



The origins of the Northern Ireland conservatives

Colin Coulter

To cite this article: Colin Coulter (2001) The origins of the Northern Ireland conservatives, Irish Political Studies, 16:1, 29-48, DOI: [10.1080/07907180108406631](https://doi.org/10.1080/07907180108406631)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07907180108406631>



Published online: 19 Oct 2007.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 62



View related articles [↗](#)



Citing articles: 4 View citing articles [↗](#)

THE ORIGINS OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND CONSERVATIVES

Colin Coulter

National University of Ireland, Maynooth

Abstract: This article sets out to tell the story of the Conservative associations that appeared in parts of Northern Ireland in the late nineteen eighties. Ironically, the emergence of the Ulster Tories may be attributed largely to the activities of a small leftist sect. Throughout the seventies and eighties the British & Irish Communist Organisation (B&ICO) developed and advanced an ideological programme of 'electoral integrationism'. While the case for electoral integration attracted little attention initially, the advent of the Anglo-Irish Agreement enabled it to reach a wider and more receptive audience. The principal achievement of the electoral integrationist movement was perhaps to persuade the British Conservative Party to establish constituency organisations in Northern Ireland. Although opinion polls often suggested a bright future for Conservative politics in the region, the early nineties saw the Ulster Tories suffer humiliation in a sequence of elections. The swift and ignominious decline of the Northern Ireland Conservatives is instructive not least because it casts light upon the troubled relationship between Ulster unionists and the British state.

In the late nineteen eighties a series of Conservative associations were established unexpectedly in the eastern reaches of Northern Ireland. Those who joined the ranks of the Ulster Tories often claimed to be on the verge of breaking the mould of political life in the six counties. In practice this confidence proved to be without foundation. This flirtation between the unionist middle classes and British Conservatism would ultimately last no more than five years. Although short-lived these efforts to promote Conservative politics in the six counties retain considerable significance. The story of the Northern Ireland Conservatives sheds important light upon crucial cultural and political trends that define the nature of contemporary Northern Irish society. It, therefore, deserves to be examined in some detail.

STALINISM AND THE NORTHERN IRELAND CONSERVATIVES

One of the more intriguing ironies of recent political life in Northern Ireland is that the emergence of the local Conservatives may be attributed largely to the activities of individuals situated on the far left. Although a small Stalinist splinter, the British and Irish Communist Organisation (B&ICO) has exercised an important influence over the political and intellectual life of the province (Jackson 1990). In the early seventies the B&ICO broke with the prevailing republican socialist orthodoxy and began to construct

a distinctive interpretation of the 'Northern Ireland problem' (B&ICO 1971, 1972, 1974, 1977; Workers' Association 1972, 1973, 1974). The zealots within the B&ICO contended that the resurgence of communal unrest that heralded the modern troubles was the inevitable outcome of the exceptional and subaltern status within the United Kingdom that Northern Ireland has been forced to endure since its inception.

One of the abiding concerns of the British political establishment over the past century has been to maintain a discreet distance from the troublesome territory formed by the north eastern counties of Ireland (Cunningham 1991, 105-20; O'Leary & McGarry 1993, 117-19; Ryan 1994, 157; Wright 1987, 185-6). The ambition of the metropolis to insulate itself from the sectarian tensions of the region was inscribed in the political arrangements that occasioned the creation of Northern Ireland (O'Dowd 1994; Ruane & Todd 1996, 116). The actual terms of the partition settlement entitled the residents of the six counties to exist merely on the margins of the United Kingdom. The mode of government that obtained within the fledgling constitutional entity of Northern Ireland differed enormously from that which operated throughout the other regions of the state. The institutions of a legislative assembly were established in Belfast in spite of the pronounced absence of local enthusiasm for the devolution of authority from Westminster. The creation of a devolved parliament to oversee the affairs of the province ensured that for half a century the people of Northern Ireland were compelled to exist in a state of political quarantine.

In the late nineteen sixties, the resurgence of political unrest in Northern Ireland signalled that the partition settlement had begun to unravel. As intercommunal relations within the six counties deteriorated apace, a reluctant metropolis was forced to intervene in the affairs of the province. In the spring of 1972 Westminster chose to exercise its constitutional prerogative to prorogue the devolved parliament at Stormont and assume direct responsibility for the governance of Northern Ireland. The dissolution of the Stormont legislature could have marked a radical departure in the manner in which the sovereign parliament chose to deal with the province. In principle, the advent of 'direct rule' offered Westminster the opportunity to embrace Northern Ireland as an equal and integral region of the state. In practice, however, the metropolis preferred to cling to the traditional conception that the six counties are irretrievably 'different' (Rose 1982, 125; Ruane & Todd 1996, 224-6; Wright 1987, 198-99). The structures and mechanisms through which direct rule operated fell considerably short of the standards of democratic practice that obtained throughout the rest of the United Kingdom (Livingstone & Morrison 1995; O'Leary & Arthur 1990, 41). The distinctly autocratic fashion in which Northern Ireland was governed after the abolition of Stormont ensured that the residents of the six counties continued to endure rights of citizenship inferior to those enjoyed by the inhabitants of the other regions of the state (Clayton 1996, 167-8).

The ambition of the metropolis to keep Northern Ireland 'at arm's length' found further expression in the conduct of the British political parties. Those parties that aspire to govern the United Kingdom have traditionally refused to admit as members

individuals living in Northern Ireland. In their myriad publications the B&ICO asserted that the aloofness of the parties of state towards the province had inevitably proved thoroughly calamitous. The inclusion of Northern Ireland within the broader party political life of the United Kingdom, the Stalinists insisted, would in time have eroded the sectarian enmities that fester within the six counties. The parties of state would have provided that secular environment in which the people of the province could gradually exchange ethnoreligious affiliation for rather more temporal forms of political identity. The unwillingness of the British political parties to contest elections in Northern Ireland had, therefore, acted to confirm the sectarian poverty of the public life of the region. Excluded from the secular environs of the Labour and Conservative parties, the people of Northern Ireland had been compelled to inhabit the narrow ground of a provincial political culture mired in ethnoreligious feeling and division.

The distinctive reading of the Northern Irish conflict tendered by the B&ICO drew the faction towards a radical prescription for the ills of the province. The activists within the B&ICO insisted that the origins of the modern troubles are to be found in the anomalous and unequal status afforded to Northern Ireland from the moment of its creation. The resolution of the conflict requires, therefore, that the metropolis acknowledge Northern Ireland as an equal and integral region of the state. The six counties should be governed through structures and according to principles deemed appropriate for the administration of the United Kingdom as a whole. Executive authority over the province should be exercised by the sovereign parliament at Westminster rather than a devolved assembly in Belfast. Moreover, the six counties should be assimilated into the mainstream civic life of the United Kingdom. In particular, the residents of the province should be entitled to join and pass electoral judgement on those parties that aspire to form a government at Westminster. Admission to the party political life of the state would – the B&ICO asserted – elevate the people of Northern Ireland to the status of ‘equal citizens’ (*Workers’ Weekly* 14/5/77).

The leftist credentials of the B&ICO ensured that the principal concern of the sect was to ensure the organisation throughout Northern Ireland of that particular party considered to hold greatest promise of advancing the interests of the province’s working classes. By the mid seventies the foremost intellectuals within the B&ICO had arrived at the opinion that the prospects of political progress hinged upon the British Labour Party establishing constituency associations within the six counties. Drawn fully into the wider environment of a labour movement that encompasses the entire state, Northern Irish workers would be offered the opportunity to eschew the distractions of ethnoreligious affiliation in order to pursue the imperative of class interest (*Workers’ Weekly* 22/10/77). The decision of the British Labour Party to extend membership to Northern Ireland would, therefore, herald the advance of working class consciousness within the six counties.

The conviction that the British labour movement held the key to political progress in Northern Ireland prompted the B&ICO into action. In the summer of 1977 its members began to devote their considerable energies to the cause of persuading the British Labour Party to organise throughout Northern Ireland. The demand that Labour extend membership to people living in the six counties was articulated through various cover organisations. Perhaps the most significant of these was *the Campaign for Labour Representation (CLR)* which was established during 1978. Through the agency of the CLR the B&ICO sought to court opinion among the various elements of the British labour movement (B&ICO 1979a,b). While the lucid polemic of the pressure group often attracted admiration, the characteristically combative style of its members frequently alienated potential sympathisers.

During the late seventies and early eighties the overriding concern of the B&ICO was to ensure that Northern Irish workers secure the right to join the British Labour Party. The interpretative stance adopted by the faction insisted, however, that the people of the province should be assimilated more fully into not merely the labour movement but also the wider public life of the state. The political enterprise endorsed by the B&ICO required not only that the Labour Party should organise throughout the six counties but that those other parties that aspire to govern the United Kingdom should follow suit. Over time the demand that *all* of the parties of state should stand for election in the province became more explicit. In 1984 the B&ICO published a pamphlet under the guise of *The Integration Group* – yet another in the seemingly endless sequence of cover names adopted by the sect. While the document offered a fairly standard exposition of the case for Northern Ireland being governed in the same manner as the other regions of the United Kingdom, it did contain one genuine innovation. The Integration Group suggested that the decision of the Conservative Party to accept members from Northern Ireland would constitute an enormous stride ‘towards equal citizenship’

By the mid eighties the B&ICO had constructed an arguably cogent political programme. The activities of the CLR had brought the counsel of the stalinist sect to a wider audience than hitherto. Indeed, the pressure group managed to garner sufficient sympathy within the Labour Party for the issue of establishing branches throughout Northern Ireland to appear on the agenda of the 1983 annual conference (Workers’ Weekly 11/10/86). While the B&ICO had made some ground in the early eighties, the organisation remained nonetheless a small voice on the exotic fringes of Northern Irish political life. The incessant demand for ‘equal citizenship’ was typically voiced through the columns of invariably obscure and often impenetrable journals. The seismic constitutional developments of the mid eighties, however, would transform the political fortunes of the B&ICO. The advent of the Anglo-Irish Agreement would ensure that the views articulated by the Stalinists of the B&ICO began to reach a larger and rather more receptive audience.

THE ANGLO-IRISH AGREEMENT AND THE CAMPAIGN FOR EQUAL CITIZENSHIP

On the afternoon of Friday 15 November 1985 representatives of the British and Irish governments signed an international agreement at Hillsborough Castle. The appearance of the Anglo-Irish Agreement transformed the parameters and contours of the political life of Northern Ireland. The most significant aspect of the Hillsborough Accord was that it appeared to occasion a dilution of the sovereignty that Westminster exercises over Northern Ireland. Under the provisions of the accord, the government of the Irish Republic became entitled for the first time to a consultative role in the administration of the six counties (Hadden & Boyle 1989, 22). The Anglo-Irish Agreement further featured the assertion that should a majority of the people of Northern Ireland wish to leave the United Kingdom, Westminster would facilitate that ambition (Aughey 1989, 55). In signing the agreement, therefore, the British government appeared to have declared formal indifference concerning the constitutional status of Northern Ireland.

The appearance of the Anglo-Irish Agreement inevitably and immediately drew the wrath of the entire unionist community. Unionists were especially enraged by the role that the agreement had afforded to the southern Irish state. Representatives of unionist opinion denounced the Hillsborough Accord as an insufferable violation of national sovereignty. In endorsing the accord, London had chosen to cede authority to a state held to be foreign and hostile. The Anglo-Irish Agreement alarmed unionists further on the grounds that the document appeared to confirm the alleged insouciance of the British political establishment towards the people of Northern Ireland. The impact of the events of 15 November 1985 upon unionists was evidently traumatic (Loughlin 1995, 212; Ruane & Todd 1996, 113-5). The introduction of the Anglo-Irish Agreement heralded a crisis for Ulster Unionism that was both political and intellectual (Cochrane 1997). In the emotional aftermath of the Hillsborough Accord, elements within the unionist fold came to the realisation that the imminent battle for the Union would occur largely upon the terrain of the ideal. If the constitutional status of Northern Ireland were to be guaranteed, unionists would have to reflect more fully upon the nature of their political identities and ambitions. Moreover, those who sought to defend the Union would have to disseminate their beliefs and aspirations to a wider audience than had been the case hitherto.

The occupants of the mainstream of Unionist politics were clearly, however, less than able for this urgent task of ideological and ontological renewal. Faced with the biggest crisis since the dissolution of Stormont more than a decade earlier, the key players within the principal Unionist parties responded with characteristic conservatism. Rather than seek to forge radical political strategies, the leaders of Ulster Unionism chose to cling wearily to antiquated forms of thought and practice (Aughey 1989, 138-46; O'Malley 1990, 37). The political crisis occasioned by the Anglo-Irish Agreement merely served, therefore, to cast the philosophical dereliction of the Unionist mainstream into yet bolder relief (Cochrane 1997; Porter 1996, 6-11). The intellectual crisis of Ulster Unionism would, however, prove to be the political opportunity of

the B&ICO. The traumas visited by the Anglo-Irish Agreement had rendered many unionists more open to new political ideas and direction. In the climate of ideological flux that followed the Hillsborough Accord, the stalinists of the B&ICO sought to bring their views to a wider political audience. In the months that followed the Anglo-Irish Agreement, the pivotal B&ICO intellectual Brendan Clifford (1985, 1986a,b; Davidson 1986a,b) produced a series of lucid pamphlets which set out to explain the origins of the political storm that had recently engulfed the six counties. According to Clifford, the Anglo-Irish Agreement should be viewed as merely a symptom of a deeper malaise. The manifold ills that have afflicted Northern Irish society derive principally from the profoundly 'unrepresentative' manner in which the province has been administered. Since the dissolution of the Stormont legislature the sovereign parliament has chosen to govern the six counties in a distinctly unaccountable fashion. The colonial status that has been conferred upon the province by the metropolis cannot, however, be attributed primarily to the peculiarly autocratic form that direct rule has assumed. The people of Northern Ireland have been subjected to a reign of 'parliamentary despotism' not because they have been governed directly by Westminster but rather because they have been excluded from that process of party political competition that determines the balance of power within the sovereign parliament.

The interpretation offered by Brendan Clifford and others within the B&ICO camp was that genuinely democratic practice depends upon the operation of political parties. The conduct of political parties is prompted, Clifford (1986a) argued, not by grand social philosophies but rather by the proclivities of the electorate. An effective system of party political competition operates, in other words, 'by means of reflexes rather than theories' (Roberts 1990, 131). A political party that seeks to secure public office through the democratic process cannot afford to behave in a consistently autocratic fashion. Failure to accommodate the feelings and aspirations of citizens would inevitably ensure a shift in electoral preference that would consign the government to the ineffectual status of parliamentary opposition (Clifford 1986b). It is the effective competition between political parties in common pursuit of executive authority, therefore, that constitutes the ultimate guarantor of genuinely accountable government. The people of Northern Ireland, however, are excluded from that process of party political rivalry that produces the government of the state of which they happen to be citizens. Those political parties that can reasonably aspire to form a majority in the sovereign parliament choose not to stand for election in the six counties. The inhabitants of the province are denied, therefore, the opportunity to effect those swings of electoral preference that can dislodge a government from office or sweep an opposition into power. As a consequence, the principal parties of state have little incentive to accommodate the interests and ambitions of the people of Northern Ireland (*The Equal Citizen March*/ April 1986). The ruling party of the day can choose to govern the province in a thoroughly unaccountable manner safe in the knowledge that the residents of the six counties will be unable to exact electoral retribution.

In the emotional aftermath of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, the activists within the B&ICO strove with renewed vigour to advance a political programme designed to herald an era of genuinely accountable government within Northern Ireland.. The prime movers within the B&ICO demanded that the people of Northern Ireland should be assimilated fully into the party political life of the state. Those parties that sought to form a majority within the sovereign parliament should admit the residents of the six counties as members and stand for election in the region. The advent of 'electoral integration' would – its advocates insisted - sound the death knell of unaccountable government in Northern Ireland (Davidson 1986b). Admission to the party political culture of the state would enable the Northern Irish electorate to generate those relatively small shifts in the balance of political power that can transform government into opposition. The fear of electoral reproach would compel the parties at Westminster to respond with greater sensitivity to the interests and ambitions of voters living in Northern Ireland. The implementation of measures as offensive to the democratic will as the Hillsborough Accord would become inconceivable. Assimilation into the party politics of the United Kingdom would, therefore, enable the people of Northern Ireland to hold Westminster to account. The realisation of electoral integration would, in other words, transform the voters of the region from the status of British subjects to that of British citizens.

Through the columns of their journals *The Equal Citizen* and *Workers' Weekly* the B&ICO attempted to court the opinion of unionists disorientated by recent political developments. The bold and imaginative ideological enterprise mapped out by the Athol Street sect evidently exercised a resonance for many within the unionist community (O'Dowd 1998a, 73). In the spring of 1986 those disparate individuals who had been drawn to the case for 'equal citizenship' or 'electoral integration' joined forces. Over the next couple of years the *Campaign for Equal Citizenship* (CEC) came to play a significant role in the public life of Northern Ireland (O'Dowd 1998b, 117). The initial strategy that the CEC adopted predictably entailed an attempt to convert the Ulster Unionist Party to the cause of 'equal citizenship'. Throughout the summer and autumn of 1986 the President of the pressure group - the influential but volatile barrister Robert McCartney (1986a,b) - canvassed opinion within the party. The struggle for the hearts and minds of Ulster Unionists reached a climax at the annual conference held on 6 November. In a move widely interpreted as a leadership bid, McCartney tabled a motion demanding that the UUP commit itself to the strategy of electoral integration. Anxious to resist the ambitions of the CEC President, the Ulster Unionist leadership countered with an amendment stating that, in the interests of Unionist unity, any change in the direction of the party would have to await the demise of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. The amendment was duly carried by 199 votes to 143.

The developments at the 1986 UUP annual conference indicated that while the case for 'equal citizenship' had gained considerable ground the principal voice of Ulster Unionism remained unwilling to embrace a new political direction. The defeat of

the motion proposed by Robert McCartney nurtured the growing belief among CEC members that electoral integrationism could only be advanced outside the realm of established Unionist politics. The events of the following summer would merely serve to confirm that particular conviction. During the 1987 Westminster elections the mainstream Unionist parties persisted with the electoral pact devised in the immediate wake of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Unionist candidates would not stand against one another, even in safe Unionist seats. The North Down Ulster Unionist Association decided, however, to break the electoral cartel and put forward Robert McCartney as competition for the sitting Independent Unionist MP Jim Kilfedder. The leadership of the party promptly responded by expelling the North Down association *en masse*. Undeterred, McCartney decided to run as an independent 'Real Unionist' on an electoral integrationist ticket. The campaign that unfolded in North Down was to prove one of the most compelling and acrimonious contests of the 1987 General Election (Cochrane 1997, 176). Aided by the support of others within the 'Unionist Family', Kilfedder managed to retain his seat albeit with a greatly reduced majority. While McCartney may have failed in his bid to seize North Down, there was nonetheless much from which the CEC could draw comfort. In particular, the run up to the election had marked the publication of the first of a series of opinion polls suggesting a level of support for the principles of 'equal citizenship' which even seasoned political commentators considered to be 'remarkable' (Bew & Patterson 1990, 209). Hence, even in the wake of defeat, many members of the CEC believed the election to have heralded a bright political future for the pressure group. In reality, however, the North Down campaign was to prove the beginning of the end of the CEC as a mass organisation.

One of the essential attributes of those who joined the CEC was their remarkable political diversity. For a time the pressure group proved able to accommodate a body of individuals who shared little in common save for the conviction that the strictures of democratic practice demanded that the British political parties should run for election in the province. Stalinists found common cause with Thatcherites. Gay rights activists rubbed shoulders with the more genteel elements of the Northern Irish middle classes. The quintessential diversity of the CEC would ultimately prove, however, to be its Achilles heel. The ideological differences among those drawn to the ideal of electoral integration gradually and inevitably nurtured division. In the year that followed the 'Real Unionist' campaign in North Down clear fissures opened up within the CEC (Wilson 1988). The disputes that embroiled the pressure group centred frequently upon the style and direction of leadership provided by its President. The most vehement criticism directed towards McCartney came inevitably from those associated with the B&ICO (Workers' Weekly 12/3/88, 19/3/88, 26/3/88). Dissidents within the CEC alleged that under the autocratic leadership of McCartney the organisation had taken a political course that infringed those principles upon which it was founded. In the minds of those within the orbit of the B&ICO, the essential promise of the CEC was that of a broadly based civil rights organisation that would appeal to people from all

ethnoreligious backgrounds and none. The political direction that the pressure group had taken had, however, betrayed that noble ideal. Under the leadership of Robert McCartney, the CEC had been reduced to little more than yet another intemperate voice in the quarrels of the 'Unionist family'

The tensions simmering within the ranks of the CEC finally came to a head at a fractious special general meeting held on June 18 1988. As the meeting progressed it became clear that the dissidents within the pressure group were in a minority. Realising that they had lost control of the organisation they had created, the supporters of the B&ICO withdrew from the CEC and poured vitriol upon those who remained. Although damaging, the withdrawal of support from the B&ICO scarcely dealt a fatal blow to the CEC. The B&ICO provided the initial ideological impetus that brought the CEC into existence. Nonetheless, those associated with the Stalinist splinter provided only a small proportion of the entire membership of the pressure group. It was conceivable, therefore, that the CEC could have survived the bloodletting of the spring and summer of 1988. In reality, however, the days of the CEC as a mass organisation were about to come to an end. Ironically, the pressure group would be fatally undermined not by the machinations of the Stalinists of the B&ICO but by the activities of the rather more 'respectable' elements within the electoral integrationist fold.

THE NORTHERN IRELAND CONSERVATIVES

The political programme advanced by the CEC attracted the support of individuals drawn from a variety of social and ideological backgrounds. The ideal of electoral integration clearly proved particularly attractive, however, to the more affluent sections of the unionist community (Coulter 1996, 1997; McKay 2000, 37). While concerned that all of the British parties should extend organisation to Northern Ireland, the social location and interests of middle class unionists ensured that they were particularly concerned to secure the opportunity to join and vote for the Conservative Party (Duffy and Evans 1996, 132-6). Over time the Conservatives within the electoral integrationist fold became convinced of the need for a discrete organisation that would operate under the umbrella of the CEC but would work specifically to ensure that the Conservative Party accept members from the province. In March 1988 the *Campaign for Conservative Representation* (CCR) was established to serve that purpose. The following month witnessed a further significant development with the formation in the constituency of North Down of a *Model Conservative Association* (NDMCA). The rationale behind the NDMCA was to illustrate that there existed within Northern Ireland support for the Conservative Party and thereby exert pressure upon Smith Square to establish constituency associations throughout the province. The strategy adopted by the North Down Tories soon appeared to have borne fruit. During the local government elections of May 1989 a slate of Conservative candidates ran for office in North Down. The Conservatives polled strongly, securing six seats to become the single largest party represented on North Down district council.

Encouraged by the success of the local government elections, the Ulster Tories forged ahead with the campaign to persuade the Conservative Party to open its ranks to people living in Northern Ireland. The Northern Ireland Conservatives adopted a skilful and imaginative strategy that drew admiration even from an otherwise hostile party hierarchy. Among the principal concerns of the Ulster Tories was to engage the sympathy of the grassroots of the Conservative Party (Aughey 1994, 144-6). In their promotional material the Northern Ireland Conservatives were keen to offer themselves as people who were essentially the same as Conservatives who happened to live in other regions of the United Kingdom. The solid bourgeois credentials of the Ulster Tories were frequently underlined. Events at the next annual conference of the Conservative Party testified to the Ulster Tories' powers of persuasion. On 10 October 1989 Conservative delegates gathered at Blackpool voted overwhelmingly to endorse a motion encouraging the party to organise in Northern Ireland (Cunningham 1995, 35). The grave expressions on the faces of the dignitaries gathered on the platform suggested that the hierarchy did not share the enthusiasm for electoral integration being expressed by the grassroots (Pearce 1989). Bowing to pressure from the rank and file of the party, the Executive Committee of the National Union agreed reluctantly at a meeting convened on 6 November to accept the applications for affiliation from four Conservative associations established in Northern Ireland - North Down, South Belfast, East Antrim and Strangford. After a campaign that had lasted barely eighteen months, the Northern Ireland Conservatives had secured their principal objective of admission to the party of government.

The decision of the Conservative Party to accept members from Northern Ireland was greeted within the CEC as a major victory. The affiliation of the Ulster Tories would, however, inevitably precipitate the decline of the pressure group. The arduous task of advancing further the case for electoral integration in the face of stern opposition from many quarters - not least within the British Labour Party (Bew & Dixon 1994, 162-3) - proved of course rather less attractive than the apparent prospect of exercising real political influence within the party of government. In the months that followed the historic Blackpool conference, many middle class unionists who had joined the CEC allowed their membership to lapse and opted instead for one of the various Conservative associations springing up in many parts of Northern Ireland. As its support evaporated the leaders of the CEC quickly realised that the body could no longer function as a mass campaigning pressure group. In the winter of 1990 the organisation decided to reinvent itself as a political 'think tank'. The new streamlined CEC, however, would never manage to exercise influence on the scale that it had in the heady days that followed the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Finally in 1993 the few remaining stalwarts bowed to the seemingly inevitable and formally wound up the pressure group.

The dramatic events at the 1989 Conservative Party conference understandably offered enormous encouragement to the Ulster Tories. The ease with which admission to the party had been secured also, however, inflated the expectations of the Northern

Ireland Conservatives. In the afterglow of affiliation, many Ulster Tories were convinced that they stood on the threshold of an historic political breakthrough. Complacency would shortly prompt the Conservatives to commit the first of many errors of political judgement. The death of the Ulster Unionist MP Harold McCusker in the spring of 1990 offered the Ulster Tories the first opportunity since affiliation to gauge support in a parliamentary election. There was little evidence of support for the Conservatives in Upper Bann and many party activists were resolutely opposed to running in the constituency. The Upper Bann Conservative Association - which had been affiliated only three weeks in advance of the poll - nonetheless decided to field a candidate. The result of the election entirely vindicated the misgivings of those who had counselled against standing. The Conservative candidate Collette Jones limped in sixth and failed to retain her deposit.

In the aftermath of the calamitous Upper Bann by-election the Northern Ireland Conservatives set about building constituency organisations beyond their heartland of North Down in preparation for the forthcoming Westminster elections. When a General Election was called for 9 April 1992 the Conservatives nominated eleven candidates. The Ulster Tories performed moderately well. Conservative candidates received 45,000 votes - six per cent of the electorate overall and ten per cent in those constituencies where they had actually run. The respectable performance of the Ulster Tories was tarnished, however, by the failure of Dr. Laurence Kennedy to secure North Down. The constituency was the only one in which the Northern Ireland Conservatives had a realistic chance of victory. Success in North Down was essential if the Ulster Tories were to establish themselves as a credible electoral force. The failure to prise the constituency from the sitting Independent Unionist MP Jim Kilfedder, therefore, represented an enormous setback for the fledgling Conservative associations in Northern Ireland.

The electoral prospects of the Ulster Tories were undermined by a number of considerations. Not the least of these was the transparent indifference with which Conservative Central Office viewed members living in Northern Ireland. The affiliation of associations established in the six counties appeared to mark an important shift in the disposition of the hierarchy of the Conservative Party. In practice, however, the formal endorsement of the principle of electoral integration made little discernible impact upon the outlook and conduct of more senior Conservatives (O'Dowd 1998a, 116; McGarry and O'Leary 1995, 312). Influential figures within the Conservative Party continued in the main to be guided by the perennial concern of keeping the affairs of Northern Ireland at a discreet distance. The Tories frequently appeared entirely indifferent as to the welfare of their associations located in the province. The recurrent reluctance of senior Conservatives to endorse fellow Tories running for election in the six counties clearly signalled that the party had little genuine ambition to become an influential force in the political affairs of the province. Those Conservatives who stood for office in the six counties in effect provided the people of Northern Ireland with the unusual and

possibly unique opportunity of voting for a political party that actually would rather not have had their support. It is scarcely surprising that all but a few of the Northern Irish electorate should have declined.

The evident disregard of Conservative Central Office for their interests quickly became a major source of grievance among the Ulster Tories. In advance of the Westminster elections, the Northern Ireland Conservatives considered it prudent to conceal their growing disenchantment with the party hierarchy. Once the polls had closed, however, the Ulster Tories promptly broke their silence. The disappointment of coming second in North Down immediately moved the most prominent Conservative in Northern Ireland to give vent to the disillusionment increasingly common among the Ulster Tories. Once the result had been declared, Dr. Laurence Kennedy launched a blistering attack upon the hierarchy of the Conservative Party for having offered insufficient support to his campaign. The strident public admonition issued by Dr. Kennedy soured yet further the already frosty relations that existed between Conservative Central Office and the Ulster Tories. The deterioration of relations with Smith Square was to prove merely symptomatic, however, of the wider difficulties that the Northern Ireland Conservatives had begun to encounter. In the year that followed the Westminster elections the fortunes of the Ulster Tories nose-dived. The ignominious decline of the Northern Ireland Conservatives was mercilessly confirmed by the local government elections held in May 1993. Conservative candidates seeking election to district council chambers were routed. The Ulster Tories captured only six seats and secured less than one per cent of the vote.

Already weakened by their disastrous performance in the local government elections, the Northern Ireland Conservatives were undermined further by the clandestine negotiations that attended the passage of the Maastricht Bill through the House of Commons (Cochrane 1997, 304). Faced with the prospect of a humiliating defeat in parliament, the Conservative Prime Minister entered into a pact in order to secure the support of the nine Ulster Unionist MPs (Dixon 1994; McCann 1993, 56-7). One of the understandings at which John Major and the Ulster Unionists had apparently arrived was that the Conservatives would allow their associations situated in Northern Ireland to 'wither on the vine' (Bevins 1993). The creation of the parliamentary pact between the Conservative and Ulster Unionist parties inevitably infuriated the Ulster Tories. Already disillusioned with the inability of the Northern Ireland Conservatives to make a meaningful impression upon the political culture of the six counties, Dr. Laurence Kennedy announced that he would resign his seat on North Down borough council and bow out of public life (Duffy and Evans 1996, 126). The events of the summer of 1993 indicated that the Northern Ireland Conservatives had been swiftly consigned to the very margins of political life in the six counties. Some of the Conservative associations established in the province have obstinately continued to field candidates for election. The Ulster Tories have, however, been routinely humiliated at the polls. Recent elections have seen the Conservatives fail to perform respectably even in their

former stronghold of North Down (McKay 2000, 37). In the Westminster election of 1992 the Tories drew support from one third of voters in the constituency. The three Conservatives who have stood in subsequent parliamentary elections in North Down, however, have been unable to retain their deposits.

THE 'MEANING' OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND CONSERVATIVES

The emergence of the Northern Ireland Conservatives in the late nineteen eighties represented a genuinely unanticipated turn of events. The view common among many commentators at the time suggested that the advent of the Ulster Tories should be considered as merely an aberration in the political life of the six counties. The spectacular and swift demise of the Northern Ireland Conservatives in the early nineteen nineties seemed of course to bear out this interpretation. It would nonetheless be a mistake simply to dismiss the emergence of the Ulster Tories as an aberrant political development. In certain respects, the establishment of Conservative associations within the province more than a decade ago marked an entirely rational development.

After the dissolution of the Stormont legislature the sovereign parliament at Westminster proceeded to govern Northern Ireland in a manner reminiscent of a distant colonial possession. The institutions and procedures that were installed under direct rule infringed - as we noted earlier - even the most rudimentary standards of democratic practice. None of the individuals who exercised political authority in relation to Northern Ireland were actually elected by the people of the region. The considerable powers at the disposal of the executive, moreover, were subject to few of the checks and balances that are conventionally assumed to be the hallmark of a liberal democracy. The distinctly autocratic nature of direct rule offered as grave offence to the political sensibilities of middle class unionists as to those of their less prosperous ethnopolitical kin. While the professionals and business people among the unionist community may well have resented and distrusted the substantial powers in the hands of Westminster, the specific policies that the direct rulers of the province employed their authority to implement often in fact proved very much to their liking.

Among the preoccupations of the metropolis after the fall of Stormont was a concern to nurture within Northern Ireland those social and economic conditions deemed appropriate to a genuine resolution of the conflict. As a consequence the era of direct rule witnessed a substantial and sustained increase in public expenditure in the six counties (McKay 2000, 36). The fiscal benevolence of the British state served to enhance the general standard of living in Northern Ireland. The material gains secured under direct rule were, however, neither universal nor evenly distributed. The relative generosity of the British exchequer conferred especial benefit upon the professional and business classes in the region. The expansion of the public sector in the period of direct rule ensured the creation of a considerable number of secure and comparatively lucrative positions that were swiftly filled by the province's burgeoning middle classes (McGovern and Shirlow 1997, 188-9). Those who became state employees in the

seventies and eighties received salaries on a par with their counterparts in other parts of the United Kingdom but, crucially, faced house prices much lower than most British regions. The superior purchasing power of the Northern Irish middle classes would in time come to find expression in ever more conspicuous forms of consumption (Breen 1994). For many people living in the six counties - unionists and others - the era of direct rule soon came to assume the status of a golden age.

The decision to prorogue the Stormont parliament had been greeted with almost unanimous disapproval within the unionist community. As the material advantages flowing from direct rule became increasingly apparent, however, a great deal of the initial hostility that unionists had articulated began to dissipate. The more affluent elements within the unionist fold in particular abandoned their erstwhile commitment to the restoration of devolution with almost indecent haste. The rapid shifts in the outlook and allegiance of the unionist middle classes that occurred in the nineteen seventies were soon offered ideological expression with the emergence of a political disposition that has been conventionally denoted as 'integrationist' but which Bew and Patterson (1987a) have persuasively designated 'minimalist'. Minimalist integrationists - prominent among them former Ulster Unionist Party leader James Molyneaux - argued that Northern Ireland would be best governed permanently from Westminster not least because the terms of a future devolved settlement would in all likelihood be unfavourable to unionists. The pragmatic endorsement of direct rule encoded within the minimalist position evidently chimed with the particular material interests of the unionist middle classes.

The enterprise of minimalist integrationism, moreover, bore the indelible impression of the conservatism that defines the political disposition of middle class unionists. Minimalist integrationists consistently eschewed those radical political strategies that might threaten to alienate metropolitan opinion. Conscious that the constitutional fate of Northern Ireland lies ultimately in the hands of the sovereign parliament, figures such as Molyneaux adopted a decidedly conciliatory approach towards the British political establishment. The health of the Union would be best served - it was insisted - not by radical words and deeds on the streets of Ulster but rather by the careful courting of opinion within the corridors of power in Westminster and Whitehall. The essential promise of minimalist integrationism was that it would enable unionists to quietly exercise meaningful influence within the centres of metropolitan authority. Throughout the early nineteen eighties senior figures within the Ulster Unionist Party were wont to suggest that they 'had the ear' of important players within the British political establishment. The signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, however, would mercilessly expose these suggestions as being without foundation. The distinct ease with which the Hillsborough Accord proceeded through the House of Commons offered the most telling illustration imaginable that unionism has few friends and little influence within the sovereign parliament.

The impact of the Anglo-Irish Agreement upon professional and business people was no less traumatic than upon the rest of the unionist community. In the decade that preceded the Hillsborough Accord a debilitating political complacency had descended upon the unionist middle classes. As the material advantages of direct rule became increasingly apparent, middle class unionists more or less opted out of politics altogether (McKay 2000, 37, 258). The signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement would, however, jolt the more affluent sections of unionism from their ideological reverie. The advent of the Hillsborough Accord forced many middle class unionists to reflect critically for the first time upon the precarious nature of their political position. The terms of the deal struck by the British and Irish governments in the winter of 1985 brought home to the unionist middle classes that while the power of the executive under direct rule had been used in the past to their considerable economic advantage it could be employed with equal ease to their political disadvantage. Suddenly conscious of the vulnerability of their position, many professional and business people within the unionist community came to see the need to be more active in the political affairs of the six counties. The enterprise of minimalist integrationism to which the unionist middle classes had in the past offered at least their passive support had of course been largely discredited. As a result, many middle class unionists had become rather more receptive than hitherto to new political ideas and directions. This opening up of ideological space on the 'respectable' margins of unionism created the conditions that would for a time enable electoral integrationism to move to the centre stage of Northern Irish political life.

The electoral integrationist project came to exercise considerable appeal among the unionist middle classes in the late eighties precisely because it seemed able to resolve those gnawing contradictions that had defined their particular experience of direct rule. The various measures advocated by electoral integrationists dovetailed neatly with the specific material interests of the more prosperous sections of unionism. Had the ideal of electoral integration been fully realised direct rule from Westminster would have become both stable and permanent. The intention of electoral integrationism was, in other words, to secure that mode of government that had bestowed enormous material advantage upon the more affluent fragments of the unionist population. The electoral integrationist project promised to the unionist middle classes not only that they could retain their comfortable lifestyles but also that their continued prosperity would not have to come at the cost of political subordination. The strategy of 'equal citizenship' exercised a great deal of resonance among middle class unionists in part because it seemed to offer a way to transcend that political dependence upon the British state that had defined the period of direct rule. In the minds of its advocates, electoral integration would herald an era of genuine democracy in Northern Ireland. Once the people of the province were admitted to the parties of state, the autocratic mode of government that had blighted direct rule would become untenable. Those parties that aspired to form the executive in Westminster

would as a matter of course be compelled to tailor their policies to the interests of voters living in the six counties. The people of Northern Ireland would become full and equal citizens of the British state.

While many middle class unionists were clearly drawn to the principle of 'equal citizenship' the relationship would, however, never be fully consummated. In order to explain the ignominious demise of electoral integrationism we need to examine the troubled relationship of unionists to the British state. The political disposition of contemporary Ulster unionism exhibits a distinct and abiding ambivalence. While unionists have deep feelings of affiliation to the British state they also distrust many of the actors and agencies at its heart (Loughlin 1995). The minds of unionists are perennially troubled by the nagging suspicion that their devotion to the Union may well be unrequited. Many unionists share an anxiety that it is the ultimate ambition of the British state to facilitate the circumstances under which the troublesome territory of Northern Ireland would finally leave the United Kingdom. It is this concern that reproduces many of the more unsavoury traits of the unionist mindset.

The pervasive distrust among unionists concerning the ambitions and actions of the British state ultimately proved to be the undoing of the 'equal citizenship' project. Those who sought to advance the electoral integrationist cause asserted that the indifference or perhaps even hostility of Westminster to the constitutional status of Northern Ireland should be seen as the inevitable outcome of the exclusion of the province from the party political life of the state. The advent of electoral integration would - its proponents insisted - enable the Union to be renewed. Access to the real centres of political authority within the United Kingdom would allow the people of Northern Ireland to prevent those course of action that threaten to injure their interests. Operating within the grassroots of the parties of state would ensure that individuals from the province would come to establish essential channels of communication with their fellow British citizens. In time, Northern Ireland would come to assume the status of simply another region of the United Kingdom.

The success of the electoral integrationist enterprise hinged crucially upon whether a critical mass of unionists was willing or able to share this particular vision. It soon transpired, of course, that this was not in fact the case. While many unionists longed for a political settlement that would allow them to be full and equal citizens of the United Kingdom, few seemed able to imagine such an eventuality. The 'equal citizenship' project demanded of the unionist community a fundamental leap of political faith. If the principles of electoral integration were to be realised, unionists would in future have to place their faith in parties that had in the recent past spoken and acted in ways deemed injurious to the unionist cause. While electoral integration held much that appealed to unionists, few within the unionist fold were prepared to make this act of trust. Most preferred instead to persevere with the traditional assumption that the cause of the Union would be best served by political interests that are formally independent of the parties of state. The recent troubled history of Northern Ireland throws up many

illustrations of unionist distrust of the British state. Few are more dramatic, however, than the sequence of humiliations that unionists visited upon Conservative candidates standing for election in the early nineteen nineties.

CONCLUSION

At first glance the tale of the Northern Ireland Conservative might appear merely an intriguing footnote to the rather more substantial narratives that form the recent turbulent history of the six counties. The Ulster Tories failed, after all, to make a meaningful impression upon the political culture of the province. The achievements of the Northern Ireland Conservatives amounted to little more than a single term in control of a single district council chamber. The story of the Ulster Tories possesses a significance, however, rather greater than might be suggested by the trail of deposits lost by Conservative candidates. Its real importance lies primarily in the light it casts upon the vexed relationship between Ulster unionists and the British state.

The developments that took place at the 1989 Conservative Party conference offered the British political establishment - in principle at least - the opportunity to adopt a rather different disposition towards Northern Ireland. Had Smith Square genuinely sought to promote Conservative politics in Northern Ireland it might have signalled that the people of the province are after all equal and cherished citizens of the United Kingdom. Unequivocal endorsement of Conservative candidates might even have lent some credence to the famous Thatcherite maxim that the six counties are as British as Finchley. In reality, of course, Conservative Central Office chose instead to behave as though the Ulster Tories simply did not exist. This particular decision evidently derives from the strategic interests of the British state. Over the last century, Westminster and Whitehall have operated on the assumption that the north of Ireland is irretrievably 'different' from the rest of the United Kingdom (Bew and Patterson 1987b, 43; McGarry and O'Leary 1995, 113-5). The construction of Northern Ireland as exceptional was clearly inscribed in the conduct of the leadership of the Conservative Party after the decision to accept members from the province. In allowing the Ulster Tories to 'wither on the vine', Conservative Central Office offered one of the most explicit declarations imaginable of the metropolitan conviction that the six counties are, and should remain, 'a place apart'.

The course that events took after the 1989 Conservative Party conference would seem to underline that there are many among the political establishment in London who simply do not regard the unionist community in Northern Ireland as genuinely 'British'. The sorry tale of the Ulster Tories would further appear to indicate that these feelings of distance and aversion are mutual (O'Dowd 1998a, 115). The decision taken at Blackpool offered Ulster unionists the opportunity - in principle at least - to adopt a rather different approach towards the British state. The affiliation of the Ulster Tories meant perhaps that the unionist community might be able to participate more fully in the wider cultural and political life of the United Kingdom. In practice, of course, unionists

declined to do so. While opinion polls consistently suggested that there were many within the unionist fold interested in voting for the Conservative Party, most seemed to lose their nerve upon entering the polling booth. The dismal failure of the Ulster Tories reveals a great deal about the nature of modern unionism. Ulster unionists have frequently decried that the machinations of London *inter alia* has forced them to the very margins of the United Kingdom. The resolute rejection of the Northern Ireland Conservatives would suggest, however, that the edge of the Union might well be the place where the unionist people feel most comfortable.

REFERENCES

- Aughey, Arthur, 1989. *Under Siege: The Unionist Response to the Anglo-Irish Agreement*, Belfast: Blackstaff.
- Aughey, Arthur, 1994. 'Conservative Party Politics in Northern Ireland', pp. 120-150 in B. Barton and P. Roche (eds) *The Northern Ireland Question: Perspectives and Policies*, Alderhot: Avebury.
- Bevins, A., 1993. 'Major's Pact With Unionists Exposed', *The Independent* July 28.
- Bew, Paul and H. Patterson, 1987a, 'Unionism: Jim Leads On', *Fortnight* 256.
- Bew, Paul & H. Patterson, 1987b, 'The New Stalemate: Unionism and the Anglo-Irish Agreement. pp. 41-57 in P. Teague (ed), *Beyond the Rhetoric*, London: Lawrence & Wishart.
- Bew, Paul & H. Patterson, 1990, 'Scenarios for Progress in Northern Ireland', pp. 206-18 in J. McGarry & B. O'Leary (eds), *The Future of Northern Ireland*, Oxford: Clarendon.
- Bew, Paul & P. Dixon, 1994, 'Labour Party Policy and Northern Ireland', pp. 151-165 in B. Barton & P. Roche (eds) *The Northern Ireland Question: Perspectives and Policies*, Alderhot: Avebury.
- Breen, S, 1994, 'Middle Classes Find a Silver Lining', *Red Pepper* 5.
- British & Irish Communist Organisation (B&ICO), 1971, *The Two Irish Nations*, Belfast: B&ICO.
- British & Irish Communist Organisation (B&ICO), 1972, *The Home Rule Crisis*, Belfast: B&ICO.
- British & Irish Communist Organisation (B&ICO), 1974, *The Road to Partition*, Belfast: B&ICO.
- British & Irish Communist Organisation (B&ICO), 1977, *Against Ulster Nationalism*, Belfast: B&ICO.
- British & Irish Communist Organisation (B&ICO), 1979, *Labour in Ulster*, Belfast: B&ICO.
- Clayton, P, 1996, *Enemies and Passing Friends: Settler Ideologies in Twentieth Century Ulster*, London: Pluto.
- Clifford, B, 1985, *Parliamentary Sovereignty and Northern Ireland: A Review of the*

- Party System in the British Constitution With Relation to the Anglo-Irish Agreement*, Belfast: Athol Books.
- Clifford, B, 1986a, *Parliamentary Despotism: John Hume's Aspiration*, Belfast: Athol Books.
- Clifford, B, 1986b, *Government Without Opposition*, Belfast: Athol Books.
- Cochrane, F, 1997, *Unionist Politics and the Politics of Unionism Since the Anglo-Irish Agreement*, Cork University Press.
- Coulter, C, 1996, 'Direct Rule and the Unionist Middle Classes', pp. 169-191 in R. English and G. Walker (eds), *Unionism in Modern Ireland: New Perspectives on Politics and Culture*, Dublin: Gill and MacMillan.
- Coulter, C, 1997, 'The Culture of Contentment: The Political Beliefs and Practice of the Unionist Middle Classes', pp. 114-139 in P. Shirlow and M. McGovern (eds) *Who are 'the People'? Unionism, Protestantism and Loyalism in Northern Ireland*, London: Pluto.
- Cunningham, M, 1991, *British Government Policy in Northern Ireland, 1969-89: Its Nature and Execution*, Manchester University Press.
- Cunningham, M, 1995, "Conservative Dissidents and the Irish Question: The 'Pro-Integrationist' Lobby 1973-94", *Irish Political Studies* 10, pp. 26-42.
- Davidson, J, 1986a, *Integration: A Word Without Meaning*, Belfast: Athol Books.
- Davidson, J, 1986b, *Electoral Integration*, Belfast: Athol Books.
- Dixon, P, 1994, "'The Usual English Doubletalk": the British Political Parties and the Ulster Unionists 1974-94', *Irish Political Studies* 9 pp. 25-40.
- Duffy, M, & G. Evans, 1996, 'Building Bridges? The Political Implications of Electoral Integration in Northern Ireland', *British Journal of Political Science* 26 pp. 123-42.
- The Equal Citizen, 1985-93, Belfast: The Campaign for Equal Citizenship in Northern Ireland, Belfast: CEC.
- Hadden, T, & K. Boyle, 1989, *The Anglo-Irish Agreement: Commentary, Text and Official Review*, London: Sweet & Maxwell.
- The Integration Group, 1984, *Towards Equal Citizenship*, Belfast.
- Jackson, A, 1990, 'Unionist History (ii)', *The Irish Review* 8, pp. 63-69.
- Livingstone, S, & J. Morison, 1995, 'An Audit of Democracy in Northern Ireland', *Fortnight* 337, Special Supplement.
- Loughlin, J, 1995, *Ulster Unionism and British Identity Since 1885*, London: Pinter.
- McCann, E, 1993, *War and an Irish Town*, Third Edition, London: Pluto.
- McCartney, R, 1986a, *We Have a Vision*, Belfast: Campaign for Equal Citizenship.
- McCartney, R, 1986b, *What Must Be Done: A Programme for Normalising Politics in Northern Ireland*, Belfast: Campaign for Equal Citizenship.
- McGarry, J, & B. O'Leary, 1995, *Explaining Northern Ireland: Broken Images*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- McGovern, M & P. Shirlow, 1997, 'Counter-Insurgency, Deindustrialisation and the Political Economy of Ulster Loyalism', pp. 176-98 in P. Shirlow & M. McGovern

- (eds), *Who are 'the People'? Unionism, Protestantism and Loyalism in Northern Ireland*, London: Pluto.
- McKay, S, 2000, *Northern Protestants: An Unsettled People*, Belfast: Blackstaff.
- O'Dowd, L, 1994, *Whither the Irish Border: Sovereignty, Democracy and Economic Integration in Ireland*, Belfast: Centre for Research and Documentation.
- O'Dowd, L, 1998a, "'New Unionism', British Nationalism and the Prospects for a Negotiated Settlement in Northern Ireland', pp. 70-93 in D. Miller (ed), *Rethinking Northern Ireland: Culture, Ideology and Colonialism*, Harlow: Longman.
- O'Dowd, L, 1998b, 'Constituting Division, Impeding Agreement: The Neglected Role of British Nationalism in Northern Ireland', pp. 108-125 in J. Anderson & J. Goodman (eds), *Dis/Agreeing Ireland: Contexts, Obstacles, Hopes*, London: Pluto.
- O'Leary, B & P. Arthur, 1990, 'Northern Ireland as the Site of State- and Nation-Building Failures', pp. 1-47 in J. McGarry & B. O'Leary (eds), *The Future of Northern Ireland*, Oxford University Press.
- O'Leary, B & J. McGarry, 1993, *The Politics of Antagonism: Understanding Northern Ireland*, London: The Athlone Press.
- O'Malley, P, 1990, *Northern Ireland: Questions of Nuance*, Belfast: Blackstaff.
- Pearce, E, 1989, 'Not Everyone Was Cheering', *Fortnight* 278 p. 8.
- Porter, N, 1996, *Rethinking Unionism: An Alternative Vision for Northern Ireland*, Belfast: Blackstaff.
- Roberts, H, 1990, 'Sound Stupidity: The British Party System and the Northern Ireland Question', pp. 100-36 in J. McGarry & B. O'Leary (eds), *The Future of Northern Ireland*, Oxford: Clarendon.
- Ruane, J, & J. Todd, 1996, *The Dynamics of Conflict in Northern Ireland: Power, Conflict and Emancipation*, Cambridge University Press.
- Ryan, M, 1994, *War and Peace in Ireland: Britain and the IRA in the New World Order*, London: Pluto.
- Wilson, R, 1988, 'Sect Behind CEC Split', *Fortnight* 261.
- Workers' Association, 1972, *Why a Divided Working Class?*, Belfast: Workers' Association.
- Workers' Association, 1973, *One Island, Two Nations*, Belfast: Workers' Association.
- Workers' Association, 1974, *The Ulster General Strike*, Belfast: Workers' Association.
- Workers' Weekly, 1972-88, Various Issues, Belfast.
- Wright, F, 1987, *Northern Ireland: A Comparative Analysis*, Dublin: Gill & MacMillan.