p>Gerry Boland (Engineer, Dublin Corp.)            Robert Brennan (Journalist)            Tom Derrig (Headmaster, Ballina Tech.)            Eamon De Valera (Professor)            George Gavan Duffy (Lawyer)            Frank Gallagher (Journalist)            Lawrence Ginnell (Lawyer)            Sean MacEntee (Electrical Engineer)            Mary MacSwiney (Teacher)            Rory O'Connor (Engineer, Dublin Corp.)            Peador O'Donnell (Writer-Teacher)            Ernie O'Malley (Medical Student)            Count Plunkett (Professor)            Dr. James Ryan (Medical Doctor)</p>	<p>Piaras Beaslai (Journalist)            Ernest Blythe (Reporter)            Eamonn Duggan (Lawyer)            Darrell Figgis (Author-Import/Export)            Desmond Fitzgerald (Author of plays &amp; poet)            Michael Hayes (Assistant Professor)            Pat Hogan (Lawyer-Farmer)            Fionan Lynch (Lawyer)            Dr. Macartan (Medical Doctor)            Eoin MacNeill (Professor)            Eoin O'Duffy (Engineer &amp; Architect)            Kevin O'Higgins (Lawyer)            Georoid O'Sullivan (Lawyer)</p>
Independent Landed Wealth	
<p>Robert Barton            Erskine Childers            Countess Markievicz</p>	<p>none</p>

(continued)

TABLE VII (continued)

REPUBLICANS		FREE STATERS	
Managers, Clerks, & Self-Employed			
Cathal Brugha	(Self-employed, ecclesiastical goods)	Con Collins	(Post Office Clerk)
Diarmuid Lynch	(Post Office Clerk)	Michael Collins	(Post Office Clerk)
Liam Lynch	(Hardware Apprentice)	William Cosgrave	(Asst. in Public House)
Liam Mellows	(Clerk in Dept. Store)	Bulmer Hobson	(Clerical-Printing House)
Sean O'Hegarty	(Post Office Clerk)	Richard Mulcahy	(Postal Service)
Sean T. O'Kelley	(Assistant, National Library)	Diarmuid O'Hegarty	(Civil Servant--Secretary in Department of Agriculture, British Admn.)
Austin Stack	(Clerk in Law Office)	P.S. O'Hegarty	(Post Office Clerk)
Maurice Twomey	(Works-Manager in Mill)	Patrick O'Keefe	(Post Office Clerk)
Workers, Tradesmen, Small Farmers, & Agricultural Workers			
Frank Aiken	(Family Farm)	Arthur Griffith	(Printer)
Harry Boland	(Tailor's Cutter)	Sean McGarry	(Electrician)
Dan Breen	(Railroad Fitter, Midlands & Great Western RR)	Joseph McGrath	(Early ITGWU Member, later joined accountant firm)
Sean Lemass	(Outfitter)	Sean McKeon	(Blacksmith)
Sean Moylan	(Carpenter)	Batt O'Connor	(Stone Mason)
Seumas Robinson	(Farm Laborer)		
Oscar Traynor	(Compositor)		

scientists have argued that the immediate family,<sup>11</sup> the peer group, or early education,<sup>12</sup> may all be crucial determinants of one's political personality. According to the source, preschool, elementary school age,<sup>13</sup> adolescence,<sup>14</sup> and young adulthood,<sup>15</sup> are the proper periods to focus upon. And, even within a fairly specific area, say family background, there are a multiplicity of theoretical pronouncements. Is it the nature of a family's "authority relations" that count most?<sup>16</sup> Perhaps material or affective deprivations are the key to leaders' subsequent behavior patterns? Might not a simple transference of substantive political attitudes be a prime mechanism for creating political attitudes? The father, mother, siblings, or some combination of all three may be the important factors in this process. The lack of consensus on these matters is rather confusing. Take, for instance, the work of one group of social scientists, psychobiographers, who have examined the Great Man's family as the repository for clues concerning his political--often pathological--personality. No one general pattern emerges from these studies; rather, we are told that the idiosyncracies of individual family backgrounds account for future attitudes and behavior.

The effect of Lenin's brother swinging at the end of a Tsarist hangman's rope;<sup>17</sup> Trotsky's anomolous position as the son of a Jewish landowner (serf-like peasants and all);<sup>18</sup> the unbending severity of young Woodrow Wilson's austere father;<sup>19</sup> Ataturk's unresolved and unexpressed love for his mother given unabashedly to the resurrected Turkish state<sup>20</sup>--these are but a sampling of the psychobiographer's variations on the family theme. The complex

tapestry of each family is carefully unraveled to yield a more complete picture of the grown individual, a picture that is not straight-jacketed by any one of the above-mentioned schools of "political socialization" thought.

Now, "elite studies" that focus on broader groups of leaders would also do well to adopt this flexible analytic stance. The rub, though, is that in-depth study of the individual and his family is virtually impossible using this approach. The best we can do, at this point, is take a stab at one small fraction of the family's totality, an aspect easily defined, amenable to comparisons from one leader to the next, and one relatively accessible to the researcher who obviously cannot put scores of leaders "on the couch." Our choice would be the general political atmosphere of the home--Unionist, Home Ruler, Fenian, etc.--which might include the stated preferences of family, the biases of relatives, and perhaps the role of those one step removed from the household. It would obviously be a very inexact summary variable, one that compresses a host of different factors under a broad heading. Yet, roughly speaking, it may be used to test the simple proposition that the most extreme nationalist backgrounds yield the more intransigent revolutionaries. The other end of the political spectrum--staunch Unionism--would not seem to engender the opposite political attitude, that of moderation. To break from a pro-British family, at least one that accepts the Union, however half-heartedly, and dare to be a revolutionary--this seems to require a special brand of radicalism.

In terms of the overall leadership, we would naturally expect some form of nationalist background in their home environment. After all, "Repeal the Union" had been on the political agenda since Daniel O'Connell's days, and Home Rule was a serious alternative since the Land League and Parnellite parliamentary obstructionists wedded themselves to Gladstone's reformism in the 1880s. Indeed, the overwhelming majority of early twentieth-century Irishmen were Catholic supporters of some form of nationalism, and the Home Rule movement was the vehicle for such aspirations prior to, and for a period after, the Rising. Therefore, it would not be particularly surprising to find many Free Staters and Republicans exhibiting what might be considered the modal "nationalist" political background. On the other hand, a family heritage of Fenian violence or incarceration in British prisons, might foster the most militant of offspring--die-hard Republicans. So, too, would the Unionist background, for a different set of reasons.

(a) First off, take the general category of Home Rulers/Land Leaguers. (In a conversation with this writer, Sean Cronin warned that the lines between parliamentary reformers, direct action Land Leaguers, and even Fenians were often blurred. Actual insurrectionaries, though, could still be separated from this category.) Our impression is that both Free Staters and Republicans all come from such Home Ruler backgrounds.

De Valera (Republican), for instance, grew up in the County Limerick household of his uncle, Patrick Coll, a founding member of a local Land Labor League branch. This organization furthered the

cause of the landless, agricultural laborers and cottiers, and according to De Valera's biographer, MacManus, young "Dev" was duly indoctrinated as to the plight of rural workers and the need to sever the British connection.<sup>21</sup>

Michael Collins (Free Stater) came from an interesting background. His father, a lifelong carpenter and builder, 75 years old at his birth, was incongruously a classical scholar. Intellectual pursuits were a common household activity, "a very unusual attribute of a country family in County Cork at that time, or even nowadays."<sup>22</sup> Wolf Tone, Robert Emmett and Thomas Davis were the literary fare, as well as Arthur Griffith's The United Irishman. Not yet five years of age, Collins enrolled in Lisavaird National School, taught by the IRBer Denis Lyons. And his nationalist education did not end there. Repeated visits to the local forge, run by a blacksmith whose father had constructed pikes for the men of '48 and '67, and whose grandfather was "out" in '98, made a deep impression on the boy. By and large, though, Beaslai rates his family's intellectual curiosity as the prime factor for shaping his nationalist bent.

Arthur Griffith's (Free Stater) father, a skilled printer, was certainly more educated than most, relatively independent, and well-off. Padraic Colum suggests that he and his circle of friends "would be likely to take the line that Ireland was in a better position since the passing of the Ballot," a decidedly Home Rule political orientation.<sup>23</sup>

Diarmuid Lynch's (Republican) father had an abiding interest in the Home Rule movement that is tellingly described as "typical."

The son attentively listened to him reading Parliamentary speeches, was taken to Land League meetings, and took part in the crowd welcoming Parnell--the uncrowned King of Ireland--to Cork.<sup>24</sup>

Kevin O'Higgins (Free Stater) came from a nationalist family of the solid middle class. His physician father balked, though, at the violence of the Rising and his son's early participation in the Republican movement. Tragically, the old man was murdered during the Civil War as a reprisal for Kevin O'Higgins's role in the execution of Republican "irregulars" (Mellows, McKelvey, Barrett, O'Connor, Childers, et al.).

Or, take another Republican, George Gavan Duffy. Though his father, Sir Charles Gavan Duffy (a Young Irelander), sanctioned at the last moment the feeble uprising of 1848, it would be safe to say that his life was devoted to constitutional methods for repealing the Union. In fact, his 1848 proposal advocating withdrawal from Westminster, the creation of a Council of Three Hundred, and demanding "the reassembly of the Irish Parliament (1782),"<sup>25</sup> sounds very much like Griffith a half-century later.

(b) At the Fenian pole of Irish politics, there are quite a few Republicans of 1922 having strong familial ties to this secret, oath-bound physical force Republican organization. Recalling again Sean Cronin's warning that it is hazardous to arbitrarily differentiate between often indistinguishable nationalist forms, it is still striking how the IRB insurrection or felon made his mark on the next generation.

Consider, for example, the case of Harry Boland. He, perhaps, best summed up the effect of his father's Fenian past when arguing against compromise at the historic Treaty debate:

Many deputies in this house know that my father himself had to fly from this country because he believed in the Republic. His son was privileged to stand on public platforms to ask the Irish people to subscribe to this Republic--and they did.<sup>26</sup>

Or, for instance, take Austin Stack's biographical note offered at the debates as a rationale against compromise:

I was nurtured in the traditions of Fenianism. My father wore England's uniform as a comrade of Charles Kickham and O'Donovan Rossa when as a '67 man he was sentenced to ten years for being a rebel, but he wore it minus the oath of allegiance. If I, as I hope I will, try to continue the fight for Ireland's liberty, even if this rotten document be accepted, I will fight minus the oath and to wipe out the oath of allegiance if I can do it.<sup>27</sup>

Interestingly, J. Anthony Gaughan depicts the checkered IRB career of Wilbur Moore Stack in a less flattering light. It seems that his revolutionary comrades did not trust him a bit as he was "very fond of drink and spoke rather freely."<sup>28</sup> It was a well-founded fear. While incarcerated in Dartmoor prison (1867) for such treasonous activity as "tampering with soldiers" in "singing saloons," he conveyed information to the authorities about the Fenian organization --"its leadership and membership." His "heroic" return to Dublin was due, in part, to public sympathy for the recently executed IRB Manchester Martyrs and their confusing a besotted informer with a bonafide Republican hero. But by the time Austin was a young child (born 1879), the elder Stack was deeply involved in the constitutional and Lang League struggles of the early 1880s. His wife was also

"an active and enthusiastic member of the Ladies Land League."<sup>29</sup>

(Again note the overlap of nationalist movements.) For his efforts, Wilbur Moore Stack spent October 1881 through Autumn 1882 in Montjoy Prison, but by 1885 was instrumental in forming the first Gaelic Athletic Association in Kerry. He was to die some four years later.

Though Gaughan debunks the myth of Austin's Fenian father, he suggests that the Treaty speech was an honest account of what one revolutionary felt was a parental directive. In fact, the myth of William Moore Stack--

his involvement in nationalist causes and his close association with all those in the Fenian tradition made it almost inevitable for his son, Austin, to be not only politically-minded, but also a separatist and a supporter of the use of physical force. Moreover, it seems that Moore Stack consciously influenced his family in this direction. Thus, Austin's brother, James (Jim), in a letter to Joseph (Joe) McGarrity, dated 6 May 1916, wrote, "Our dear father before us instilled in our minds the honour it would be to strike a blow in defence of our native land."<sup>30</sup>

And, if this was the formative background of a "revolutionary," it may also have shaped a most extreme die-hard Republican.

Republicans Cathal Brugha, Oscar Traynor, Sean Moylan and Sean MacEntee apparently had IRBer fathers, although we have no evidence suggesting that any of them served jail sentences, or actually participated in insurrection or other forms of violence. Liam Lynch's grandfather was "out" in '98, and an uncle joined the abortive Fenian rebellion of 1867. Did this family tradition play a role in Liam Lynch's refusal to accept the Free State? As for Free Staters P.S. O'Hegarty and Denis McCullough (whose father swore him into the organization), they were the only leaders we could find that

exhibited such a background. Of course, a lack of information probably accounts for this dearth of old-time Fenians in the moderate camp, and this appears to be a fertile area for further research efforts.

(c) Turning to the Unionist or anti-nationalist side of the political spectrum, we find these types of parents on both sides of the civil war divide in roughly equal numbers. Obviously, Republicans Barton, Childers and the Countess Markievicz, all raised among the landed gentry, would qualify by social class alone. Childers's family, for instance, was linked to the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy (his mother being a Barton of Glendalough, County Wicklow) and the rulers of the Empire, albeit the Liberal reformist wing. His father, Robert Childers, a professor, was first cousin to Gladstone's last Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the elder Childers himself was the author of the "Childers Report," which outlined the inequitable flow of taxation revenues away from Irish shores since the Act of Union (1801). Both parents died when Erskine was quite young, and he was brought up among his Irish relatives, the Bartons.

Republican Ernie O'Malley's family represents the anti-nationalist middle class--snobbishly indifferent, indeed repulsed by the Gaelic revival as something lower class and particularly outraged by the Rising's violence.<sup>31</sup> Frances Mary Blake writes in the introduction to The Singing Flame, "By 1918 he could no longer live at home; his parents were by their background and political outlook hostile to the spirit of the Rising."<sup>32</sup>

As for lower class manifestations of anti-nationalism, at first glance, Republican Liam Mellows seems to descend from such

a family tradition--long service in the Crown forces throughout the Empire. His grandfather participated in the bloody suppression of the Sepoy Mutiny and his father was a career soldier rising to the rank of sergeant. Sean Cronin and C. Desmond Greaves, though, have pointed out that fighting for the British Army may well have been a function of extreme rural poverty and job scarcity rather than any ideological identification with the aims of Empire in general and Unionism in particular.<sup>33</sup> (Remember, the legions of Redmondite Volunteers--Home Rulers--that flocked to the colors [1914-16] to prove their worthiness for the expected but unrealized devolution, for a steady salary check, or simply to teach the Hun a lesson.) Royal Irish Constables ("Peelers"), on the other hand, might be considered more closely associated with the garrison class in Ireland and be expected to take a rather dim view of anything but lukewarm nationalism. Free Stater Richard Mulcahy came from just such a family. Of course, support of Home Rule would not necessarily be incompatible with RIC service--individual constables were known to wink as Michael Collins bicycled undisguised through Dublin during the war, and others refused to carry out the atrocities advocated by the British "Auxiliaries" and "Black and Tans"--but, in general, the RIC were mortal enemies of advanced nationalism from the Land League to the IRA.

Free Staters Darrell Figgis and Ernest Blythe also display backgrounds tending toward Unionism. Figgis was born to a Protestant Dublin business family "traditionally opposed to nationalism,"<sup>34</sup> and Blythe's parents were Ulster Protestant farmers. Not that

this halted young Ernest from a consuming interest Gaelic revival and Irish nationalism. (Young Catholic girls laboring for his father often spoke Gaelic coming themselves, supposedly attracting an impressionable Protestant youth.)

### Conclusion

In sum, then, there is at least a hint that only the most extreme forms of familial nationalism will have much influence on the civil war position. As for the other background factors, occupation appears to have little or no relevance to political attitudes, although the leadership profile seems to confirm a universal observation concerning revolutionary elites in general--professional, intellectual and white-collar types abound, whereas it is hard to find a worker or poor farmer. The average Republican or Free Stater is "youthful," but when tallying the ages of the Military Executive (the most extreme Republican activists), we note that the average age plunges a quite remarkable ten years or so. Here, the link between youthfulness and radicalism is quite clear. On the other hand, educational level does not appear linked to either side of the Treaty divide, but again, the high overall formal intellectual attainments coincide with the widely held conception of almost all revolutionary elites.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>John Redmond, leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party up to its eclipse in the 1918 Khaki election, had led the "Parnellite nationalists" in the 1892 General Election. His group, loyal to the "adulterous" Charles Stewart Parnell, could count on a bare nine votes, as opposed to the anti-Parnellites' 71. John Dillon, who was Redmond's close associate through the Rising period, had been jailed for nationalist activities as early as 1881, and had later withdrawn support from the disgraced Parnell.

<sup>2</sup>Gallagher, Four Glorious Years, p. 21.

<sup>3</sup>Colum, Arthur Griffith, p. 201.

<sup>4</sup>McCracken, Representative Government in Ireland, p. 31.

<sup>5</sup>It seems that we are on safe ground to claim that the universal perception of revolutionaries' age is one of relative youth. Some empirical studies have questioned this commonly held view. For instance, Crane Brinton in The Anatomy of Revolution (pp. 96-97) demonstrates that the rank-and-file of the Jacobin clubs (admittedly not comparable to our more restricted elite sample) "were clearly not foolhardy youngsters." For ten such clubs the average age was a sobering 41.8. Perhaps when compared to the top leadership, these statistics overstate the case for questioning the "youth-as-revolutionary" thesis (e.g., Robespierre and Danton were barely 30 in 1789). Still, Brinton's work is an important corrective to overly general statements concerning the link between age and radicalism.

<sup>6</sup>Ho Chi Minh, Castro, Che Guevara, Trotsky and Lenin are good examples.

<sup>7</sup>Rustow ("Studies of Elites," p. 699) notes that this conclusion is hardly as surprising as some scholars, like Daniel Lerner, would have believe: "For even the Bolsheviks did not claim that Marx and Lenin were factory workers, not the Nazis that Hitler, Himmler and Goebbels were blond peasants, rather their claims were that the party was the vanguard of the proletariat or that it would restore future German generations to Aryan strength in 'Blut and Boden.'" "

<sup>8</sup>F.X. Martin ("1916: Revolution of Evolution?" pp. 249-50) claims that the Rising leaders and those who prosecuted the War of Independence were "largely past pupils of the Christian Brothers' Schools." Mellows, De Valera, Cosgrave, Griffith, Mulcahy, et al. are listed to prove this point. The author stresses that these schools gave "unqualified support" to the Gaelic revival and, therefore, were instrumental in heightening the national struggle.

<sup>9</sup>Lynch, The IRB and the 1916 Rising, p. 16.

<sup>10</sup>Pyne, "New Sinn Fein Party, 1923-1926," p. 56.

<sup>11</sup>There is another large literature on this subject mostly devoted to understanding how the average citizen in the U.S. becomes socialized into the political system. Obviously, this may be a different process for the elite leader and a very different process in other countries. In any case, for the accent on the "family," see, for instance, J. Leiper Freeman, "Parents, It's Not All Your Fault, But . . .," Journal of Politics 31 (August 1969): 812-17.

<sup>12</sup>See David Easton and Jack Dennis, "The Child's Image of Government," The Annals 411 (1965): 40-57.

<sup>13</sup>For instance, 6 of 10 fourth graders in New Haven could already identify with either party, Democratic or Republican. See Greenstein, Children and Politics, p. 84.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>See discussion of Erikson's work, pp. 26-27.

<sup>16</sup>For instance, John Stoessinger (Why Nations Go to War [New York: St. Martin's Press, 1974], pp. 60-61) argues that Erik Erikson (Childhood and Society [New York: W.W. Norton, 1963]) correctly pinpoints the critical factor in socializing youth into the Nazi Party--family authority relations. The father, a tyrant at home, is perceived by the youth as both a feared figure and one who must cringe, crawl, and fawn in the hierarchical world outside the home. Thus, to obey this parent, which he is obligated to do with the utmost of respect, creates all sorts of ambivalent rebellious feelings in the child. Hitler functions not as a father figure but as an elder brother sanctioning the break from the overbearing, hypocritical parent figure--the father.

<sup>17</sup>Wolfenstein, The Revolutionary Personality, p. 142.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>Alexander George and Juliette George, Woodrow Wilson and Colonel House (New York: Dover Publications, 1964).

- <sup>20</sup>Rustow, "Ataturk Revolution," pp. 793-828.
- <sup>21</sup>MacManus, Eamon De Valera, p. 28.
- <sup>22</sup>Beaslai, Michael Collins, I:7.
- <sup>23</sup>Colum, Arthur Griffith, p. 12.
- <sup>24</sup>Lynch, The IRB and the 1916 Rising, p. 12.
- <sup>25</sup>Kee, The Green Flag, p. 261.
- <sup>26</sup>Gallagher, Four Glorious Years, p. 371.
- <sup>27</sup>Gaughan, Austin Stack, p. 10.
- <sup>28</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 15.
- <sup>30</sup>Ibid., pp. 17-18.
- <sup>31</sup>O'Malley, Army without Banners, p. 6.
- <sup>32</sup>O'Malley, The Singing Flame, p. 1.
- <sup>33</sup>Greaves, Liam Mellows, pp. 33-35.
- <sup>34</sup>Figgis, Recollections of the Irish War, p. 35.

## Chapter X

## BACKGROUND VARIABLE: MARGINALITY

O'Higgins was fond of pointing out how half Irish patriots were more intransigent than those of whole blood.

T. de Vere White

Who Is a "Marginal Man"?

There is a fairly widespread consensus among social scientists of all stripes that the "marginal man" is potentially good material for extremist politics and revolutionary movements. The "outsider's" personal struggle for identity and the psychological and material deprivation he experiences dispose him, in general, to political radicalism. These are men ostensibly suffering from deep identity problems, loosely attached to the modal conventions and mores of the general population and peripheral to society in terms of their region, religion, race, lack of work, specialized intellectuality, appearance, or just plain self-perception. To compensate for his affliction he is thought to pursue a number of political strategies all associated with extremism--flight into universal thought that will create a new more accepting society in a utopian future; punishing the decadence of the rejecting society through revolutionary violence, being more

fervent in his beliefs to assert an identity, and others discussed below.

The case of the Irish revolutionary elite only partially supports this widely held assumption, as but a few leaders exhibiting the greatest number of "marginal traits" were indeed civil war extremists. But, of course, before elaborating on this conclusion we must ask the thorny question, "Who, in fact, qualifies as a marginal man?"

The broad term "marginality" has been stretched to the point of shapelessness and imprecision, with scholars advancing definitions and criteria that may include any number of different types of political actors in disparate situations. Depending on the source, both individual leaders and "mass" groups are deemed "marginal" in a variety of ways:

- a. religious and ethnic minorities (Veblen's characterization of European Jews,<sup>1</sup> the over-represented Jewish leaders among early Bolsheviks,<sup>2</sup> Protestant nationalists in Irish rebellions, Algerian Berbers,<sup>3</sup> etc.);
- b. leaders from frontier or peripheral regions (the Corsican Napoleon,<sup>4</sup> Ataturk's Salonikan birth,<sup>5</sup> the Georgian Stalin, the Austrian Hitler,<sup>6</sup> Kurt Schumacher,<sup>7</sup> et al.);
- c. non-nationals of a particular country or revolutionary setting (Che Guevara, Frantz Fanon);
- d. the unemployed, under-employed, recently impoverished, or those fearing impoverishment (the failed artist Hitler,<sup>8</sup> the alienated intellectual in the developing world.<sup>9</sup> the self-employed German lower middle class of Weimar<sup>10</sup>);

- e. physical deformity (Goebbels's clubfoot, Schumacher's loss of an arm as a young man in WWI); and
- f. the self-alienated individual.<sup>11</sup>

These are all "outsiders" either uncomfortable or unwelcome in their societies' dominant ethnic/religious/racial/nationalist emotional shelters, outcasts from what Harold Isaacs has called the ultimate psychological refuge, tribal-like identifications.<sup>12</sup> And this long list of marginal men is in fact highly selective. Indeed, if we would employ less plausible criteria, like the categories often utilized in a burgeoning literature (discussed below), it would be difficult to find a leader who is not "marginal" on some count.

It is our intention to describe and evaluate some of the numerous "marginal man" themes, formulate a set of marginality indicators that make sense for application to the Irish revolutionary experience (Protestant religion, foreign birth, foreign citizenship, feminine gender, Ulster upbringing), and then test the proposition, "Are marginal Irish leaders apt to be Republican intransigents?" We shall demonstrate that there is only a slight tendency for "marginal" background to be correlated with extremism, except, as we have said, in the instance of the rare leader exhibiting multiple marginal traits. More striking, though, is the relative absence of "marginal men" from the ranks of Sinn Fein/IRA which sets it apart from past Irish rebel groups (i.e., Protestant insurrectionaries like Wolf Tone [1798], Robert Emmett [1803], Thoman Davis and John Mitchell [1848], et al.), and the elite leadership of other twentieth-century revolutions. To

a marked degree this was the first struggle for Irish freedom prosecuted largely by Catholics from the southern portion of the country and, in this sense, representative of the overwhelming majority of Irishmen.

#### A General Definition of Marginality

Daniel Lerner's well-known study of the Nazi elite, which designated "marginality" as a central background characteristic of the movement's core leadership ("administrators and propagandists"<sup>13</sup>), exemplifies the open-ended, often confusing, criteria utilized by proponents of this concept. Certainly he has picked a likely subject for inquiry. The performance of Hitler and his colleagues, as Dankwart Rustow has noted, fosters a readiness "to believe that the Nazis were borderline humans in a variety of ways."<sup>14</sup> And it is common knowledge that Alfred Rosenberg was Baltic, Goebbels was hindered by a clubfoot and Hitler came from the Austrian periphery of the German heartland.<sup>15</sup> With this said, Lerner's particular approach to a large sample of the Nazi elite--essentially defined by their inclusion in the *Fuhrerlexikon*--departs from a common-sensical, almost self-evident, usage of the "marginality" concept. The term is devalued when it describes virtually any leader.

On the face of it, Lerner's general definition appears straightforward enough: a marginal man is one "who deviates from a substantial number and variety of predominant attributes in his society."<sup>16</sup> As to what constitutes these "predominant attributes,"

the author rightly points to their culturally relative nature,<sup>17</sup> and implicitly serves notice that each political environment will generate its own "marginality" criteria. The rub, though, is the large number of variables that may denote "marginality"--27 items grouped under 13 separate categories.<sup>18</sup> While some seem eminently sensible--"birth abroad," "Alsatian background," "foreign parentage," "marriage to a foreigner"--others stretch the imagination. Graduates of grade school, those attending grade school but failing to graduate, service as an enlisted man in World War I (!), and Catholicism are some of the stranger choices. (Dankwart Rustow and Isaac Kramnick have separately noted that something like half the population of the German Federal Republic could be classified as marginal on this score alone!<sup>19</sup>) Surely, an irredentist Alsatian household may breed nationalist extremes, but what of one's role as a common soldier during the war? He may be embittered, suffering from all sorts of physical and emotional wounds, and perhaps a willing convert to anti-Weimar activities, but he is certainly not "marginal" to the society. In fact, Lerner himself argued, in another context, that the displaced intellectual youth manning the lower officer ranks were precisely the group most devastated by the "outbreak" of peace and the end to their inflated status and brotherhood of "pride and pleasure."<sup>20</sup> These alienated "armed intellectuals" may have "marginal" characteristics but he certainly differs from the average foot soldier. In short, one must be cautious when devising criteria for "marginality." At minimum, each selection should be justified in terms of a hypothetical link between the individual's "marginal" background attribute and an extremist

political behavior. It will not suffice to merely list any and all "deviations" from societal "attributes." For instance, in the developing world setting, it makes some sense to designate the small minority of intellectuals, those partially separated from the roots of a pervasive traditional lifestyle, as likely material for the "marginal" classification. But a university student in Europe, particularly in the recent years of sky-rocketing enrollments, is much harder to straightjacket into this category. He is more apt to be closer to the modal citizen. Thus, the nature of the deviation from "predominant attributes" is crucial, and Lerner's rather arbitrary multiplication of categories appears to overstate the number of Nazi "marginals." (A leader, by the way, can be deemed "marginal" on just one count although the author's definition stresses the importance of a "substantial number" of such deviations.)

Similarly, in portions of Sigmund Neumann's work he succumbs to overly broad definitions and thereby devalues the explanatory power of the "marginality" factor. Aside from the relatively precise and delimited "frontier/peripheral region" variable, he implies that the "unemployed" and those simply following extremist movements are necessarily "marginal."<sup>21</sup> The faulty logic is apparent: the behavior one wishes to explain as a function of the leader's background becomes the explanation itself. Neumann's work makes the all too human error of ascribing deviant attributes to movements personally abhorrent to him. D'Annunzio's proto-fascist comrades, building a corporatist mini-statelet in Fiume after World War I, were simply rabble--marginal criminal elements and so forth. Without a strict definition

of "marginality" and a careful presentation of evidence, the author's impressions (which may well prove accurate) are somewhat suspect. How many of his immediate followers had, in fact, served prison terms? How does one differentiate between "rabble" and the wholesome citizen gone astray? Remember, the conservative historian Taine depicted revolutionary Jacobins as atypical "rabble" astir with the irresponsible egalitarian notions of the "philosophers." Crane Brinton's more impartial empirical study, having the benefit of time and distance, corrects this ideologically marred profile of a group apparently composed of solid middle-class types.<sup>22</sup> In sum, the points to be stressed are that "marginality" is certainly not a self-evident precursor of extremist political behavior and that indices of this trait must be explicitly presented, accompanied by plausible rationales for them being employed.

#### The Irish Revolutionary Elite: "Marginality" Criterion

F.X. Martin's and A.S. Cohan's studies of the Irish leadership both avoid the above definitional pitfalls while they endeavor to link Irish revolutionary leaders' "marginal" backgrounds to political extremism. The former author notes that the radical martyrs of Easter Week 1916 indeed exhibited marginal characteristics in terms of religion, place of birth, and nationality. They were either born in Britain, descended from Protestants, or the progeny of part-English parents. F.X. Martin accentuates what for him is a telling sociological fact. Their

struggle for identity was not only national but personal.  
It is a striking fact that many of the prominent figures in

the Rising were of mixed political, racial, or religious background. Thus, Pearse's father was an Englishman and a convert to Catholicism, Tom Clarke born in England, his father Protestant and a soldier in the British Army, MacDonagh's mother was born a Unitarian and became a Catholic, Ceannt's father an R.I.C. sergeant, Connolly born in Edinburgh of Irish parents.<sup>23</sup>

And, the author adds, "for these individuals the problem of identity became acute and very often induced them to a marked insistence on their Irish or Catholic heritage."<sup>24</sup> One can compare these sensible observations with Lerner's "laundry list" approach. Protestantism in a predominantly Catholic nation and some connection with the historic English enemy are clearly reasonable choices to measure the concept of "marginality."

As for Cohan's Irish Political Elite, which compares the social composition of the revolutionary and post-1922 leadership, the conclusion is that "marginal" backgrounds do not account for their respective differences in political behavior (i.e., ideological nationalism/economic pragmatism):

The characteristics of the members of the revolutionary elite indicate that a slight tendency exists to come from outside of what might be the heartland of the Irish system. But when compared to some other revolutionary elite groups, the Irish revolutionary figures do not display particularly strong marginal characteristics, and it would certainly stretching a concept to suggest vast differences on this point between the revolutionary and post-revolutionary elite.<sup>25</sup>

For our interest in the 1922 leadership schism, Cohan's general definition of "marginality" and the specific indicators he utilizes are instructive: "A person is marginal when he has certain characteristics that set him apart from the vast majority of individuals in that community."<sup>26</sup> And we examine "marginality" because those that do not

fit the picture of the average man in the community may well be less affected by the prevailing values of that community."<sup>27</sup> He is quick to recognize the problems inherent in such a broad concept since "virtually any member of the community must be considered a marginal man in certain respects. The person with blue eyes and blond hair in the brown-haired black-eyed community is marginal."<sup>28</sup>

Therefore, Cohan displays considerable care when examining the Irish leadership to sharply restrict his "marginality" variables.<sup>28</sup> First, study "what the majority of people happen to be" and then critically select the "significant variables establishing whether or not a high proportion of the members of the political elite do or do not display these characteristics."<sup>30</sup> His criteria turn out to be plausible and easily understood as possible attributes related to political extremism. They would include:

- a. membership in the Protestant Church (see below for justification of presenting one term, "Protestant," to describe different Christian sects);
- b. born in the northern six counties of Ulster (see below for debate centering about this variable);
- c. birth in a border region (These are counties adjacent to present six county-Ulster "state-let." Historic Ulster was composed of fully nine counties. Cohan notes, "there is a heavier concentration of Protestants in each of these counties, and the socialization process may be somewhat different since the physical presence of the border may have some effect on the outlooks of people from the region."<sup>31</sup>);
- d. born outside of Ireland.

This list is a good starting point for analyzing the division of the Irish revolutionary leadership. Are Republicans of 1922 more apt than Free Staters to display backgrounds that are deemed "marginal"?

The Irish "Marginal" Revolutionary: Civil War Position

a. Membership in any Protestant Church

Is it all that strange to find Protestants among the Sinn Fein revolutionary elite, or, for that matter, to view them as "marginal men"? Obviously, there is a time-honored tradition of joint Catholic-Protestant participation in nationalist, sometimes revolutionary, activity aimed against the British Crown. One has to only think back to the Protestant Wolfe Tone leading the 1798 Rising with his goal of Republican separatism for all Irishmen. Indeed, the Presbyterian citizenry of northeast Ulster were the very heart of this Republican insurrection and were allied with Catholic nationalists from other areas of Ireland.<sup>32</sup> Thomas Davis of the abortive 1848 Rising, and the Protestant landowner Parnell (the "King of Ireland"), who flirted with radicalism in the pursuit of the "3Fs" (free sale, fixity of tenure, and fair rent) for improverished tenant farmers during the latter part of the nineteenth century, were other examples of this tradition. Yet, 1800, the year of the Act of Union, is a convenient dividing line after which meaningful Catholic and Protestant nationalist alliances become more and more difficult. The two communities drift toward opposite poles, Protestants seeking refuge in the Act of Union as a guarantee of privilege, and Catholics quite simply weighed down by this oppressive Crown legislation. It is not surprising that a mass movement led by Daniel O'Connell at the beginning of the nineteenth century for Catholic emancipation, or the later struggle for the disestablishment of

the British-imposed Church of Ireland (1879), were for the most part Catholic. In fact, nationalism of all types (Home Rule, Griffith Dual Monarchy formula, Fenianism, the Irish Volunteers) that sought to undermine the Act of Union (1801) increasingly after Parnell was pursued by a predominantly Catholic rank-and-file and leadership. One might reasonably assume that the Protestant "convert" to what was generally thought of as a Catholic nationalism may self-consciously espouse a militant form of Republicanism. In other words, during the revolutionary period of 1916-22 it makes perfect sense to draw a rigid line between both camps; only the rare Protestant (a "marginal man"?) would now venture to play an essentially Catholic nationalist game.

The evidence suggests that there were relatively few Protestants among the entire leadership and that there is no apparent link between the "marginal" attribute and a civil war position. It may be of some importance that the two religious converts were hard-liners.

#### Free Staters

1. Ernest Blythe. One revolutionary leader, Peadar O'Donnell, dissented from this Protestant-as-"marginal"-extremist thesis, holding that Blythe's Ulster Protestant background fostered compromising political attitudes. Imprisoned by the Free State this die-hard Republican prepared a biting sketch of Blythe for a proposed edition of the humorously titled "Book of Cells":

The nationalists hoisted him as a signal to his orange stock of the North-East but the escaped Orangeman relapsed and became a tick-tack merchant, so his stock reading the signals rallied to prop his platform just as the natives deserted it.<sup>33</sup>

(His "stock," of course, were Ulster Unionists who would supposedly rally to their native son, Ernest Blythe, once he declared for the Free State. In

reality, Unionists wanted nothing to do with the Free State leadership, but certainly approved--from a comfortable distance--of their role smiting Republicans.)

2. Darrell Figgis.<sup>34</sup>
3. Bulmer Hobson. Quaker stock.<sup>35</sup>

#### Republicans

1. Robert Barton.
2. Erskine Childers.<sup>36</sup>
3. Countess Markievicz. Converted to Catholicism from the Anglican Church.<sup>37</sup>
4. Grace Plunkett. From a staunch Protestant Unionist family she converted to Catholicism (April 1916) and was barred from her home.<sup>38</sup>

#### b. Ulster Birth

Whether the Ulsterman can be thought of as "marginal" is a debatable issue. One might wonder how the historic homeland of Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone and the last of the great independent Gaelic chiefs could in any way be "marginal" to the Irish heartland. In fact, the poorest sections of the remote south and west may more easily be considered "peripheral" to the Belfast and Dublin urban poles.<sup>39</sup> With this said, one might still argue--as Cohan does--that life among a Protestant majority may impart very different political attitudes than those received in areas predominantly Catholic.<sup>40</sup> Certainly Ulsterman revolutionaries themselves held such a view or acknowledged its prevalence among the Irish. For instance, Sean MacEntee, in his memoir (Episode at Easter Week) comments on his very special initiation into the nationalistic movement:

Coming from the stronghold of Ulster Unionism where nationalists had to fight unitedly for their rights against odds of 3

to 1 . . . if you happened to be a follower of Arthur Griffith you were an extremist visionary or dreamer.<sup>41</sup>

Eoin MacNeill, who perhaps held an unrealistic, overly optimistic assessment of the all-Ireland political vision of Ulster Protestants and was certainly naive concerning the goals of their paramilitary formations, did admit that in some ways Ulster was thought, however wrongly, to be a "marginal" province:

In more than one section of Ireland they still talk about "the Outlanders of Ulster." There are folk who look upon the Black North as a diseased limb which should be cut off from the Irish social body.<sup>42</sup>

From the evidence, though, one might conclude that if--a big "if"--Ulster birth is deemed a marginal trait, it is not related to the political intransigence of die-hard Republicans:

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Ulstermen	
FREE STATERS	REPUBLICANS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Eoin MacNeill (Antrim)</li> <li>2. Ernest Blythe (Antrim)</li> <li>3. Dr. Macartan (Tyrone)</li> <li>4. Bulmer Hobson (Down)</li> <li>5. Eamonn Duggan (Armagh)</li> <li>6. Denis MacCullough</li> <li>7. Desmond Fitzgerald's wife from Ulster</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Frank Aiken (Armagh)</li> <li>2. Sean MacEntee</li> <li>3. Joe McKeivey</li> <li>4. Peador O'Donnell (Donegal--one of the nine counties of traditional Ulster)</li> </ol>

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In fact, one could pose an alternative hypothesis. Those leaders raised among a large Protestant population might be more attuned to the need for compromise with that portion of the Irish nation fiercely wedded to Unionism. (Whether life in a segregated Catholic section of town or village constitutes "among" is another matter for debate.) T.D. Williams has implied as much, describing the upbringing of the moderate Eoin MacNeill ("He had mixed with Protestants and Ulstermen all his life."<sup>43</sup>) and how it affected and shaped his naively optimistic assessment of Carson's Volunteers. When MacNeill called for an

Irish Volunteers in the Gaelic League magazine, the very title of his article, "The North Began," was a far-fetched recognition of a contemporary Ulster all-Irish nationalism. The Ulster Volunteer Force, according to the author, was "the most decisive move towards Irish autonomy that has been made since O'Connell invented constitutional agitation."<sup>44</sup> He was more than ready to believe that the interests of Ulster Protestants were not diametrically opposed to that of a largely Catholic advanced nationalism.

c. Foreign Birth

The fairly sensible notion that those leaders born outside of Ireland are in some way "marginal" and hence disposed to Republican extremism can be criticized in at least two important ways: (1) One might argue that the Irish sections of English cities, such as Liverpool, are certainly not foreign communities. Indeed, they are eminently Irish in politics, culture and general atmosphere--perhaps harboring Irishmen more "Irish" than their brethren across the sea. And yet the very fact the "little Irelands" were so obviously "Irish" may point to their self-conscious effort not to be culturally overwhelmed by the English. On an individual level the problem of self-identity among the "foreigner" might naturally evoke an especially intense form of nationalism and propensity to assume the hard line. (2) The second type of criticism downplays the relevance of early years spent abroad since the political attitudes and predispositions of Irish leaders are more a product of their formative years in Ireland. The American-born Spanish-surnamed Eamon De Valera (mother

from Limerick and father the son of a Cuban sugar plantation owner), of course, has been the center of this particular "marginality" criterion controversy. What relevance is a few years spent in the U.S.? After all, from the age of three he had been brought up in Limerick--a fact that De Valera himself accentuated when answering the charge of appearing distant from the lifestyle of the simple Irish peasant:

I lived in a labourer's cottage, but the tenant in his way could be regarded as a small farmer. From my earliest days I participated in every operation that takes place on a farm . . . cleaned cowhouses . . . <sup>45</sup>

Some like the Earl of Longford argue that the brief American period may have affected his development in a way that "no psychologist could forecast."<sup>46</sup> Others might stress that only an in-depth psychoanalytic approach can do justice to this type of background attribute.<sup>47</sup> In either case, we are warned that the crude application of a "foreign birth" variable holds scant explanatory power for his future political behavior. In a sense, C.D. Greaves, Liam Mellows's biographer, concurs with this general critique noting that one thoroughly immersed in the nuances of his subject's life, would refrain from elevating Mellows's birth in England to a background factor of importance. His father was temporarily stationed there as a member of the British Army, quite typical of "Irish workers and farmers who were forced into military service to make a living."<sup>48</sup> Liam Mellows's place of birth was simply an "accident which exerted no ascertainable in his life or development."<sup>49</sup>

J. Van Voris, the Countess's biographer, claims her London birth was also merely an accident. (She was taken to Lisa-Dell, the

Gore Booths' opulent home in Sligo as an infant.) Similarly, Brian Farrell implicitly denies the efficacy of universally applying a "foreign born" test to leaders such as De Valera and Gerry Boland. The actual circumstances of their life belie the connotations of being somehow "foreign." They

were brought to Ireland in very early childhood and were educated in the Church-State school system of Ireland. They were also active participants in a number of national organizations and have never thought of themselves as anything other than Irish.<sup>50</sup>

Though these criticisms deserve attention, there seems to be some confusion concerning the goals and methodology of the sociocultural background approach to the study of political elites. Surely "factoring out" the individual leader's peculiarities is precisely the strength --as well as weakness--of a broadly conceived leadership analysis. As crude as the variables may be, their application to a relatively large leadership sample garners a very different type of leadership profile than can be elicited from a psychohistorical preoccupation with the "Great Man."<sup>51</sup>

In terms of our interest in the 1922 Irish elite, if each and every leader born outside the country turned out to be a Republican die-hard, we might become suspicious of individual disclaimers issued by biographers that this "crude" fact was essentially irrelevant. The emergence of such a hypothesized pattern of background/behavior linkage is precisely the type of information that may be obscured by the individual focus, however well-conceived.

Justification notwithstanding, the "foreign birth" dimension of marginality does not appear to be an indicator of a 1922 Republican

stance. Even counting De Valera (his "foreign appearance" and Spanish surname make his selection reasonable) and Mellows (a more questionable choice, although his father's service to the King and grandfather's participation in the bloody repression of the Sepoy Mutiny are factors that may have played a role in his distinctly anti-imperialist rationale for rejecting the Treaty<sup>52</sup>), Gerry Boland, Erskine Childers and Countess are other foreign-born leaders who were Free Staters. For instance, Piaras Beaslai was born in Liverpool and Desmond Fitzgerald in London (and lived in France until 1913). In fact, if we compare the scant number of such backgrounds with, say, the pre-Rising militant labor-nationalist top leadership (Connolly from Edinburgh, Larkin from Liverpool) or Rising leader Thomas Clarke (born in England), the local Irish roots of the IRA/Sinn Fein leadership are obviously predominant.

#### d. Non-Irish National Status

Those the least bit familiar with Irish history will recognize the name of Erskine Childers--that "damn Englishman" (a Free State appellation) who served the Republicans as an irrepressible propagandist until his execution. For Churchill, as well as Treaty moderates, there was little doubt that the turncoat "renegade" compensates for betraying his original homeland by pursuing the most radical line of nationalism. His arrest during the Civil War for carrying a pistol elicited an approving comment from Churchill: "I have seen with satisfaction that the mischief-making murderous renegade Erskine Childers has been captured." And after the death

sentence was carried out Churchill somberly remarked, "Such as he is may all who hate us be."<sup>54</sup> In his mind, Childers was "actuated by a deadly and malignant hatred for the land of his birth."<sup>55</sup> Kevin O'Higgins, Free State Minister (September 1922), derisively thought Childers was that "able Englishman" leading the "irregulars" with "his eye on one objective, and that is the complete breakdown of the economic and social fabric, so that this thing that is trying to hard to be an Irish Nation will go down in chaos, anarchy, and futility."<sup>56</sup> O'Higgins certainly did not shrink from playing the role of executioner (four IRA "smallfry" were shot first to avoid the charge that Childers was singled out): "If Englishmen come to Ireland looking for excitement we will see that they get it."<sup>57</sup> And Arthur Griffith's completely irrational tirades against the "British agent" Childers--most instructive for a study in Irish xenophobia--at least underscores the case for positing English nationality as a potent background variable affecting a leader's behavior.<sup>58</sup>

Piaras Beaslai, the original IRA chief propagandist, was later to write of Childers's shortcomings in his biographical study of Michael Collins, faults that were directly attributed to his "outsider" status. (Did Beaslai, a veritable fire-eater in 1917, pushing for IRA strikes at the RUC, develop such a jaundiced view of his successor only after the Treaty split?)

In view of Collins' high opinion of his capacity I was amazed at the impression of funny, feverish, futility, he conveyed to me. He displayed the mind, outlook, ability, of a capable British civil servant, but no understanding of Ireland or Irishmen, and no adequate appreciation of the type of situation with which he was dealing. . . . I

formed an opinion reluctantly that he carried weight as an outsider . . . which he could not have carried on his own merits, had he been an Irishman in the movement for years, and found his natural level.<sup>59</sup>

The more balanced accounts of scholars refuse to condemn Childers's brand of idealism (Was it so different from the home-grown variety of Mellows, O'Malley, et al.?), but second the convert-as-radical theme. For Padraic Colum, Griffith's biographer,

He was the type more frequently found in religious than political life. He was the convert with the convert's desire feature forms that are taken for granted by those born in the Church that the convert has come into--the convert's attempt to live by a mystique that is only a point of reference to others in the congregation.<sup>60</sup>

Calton Younger observes that not only was Childers "over-fervent in the way of the proselyte," but his anglophobic American wife added to his somewhat "warped" attachment to Ireland's cause.<sup>61</sup> Furthermore, his past service as a clerk in "the House of Commons that he so despised"<sup>62</sup> was a suspicious role for the future unyielding Republican fiercely advocating a complete severance of the British link. (The Free State Constitution would essentially be an Act of Parliament.) In sum, no one, including Childers himself, could forget his controversial English background.

Evidence suggests that Republican hard-liner Cathal Brugha was half-Yorkshireman, a fact (whether true or not<sup>63</sup>) which was duly noted by his pro-Treatyite opponents. The biographer T. de Vere White claims that his subject, Kevin O'Higgins, attacked Brugha on just such a level: "[He] was fond of pointing out how half-Irish patriots were more intransigent than those of whole blood."<sup>64</sup> And denials of such a mixed background only add to the presumed importance

attached to this background attribute by revolutionary participants. (Two other anti-Treatyites, Diarmuid Lynch<sup>65</sup> and De Valera, held American citizenships.)

In sum, the few leaders that were non-nationals, of mixed nationality or mixed descent assumed the Republican position in 1922. The small number of this group is perhaps more interesting (Childers appears to be the only real foreigner, and even he grew up with his relatives, the Bartons, in County Wicklow) than the apparent relationship between this aspect of "marginality" and political radicalism.

e. Gender: Women as Radicals

Can the women revolutionary leaders be considered "marginals"? Their numerical equality with the general male population is obvious. But among the IRA/Sinn Fein leadership, the Home Rule movement (or in any other polite elite, past or future), women are decidedly under-represented. They are the minority group participating in formal political activity par excellence. One might advance the sensible proposition that a woman involved in the nationalist movement, hurdling the considerable social barriers to enter the male preserve, would harbor the most strict Republican sentiments.

From both sides of the Treaty and from more dispassionate scholars, the particularly virulent brand of women's extremism has been recorded. P.S. O'Hegarty, who criticized the "mindless militancy" of the IRA gunmen, was no less harsh towards his female revolutionary antagonists:

As the war lengthened, it became more brutal and more savage and more hysterical and more unrelievedly black. But the worst effect was on the women. . . . War, and the things which war breeds--intolerance, swagger, hardness, unwomanliness--captured the women, turned them into unlovely, destructive-minded, and begetters of violence.<sup>66</sup>

In a less anti-Republican formulation, Desmond Shaw extolls the virtuous role of these most militant "fierce virgins":

Without these Amazons of Sinn Fein, inspired as they were by a fanaticism that recked naught of consequences, of a fiercer courage even than the menfolk, the IRA would have been a body without eyes.<sup>67</sup>

And Brian Farrell notes, "Indeed for nearly a year after the Rising it was the women who were the national movement,"<sup>68</sup> Mrs. Tom Clarke "picking up the threads of the IRB conspiracy,"<sup>69</sup> while women were in the forefront of the Irish National Aid Association. He cites General Maxwell's statement to Asquith (June 1916) as a tribute to their role: "That there is a strong recrudescence of Sinn Fein is true--young priests and militant women (of whom there seems to be a strong contingent) encourage this in every possible way."<sup>70</sup> Clearly the myth of the "Amazon" began early in the struggle for independence.

Now, if we take all the women Dail members (Countess Markievicz, Mrs. O'Callaghan, Mrs. Pearse, Mary MacSwiney, Mrs. Clarke, Grace Plunkett) in addition to the famous Maud Gonne and Mrs. Francis Sheehy Skeffington, their total commitment to strict Republicanism is a striking fact. But before arriving at any prematurely drawn conclusions, one must consider that female Dail members (except the Countess) held their positions as a consequence of a son's, brother's or husband's death. Dorothy Macardle observes:

Most of them were women who had suffered. The widow of Tom Clarke . . . Mrs. Pearse's sons had both been executed . . . Mary MacSwiney had seen her brother die on a hunger strike. Mrs. O'Callaghan had seen her husband murdered.<sup>71</sup>

And Robert Kee, who, as mentioned earlier, characterized either side of the Civil War divide in terms of psychological categories (Free State "realists" vs. Republican "fantasists") also argued that these women had the "best reason to cling to fantasy."<sup>72</sup> (Interestingly, Mrs. O'Callaghan anticipated and vigorously opposed this type of argument at the time of the Treaty split: "No woman in this Dail is going to give her vote because she is warped by a deep personal loss"<sup>73</sup>--perhaps not a very convincing statement.)

Though Maud Gonne MacBride and Mrs. Skeffington were perhaps "leaders" in their own right, the post-Rising execution of Sean MacBride, Maud Gonne's husband (a jealous Yeats unfairly immortalized him as a "vainglorious lout"), and the summary execution of Francis Sheehy Skeffington by an unbalanced British officer during Easter Week 1916 casts these two women into the female Dail member category.

It is quite possible, therefore, that the fact of losing a member of one's immediate family is a "background variable" having far greater explanatory power than the attribute of "gender."

### Conclusion

In sum, then, we have argued that the concept of "marginality" is not all that helpful for explaining this particular leadership divide. For a few members of the IRA/Sinn Fein elite--Erskine Childers (Protestant, English, foreign-born, upper class, clerk

of the House of Commons, British Army officer) and Countess Markievicz (convert to Catholicism, woman, landed gentry, long English residence)-- their multiple "marginal" characteristics suggest that extreme "margin-ality" will, in fact, tend to foster radical political behavior. Yet, Darrell Figgis, on the other hand, was a Protestant, lived in London, attended English schools, and turned out quite moderate. What appears most interesting about the leadership is the relative absence of such types among a broad sample of the elite.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Isaac Kramnick (Revolution, pp. 45-46) claims that Veblen was the first to explicitly link the "marginal" Jews of Europe to a propensity for revolutionary politics. But if we examine Veblen's "The Intellectual Pre-Eminence of Jews in Modern Europe" (in The Portable Veblen, ed. Max Lerner [ ], p. 474), the term "marginal" does not appear and neither is the author primarily interested in revolutionary politics. Still, their divided allegiance to an often hostile gentile world fosters a critical, dissenting worldview that places them in the "vanguard of modern inquiry," and, apparently, in the forefront of radical political movements. Veblen's interest in the nascent turn-of-the-century Zionist movement led him to the belief that Jewish dynamism would be sapped once their "outsider" status ended.

<sup>2</sup>Zinoviev, Kamenev, Trotsky, et al.

<sup>3</sup>Quandt, Revolution and Political Leadership, p. 12.

<sup>4</sup>Sigmund Neumann, Permanent Revolution, 2nd ed. (New York: Praeger, 1965), p. 60.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Lerner et al., "The Nazi Elite," p. 289.

<sup>7</sup>Edinger, Kurt Schumacher, notes his early socialization close to the Polish border.

<sup>8</sup>Neumann, Permanent Revolution, p. 61.

<sup>9</sup>Edward Shils, "The Intellectuals in the Political Development of the New States," in Political Change in the Undeveloped Countries, ed. John Kautsky (New York: John Wiley, 1971), p. 288): "Many of them find no employment, or must supplement their professional work with other sources of endeavor . . . they suffer directly from the crisis of power and authority."

<sup>10</sup>Seymour Lipset, Political Man (New York: Anchor Books, 1963) pp. 138-48.

<sup>11</sup>Colin Wilson's remarkable book (The Outsider [London: V. Gollancz, 1974]) culls from a wide variety of works a dominant theme in modern literature--the "marginal" anti-heroes despair and

isolation. What is interesting for our discussion is the link between a "marginal" character--one cut off in ways from the dominant groups, mores, and traditions of a society--and extremist, violent behavior. The characters that concern him are not specifically "political" men; indeed, they would not be found organizing a revolutionary elite, yet the consequences of their "otherness" have a universal message. Camus Mersault is the unforgiving slayer of an unknown Arab, Raskolnikov has unsuccessfully attempted the existential leap beyond law and authority by murdering an old woman, and Dostoevsky's other character, Stavrogin, was responsible for the death of a young girl. Why the anti-social behavior? Colin Wilson writes (p. 13) that the outsider's case against society is clear: "All men and women have these dangerous, unnameable impulses, yet they keep up a pretence, to themselves, to others; their respectability, their philosophy, their religion, are all attempts to gloss over, to make look civilized and rational something that is savage, unorganized, irrational. He is an Outsider because he stands for Truth." Through the most violent of actions he strives for a freedom (beyond good and evil?) of sorts only to be rebuffed by societal retribution.

<sup>12</sup> Isaacs argues (Idols of the Tribe [New York: Harper & Row, 1975], pp. 1-2) that our modern industrialized world that was supposed to generate class-based primary relationships is in fact experiencing a re-invigoration of the House of Muumbi's function--to accept and nurture those born with a certain identity. He writes: "In Kenya, in their oath-taking ritual--practiced in recent years in the context of tribal tension in independent Kenya's new politics--members of the dominant Kikuyu tribe pledge: 'I shall never leave the House of Muumbi.' Muumbi was the progenital mother of the tribe. Her house is the womb in which all Kikuyu are born, the home in which all are nurtured. By this oath, each member of the tribe recommits himself to his tribal loyalty above all others. Not only in Kenya but everywhere in our world there are many Muumbis, mistresses of many such houses. People who live in them are huddling together more closely and more tightly packed than ever before." Of course, "marginal groups" may reside in their own versions of the House, but this residence apparently fosters a specific political attitude--dissenting radicalism. Note also, as in the case of what Karl Mannheim has called "free floating intellectuals," certain marginal characteristics can be acquired well after birth.

<sup>13</sup> Lerner, "The Nazi Elite," p. 288.

<sup>14</sup> Rustow, "Who's Who, When and How?" p. 698.

<sup>15</sup> Sigmund Neumann, the author of Permanent Revolution (published a decade prior to Lerner's work), made much of this "frontier marginality" thesis when analyzing Hitler's career. It (pp. 60-61) "may account for the intense and often exaggerated nationalism of the demagogue. He grew up in an atmosphere of defense of something which was too obvious, a matter too much taken for granted

for the average citizen reared in the midst of his fatherland." Furthermore, his "marginality" is not merely of a territorial nature: "The dreams of a painter's career were thwarted by the refusal of the Vienna Academy of Art to accept him. A casual laborer and postcard artist, he lived the life of a declassé at a time when others were building up a career, a home, and a stake in society. The frustrations, the wounded pride of an outsider combined personal humiliations with national resentments. Those are elements at the base of the political Hitler."

<sup>16</sup>Lerner, "The Nazi Elite," p. 288.

<sup>17</sup>A.S. Cohan (in The Irish Political Elite, p. 45) cites the work of Charles Moskos studying the Albanian leadership on this score: "Persons may be marginal when they belong to distinct minority religious groups. In a rural and isolated society, ethnic groups with relatively greater exposure to the world community tend to be marginal. In a society largely illiterate, advanced education can be a marginal trait."

<sup>18</sup>Lerner, "The Nazi Elite," pp. 304-305.

<sup>19</sup>Rustow, "Who's Who, When, and How?" p. 698.

<sup>20</sup>Lerner, "The Nazi Elite," p. 228.

<sup>21</sup>Neumann, Permanent Revolution, p. 64.

<sup>22</sup>Brinton, The Jacobins, p. 232.

<sup>23</sup>Martin, "1916: Revolution or Evolution?" p. 250.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Cohan, Irish Political Elite, p. 49.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 45.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 46.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 45.

<sup>29</sup>Interestingly, he tacitly approves of Lerner's sweeping marginality criteria by citing the background profile of Hitler as a good example of how to avoid "the compulsion to call someone marginal because he is a revolutionary" (p. 45): "Thus we would have to say that Hitler was a marginal man because he was Austrian, Catholic, without a university education, and petit bourgeois at a time when national leaders were Prussian, Protestant, educated, and decidedly upper class and upper middle class." Lacking is a critical distinction between a background characteristic such as Austrian birth (engendering

a pan-German support for "Anschluss" and other manifestations of extreme nationalism), and those that simply mark a departure from the norm (i.e., Catholicism) without the implication of psychologically or materially deprived "outsider" status. His analysis is much tighter in the case of the Irish elite.

<sup>30</sup>Cohan, Irish Political Elite, p. 46.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>Of course one should not overestimate such non-elite unity across sectarian lines. Robert Kee, for instance, in The Green Kee (p. 130) observes that "the most important factor of all in determining the northern debacle was the large scale reversion to the standard Protestant-Catholic rivalry which had persisted as one of the ever-present factors of life in the North."

<sup>33</sup>O'Donnell, The Gages Flew Open, p. 51.

<sup>34</sup>Figgis, Recollections of the Irish War, p. 188.

<sup>35</sup>Hobson writes in his memoir, Ireland Yesterday and Tomorrow ([Tralee: Anvil Books, 1968], p. 1), "I resigned from the Quaker society in 1914 because I was engaged in organizing the Irish Volunteers and the society was opposed to war, and I thought it inconsistent to remain a member."

<sup>36</sup>Wilkinson, The Zeal of a Convert, p. 9.

<sup>37</sup>Macardle, The Irish Republic, p. 404.

<sup>38</sup>R.M. Fox, Rebel Irishwomen (Dublin: Talbot Press, 1933), p. 79.

<sup>39</sup>Lee, Modernization of Irish Society, pp. 1-20.

<sup>40</sup>Cohan, Irish Political Elite, p. 46.

<sup>41</sup>Sean MacEntee, Episode at Easter Week (Dublin: Gill & MacMillan, 1966), p. 55.

<sup>42</sup>MacNeill, Michael Collins' Own Story, p. 34.

<sup>43</sup>Williams, "MacNeill and the Volunteers," p. 142.

<sup>44</sup>Quoted in F.X. Martin, "MacNeill and the Foundation of the Irish Volunteers," in The Scholar Revolutionary, eds. F.X. Martin and F.J. Byrne (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1973).

<sup>45</sup>MacManus, Eamon De Valera, p. 22.

<sup>46</sup>Longford and O'Neill, Eamon De Valera, p. 471.

<sup>47</sup>Lewis Edinger, the psychobiographer of Kurt Schumacher, argues exactly this point, claiming that the "specific personality" and the "unique aspects of leadership" are factored out in broad elite studies employing simplistic sociocultural variables (Kurt Schumacher, p. 3).

<sup>48</sup>Greaves, Liam Mellows and the Irish Revolution, p. 35.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>50</sup>Farrell, The Founding of Dail Eireann, p. 27.

<sup>51</sup>With all the time, energy, and research commitment the psychobiographer has to devote to his one subject, he too must make arbitrary decisions to limit his data sources. For instance, Wolfenstein (The Revolutionary Personality, p. 25) observes that in his study of Lenin, Trotsky and Gandhi he is "not going to be investigating all aspects of the leader himself, or his development. A host of sociological and other factors will have to be left to one side so that we may bring sharply into focus the underlying motivations of the men we are studying."

<sup>52</sup>Greaves, Liam Mellows and the Irish Revolution, p. 33.

<sup>53</sup>Wilkinson, The Zeal of the Convert, p. vii.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid.

<sup>55</sup>Macardle, The Irish Republic, p. 811.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 803.

<sup>57</sup>Churchill, The Aftermath, pp. 370-71.

<sup>58</sup>Greaves, Liam Mellows and the Irish Revolution, p. 312.

<sup>59</sup>Beaslai, Michael Collins, II:168-69.

<sup>60</sup>Colum, Arthur Griffith, p. 322.

<sup>61</sup>Younger, Ireland's Civil War, p. 199.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., p. 208.

<sup>63</sup>White, O'Higgins, p. 52; Wilkinson, The Zeal of the Convert, p. 210; and Item IR 92, p. 114, National Library Dublin--all state this "fact." This author has seen some written comments to the contrary.

<sup>64</sup>White, O'Higgins, p. 52.

<sup>65</sup>Lynch wrote in his memoir (The IRB and the 1916 Rising, p. 4) that he left Ireland in 1896 to stay in the U.S. with an uncle, Cornelius Dunlea, and became a citizen some five years later: "I can say that on the first sight of the Statue of Liberty I felt myself to be a good American."

<sup>66</sup>Quoted by Brian Farrell's "Markievicz and the Women of the Revolution," in Leaders and Men of the Easter Rising: Dublin 1916, e. F.X. Martin (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967), p. 227.

<sup>67</sup>Desmond Shaw, The Drama of Sinn Fein (London: W. Collins & Company, 1923), p. 10.

<sup>68</sup>Farrell, "Markievicz and the Women of the Revolution," p. 235.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid.

<sup>71</sup>Macardle, The Irish Republic, p. 621.

<sup>72</sup>Kee, The Green Flag, p. 731.

<sup>73</sup>Younger, Ireland's Civil War, p. 212.

Chapter XI  
CONCLUSIONS

Aside from providing an explanation of sorts for the civil war, these bits and pieces of background information also tie the Irish experience to the comparative study of revolutionary elite conflict. In this concluding section we shall outline some of these areas of contact.

(a) On the most general level, the study of Ireland's internecine struggle appears to validate William Quandt's conclusions gleaned from his analysis of the Algerian revolutionary leadership schisms. The individual's "political socialization" during his adult nationalist period, a broadly conceived term subsuming such background characteristics as friendship circles and "military" role--the way in which one enters and participates in the political arena--pinpoints the factors most strongly associated with fratricidal behavior. Quandt, remember, minimizes the importance of ascriptive, primordial attributes (e.g., Berber ethnicity), or those derived from a period prior to revolutionary activity. In other words, the characteristics that stamp the leader as potential moderates and radicals, to a greater degree, are those acquired during the struggle for independence. Thus, contrary to Fanon's well-known prescription, anti-colonial revolutions may generate elite discord rather than the expected unity forged in battle.

Surely, these conclusions contradict a number of commonly held views. We have noted, for instance, that "marginal men" are universally perceived as nascent extremists, whether as representatives of a peripheral areas, religious minorities, or foreigners among a home-grown nationalist movement. In Quandt's formulation such backgrounds are of less interest than later acquired characteristics. The case of the Irish leadership divide supports such a contention. We should mention, though, some qualifications to this sweeping statement. First, the two neat packages of background variables ("adult political socialization variables" / "ascriptive or earlier formed traits") are by no means distinct and dissimilar. For example, in some cases one's "previous" occupation is thoroughly interwoven with the nationalist struggle (e.g., printing propaganda leaflets) and characteristics that are obviously part of an individual's lifelong baggage, such as "age," also determine the entrance point into political activity. Secondly, it is difficult to compare evidence across categories of background variables when the size of sample populations differ widely due to lack of information. Lastly, the major hypothesis and data assembled by Quandt should not be accepted without reservation. Alistair Horne's comprehensive work, A Savage War of Peace, though hardly claiming social scientific precision or offering head counts, gives the impression that Arab/Berber enmity should not be lightly dismissed as a major cause of FLN divisions. Reservations notwithstanding, Quandt's work and our analysis of the Irish leadership dovetail remarkably well.

(b) The most active purely "military" IRA leaders, based in remote areas of the south and west, held revolutionary roles that are clearly related to Republican intransigence. These guerrillas, themselves, were outspoken in their opposition to Dail Eireann "politicians" and the GHQ Staff at the Dublin center. This conclusion also mirrors Quandt's judgment that a narrowly defined "military" group among the FLN was decidedly hesitant to negotiate a settlement with the French, in part a reflection of their narrow battlefield vision and "military" interests. We further argued that these particular Republican extremists were, in effect, anti-constitutional military elements intervening in politics (i.e., the Republican "irregular" Military Executive challenged the legitimacy of the revolutionary parliament, Dail Eireann). Explanations for their behavior were sought from a growing body of social science literature analyzing the general case of army involvement in political matters. Three basic traditions were identified: (1) the military's tendency for political interference (mostly in the developing world) stems from its unique organization, discipline, technical skills, and modernizing role; (2) intervention is a function of weak political institutions rather than special military talents and attributes; (3) army men have specific material (pay, equipment, etc.) and emotional needs--corporate group interests--that dispose them toward anti-constitutional roles. This latter category provided the best explanation for the intransigent spirit of commandants who perceived themselves as isolated, righteous, ascetics, enduring the greatest losses, and sold out by wavering Dail politicians. And, to a lesser degree, these men had become

living folk heroes, their exalted status and "job" roles threatened by a peaceful negotiation. Thus, a peculiar brand of self-interest, peculiar in the sense that it eventually cost many of their lives, was harnessed to the Republican cause in the form of fanatical patriotism.

Again, we must add some comments that qualify these grandiose judgments. Firstly, the reader should be aware that our particular "military" leaders were selected from among a large number of IRA commandants, and lesser officers, chiefly because they were frequently mentioned in major historical works covering that period. Active military leaders, who later became ardent Free Staters, may have been overlooked (e.g., a daring IRA man operating in a relatively quiet operational area), or the notoriety of some may have been rooted in their post-1922 civil war fame which rubbed off on their 1919-21 status. Secondly, the characterization of IRA commandants as "anti-constitutional" army men bent on political intervention can be overdrawn since: (1) many Dail "politicos" were effectively street gunmen on a day-to-day basis; (2) although technically they were ignoring the bare majority sentiment of the duly elected parliament (Dail Eireann) and fomenting an insurrection that some saw as a military coup, the tenuous nature of all revolutionary institutions dictated that power was up for grabs among competing factions. Dail Eireann, for all its daring and efficiency, should not be confused with a long-standing parliament on the order of Westminster. Furthermore, the military "irregular" Republicans never mounted an attack on the Free State Government, as any "putschist" would have prescribed. Their

"intervention" began by erecting an alternate pole of authority in the middle of Dublin, at the Four Courts buildings--independent, mutinous, provocative to the extreme--but one that was ultimately attacked by the Free State, marking the opening salvo of a civil war lasting more than a year. This bid for power was not a simple anti-constitutional palace coup, although the "irregulars" had at one point (Spring 1922) called for an immediate dictatorship to be foisted upon Ireland--and tellingly were voted down by fellow Republican extremists.

(c) According to . . . diverse opinion, the theorized connection between political extremism and "marginality" is a reasonable assumption, although there is scant agreement among scholars about what constitutes such a trait. Clearly, though, it is a sociological category not to be overlooked in a study of moderate and extremist divisions within a revolutionary elite. Our first task was to describe the tendency to debase the term by arbitrarily straight-jacketing any and all leadership attributes into the marginality category. We have studiously tried to avoid this pitfall by carefully defining the Sinn Fein/IRA "marginal man" in terms of characteristics that set the leader apart from mainstream Catholic nationalism. Protestantism, foreign status, female and Ulster upbringing are all personal dimensions expected to be linked with Republicanism. Our conclusions were ambiguous. On the one hand, there were few "marginals" in the overall group and a fairly even number of Free Staters and Republicans among them. This suggests that in perhaps more than

other revolutionary struggles the modal Catholic rebel from the southern heartland of post-1900 nationalism dominated the political scene. Yet, those individual leaders such as Erskine Childers or Countess Markievicz that had a greater number of "marginal" characteristics indeed were Republican extremists.

(d) In evaluating the relationship between economic/social and moderate/extreme civil war positions, some interesting contrasts with other independence movements were highlighted. By and large, these revolutionaries were not attracted to radical economic and social ideas. A fact not simply explained by emphasizing the extraordinary energy consumed in the struggle to drive the British out of Ireland. (Which movement is not consumed by the daily exigencies of survival?) Their lack of social programs, modest or nonexistence land practices, Dail Eireann moderate court judgments, and distance from the labor movement demonstrated how Sinn Fein/IRA was almost uniformly a conservative nationalist front, indeed a reactionary movement if we are to believe recent Irish "new left" politicians such as Noel Browne. Why should this be so? Firstly, in stark contrast to the British colonial policy in Rhodesia, Kenya, India, Malaya and the like, Westminster had literally undercut the major reason for nineteenth-century rural agitation through a series of far-reaching land acts.

Discontent in the countryside, basically caused by tenure practices that generated the recurring so-called "natural" famines, was assuaged by successive Liberal and Conservative administrations

from the 1880s to 1910. Simply stated, the historically dispossessed Catholic peasantry were largely transformed into a smallholding conservative class, hardly a group to agitate for social revolution or one expected to give birth to leaders calling for a vast redistribution of wealth. However, the backbone of the landlord class had been broken without the concomitant reform of home rule, and Ireland remained a constitutionally dependent portion of the United Kingdom, under-represented at Westminster. Sinn Fein's efforts to break this link and overthrow the British administration without tearing apart Ireland's social fabric, reflected the widespread acceptance of the agrarian status quo amid growing anti-British nationalist sentiment. Of course, Sinn Fein might have offered a radical socialist-oriented program that would appeal to substantial numbers of impoverished urban proletarians or rural laborers; two segments of the population singularly unaffected by Britain's progressive land policy. As we have seen, aside from a small Connolly-inspired clique of leftists (all future Republicans of 1922!), Sinn Feinners gingerly avoided, or were outrightly repelled, by any form of continental marxism.

Most likely, cultural and religious factors also explain these tendencies. A staunchly conservative brand of Catholicism, one whose official hierarchy had condemned each and every insurrection from Wolf Tone's to the Easter Rising, was still a deeply felt religion among revolutionaries. By their guerrilla activities, the rebels directly flaunted the Church and risked excommunication, but an unabated allegiance to non-institutional Christian values erected an effective barrier to "atheistic" socialism.

Furthermore, the values of a British "civic culture"--parliamentary democracy and social moderation and consensus--were somewhat diffused throughout Ireland, limiting the appeal of radical solutions to economic and social problems: collectives in the countryside, nationalization of industry, assaults on private property and central planning carried out by a dominant, vanguard party. In short, the Westminster legislative form, English law, and a continued British-styled civil service were not the institutional choices for those seeking revolutionary change. Thus, the years 1919-21 really represented a switch in ownership, Irishmen finally occupying Dublin Castle after centuries of the British presence.

(e) In the Irish experience, friendship circles are closely associated with civil war behavior. This is a surprising conclusion given that the Treaty certainly split numerous homes and buddies, and the rules of comradeship appeared to be suspended for the duration of the Republican/Free State battle. This line of inquiry, stressing the bonds of friendship as determinants of political behavior, holds great promise for the comparative study of elite conflicts. As far as we know, it has not received much attention in leadership background studies.

(f) As for the familiar, often employed, sociological triad of factors--age, education, and occupation--a few comparative comments are in order. Note that none of them were correlated to either side of the Irish Civil War, although a subgroup of "military" Republicans were distinctly "youthful" radicals.

Firstly, high educational levels among Free Staters and Republicans validate the universally held impression of nationalist elites being a few cuts above the common man, at least in terms of formal learning. Sinn Feiners are university graduates and secondary school-goers, literate men of the pen, and British civil servants toiling away at the post office. Farmers and proletarians are scarce in the occupational file, again consistent with the lower middle class origins of most nationalist leaderships. Similarly, the fact that these men, on the whole, averaged in their thirties while participating as revolutionaries demonstrates that their relatively young age fits the mold of apparently all anti-colonial elites.

\* \* \*

Let us conclude with a final word about using the background approach for the study of elite behavior. We have seen, for instance, that "military" roles and friendship circles (overlapping with IRB membership) are clearly related to civil war positions, and we have argued throughout that this is a valuable though limited type of explanation for leadership behavior. The tendency in all such studies is to set aside political considerations at the outset and then forget they ever existed. Backgrounds are somewhat arbitrarily deemed independent variables, and political events and constraints are thought to be dependent upon them. (Remember, correlations can only demonstrate links between factors and not the flow of causation.)

In the case of Ireland's revolutionaries, this type of inherent bias has a very practical result in redirecting one's focus away from Britain's responsibility for the crisis. This was not our intention, although it became part and parcel of this work given the necessary preoccupation with individuals' attributes. Republicans emerge from these pages as certain types of extremists with specific characteristics --plain and simple. It is easy to lose sight of the nasty fact that Britain erected the partition around Ulster, lied about its permanent nature, and set about dividing the elite into "fanatical gunmen" opposing "responsbile" Free State proponents. No doubt fanaticism may be the proper response to a sordid colonial presence that oppressed Ireland for centuries! Britain's continued guarantee of full support to Ulster Protestants has kept the Republican spirit alive all these years, and it clearly "caused" the conflict as much as any sociological factors. What we have attempted in this lengthy analysis is to describe and partially explain the differing leadership responses to these political facts of life.



## Appendix I

## THE LEADERS' ROLE IN THE EASTER RISING (DUBLIN, 1916)

Pro-TreatyitesRising Participants

1. Piaras Beaslai (Dail member for Kerry [1918-21], Kerry and West Limerick [1921], Director of Publicity). In Rising, Dublin.<sup>1</sup>

2. Michael Collins (IRB head during War of Independence, Dail Minister of Finance, Director of Intelligence of the IRA, Director of Operations of the IRA). He fought alongside Connolly at Dublin's General Post Office, surrendered at the end of the week and then was interned at Frongoch Prison. His universally recognized sense of practicality and efficiency<sup>2</sup> was sorely offended by the apparent needless losses of a poorly planned insurrection: "[We] bungled terribly costing many a good life."<sup>3</sup> From a post-Treaty hindsight perspective he saw the Republic declared at Easter Week "a wonderful gesture--throwing down the gauntlet of defiance to the enemy, expressing to ourselves the complete freedom we aimed at."<sup>4</sup>

3. William Cosgrave (Dail Eireann member for North Kikenny [1919], Local Government Minister in the Dail [1919], headed the Irish Free State Government in 1923). Fought in Dublin under Eamonn Kent

and had his death sentence commuted on the same day as Sean MacBride (Maud Gonne's husband) was executed.<sup>5</sup>

4. E.J. Duggan (Dail Member for South Meath [1918], Secretary for Home Affairs [1922]). In Rising.<sup>6</sup>

5. Darrell Figgis (Honorary Secretary of the Sinn Fein [October 1917 - May 1918], Editor of The Republic [June 1919 - September 1919], Chairman of Committee to Draft Constitution [1922], Dail Member County Dublin [1922]). Ulrick O'Connor notes that he was not an Easter Week rebel and was essentially an anti-Unionist rather than a firm Republican. (Figgis later criticized the Sinn Fein strategem of presenting the Republican demand before the Paris Peace Conference.) Yet, in Figgis's memoir, Recollections of the Irish War, he describes hearing news of the Rising at his Achill Island retreat--Royal Irish Constabulary pickets ringed the house--and the attempt to escape so as to create a division in the West. In his own words, "None of us expected to survive."<sup>7</sup>

6. Desmond Fitzgerald (IRA Director of Publicity; in Cosgrave ministry [1923]). Out of jail only three weeks for ignoring a banishment order, Fitzgerald walked into the Rising at the General Post Office. Padraic Pearse told him, "that O'Rahilly . . . was in charge of one side of the top part and he appointed me O'Rahilly's adjutant."<sup>8</sup> He was arrested and handcuffed to De Valera and Richard Hayes.

7. Michael Hayes (Dail Eireann Member; Minister of Education [1922]). F.X. Martin notes that Hayes as a junior faculty member at University College was among those that "did not believe an armed

revolt was justified at the time, but once the fighting began were convinced that they should join their companions in arms."<sup>9</sup>

8. Dr. Richard Hayes (Dail Member of East Limerick). Fought at Ashbourne.<sup>10</sup>

9. Michael Kilroy (IRA leader). Tried to mobilize for the Rising in Mayo.<sup>11</sup>

10. Dr. Pat Macartan (Supreme Council of the IRB; Dail member). He initially criticized the secret IRB plans for the Rising at a Supreme Council meeting (January 1916): "Who are we like the Three Tailors of Tooley Street to call a Rising? Before you commit a nation to war you should have the support of the people. We should gain that first."<sup>12</sup> In any case, he eventually joined in the violent fait accompli engineered by the clandestine IRB Military Council (Pearse, Plunkett, Ceantt, Clarke, and MacDermott).

11. Denis McCullough (President of the Supreme Council of the IRB [1916]). Though IRB President, he was not informed of the plans for an insurrection until the last moment. In January 1916 it seemed as if McCullough would support such an "elitist" decision: "Well, what are we organized for? 'Tis obvious the country will never do it unless we start it . . . to organize for it and trust the people afterward."<sup>13</sup> Sean MacDermott finally revealed the actual timetable for rebellion, less than a week before Easter Monday. A reluctant McCullough voices the inevitable choice: "it looks to me like murder and suicide . . . if you are going to turn out, what can I do but turn out my men and do my best? But if I live through this, Sean, I'll

have something to say to you and Tom Clarke'--when I saw him next he was going out to his trial in Richmond Barracks."<sup>14</sup>

12. Sean McGarry (Dail Eireann member [1919]; alderman, City of Dublin; Dail Eireann member Midlands Division [1922]; General Secretary of the Volunteers [1917]; President of IRB [Fall 1917]). Fought at General Post Office.<sup>15</sup>

13. Joe McGrath (Dail Eireann Member [1919-21]; Minister of Labour and Minister of Industry and Commerce under Cosgrave in Irish Free State Government). Interestingly, the London Times (28 March 1966, p. 12e) noted at his death that he had fought in the Rising and was "interned during which time he was singled out by General Michael Collins [sic] as the type of man he needed in the struggle ahead." Apparently, the revolutionary persona of "Mick" has been inflated to the point where the British press is unaware of his sublatern role at the General Post Office.

14. Richard Mulcahy (IRA Chief of Staff [1919-21]; Dail member from Clontarf, Dublin [1918-22]; Chief of Staff, Irish Free State Army; Assistant Minister of Defense Irish Free State). Calton Younger notes that Mulcahy led an assault on the Royal Irish Constabulary at Ashbourne during Easter Week.<sup>16</sup> Thomas Jones, the British Cabinet Secretary, referred to Mulcahy as "the only successful IRA Commander in 1916,"<sup>17</sup> clearly an underestimation of De Valera's stand at Boland's Mill.

15. Batt O'Connor (Dail Member). Fought in General Post Office.<sup>18</sup>

16. Diarmuid O'Hegarty (IRB Executive; First Dublin Battalion, Volunteers). Arrested after Easter Week and released from internment quickly. Ernie O'Malley noted that "during the Easter scrap I was told he had wandered about with a puttee trailing loose; when one looked at him one remember the puttee."<sup>19</sup>

17. Kevin O'Higgins (Dail member for Queens County [1919]; Assistant to Cosgrave Local Government Ministry; Free State Minister). He was home at Stradbally, on holiday, when the news of the Rising came. O'Higgins then "left immediately for Dublin but had only reached Athy when his progress was halted."<sup>20</sup>

18. Sean O'Muirthile (Gaelic League organizer in Kerry, Clare and Limerick; Supreme Council of IRB [1922]). In a biographical note (Capuchin Annual, 1967), there is a short reference to O'Muirthile being "associated with the Limerick preparations for the Rising but had managed to escape arrest."<sup>21</sup> Yet, Ernie O'Malley emphasized in his autobiography that he had not taken part in the Rising. Could Commandant O'Malley's oversight be related to the pro-Treaty position assumed by O'Muirthile in 1922.<sup>22</sup>

19. Georoid O'Sullivan (IRA Adjutant General [1919-1922]; Dail member). Fought and captured at the General Post Office.<sup>23</sup>

20. Liam Tobin (Assistant Director of Intelligence, IRA, under Michael Collins). As a lad of nineteen, fought in the Rising under Tom Clarke.<sup>24</sup>

21. J.J. Walsh (Dail member for Cork City [1918]; Postmaster in Provisional Government). Fought in General Post Office.<sup>25</sup>

### Rising Non-Participants

1. Arthur Griffith (Headed pre-Rising Sinn Fein; Dail Home Affairs Minister; Prime Minister of Free State [1922]). As noted above (p.     ), Griffith was wedded to Sinn Fein's Dual Monarchy ideology at the time of the Rising--not pacifist though decidedly wary of suicidal gestures. In any case, he did try to sign up at the General Post Office once hostilities broke out, only to be rebuffed and directed to save his propaganda talents for the long struggle ahead. Darrell Figgis writes,

[Easter Week] Thursday he conceived the plan of a call to the country to come to the help of the men of Dublin. . . . [With MacNeill] two of them wrote an appeal to the country to rise and assist Dublin, and they arranged for that appeal to be dispatched. . . . The appeal was never sent. All roads were held by the military and by armed police, all travellers stopped and a close watch kept on all persons thought to be dangerous.<sup>26</sup>

2. Bulmer Hobson (Editor of Irish Freedom and The Republic; pre-Rising Supreme Council of the IRB). His antagonism towards any premature Rising, criticism of the anti-democratic conspirators of the IRB's military, and arrest by the Leinster IRB Executive on the eve of the Rising were discussed in Chapter 7 (pp.     ). In his words, "I had done my last to stop the Rising."<sup>27</sup>

3. Eoin MacNeill (Sinn Fein Executive [1917]; Dail Minister [1919]). Obviously, his countermand order as President of Volunteers (see p.     ) relegates MacNeill to the non-participant category, although, as noted above, he did join Griffith in his unsuccessful belated effort to rouse the countryside. In the Irish Volunteer (25 December 1915), MacNeill directed an attack against a precipitous

Rising in general and the threatened violent actions of James Connolly in particular: "No man has the right to seek relief of his own feelings at the expense of his country. Any act of rash violence will be used to the great injury of the national cause."<sup>28</sup> A Rising would not have the support of the Irish people: "A few of us, a small proportion who think about the evils of the English government in Ireland, are always discontented. We should be downright fools to measure many others by the standards of our own thoughts."<sup>29</sup> And even in a retrospective view, from a vantage point where the Rising's worth could be more fairly assessed, MacNeill maintained an ambivalent attitude: "Had I know their grim purpose I might have acted differently. I might have subscribed to it. And yet I am not sure."<sup>30</sup>

4. J.J. O'Connell (IRA General Headquarters Staff). Along with Hobson, O'Connell advised Eoin MacNeill (April 20, 1916) that the mobilization orders for Easter Monday given by Pearse and company "were tantamount to insurrection."<sup>31</sup> These three, according to Sean MacEntee (an anti-Treaty Rising participant himself), then confronted Pearse at his St. Edna's school to no avail.<sup>32</sup>

5. P.S. O'Hegarty (Supreme Council of the IRB). He was outraged that the Volunteers were called out for insurrection without giving them a choice and without informing the IRB Executive.<sup>33</sup>

Leaders too Young to have Participated, Outside the Country or Residing in a Non-Organized Area, or Lack of Information

1. Charles Dalton (IRA Intelligence staff under Liam Tobin). He was merely thirteen at Easter 1916, although in his memoir he does admit that "If only I had been older I would have helped in the fight. I felt that I should love to join the 'Rebels' but the sound of firing frightened me."<sup>34</sup> And fourteen he did join up with the Volunteers.

2. Emmett Dalton (IRA Assistant Director of Training [1922]). Fought throughout World War I as a major in the British Army.<sup>35</sup>

Lack of Information

1. Ernest Blythe (Dail Eireann Member from North Monaghan [1919-21]; Cabinet Minister for Trade and Commerce [1921]).

2. Michael Brennan (IRA Commandant, 1st Western Division).

3. Sean Hales (Dail member).

4. Pat Hogan (Dail member from Galway [1921]; Minister of Agriculture in the Irish Free State.

5. P.J. Little (Sinn Fein Executive [1917-22]; Dail member). Arrested in 1916 after the Rising.

6. Fionan Lynch (Dail Member [1919-21]).

7. Sean McEoin (Dail member for Longford and Westmeath; Commandant, IRA Longford).

8. Sean Milroy (Dail member).

9. Eoin O'Duffy (IRA General Headquarters).
10. Liam de Roistre (Dail member for Cork City [1919-21]).

#### Anti-Treatyites

1. Gerry Boland (Commandant 7th Battalion of the IRA [1921]).  
Fought at Jacob's factory, Dublin.<sup>36</sup>
2. Harry Boland (Dail Deputy; member of IRB's Supreme Council).  
In the Rising.<sup>37</sup>
3. Robert Brennan (National Director of Elections [1918];  
Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs; Dail member). Participated in the  
Rising and interned in an English prison.<sup>38</sup>
4. Cathal Brugha (Dail Minister of Defense; Dail Deputy  
representing Waterford). Second-in-command to Eamonn Ceannt, Brugha  
--born Charles Burgess--received more than a dozen serious wounds  
during Easter Week.<sup>39</sup>
5. Eamon De Valera (IRA President; President of Dail). The  
Commandant at Boland's Mill which, "Along with the Four Courts, held  
by Commandant Daly, . . . remained to the end the most strongly  
defended post in the city."<sup>40</sup>
6. Lawrence Ginnell (only "leader" belonging to Nationalist  
Parliamentary Party; House of Commons seat from Westmeath [1906-22];  
IRA Director of Publicity [1919]). At the time of the Rising,  
Ginnell was representing Westmeath for the Parliamentary Party.

When his leader, John Redmond in the Commons, applauded the execution of the Easter Week conspirators, Ginnell was to scream out, "Murder!" By the post-Rising Sinn Fein Ard-Fheis (October 1917), he was elected, along with William Cosgrave, Treasurer of the Republican Party.

7. Tom Hales (First Officer of the West Cork Brigade IRA).  
In Rising mobilization.<sup>41</sup>

8. Sean Lemass (Barracks Adjutant at the IRA "irregular" Headquarters at Four Courts [Spring 1922]; Prime Minister of the Irish Republic, Fianna Fail [during 1960s]). At fifteen-and-a-half he had joined De Valera's A-Company, Third Battalion, Irish Volunteers. Fought at the General Post Office with his brother Noel.<sup>42</sup>

9. Sean MacEntee (Dail member for South Monaghan [1919-21]; Acting Brigadier of Belfast Brigade IRA [1919-21]; Member of National Executive of Irish Volunteers [1917-19]). He was Louth and Meath Brigade Commandant (Volunteers, 1916); received the countermand order halting mobilization, and joined the Rising anyway. His sentence of death was commuted by the British military authorities.<sup>43</sup>

10. Constance Markievicz (Dail Minister of Labour [1919]; first woman returned to Parliament under British franchise). Fought at the College of Surgeons under Commandant Michael Mallin. Dangerfield notes her "melodramatic" surrender: "Taking off her revolver, she kissed it before handing it to a Major Wheeler, and said, 'I am ready.'"<sup>44</sup>

11. Liam Mellows (Dail Deputy for Galway; IRA General Headquarters Staff). Led a rising in the west that petered out

out after a few days. The "British forces scoured Connaught for him but he managed to escape to the U.S. in women's clothes."<sup>45</sup>

12. Rory O'Connor (IRA Director of Engineering; Clerk of Dail [1919]). Fought and wounded in the Rising.<sup>46</sup>

13. Sean T. O'Kelley (first member of Griffith's Sinn Fein [1906] to win a parliamentary seat at Westminster; Honorary Secretary of Sinn Fein [1908-10]; Sinn Fein M.P. for North Dublin City [1918]; Spaker of Dail [1919-21]; Minister for Local Government and Public Health [1932] in De Valera's first Fianna Fail Government; President of the Irish Republic [1945-59]). It was claimed that "The highlight of his career . . . was when he heard Pearse reading the Proclamation of the Republic in front of the General Post Office."<sup>47</sup> After the Rising he was lodged with other insurrectionaries in Richmond Barracks (Dublin), released at Christmas (1917), again arrested and deported, remaining interned until a general amnesty.

14. Ernie O'Malley (Commandant of Second Southern Division IRA [1922]). As a medical student at Trinity College--a Protestant Ascendancy institution--he responded to the fighting by obtaining a rifle and firing off his ammunition. He records in his autobiography a prior disdain for the Volunteer movement that changed into support as Easter Week progressed: "The men down there were right, that I felt sure of. They had a purpose which I did not share. But no one had a right to Ireland except the Irish. . . . I was going to help them in some way."<sup>48</sup> O'Malley records the general populace's sentiments towards the "Sinn Fein" rebels; defeated insurrectionaries held

responsible for the destruction of a good part of central Dublin: "People taunted, jeered and spat at them as they swung by singing. Some few wave handkerchiefs or shouted a greeting. The grand adventure was over."<sup>49</sup> The execution of Rising "leader" Sean Macbride (his anti-British military role in the Boer War proved his undoing more than his nonexistent leadership of the Easter Rising), a frequent visitor to the O'Malley household, was the final blow for this young medical student. He promptly joined F-Company 1st Battalion Dublin IRA.

15. Sean Russell (Director of Munitions IRA; General Headquarters [1919-21]. Veteran of Easter Week.<sup>50</sup>

16. Dr. James Ryan (Dail member for South Wexford [1919]; Brigade Commandant IRA, South Wexford [1920]). As a medical student, Ryan cared for the wounded at the General Post Office (Dublin, 1916). During the fighting, Tom Clarke related to him the secret history of the IRB expecting his survival, given his Red Cross category.<sup>51</sup>

17. Austin Stack (Dail Deputy for Kerry; Cabinet Minister). As Commandant of the Kerry Brigade (Irish Volunteers, 1916), Stack prepared for the ill-fated landing of German arms on the West Coast. He was sentenced to death for his complicity in the Rising plans.<sup>52</sup>

18. Oscar Traynor (Dublin Brigade Vice Commandant [1920]). In the Rising (Dublin).<sup>53</sup>

### Non-Participants

#### 1. Tom Barry (Commandant West Cork Flying Column IRA).

He was enlisted in the British Army serving in Mesopotamia during 1916. He notes in his autobiography that he had not heeded Redmond's call to the British colors or enlisted to save Belgium from the Huns. Rather, he "wanted to see what the war was like, to get a gun, to see new countries. . . . Above all I went because I knew no Irish history and had no national consciousness."<sup>54</sup> Reading of the "Sinn Fein" rebellion in the paper, and linking their struggle to those of subjected peoples of the Empire, especially Indian nationalists, the brutal execution policy aroused this young Irish soldier: "Thus through the blood sacrifices of the men of 1916 had one Irish youth of 18 been awakened to Irish Nationalism."<sup>55</sup>

#### 2. Robert Barton (Dail member for Wicklow; Dail Minister of Agriculture [1919-21]; Minister of Economic Affairs [1921-22]).

As a lieutenant in the British Army and the son of an Irish Protestant landlord, Barton was said to have been swayed toward the nationalist position after witnessing the brutal treatment of the Dublin insurrectionaries firsthand.<sup>56</sup>

#### 3. Dan Breen (IRA Leader, Tipperary).

In his autobiography, My Fight for Irish Freedom, Breen leaves little doubt that he was more than willing to carry out his part of an insurrection: "Part of the duty of the Volunteers of my district was to have been the destroying of an important line of railway communications."<sup>57</sup> He blames his non-participation on the "confusion of orders and counterorders" emanating

from Dublin, which meant that "the men of Tipperary got no chance of having their mettle tested."<sup>58</sup>

4. Erskine Childers (Dail Minister for Wicklow and Kildare [1921]; Secretary to the October 21, 1921 London Conference). An Englishman serving in Naval Intelligence during the war.<sup>59</sup>

5. Liam Lynch (Cork Brigade Commandant [1919]; Southern Division Commandant [1921]). Robert Kee notes that Lynch was not a committed Republican until the Conscription Crisis, when he left his job for full-time revolutionary activities.<sup>60</sup> In Florence O'Donoghue's biographical No Other Law, his account describes Lynch's membership in the Volunteers (1914) and his failure to participate in the Rising due to "confusion and uncertainty which followed conflicting orders from Dublin." In Fermoy, during Easter Week, he watched Eamonn Kent's defense and "vowed to make them pay."<sup>61</sup>

6. Sean Moylan (Commandant Cork #2 Brigade IRA; Dail member). His unit was prepared for Easter Week, but was stopped by MacNeill's countermand order.<sup>62</sup>

7. Count Plunkett (Dail Minister of Foreign Affairs [1919]). His son, Joseph Plunkett, was executed for his leadership role in the Rising.

[Except for Countess Markievicz, none of the women revolutionaries/Dail members (Mrs. Clarke, Grace Plunkett, Mary MacSwiney, Mrs. O'Callaghan, and Mrs. Pearse) were directly involved in the fighting. This is not to say that they were lacking in fervor for

a "blood sacrifice." Mrs. Tom Clarke, for instance, visiting her condemned husband in his cell, offered this advice: "Why did you surrender? . . . I thought you were going to hold out for six months."<sup>63</sup>

#### Lack of Information

1. Frank Aiken (Commandant Fourth Northern Division IRA [1921]).
2. Frank Barrett (Member of IRA "irregular" Executive [1922]).
3. Frank Fahy (a founder of the Volunteers; Dail member).
4. Joe McKelvey (Republican "irregular" Executive [1922]).
5. Peador O'Donnell (Brigade Commandant in Donegal; Member of IRA "irregular" Executive [1922]).
6. Florence O'Donoghue (Brigade Adjutant First Southern
7. Sean O'Hegarty (Brigade Commandant Cork #1 Brigade).
8. Sean J. O'Kelley (Dail member for Louth and Meath [1919]; Chairman of Dail [1921]).
9. William Pilkington.
10. Seumas Robinson (IRA leader). William O'Brien notes that Robinson was interned at Frongoch after the Rising.
11. P.J. Rutledge.
12. Maurice Twomey (Adjutant Cork #2 Brigade IRA; Staff Officer First Southern Division IRA [1920]).

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Breandon Mac Giolla Choille, Intelligence Notes, 1913-1916 (Dublin: Talbot Press, 1966), p. 48.

<sup>2</sup>Longford and O'Neill, Eamon De Valera, p. 248. Desmond Fitzgerald recognized that Collins was the most efficient officer in the General Post Office (O'Broin, Revolutionary Underground, p. 145).

<sup>3</sup>O'Broin, Revolutionary Underground, p. 178.

<sup>4</sup>Collins, Path to Freedom, p. 65.

<sup>5</sup>Kee, The Green Flag, p. 576.

<sup>6</sup>Mac Choille, Intelligence Notes, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup>Figgis, Recollections of the Irish War, pp. 144-46.

<sup>8</sup>Fitzgerald, Memoirs of Desmond Fitzgerald, p. 130.

<sup>9</sup>Martin, "1916: Myth, Fact and Mystery," p. 46.

<sup>10</sup>Fitzgerald, Memoirs of Desmond Fitzgerald, p. ix.

<sup>11</sup>Florence O'Donoghue, "Ceannt, Devoy, O'Rahilly, and the Military Plan," in Leaders and Men of the Easter Rising, ed. F.X. Martin (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967), p. 200.

<sup>12</sup>O'Broin, Revolutionary Underground, p. 166.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 168.

<sup>15</sup>Lynch, The IRB and the 1916 Rising, p. 107.

<sup>16</sup>Younger, Ireland's Civil War, p. 32.

<sup>17</sup>Jones, Whitehall Diary, III:193.

<sup>18</sup>Skinner, Politicians by Accident, pp. 265-70.

<sup>19</sup>O'Malley, Army Without Banners, p. 53.

- <sup>20</sup>White, Kevin O'Higgins, p. 17.
- <sup>21</sup>General Richard Mulcahy, "The Irish Volunteer Convention, 27 October 1917," Capuchin Annual 42 (1967): 401.
- <sup>22</sup>O'Malley, Army Without Banners, p. 103.
- <sup>23</sup>Skinner, Politicians by Accident, p. 53.
- <sup>24</sup>Charles Dalton, With the Dublin Brigade, 1917-1921 (London: Peter Davies, 1929), pp. 82-83.
- <sup>25</sup>Talbot, Michael Collins' Own Story, p. 243.
- <sup>26</sup>Figgis, Recollections of the Irish War, p. 143.
- <sup>27</sup>O'Broin, Revolutionary Underground, p. 173.
- <sup>28</sup>Mac An Bheatha, James Connolly, p. 41.
- <sup>29</sup>Kee, The Green Flag, p. 554.
- <sup>30</sup>Talbot, Michael Collins' Own Story, p. 34.
- <sup>31</sup>Kee, The Green Flag, p. 557.
- <sup>32</sup>MacEntee, Episode at Easter Week, p. 47.
- <sup>33</sup>O'Broin, Revolutionary Underground, p. 173.
- <sup>34</sup>Dalton, With the Dublin Brigade, p. 38.
- <sup>35</sup>Younger, Ireland's Civil War, p. 128.
- <sup>36</sup>Skinner, Politicians by Accident, pp. 214-15.
- <sup>37</sup>Mac Choille, Intelligence Notes, p. 48.
- <sup>38</sup>Brennan, Allegiance, p. 44.
- <sup>39</sup>Macardle, The Irish Republic, p. 901.
- <sup>40</sup>MacManus, Eamon De Valera, p. 45.
- <sup>41</sup>Barry, Guerrilla Days in Ireland, p. 15.
- <sup>42</sup>MacDonagh, Ireland, p. 132; Skinner, Politicians by Accident, p. 54.
- <sup>43</sup>MacEntee, Episode at Easter Week, p. 49.

- <sup>44</sup>Dangerfield, The Damnable Question, p. 200.
- <sup>45</sup>The Times of London, 9 December 1922, p. 10.
- <sup>46</sup>Macardle, The Irish Republic, p. 905.
- <sup>47</sup>The Times Obituary Index, 1961-1970, p. 600.
- <sup>48</sup>Earnan O'Malley, "A Student in the Rising," in Dublin 1916, ed. Robert Joseph McHugh (London: Arlington Books, 1966), p. 134.
- <sup>49</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 137.
- <sup>50</sup>Cronin, The McGarrity Papers, p. 162.
- <sup>51</sup>Skinner, Politicians by Accident, pp. 147-48.
- <sup>52</sup>Macardle, The Irish Republic, p. 906.
- <sup>53</sup>Skinner, Politicians by Accident, pp. 256-57.
- <sup>54</sup>Barry, Guerrilla Days in Ireland, p. 2.
- <sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>56</sup>Wilkerson, The Zeal of the Convert, p. 150.
- <sup>57</sup>Breen, My Fight, p. 5.
- <sup>58</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>59</sup>Coogan, Ireland Since the Rising, p. 20.
- <sup>60</sup>Kee, The Green Flag, p. 619.
- <sup>61</sup>O'Donoghue, No Other Law, pp. 8-10.
- <sup>62</sup>Skinner, Politicians by Accident, p. 270.
- <sup>63</sup>Coogan, Ireland Since the Rising, p. 20.

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