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Revision Notes for Leaving Cert 2011

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Introduction

These notes have been created by Mr Barry Finn one of Irelands leading history teachers and a teacher of History at St Columba's College, Co Dublin. The notes are very comprehensive and cover some areas of the Leaving Cert History course in great detail.

THE APPRENTICE BOYS OF DERRY

Background

The Apprentice Boys of Derry Association was established to commemorate the “No Surrender” action of 13 apprentices in closing the gates of Derry against Catholic troops under Lord Antrim in December of 1688. This action helped to precipitate a determined resistance to James II and support for William III, his son-in-law, who replaced him as king following the “Glorious Revolution” of 1688. When James appeared in person in April 1689, he was met with gunshot and cries of “No Surrender”. The 105-day siege which followed, during which starvation and disease ravaged the city and 4,000 people died, ended in August 1689 when the ship the *Mountjoy* broke through the boom which has blocked the Foyle estuary.

The garrison commander, Robert Lundy, who had advocated surrender, was deposed and replaced by Reverend George Walker. Lundy's name became a synonym for traitor and his effigy is traditionally burnt from the Walker Pillar on the walls of Derry every December. Some historians point to the Ulster Protestant “siege mentality” as dating from this time - “No Surrender” has become a loyalist slogan ever since and the arrival of 10,000 Protestant marchers every year for commemoration events has been seen as an expression of determination by Derry Unionists to maintain control of a city where they only make up 30% of the population.

Membership and Structure

“Membership of the Association is open to anyone who professes Christ through the reformed Protestant faith” - men only! Members can only be initiated within the city walls. The wearing of crimson collarettes by members recalls the crimson flag flown from the cathedral during the siege. This flag is also flown during commemorative events.

The Association originally comprised a number of clubs which are now referred to as “parent” clubs: the Apprentice Boys of Derry Club, the Walker Club, the Murray Club, the Mitchelbourne Club, the No Surrender Club, the Browning Club, the Baker Club and the Campsie Club. With the exception of the No Surrender Club, the clubs are named after men involved in the defence of Derry during the 1688 – 1689 siege. The parent clubs are based in the Memorial Hall in Derry.

In 1859 a General Committee was formed, and the office of Governor was created shortly afterwards. From 1877, despite the initial opposition of the General Committee, a modest development of clubs outside the city took place – in Belfast, Glasgow etc. These are referred to as “branch clubs”. The number of such clubs increased dramatically from the 1970s, with obvious implications for the scale of the celebrations in Derry.

There is no formal link with the Orange Order, but nonetheless many men were members of both organisations. For Unionist politicians during the Stormont years, it was never as important to be as Apprentice Boy as it was to be in the Orange Order, but Brookeborough, Faulkner, O'Neill and Paisley were all members.

The Derry Celebrations

Each year, the Apprentice Boys hold two commemorative events in Derry, usually within the walls of the city. The bigger is held on August 12th to celebrate the relief of the city in 1689. On December 18th a celebration is held to commemorate the shutting of the gates in 1688.

The main focus of the celebrations is a parade to and from St. Columb's Cathedral (Church of Ireland) with a wreath being laid at the city's war memorial. By the 1960s, the August celebrations had settled into a regular pattern, beginning with the gathering of members of the parent clubs at a section of the city walls known as the Mall Wall prior to the cathedral service, and finishing with a larger procession in the afternoon which included the branch clubs. The Mall Wall overlooks the Nationalist/Catholic area of the Bogside.

During the August celebrations, canon are fired once and then three times at midnight of the night before the parade in remembrance of the “Brave 13”. During the December celebrations members of each of the 13 parent clubs, dressed in 17th Century costume, make their way to the city's four historic gates in remembrance of the actions of the original apprentices in 1688. An effigy of Lundy is traditionally burned during these December celebrations also. The Apprentice Boys also hold an Easter Monday parade, traditionally the start of the marching season in Northern Ireland, and a Remembrance Day parade around 11th November.

Events in the History of the Apprentice Boys

- 28th July 1689 – first relief celebrations when starving citizens assemble on walls of Derry to welcome the relief ships.
- 8th August 1869 – first organised celebrations with service of thanksgiving in St. Columb's Cathedral.
- 1788/1789 – centenary celebrations attended by Catholic clergy and bishop, Dr. McDevitt.
- 1813 – Apprentice Boys club founded in Dublin
- 1814 – Apprentice Boys of Derry club founded in Derry
- 1824 – No Surrender Club founded and Apprentice Boys of Derry take charge of celebrations in the city.

- 1859 – General Committee established to regulate and oversee the various clubs and organise the commemorations.
- 1869 – serious rioting in Londonderry leads to official enquiry by British Government discovering the increasing alienation of Catholics who had once took part in the celebrations: *“the character of the demonstrations (by the Apprentice Boys) has certainly undergone a change, and, among the Catholic lower classes at least, they are now regarded with the most hostile feelings”*.
- Post WWII – dramatic expansion of the organisation, especially during the 1970s.
- 15th August 1949 – 30,000 Apprentice Boys march in Derry.
- 15th August 1960 – Viscount Brookeborough, PM of Northern Ireland, initiated as an Apprentice Boy.
- 13th August 1964 – Rev. Hastings, delivering the sermon at the service in St. Columb's, condemns ecumenism as *“action to please Rome in every way”* and *“Lundies and those who are prepared to betray their friends and their faith”*.
- 12th April 1966 – at an Apprentice Boys rally, Minister for Commerce, Brian Faulkner, criticises commemorations in the North of the 50th anniversary of the Easter Rising as *“celebrating an act of sedition”*.
- 12th August 1968 – 40,000 Apprentice Boys march in a two-and-a-half mile long procession and 400 new members are initiated, including Harry West, MP for Enniskillen.
- 5th October 1968 – Apprentice Boys call a march in Derry to counter a NICRA march, the former does not proceed but the latter does and sees the RUC baton-charge the marchers including SDLP leader Gerry Fitt.
- 12th August 1969 – the “Battle of the Bogside” erupts during the annual Apprentice Boys march and serious rioting continues for three days until the British Army arrives on the streets of Derry, serious violence had been anticipated.
- 1970 – Apprentice Boys marches and burning of Lundy effigy are banned
- 1971 – marches etc banned again, Brian Faulkner, PM of Northern Ireland, is expelled from the Apprentice Boys for his association with these bans.
- 1972 – parade to be confined only to Protestant Waterside area of the city but is called off by General Committee, rally held there instead by Ian Paisley.
- 1973 – parade confined to Waterside again, IRA blows up the 25m high Walker Pillar.
- 1975 – parade permitted within but along the city walls.
- 1989 – tercentenary celebrated with backing of Nationalist City Council.
- 1990 – Ian Paisley expelled for condemning the Apprentice Boys seeking funds from the International Fund for Ireland.
- 1992 – restored plinth of Walker monument re-dedicated and memorial garden is opened.

A Controversial Organisation? - Nationalist Perspective

For many Catholics and Nationalists, the Apprentice Boys symbolise sectarianism and triumphalism. They point out that Catholics are excluded from membership and believe that huge numbers of parades every year are designed to hammer home the message of Protestant and Unionist dominance in Ulster.

They highlight the fact that parades assemble high on the walls of Derry overlooking the bogside as a deliberate “rubbing of salt in the wounds” gesture to remind the Catholics and Nationalists below who is in charge. To this they also add the issue of the burning of the Lundy effigy, the frequent practice in the past of Apprentice Boys throwing coins from the walls down onto the unemployed Catholics of the bogside, the deliberately insensitive routing of parades through strongly Catholic areas and the habit of stopping these parades outside Catholic homes or churches while loyalist bands would bang their drums at a deafening level - Derry has a 70% Catholic majority yet the Apprentice Boys welcome 10,000 Protestants from across Ulster into the city several times a year

They cite the Parades Commission statistics which say the Apprentice Boys hold at least 200 parades each year as grossly over the top and proof that the organisation is not about celebrating cultural heritage but constantly expressing Protestant and Unionist supremacy at the expense of Catholics and Nationalists.

A Controversial Organisation? - Unionist Perspective

The Apprentice Boys strenuously deny the charges of sectarianism and triumphalism and maintain they are merely celebrating their religious and cultural heritage as they have every right to – just as the French celebrate Bastille Day or the Americans the 4th of July.

They point out that nowhere in any vows or initiation ceremonies is there any reference to the Roman Catholic faith and that the original siege of Derry was much more complex than Catholics versus Protestants, with both armies containing soldiers of different faiths and Pope Innocent XI himself being an ally of William of Orange.

They stress they have no political affiliations of any sort, nor any links with other loyalist organisations like the Orange Order, and that there is nothing secret about their meetings or their ceremonies, mostly consisting of a series of questions and readings from the bible and which have been covered by reporters and TV cameras.

The Apprentice Boys see the relief of the siege of Derry as a victory of democracy and liberty over tyranny – the divine right of kings as espoused by James II and his ally Louis XIV of France being replaced by the reforms of William and Mary establishing the supremacy of parliament. By the same token, celebrations also remember the dead of WWI and WWII.

The Apprentice Boys point out that Derry City Council, representing an overwhelmingly Catholic population, has met with them and discussed and funded their celebrations, as has the government of the Republic of Ireland (donating £30,000), as proof of the absence of any anti-Catholicism. They also stress the widening of the Relief of Derry celebrations into the week-long, culturally diverse “Maiden City” festival, including a Bluegrass Music Festival, Irish and Ulster Scots music and tuition, arts exhibitions and minority culture exhibitions from the Polish and Chinese communities.

Interpretations of Historians

“The siege of Derry carries an emotional charge that the more famous Battle of the Boyne lacks. In part, this is simply because the Maiden City (Derry), unlike the river Boyne, is situated within the six Ulster counties which became Northern Ireland in 1921. Ulster men and women participated in the defence of Derry, and their descendants still live there. The story serves to reinforce the political resolve of Ulster Protestants by recalling the unchanging threat to their faith and liberties by the Catholic majority in Ireland: ‘No Surrender’, the watchword of the defenders of Derry, has become the arch slogan of loyalism”, Brian Lacy.

“To most of those who march, the marching period is a celebration of their history, culture and religion, while to most of those who do not it is at best a colourful spectacle, at worst an expression of sectarian triumphalism”, Michael Hall.

“In no other spot in the North did I feel the surge of pride which an Ulsterman must feel as he thinks back over his own local history. Had I met an Orangeman as I stood on Walker's Bastion I would have wished to take his hand and shake it. If I were an Ulsterman I could never forget Derry. Its siege was a magnificent example of heroic endurance, from the 18th December 1688 when the gates were closed to the 12th August when the relief ships, that had for seven weeks been blocked on the Foyle by a boom, having burst through at the end of July, received the city and ended its torments”, Seán O'Faoláin.

THE COLERAINE UNIVERSITY CONTROVERSY

Background

Up until the 1960s, Queens College in Belfast was Northern Ireland's only university. In 1962, a Stormont government committee was established to investigate the possibility and location of a second university for Northern Ireland. It eventually recommended it be set up in the predominantly Protestant market town of Coleraine, a prosperous town of 15,000 inhabitants 30 miles east of Derry, rather than in Derry itself, a mainly Catholic city. The decision was seen as controversial because a university campus called Magee College had been based in Derry since the 1865 and many people saw it as the logical and natural choice for a second university (originally founded to train Presbyterian clergy, it had a "Liberal Arts" programme and was mostly attended by wealthy, Protestant students). Furthermore, Derry was the second city in Northern Ireland and the largest city in the west of the province. The issue of a second university was important for several reasons:

- i. The UK's post-WWII Welfare State meant significantly larger numbers of students were completing secondary education and looking to enroll at third level
- ii. By 1961 the Robbins Committee was ready to present its findings on higher education for Britain but had not included Northern Ireland in its brief
- iii. Magee College in Derry was very underfunded, struggling with its academic performance, in need of drastic reform and still did not have university status
- iv. Coleraine, Armagh and Craigavon (a newly created city named after Northern Ireland's first PM James Craig) all wanted to host the university and had begun lobbying to that end

A committee was set up under English educationalist Sir John Lockwood to review the state of higher education in Northern Ireland and make recommendations including (further into its deliberations) an actual physical location. The Lockwood Committee was expected to recommend granting Magee College in Derry full university status for the following reasons:

- Historical – Magee had a proud tradition of higher education dating back more than a century
- Geographical – Derry in the west of Northern Ireland would be a suitable counter-balance for Belfast on the east coast
- Social – Derry was Northern Ireland's second city, had a large student population which was not well served at higher level and had a Catholic majority increasingly becoming aware of its rights

The Lockwood Report, published in February 1965, recommended Coleraine as the site for the new university. Magee College and Derry City itself were rejected as unsuitable – Catholics and Nationalists were outraged, seeing the decision as proof that the Unionist government was deliberately starving the North-West of resources and development. Northern Ireland's demographic status saw Protestant and Unionist power strongest to the east of the river Bann, especially around Belfast, while the west was populated by the greater numbers of Catholics and Nationalists. John Hume would later identify this episode as a leading causal factor in the Civil Rights movement.

Catholic Resentment

Derry was a city with a 2:1 Catholic majority and 14,500 Catholic rate-payers vs. 8,000 Protestant, but it had 12 Protestant councillors vs 8 Catholic - the city was gerrymandered to enable the minority to run it. Most Derry Catholics felt that the Unionist government was deliberately discriminating against the area "west of the Bann". This was based on the accusation that major government decisions relating to transport and industrial development seemed to favour the east of the province, centred around Belfast. Examples of such decisions include:

- 1963: Benson Report on railways led to the closure of the west's only railway line
- 1964: Matthew Report recommended that a new city (Craigavon) for Northern Ireland be developed in the east of the province – even the name was a source of contention
- 1965: Wilson Plan designated areas for development in Northern Ireland, concentrating them heavily in the east
- 1966: Derry's historic naval base was closed

John Hume summed up Nationalist suspicions thusly: *"And so the plan stands clear. The minority in Northern Ireland resides mainly in the western counties of Londonderry, Tyrone and Fermanagh. To develop these areas is to develop areas*

opposed to the government and to lose the few Unionist seats held there. The plan therefore is to develop the strongly Unionist Belfast-Coleraine-Portadown triangle and to cause migration from west to east Ulster, redistributing and scattering the minority so that the Unionist party will not only maintain but strengthen its position”.

In 1964, in response to the closure of the western railways, Unionist politician John Hamill made the following point: “*Will Derry feel isolated? By isolating Derry will you not be giving a wonderful weapon to the other side? Will they not be able to say ‘Now you see your real place is over here with us’?*”

In an interview in 1968, Lord Brookeborough, PM of Northern Ireland from 1943 – 1963, said: “*There is a feeling of resentment that most, and let me emphasise the word most, that most Roman Catholics are anti-British and anti-Northern Ireland. This is nothing to do with religion at all. But there is a feeling of resentment that here is a man who is out to destroy Northern Ireland if he can possibly do it. That, I think, is it. They say why aren’t we given more higher positions. But how can you give somebody who is your enemy a higher position in order to allow him to come and destroy you?*” Openly admitting discrimination, Brookeborough always maintained he was prouder of being Grand Master of the Orange Order than of being PM of Northern Ireland.

Nonetheless, the people of Derry, a city of 70,000, three times the population of any town in Northern Ireland, aside from Belfast, and a campus and college dating back a century, expected the new university would be located in Derry at Magee College.

An anti-Catholic conspiracy? Why Coleraine and not Derry?

The Lockwood Committee, which contained no Catholics and nobody from the Derry area, laid down the following criteria for deciding where to locate the new university:

- Are the proposed location, size and sponsors such as to suggest that the creation of a worthwhile academic institution of university standard placed there would proceed smoothly and effectively?
- What, if any, particular sort of university is being aimed at in the light of the needs of the region of the UK in which it is to be established?
- Will staff of the necessary quality and energy be attracted in appropriate numbers?
- To what extent will the students be catered for, require lodgings or need to be provided with residence?
- Is there, in fact, a suitable site on which to create a university and is it available on suitable terms?
- What local financial and other support is likely to be available?
- Does the locality offer any necessary associated industrial or research activities?

With these questions in mind, based on terms and criteria relevant to locating universities in Britain and not taking into account the peculiar economic, social and cultural aspects of life in Northern Ireland, the committee considered the following points about Magee College:

- Legislation in the 1950s set up a board of trustees to run Magee. This board did not include representatives from the faculty or college professors, which created tension. These arrangements were seen as old-fashioned compared to newer university models.
- Magee was not included in the National University of Ireland Act of 1908, whereas Queen's University was. Magee did not have the power to award degrees and struggled financially, with teaching salaries frozen at 1865 levels into the 1920s. It depended heavily on government grants.
- The Lockwood Committee noted the “cramped physical situation” at Magee. Many students had to stay in hostels with no scope for private lodging. This contrasted with newly-created universities in the UK such as Sussex and Essex, located near the seaside with ample accommodation facilities.
- The Provost of TCD indicated in a confidential letter to Lockwood (8th Feb 1964) that the relationship between TCD and Magee which had existed since 1909 and whereby TCD students traditionally undertook part of their studies in Magee, was to end. Magee depended heavily on this relationship.
- A visit to Magee by the Lockwood Committee detected a “lack of dynamism” among the college community, with no evidence of “a clear idea about how the college should develop”. The committee noted the general atmosphere was complacent and that there were poor communication structures between the board of governors and staff.

The Lockwood Committee met for the first time in December 1963 – by its 11th meeting in June 1964 it had eliminated Magee as an option and was considering an entirely different function for it altogether. Submissions made to the committee by lobby groups from Derry had all centred on Magee as the location for the new university. With Magee out, the Lockwood Committee then considered the wider question of the appropriateness of the entire Derry area.

Derry as a location – Pros and Cons

Pros:

- A suitable site could be found outside the city
- It would suit the development of agriculture and biology, being near good farming land and on the coast
- It had a concentration of farming
- It supported a little cultural activity
- It might take the sting out of a change of function at Magee

Cons:

- Further industrial development appeared doubtful and it was difficult to see that part of Northern Ireland becoming a stronger and more active part of the community
- The Promotion Committee was not inspiring
- The housing situation was particularly bad and few lodgings would be available which meant that expensive halls of residence would have to be provided
- The existence of Magee was a mixed blessing
- It gave the impression of a frontier town and had never lost its siege mentality

Coleraine (incl. Portrush and Portstewart) as a location – Pros and Cons

Pros:

- Suitable for agriculture, marine biology and biology so the academic bias pointed to it
- There was some industrial growth in the area
- It offered immediate living amenities to the staff
- An adequate site could probably be found
- Lodgings were immediately available and the number of hotels etc would also allow for the holding of conferences and seminars
- Its proximity to Londonderry would soothe hurt feelings and attract support, while easing the demise of Magee
- The local population was adequate in numbers
- It was acceptable for social and economic reasons as a balance against Craigavon and Belfast

Cons:

- The Promotion Committee had not inspired confidence
- It had no cultural amenities

Other factors influencing the decision of the Lockwood Committee included:

- The Coleraine Promotions Committee heavily cited the University of Sussex and Essex model – devoting much of its submission to it. This is significant because several members of the Lockwood Committee had previously been involved with Sussex-Essex. To a certain extent, the Coleraine Committee had been coached by members of the

Sussex-Essex team and was now presenting to them.

- The Coleraine Committee showed scope for expansion of 200 acres in its proposal, as the Lockwood Committee favoured, and it produced two sketch maps – the Derry group provided no sketch maps.
- Derry City Council provided no case for a 200-acre site, saying it was concerned that such a disclosure would push up the price.
- The submission by Derry councillors seemed vague about how they might financially support a university – a proposed increase in rates would only yield one-fifth of the figure needed.
- It was estimated that 50% of investment in colleges went on accommodation or halls of residence. Availability of local accommodation could free up money for other investment. It was felt that the off-season, coastal accommodation provided by the “better quality” landlords of Portrush and Portstewart would fit the bill nicely.
- The Londonderry branch of the Association of University Teachers portrayed Derry city in a negative light, suggesting it was culturally deprived, having no theatre or concert hall.
- Derry's “lack of industry” and the unlikelihood of any development in the future were also taken into account – although it could be asked why a university town needed to be industrialised anyway, Coleraine was only a small country town.
- A 1964 memo to the government backing Coleraine/Portrush/Portstewart stated: *“Although not the major objective of university life, recreational and sporting facilities form a substantial part of the activities of any university. Athletics, cricket, rugby football, soccer, hockey and badminton, all the traditional sports of university life, flourish in this area and there are ideal facilities for each of these activities”*.

Reaction to the decision of the Lockwood Committee

By the 11th meeting of the Lockwood Committee it was clear Derry was not going to be chosen. The government began to worry about the public reaction and in December 1964 Basil McFarland, former mayor of Londonderry, said in a speech that he doubted if the imminent report would “*do Derry much good*”. In January 1965, the University for Derry Committee (UDC) was founded with John Hume, a local Catholic schoolteacher, as chairman. A huge protest meeting was held at the Guildhall on February 8th and the Lockwood report was published two days later:

“In our concerted view the Coleraine area satisfied our criteria better than any of the other areas we have considered and we are of the opinion that the new university will have the best opportunity of a good start and of ultimate success in that area. The implications of this recommendation for Magee College are inescapable. We see no alternative to its discontinuance in its present building and on its present site it could not be regarded as the nucleus of a new university planned to expand to 5/6,000 students. We do not consider the college provides a suitable basis for expansion. We recommend a progressive reduction in government grants until the end of 1969/1970 after which no further recurrent grant should be paid”. At the time, it seemed like Derry was not only losing the new university but Magee College too. Eventually it was to get a reprieve and become a college in the University of Ulster, but this was not known at the time and the decision was greeted with outrage. Salt was rubbed in the wound when it emerged the Lockwood Committee had recommended Armagh City should Northern Ireland need a third university.

The Stormont cabinet felt it could not overturn Lockwood's decision but there was much heated debate, especially on the issue of closing Magee completely. Two minutes silence were observed across Derry in protest on February 18th and many shops and businesses closed in support. 2,000 vehicles and up to 25,000 people travelled in a motorcade from Derry to Stormont to protest, led by Nationalist MP Eddie McAteer and Unionist Mayor, Albert Anderson. At the vote in parliament in March there was more heated debate and two Unionist MPs even voted with the Nationalist opposition against their own party. Nonetheless, O'Neill's government won the vote 27:19.

The “Faceless Men”

In May 1965, Robert Nixon, a Unionist MP from Derry, added to the tension and bitterness following the decision by claiming that “*nameless, faceless men from Londonderry*” had met the PM and Minister for Education on Friday February 19th and advised against the setting up of a university in the city or any further industrial social or economic development in Derry. Patrick Gormley, a Nationalist MP, backed up these claims and named the men in question, suggesting that they believed such developments in Derry might affect Unionist control of the city. Nixon was expelled from the Unionist Party and a petition signed by 15,000 people failed to convince the PM to order a public enquiry into these allegations.

Notes from the meeting suggest that O'Neill had wondered how an increase in the numbers of Catholics in Derry could be avoided in the event of industrialisation – he had been warned that Unionist control of Londonderry Corporation was already at risk because of the large Catholic population. Only ratepayers could vote, so an increase in jobs might lead to more Catholic votes, which were unlikely to go to the Unionists. However, records from the meeting indicate the men did lobby for the retention of Magee and, while fearing the political problems industrialisation in Derry would raise, saw the university issue as an exception.

Outcome and Significance of the Coleraine University Controversy

In the aftermath of the Lockwood decision, O'Neill tried to calm the situation by finding a solution to the fate of Magee College. A compromise proposal suggested Magee be able to provide some degree courses as part of the Coleraine University but this never developed and it was only later that Magee merged with Coleraine in the University of Ulster.

Lockwood died not long after the events, shocked by the furious reaction to his committee's decision. It was seen by Nationalists as another act of sectarianism against the Catholics of Derry. However, the evidence also suggests that the Committee based its decision on criteria that were entirely objective with no anti-Catholic bias. This is given extra weight by the fact that many Protestants and Unionists in Derry were angry with and protested against the decision – Eddie McAteer, a Nationalist MP, had made a speech in Stormont proposing Derry as the location as far back as 1960, with the firm support of Unionist MP Edward Jones. Derry's Protestants were as disadvantaged as their Catholic neighbours by Stormont's decisions on universities, railways, locations of new industries etc. Nonetheless, other Unionists seemed to want the city to stay undeveloped for obvious political reasons. However, when Ian Paisley and other more extreme Unionist leaders criticised O'Neill, they found ready listeners among the Unionist population west of the Bann.

Perhaps a tragic result of the affair was that the issue had been one that had united both Nationalists and Unionists, Protestants and Catholics, in a divided city – the Unionist controlled council had even pledged financial assistance should Derry's bid be successful. Areas of common ground between Northern Ireland's two communities were very few and far between, and this one ended in failure and disillusionment.

According to John Hume: *“The university decision electrified the people on the Nationalist side, and I think was really the spark that ignited the Civil Rights movement. When the university went to Coleraine, the chance of orderly change in Northern Ireland probably disappeared. It became clear to me certainly that change could only be affected by positive political action”*.

Historical Assessment of the Coleraine University Controversy

“The Lockwood Report revealed on 10th February 1965 that the province's second university was to be sited, not in depressed Derry where Magee University College had established an appropriate ethos and where local pride, crossing all religious barriers, had anticipated such an honour, but in the prosperous small market town of Coleraine. The solid Protestant character of Coleraine was held by critics of the decision to have outweighed other considerations and the fact that no Catholic had been appointed to the Lockwood Committee – or indeed to many other significant public bodies – seemed to belie in action the bland community admonitions of the new premier”, David Harkness.

“Derry...was outraged. The resultant protest movement was unprecedented. The same sort of liberal Unionist sentiment which had prompted the suggestion that Catholics be admitted to the party surfaced and made common cause with the Catholics of Derry and the opposition parties at Stormont. However, although defeated on the university issue, for John Hume and many other educated young Catholics, the seeds of a civil rights street protest movement had been planted by the Magee controversy. They would shortly sprout”, Tim Pat Coogan.

“It had obviously been decided to treat the inevitably hostile reaction of local Unionists in the west of Ulster as a necessary price for the political benefits to be gained from concentrating resources in the Protestant 'heartland' of the east. The existence within the Derry Unionist leadership of a significant group that saw 'modernisation' as disruptive of the local power structure may have encouraged the O'Neill entourage to hope that resistance to Lockwood would be seriously weakened”, Paul Bew, Peter Gibbon and Henry Patterson.

“The 'betrayal of Magee' can in no way be construed as a cause of the Troubles, but there can be little doubt that the circumstances which surrounded the siting of the university at Coleraine conspired to make the occurrence into one of the triggers of the initial unrest”, Gerard O'Brien.

“If the case for choosing Coleraine was unimpressive, there did not seem to be any academic objections to this choice. But the political reaction proved to be very hostile indeed. From that point of view, the government undoubtedly made a mistake in accepting the Lockwood recommendation on this main issue – if it tried to soften the blow to Derry a little by rejecting the committee's advice to close down Magee College, matters were made worse politically by the poor drafting of the Lockwood Report where the reasons for their favouring Coleraine rather than Derry were not presented. As a final snub to Derry, the

report went on to say that if a third university should ever prove to be necessary, Armagh might be an appropriate place. In this context, there was no reference at all to Derry. It is scarcely surprising that the committee was accused of being a tool of the Unionist government that wanted to do down the predominantly Catholic city of Derry. I do not believe for a moment that Lockwood would have submitted to any such intrusion from the Unionist leaders, as he was alleged to have done. What is, however, beyond question is that the whole affair was grossly mishandled”, Tom Wilson.

Northern Ireland after Sunningdale

The Economy

- Northern Ireland's economy continued to stagnate in the 1970s
- 1974 – Harland and Wolfe had to be taken into state ownership to prevent bankruptcy
- Foreign investment declined and many multi-national companies left Northern Ireland due to the violence but also because the 1973 oil crisis pushed up prices
- Jobs in traditional manufacturing industries had fallen from 30% in the 1960s to an all-time low of just 18%
- Unemployment ran at 10%, twice the rate of the rest of the UK, with some especially disadvantaged areas (usually Catholic) running as high as 50%

The Northern Ireland Constitutional Convention

- A second attempt in 1975 by Rees to reach an agreement on government for and by the people of Northern Ireland
- Faulkner's swansong – his UPNI wins only 5 seats (6% of vote) while the UUUC wins 47 seats (60% of vote) – and he retires from political life
- SDLP wins 17 seats (22% of vote) but boycotts the Convention because of its opposition to power-sharing
- At first meeting of the Convention the UUUC demands return to majority Unionist rule
- Craig tries to sell this to Catholics by suggesting SDLP take part in a “voluntary coalition” in the future – rejected by both SDLP and hardline Unionists and Craig is forced from politics as Vanguard party collapses
- British government rejects Unionist demand also and shuts down the Convention in 1976
- Finding a solution seems almost impossible – Nationalists can block any return to majority Unionist rule (knowing British government will support them) and Unionists can block any attempt at power-sharing (knowing British government won't take them on) – known as the “Double Veto”
- Other options examined - majority Nationalist areas to go to the Republic or total British withdrawal (leading to IRA ceasefire while secret talks on this continued) – but the decision reached was for continued Direct Rule

British Government Policy in Northern Ireland after Sunningdale

- Need for tighter security (in aftermath of Birmingham and Guildford bombs) led to Prevention of Terrorism Act giving police broader powers to arrest, question and detain suspects
- Policy of “Ulsterisation” tried to play down the role of the British Army and increasing the role of the RUC and the UDR: (1) RUC recruitment stepped up from 7,000 to 12,000, UDR numbers rise to 7,000, (2) Soldiers were withdrawn from Northern Ireland in response to a “Troops Out” campaign in Britain, (3) RUC gets better weapons and equipment and takes over patrols, searches etc.
- Shortage of British Army “targets” means IRA turns to killing RUC and UDR men – almost all Protestant – whom it claims are legitimate targets but Protestants see as purely sectarian murders
- 1976 also sees Roy Mason replace Rees as Northern Ireland Secretary – tough, no-nonsense former miner determined to crack down on terrorism and restore stability
- Tested immediately with Paisley's newly formed United Unionist Action Council calling a strike because the Convention's demand for Unionist majority rule was not implemented – this time the strike is broken within days as the RUC dismantles barricades and soldiers occupy and run the power stations (it was also harder to galvanise support for this as opposed to support for getting rid of the Council of Ireland)

- Mason wins trust of Unionists: (1) Introduced anti-terrorist legislation giving RUC power to question suspects for days at a time in Castlereagh Holding Centre (Belfast) and Gough Barracks (Armagh) producing useful intelligence, (2) Internees were freed but those imprisoned from 1976 on were to be treated as ordinary criminals rather than PoWs, (3) The numbers in prison on terrorist charges increased thanks to the Diplock Courts using a single judge and no jury to weigh up the evidence (despite accusations of beatings to produce false confessions), (4) Violence declines as does death toll – 476 dead in 1972, 100 dead in 1977
- Mason's economic policy: (1) Increased government expenditure when the rest of the UK saw cutbacks, (2) Harland and Wolfe protected, (3) Increase in numbers employed by the government, (4) Grants for community groups, leisure centres, local businesses (DeLorean) etc
- Number of Northern Ireland MPs is increased to 17 in 1979 – moderate Unionists feel safer now, and more so when Thatcher and the Conservatives, strong supporters of the Union, take power the same year
- Labour and the Tories have an unspoken “Bi-Partisan Agreement” at Westminster that involves neither party criticising the other's policy in Northern Ireland and both following roughly the same tactic of trying to defeat the IRA and persuade both sides to form a power-sharing government

Unionism after Sunningdale

- UUUC falls apart by 1976 due to disagreements over policy – return to majority Unionist rule as devolved government with the UK, direct rule from London or complete independence for Northern Ireland all suggested
- Leadership struggle also an issue – Paisley as head of DUP, Craig as head of Vanguard or West as head of UUP
- Vanguard soon disintegrates due to Craig's unsavoury links to Loyalist paramilitaries and his suggestion of involving Catholics in a “voluntary coalition” in the “Constitutional Convention”
- UUP continues to decline – West is not a good leader and there is continued internal division over which is the better solution, Stormont or London
- West's poor showing in European elections of 1979 sees James Molyneux replace him as leader – Molyneux supports direct rule and represents Northern Ireland's interests at Westminster where, needing his support, the Labour government under Callaghan increases the number of Northern Ireland MPs to 17
- DUP, growing in stature with Paisley as a strong leader, sees its vote in local election rise from 4% in 1973 to 26% in 1981 and Paisley elected MEP for Northern Ireland in 1979

The SDLP after Sunningdale

- SDLP has similar power struggle for Nationalist support with the IRA and Sinn Féin
- Becomes more overtly “Nationalist” leading to resignation of Devlin and Fitt who wanted more socialism, less divisive Nationalism and the chance of appealing to working-class Unionists
- Hume takes over leadership in 1979 convinced that next attempt at solving Northern Ireland's problems must involve important politicians from the wider world – will use his election as an MEP to try to forge links in Europe and the USA, as well as continuing to talk to Britain and the Irish Republic, to achieve this
- Hume says he is looking for a “third way” - SDLP want a United Ireland but Hume insists on recognising the rights and traditions of Unionists – so tries to build a consensus that Irish government will acknowledge a United Ireland can only come about with Unionist consent while British government will acknowledge that, should that consent be given, it will not stand in the way

The Provisional IRA and Gerry Adams

- Adams was interned in 1971 but later freed to attend talks with Whitelaw in 1972
- Rearrested in 1973 and held until 1977 – time to think about the direction of Republican policy

- Criticised old Dublin leadership of Official IRA and its policy of ceasefire in 1975 – said it broke momentum, demoralised volunteers, led to internal bickering and provocation into “tit-for-tat” sectarian killings with Loyalist paramilitaries
- Believed British had no intention of leaving Northern Ireland in the short term and so felt IRA and Sinn Féin should prepare for a “long war” involving politics as well as violence – attacking British cities and extending the list of targets to anybody working for what he called the “British War Machine” (prison officers, judges etc)
- When released, together with McGuinness, he reorganised the IRA from larger “Brigades” to smaller “Active Service Units” so that: (1) Each unit could be tasked with a specific killing, bombing or robbery, (2) The small size of the unit would make it harder to infiltrate, (3) If captured, IRA men would only have a limited knowledge of the wider organisation to give to the British
- The late 70s saw the IRA struggle under pressure from Mason's tougher measures taking volunteers out of action, from a decline in support from their own heartlands as atrocities and murders caused revulsion and from the moral pressure of groups like the “Peace People” (Catholic women's peace movement led by Corrigan and Williams, later Nobel Peace Prize winners)

The Hunger Strikes

- Begins with the rescinding in 1976 of “Special Category Status” for new paramilitary prisoners – in place since 1972 and meaning detention in a separate part of the prison, no prison uniforms, no prison work and extra food parcels and visits
- “Blanket Protests” begin with IRA man Ciarán Nugent who refused to wear prison uniform and wrapped himself in a blanket instead – 300 others soon follow his lead
- Prisoners complain of being beaten by prison guards and IRA retaliates with campaign of shooting prison officers – 19 killed by 1980
- 1978 sees escalation of the protest – IRA prisoners refuse to wash or to leave their cells and begin smashing cell furniture and smearing cell walls with their excrement (“Dirty Protest”)
- World media attention is focused on their campaign but to no avail – in 1980 Special Category Status is removed from prisoners in prison since before 1976
- 1980 – seven IRA men go on hunger strike to regain political prisoner status, some concessions are awarded, or thought to have been awarded, and the strike is called off
- Margaret Thatcher is new PM of Britain and refuses to negotiate with terrorists – hunger strikes begin again in earnest
- 1981 sees Bobby Sands begin the hunger strike, joined each week by a new striker for maximum media publicity – to make matters worse for British government, Sands is elected as a Westminster MP while on strike, a massive propaganda coup for the IRA
- Sands died in May 1981 – the total will eventually reach 10 – with neither side prepared to back down (“*Mr. Sands was a convicted criminal – he chose to take his own life*” Thatcher)
- Although technically a victory for the British government, some special status was restored and to many across the world the strikes proved the IRA was not a criminal organisation as its members were prepared to die to be recognised as political prisoners
- Another important impact was the increase in recruitment to the IRA – providing the basis for more years of violence
- Finally, the success of Sands, Carron (Sands election agent who was also elected as an MP) and two other hunger-strikers elected to the Dáil persuaded some leading Republicans that political paths might be more successful in achieving their goals than violence

Later Attempted Solutions

- *The Northern Ireland Assembly (1982 – 1986)*: (1) No power-sharing executive but “Assembly Committees” to be created involving members from all parties, (2) No link with the Republic – thus SDLP and Sinn Féin refuse to take the seats they win, (3) Unionists happy to go ahead but not allowed by British government as Nationalists were not involved, (4) Assembly is shut down in June 1986 after Unionists use it to attack the Anglo-Irish Agreement which was signed in November 1985
- *The Anglo-Irish Agreement (November 1985)*: (1) Signed at Hillsborough Castle by Thatcher and Fitzgerald, (2) Stated that Irish and British government ministers would meet regularly to discuss political, legal and security matters in Northern Ireland, (3) Irish government expected a greater say in Northern Ireland as a result of this but Thatcher unwilling to let this happen, (4) Thatcher expected greater cooperation from Republic on security matters but this didn't always happen either, (5) Supported by Nationalists but huge opposition from Unionists – 200,000 attend a rally in Belfast City Hall to hear Paisley's famous “Never, Never, Never” speech, (6) All Westminster Unionist MPs resign their seats and then stand again to emphasise Unionists opposition – 420,000 vote against it but Thatcher won't back down this time either
- *The Downing Street Declaration (December 1993)*: (1) Came about due to realisation on all sides that some negotiation was necessary – Unionists know Anglo-Irish Agreement won't be dropped, Republicans know violence won't achieve a United Ireland etc, (2) Bill Clinton, as President of the USA, took a personal interest and his power and charisma had a big effect in moving things forward, (3) The declaration stated that the Irish and British governments would work together to reach agreement on an acceptable form of government for Northern Ireland, on links between Britain and Ireland and between the Republic and Northern Ireland, that it would be up to people of Ireland (voting separately as North and South) to decide their future and that the British government would not stand in the way should that decision be for a United Ireland, (4) Sinn Féin rejected the declaration as it stood because it gave the decision on the future of Northern Ireland only to the people of Northern Ireland (Unionist majority) rather than the island of Ireland as a whole (Nationalist majority), (5) Nonetheless, there was enough interest in what could be achieved through negotiation as a result of the declaration to lead the IRA to declare a ceasefire in August 1994, (6) Years of negotiation would follow, resulting in the *Good Friday Agreement* of April 1998, which set up the new Northern Ireland Assembly which is (just about) still in existence today.