

## IN THIS ISSUE

In August 1969, serious communal violence erupted between the Catholic and Protestant communities in Northern Ireland, prompting the British government to introduce large numbers of troops to pacify the situation. Over the next three years, the nature of the conflict changed, pitting the Army against the Provisional IRA in what has become Britain's longest counter-insurgency campaign. In October 1989, the Centre for Conflict Studies at the University of New Brunswick marked the 20th anniversary of the outbreak of "the Troubles" with a conference, entitled "Northern Ireland: a Twenty Year Retrospective". The conference attracted scholars from Britain, Ireland, Canada, the United States and Australia. A selection of the papers, refereed and revised for publication, are featured in this and the next issue of the *Quarterly*.

This issue offers three perspectives on the conflict. Henry Patterson examines the evolution of the Provisional movement under the leadership of Gerry Adams. Joanne Wright focuses more narrowly on the PIRA's propaganda, in particular, how it attempts to establish legitimacy for its cause and for its use of violence. John McGarry and Brendan O'Leary tackle the daunting question of Northern Ireland's future, by offering several options for conflict resolution. If there is a consistent theme which emerges from all three of these essays, it is that the conflict has become institutionalised, with no easy or immediate way out.

The Northern Ireland struggle is usually classified among those wars which are included under the rubric of 'Low Intensity Conflict'. Given the nature of the fighting there, this does not seem inappropriate. What actually constitutes these forms of war is still a matter of some debate. Elements of this debate are explored in several of the books reviewed in this issue.

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