

Subcultural Obstacles to the Control of Racketeering in Northern Ireland

by
Paul K. Clare

In this article the author will attempt to demonstrate how subcultures that lend support to racketeering and terrorist activity in the Catholic and Protestant ghettos of Northern Ireland are quite similar to those that sustain criminal organizations in North America.¹ Over the last 21 years, paramilitary (terrorist) organizations have increasingly gained significant control over much of the social and economic life of ghettos and, by doing so, have been able to engage in types of racketeering that not only exploit the larger community but the very people that their leaders claim to be protecting. Believing the rackets to be the main source of financing for the paramilitary organizations, Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) (police) officials have wisely reorganized and enlarged their Anti-Racketeering Squad. Legislation that was specifically designed to control the involvement of the paramilitaries in racketeering has been enacted within the last three years. Recent success in curbing some racketeering activity can be attributed to the new emphasis that the RUC has placed on controlling this type of crime and, to a lesser degree, the recent legislation. However, it is the author's contention that the police in Northern Ireland will continue to face many of the same obstacles that their North American counterparts do when they attempt to bring down criminal organizations that operate within defensive subcultures. In addition, as will be explained, the RUC, because of the nature of the conflict in Northern Ireland and certain historical traditions, faces a much more difficult task when attempting to stamp out the rackets than do North American law enforcement agencies.

The following few pages should provide those readers who know little about the continuing conflict in Northern Ireland with some necessary background information on the paramilitary organizations and their political wings. Each of the major organizations will be discussed briefly and references to more detailed analyses will be cited in the endnotes.

THE REPUBLICANS

After violence between Catholics and Protestants dramatically escalated in the streets of Belfast and Derry during 1969, the Irish Republican Army (IRA), then in a state of disarray, began to reorganize and attempted to reestablish its perceived role as the defender of the Catholic people. After a brief "honeymoon period" when British troops entered Northern Ireland and were generally made to feel welcome by the Catholic population, the IRA began to pursue its stated goal of using military force to drive the British presence from the island.²

In 1970 internal controversy over such issues as the IRA's decision to abandon its traditional abstentionist policy and run candidates for political office, its basically Marxist platform, and the level of intensity at which the "armed struggle" should be carried out, led to a split within the organization. The dissenters formed the Provisional IRA (PIRA) and its political wing Provisional Sinn Fein.³ The original organization became known as the Official IRA and its political wing as Official Sinn Fein in the south and as Republican Clubs in the north.

Official Sinn Fein/Republican Clubs later became known as Sinn Fein-The Workers' Party and, in 1983, changed its name again to simply, the Workers' Party. Representatives of the ultra left Workers' Party publicly insist that its military wing, the OIRA, was disbanded in 1972. While the Officials did declare a cease-fire in 1972 and did, in fact, discontinue their guerrilla war against the security forces (the RUC and the British Army) there are those, including this author, who maintain that the OIRA most certainly still exists and is currently a military and fund-raising wing of the Workers' Party. Since 1972, when the organization supposedly became defunct, the OIRA has engaged in several bloody feuds with the PIRA and the INLA-IRSP, which will be discussed shortly.

While the OIRA is no longer a physical threat to the government, it should be at least mentioned in any analysis of racketeering in Northern Ireland. The Officials were the ones who started and later perfected such sophisticated rackets as tax exemption fraud and have developed some innovative ways of laundering illicit funds obtained from numerous other rackets.⁴

The outlawed Provisional IRA is the largest and most important Republican paramilitary organization. Over the last two decades it has engaged in a guerrilla war against the representatives of the existing government and many of those whom PIRA leaders regard as being supporters of the government. The Provisionals are headed by an Army Council, which maintains control over a General Headquarters Staff. The organization has both a northern and southern Command.

Some of the disgruntled members of the IRA who left the organization in 1970 and helped form the PIRA did so, in part, because they objected to contesting elections and, thus, recognizing the legitimacy of the British state. Ironically, since 1981 and before that in the Republic of Ireland, Sinn Fein, the PIRA's legal political wing, has run candidates for political office on a regular basis. Many of the original dissenters also strongly objected to the IRA's Marxist platform. Nevertheless, through the years the PIRA-Sinn Fein has progressively developed a leftist orientation with many members now categorizing themselves as "revolutionary socialists."⁵

When the OIRA called a cease-fire in 1972, some members who wanted to continue the "armed struggle" broke away from the organization and, in 1974, founded the Irish Republican Socialist Party and, in 1975, its military wing, the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA). This self-proclaimed Marxist revolutionary organization became less known for its political stance than for the

violent activities of some of its seemingly psychopathic leaders, its wanton disregard for the lives of innocent civilians, spectacular assassinations of political figures, and fierce internal feuding. In 1986-87 the INLA split into two factions; the dissenters formed the Irish People's Liberation Organization (IPLO). A brutal feud ensued and resulted in the killing or maiming of most of those who formerly made up the leadership of the INLA.⁶

The INLA is no longer the formidable terrorist organization that it once was, and the IPLO, which carried out a number of bombings and assassinations during its short history, has recently fallen upon hard times. Within days of this writing, IPLO leaders have announced their intention of disbanding the organization and forming the Irish Republican Resistance Force. Presumably, they have been embarrassed by the numerous "outrages" committed by its members, the most recent being the gang rape of a young Catholic woman by eight IPLO "volunteers."

THE LOYALISTS

It is extremely difficult to offer a simple definition of Loyalism and not over-simplify some very complex political, as well as military, movements. Generally, those who belong to Loyalist political or paramilitary organizations are Protestants who want Northern Ireland to remain as part of the United Kingdom and are often willing to use all available means of preventing Northern Ireland (the north) from becoming united with the Republic of Ireland (the south) under one government. However, while no Loyalist would be willing to tolerate a United Ireland, some do not insist that the province must remain as an integral part of the U.K. For example, in 1979 the leadership of the largest Loyalist paramilitary organization, the Ulster Defense Association (UDA), advocated the establishment of an "Independent Ulster" that would be closely linked to the U.K. in terms of trade relations but would be, more or less, politically and administratively autonomous.

When the UDA was established in 1971, many joined its ranks because they believed it to be a necessary defense organization that would serve to protect the working class Protestant population from a ruthless IRA. However, the UDA has increasingly become known as more of a terrorist and/or racketeering organization than as a legitimate defense association. While the UDA is organized along military lines similar to that of the PIRA, UDA spokesmen usually do not, as the Provisionals do, take credit for assassinations and other forms of political violence. However, those who claim to belong to the branch of the UDA known as the Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF) proudly acknowledge their involvement in violent actions against their perceived enemies who are primarily members of Republican paramilitaries and their supporters. Membership in the UFF is prohibited by law, but the UDA itself remains a legal organization. Few believe that the UFF actually exists as an organization. Most experts agree that the men who make up the UFF murder squads are, in fact, regular members of the UDA. By not claiming direct involvement in terrorist activity, the UDA has, thus far, avoided being proscribed by law.

Throughout most of its history, the UDA has managed to confuse many of those who live in the north by continuing to put forth seemingly contradictory policy statements and by engaging in behavior that does not coincide with its publicly avowed goals. For example, the UDA has engaged in apparently sincere negotiations with the Social Democratic Labour Party (SDLP), the largest Catholic political party in the north, and has instructed its members to avoid conflict with Catholics. At the same time, however, UDA men, under the banner of the UFF, have tortured and murdered innocent Catholics, burned out Catholic churches, and assassinated Catholic political rivals. Quite surprisingly, the UDA policy document, *Common Sense*, that was published in 1987 demonstrated a considerable degree of sensitivity to the needs of the Catholic minority. On the other hand, not so surprisingly, much of the material contained in the UDA's regularly-published magazine, *Ulster*, is rooted in anti-Catholic bigotry and ignorance.

The other major Loyalist paramilitary organization is the outlawed Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF). This organization claims to trace its roots back to the 1914 UVF, which was established for the purpose of opposing Irish Home Rule and which later distinguished itself as part of the British Army — the 36th (Ulster) Division — in World War I. However, the current UVF, which was organized in the late 1960s to fight against the IRA, has little in common with the original organization. While the UVF can boast of a few military accomplishments, such as a 1989 direct hit on Sinn Fein headquarters in the Catholic ghetto of Ardoyne with a RPG-7 rocket, it is most widely known for engaging in brutal sectarian killings and its inability to maintain internal discipline. Several of the minor Loyalist terrorist groups such as the Red Hand Commando, which has been generally inactive in recent years, and the Protestant Action Force are commonly believed to be only factions within the UVF or cover names used by UVF members when they carry out some particularly outrageous act of violence.⁷

THE EARLY RACKETS AND A QUESTION OF TERMINOLOGY

The paramilitary organizations that have been involved in the "armed struggle" during the last 21 years have, since the very beginning, been willing to engage in both ordinary crime and racketeering for the purpose of financing their military and political campaigns. Their participation in such activity distinguishes them from their historical predecessors. Journalist Martin Dillon correctly observes that members of the "old" IRA who engaged in ordinary crime, such as bank robberies, risked being ostracized by their fellow revolutionaries. "The attitude that robbery was anathema to Republicans remained in place until the commencement of the 'dirty war' in 1969".⁸

From the start of the current phase of the conflict in 1969, some types of ordinary criminal behavior were legitimized by both Republican and Loyalist paramilitary leaders. By sanctioning such activity, the organizations were then able to become involved in racketeering, and, ultimately, to develop and maintain significant social and economic control of the ghettos. When PIRA

leaders, as Dillon points out, first constructed barricades and established “no-go” areas (neighborhoods that were under the protection and control of the IRA and in which, for a time, security forces were unable to enter) they soon discovered that they had marked off territories in which they could operate criminal enterprises with impunity.

The first lucrative racket that the Republicans developed involved the exploitation of the brewing industry. Brewery executives negotiated deals with paramilitary leaders that resulted in the delivery of alcoholic beverages to some establishments within the “no-go” areas. Illegal drinking clubs known as “shabeens” replaced the pubs and clubs that were destroyed during the rioting that took place in the ghettos in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The organizations not only maintained control over the “shabeens” but developed increasingly sophisticated relationships with the breweries. Dillon claims that in 1969-70 a leading Provisional IRA man was placed on the payroll of one brewery and an accountant representing the PIRA was appointed to negotiate the prices for all of the alcoholic beverages sold to “IRA controlled outlets.”⁹ Loyalist paramilitaries soon established their own working relationships with breweries.¹⁰

Paddy Devlin, a highly respected political commentator and former chief whip of the SDLP, in an interview with Dillon, explained how the establishment of the early barricades was “critical” in the development of the rackets. By physically, socially, and, to a degree, economically isolating their communities the racketeers/terrorists were, he contends, able to establish criminal empires.

“The barricades brought an influx of criminal and low-life types into so-called defense organizations which evolved into the Provisional IRA. It was a tribal thing which brought monies, even state monies from government agencies in Dublin, into the North for Catholic aid.....They (the area leaders) evolved into the Godfathers who sustained their own existence and position with funds generated on the same basis as the New York Mafia families.”¹¹

Devlin was a member of the IRA in the early 1950s and, during the early stages of the current “troubles”, was active in the Central Citizens Defense Committee. He was, thus, in an ideal position to observe the development of the rackets on a daily basis. It is not only important to draw the reader’s attention to the conclusions that Devlin comes to, but also the terminology that he uses. He labels those who were to become PIRA leaders as “Godfathers” and points to the similarities between their organization and “New York Mafia families.”

Academics who use such terms when discussing the paramilitaries naturally invite criticism from their colleagues. It is argued that those who use such terms as “racketeer,” “gangster,” “Godfather,” and “Mafia” are adopting an “elitist” position and, by doing so, tend to ignore the transgressions of the legal authorities. This only serves to further the government’s interest in criminalizing behavior, so the argument goes, that is no worse than that engaged

in by the security forces. Critics also claim that such words are often used by representatives of the British government for propaganda purposes. It is to the advantage of the government if the Republican paramilitary organizations are seen as self-serving mafias. Such criticism may be, to a degree, justified if it is not carried too far. Government officials and both British and Irish journalists have, indeed, used such terminology and have claimed that Republican paramilitary leaders behave more like gangsters than they do revolutionaries. Nevertheless, at the risk of offending some, such words will appear again in the remainder of the text.

It is significant that many long-time Irish "nationalists", such as Paddy Devlin, and even some die-hard Republicans not only use such words, but equate the Republican paramilitaries with "the Mafia." Such an analogy represents their perception of reality. To ignore that perception and its associated terminology would distort a particular view of the paramilitary organizations that is held by many, including some who, like Devlin, are considered to be "insiders." Equally important, the victims also tend to use the same terminology, and view the organizations as being analogous to mafias. However, other sources within the ghettos of Belfast and Derry do not all speak with the same voice on the subject of racketeering. On one extreme, for example, some contend that the PIRA remains ideologically pure and does not exploit ordinary citizens. On the other, some see all of the Provos as gangsters and hoodlums who are intent only on gaining power and money. It also should be made clear that racketeering would probably not be near the top of a list of concerns expressed by residents of the ghettos. Most are content not knowing much about such activity, and most of those who do are not inclined to speak out on the subject. However, if one is to meaningfully discuss the financing of terrorism in Northern Ireland, one must certainly use such words as racketeering and mafia because these terms are used by, and accurately describe the perceptions held by, key individuals, including disgruntled Republicans and Loyalists as well as victims. These are the very people who know the most about the subject and who can at least begin to help us understand the subcultural obstacles to the control of racketeering and terrorism.

RACKETEERING TODAY AND THE LAW ENFORCEMENT RESPONSE

Republican paramilitary organizations are engaged in what they regard as a guerrilla war against the security forces and operate militarily out of certain "working class" Catholic neighborhoods. It should come as no surprise to learn, therefore, that they maintain tight control over much of the social and financial life of their communities. Anything that is perceived of as a threat to the social control that the paramilitary bosses maintain over the community (such as independent social and drinking establishments) or to their business empire (such as a bus system in the neighborhoods that would compete with the PIRA-controlled taxi companies) either sells out, moves out, or is blown up.

While in recent years the Loyalist organizations have engaged in serious confrontations with the RUC, they are not involved in a shooting war with the

security forces. The police are able, therefore, to operate more freely in the Protestant "working class" areas and, as a result, Loyalist "supremos" are more vulnerable than are their Republican counterparts. Nevertheless, the UDA and UVF, often employing even more brutal forms of intimidation than those used by Republicans, also attempt to maintain tight reins on the economic and social life of their communities. Their success in doing so should not be underestimated.

As a result of the passage in March 1989 of the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act the police now have the legal authority to examine bank accounts and seize funds that are linked to paramilitary organizations.¹² This legislation was patterned on the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO) in the United States.¹³ The RICO type statute, which was supported by all of the political parties except the political wings of the paramilitaries, holds promise of future victories for the RUC in its fight against racketeering. Thus far, the legislation has not actually been used to seize paramilitary funds. However, a law enacted in January 1988 (Emergency Provision of the Northern Ireland Act) has already proven to be an extremely valuable tool for the RUC in its attempt to eradicate Loyalist extortion rackets.

Through the establishment of private security firms, factions within the UDA were able to maintain the appearance of legitimacy when receiving payments from building site contractors and other businessmen. The UDA would, in fact, provide a minimal amount of security, usually a watchman and sometimes security dogs, but businessmen either paid off these UDA-front organizations or, at the very least, their property would be destroyed. There never was any question about who was behind the extortion rackets. In fact, the number listed for one of the security firms in the yellow pages of the telephone book was actually that of UDA headquarters. The UDA ran extortion rackets in all Loyalist areas and even in some Republican territory, such as the Short Strand, where the Official IRA maintains a strong presence. There is little question that the OIRA and the UDA worked out a cooperative arrangement in which the Officials operated the tax exemption fraud racket on the building sites and the UDA provided the security.¹⁴

The 1988 legislation referred to above requires all private security firms to be licensed by the Secretary of State. The name of every employee of the firm must be declared and after an application is approved, a registration fee is assessed. While it would be naive to suggest that extortion no longer takes place on building sites in Loyalist areas, virtually all of the UDA-controlled security firms have gone out of business.

The effects of the most recent legislation that was specifically designed to cope with the racketeering problem has been, perhaps, a little disappointing. In recent years, however, a few courageous men have taken stands against the paramilitary-backed gangsters. Their willingness to do so has brought forth some encouraging results. In 1986, Jim Murtagh, a Catholic pub owner, was the first to challenge the authority of the racketeers and is, indeed, the bravest of the brave few who have risked their lives by doing so. As a result of Murtagh's testimony three very dangerous Loyalist extortionists were convicted and sent to prison.

A few other brave individuals have followed Murtagh's example and have testified in court against paramilitary extortionists. The most noteworthy case is a recent one in which building industry officials gave evidence against five members of the UDA who were demanding protection money from them. They, as Murtagh was, were wired for sound when meeting with the terrorists. Their testimony and the taped evidence that was played in court resulted in the conviction and imprisonment of the five high-echelon UDA men, including a man by the name of Artie Fee, one of the most notorious of the Loyalist gangsters. As a result of this and a few other recent trials, as well as some ongoing investigations by the RUC, Loyalist paramilitary organizations are currently in a state of disarray. Most of the old leadership of both the UDA and the UVF are now in prison, many after having been convicted on racketeering charges.

Certainly the demise of one James Craig, a close associate of Fee and arguably the most feared gangster in Northern Ireland, has caused building contractors and other business people to breathe a little more easily. The one-time UDA supremo was gunned down by a UFF hit squad. Craig's blatant gangsterism had become an embarrassment to the UDA leadership. He was one of a number of flamboyant Loyalists, who, unlike their Republican counterparts, behaved much like the stereotypical rich and flashy North American gangster. Craig was also blamed for the murder of UDA kingpin, John McMichael, a leader who had expressed a desire to investigate racketeering within the UDA. Allegedly, Craig made arrangements with the PIRA to have McMichael killed.¹⁵ As strange as it may seem, Loyalists and Republicans do sometimes enter into agreements which may involve one side carrying out assassinations for the other or dividing up territory for racketeering purposes, as noted earlier. Regardless of the circumstances surrounding Craig's assassination, his death and recent successful investigations by the RUC have apparently brought about a decrease in some of the more visible types of racketeering activity.

Racketeering on the Republican side is much more sophisticated and professionally run than it is in Loyalist areas. The RUC may know that both the PIRA-Sinn Fein and the OIRA-Workers' Party are, for example, operating their social and drinking clubs illegally, but proving this to be the case is extremely difficult. Club managers may claim to pay as much as 50,000 pounds in wages above what they are actually paying, make 100,000 on beer and spirits in excess of what they are reporting, and siphon off nearly 100,000 pounds in profits from gaming machines. Nevertheless, the police have been able, in a few instances, to close down these lucrative sources of financing for the paramilitaries. The 1987 Registration of Clubs Act gave the RUC the authority to examine the accounts of the various clubs and to shut down those who could not provide documentation that proves they are legally run establishments. Since January of this year, the courts have mandated the closing of five Republican and one Loyalist club.

Investigators know very well that certain social and drinking clubs, the West Belfast Taxi Association, and a number of other business establishments are front organizations for the Provisional IRA. In fact, there are few people in

Belfast, if any, who do not know that the West Belfast Taxi Association, as well as some other taxi companies, are controlled by the PIRA. PIRA-Sinn Fein spokesmen, at least most of those that this writer has encountered, do not even deny this. However, knowing which businesses are front organizations for the paramilitaries is not enough. Authorities are faced with the difficult task of tracing the money made by such organizations to the financing of terrorist activity. With such evidence, prosecution is difficult, if not impossible.

The PIRA's taxi business is self-contained, sophisticated, and, at least on the surface, appears to operate legally. Of course, bombing and intimidating the competition out of business, as the Provos have done, and using the proceeds from their operation to finance their military campaign could hardly be regarded as lawful behavior. Nevertheless, the PIRA taxi racket is a well-run enterprise in which the drivers must purchase their fuel, maintenance, and insurance from the organization itself, and pay their dues at the Sinn Fein offices at Conway Street Mills on a regular basis. The whole operation is covered by a private insurance policy which the taxi association takes out with Lloyds.

On the Loyalist side, the UDA and UVF also demand and get regular payments from the drivers of black taxis in the Protestant ghetto areas. Unlike their Republican counterparts, however, the Loyalist taxi rackets are not very sophisticated. Protestant drivers must pay their dues to the paramilitaries, but they purchase their fuel, maintenance, and insurance from private outlets.

RUC officers, who are constantly targeted for assassinations, can hardly be expected to conduct investigations of either street or organized crime in Republican ("hard green") areas in the same manner in which police do in "normal" neighborhoods. Northern Ireland has been determined to be the most dangerous place in the world in which to do police work.¹⁶ The mere fact that the RUC can point to a number of successful investigations involving racketeering activity linked to the Republican paramilitaries is not only a testimony to the professionalism of its officers but to their bravery.

The situation is even more precarious for the RUC when they are on duty in Republican strongholds in the border areas. Now in possession of advanced military hardware, the PIRA is such a threat to the security forces in the rural border areas that simply patrolling this so-called "bandit" or "Indian" territory is a significant accomplishment. It is here, in these PIRA and INLA controlled areas, where vast sums are made from smuggling, exacting tribute from legitimate truckers who transport goods of all sorts across the border, and from the red diesel racket.¹⁷ Elaborating on the obvious serves little purpose. Obviously, investigating racketeering activity that takes place within what amounts to enemy territory is dangerous, frustrating, and seldom rewarded with success.

The main purpose of this article is to examine some of the social relationships that have developed and are maintained within the closed ghetto subcultures that exist in Northern Ireland and analyze the implications that they have for the control of racketeering. The new legislation and the increasing attention that the RUC is giving to the financing of terrorism should result in a decrease in some racketeering activity. However, the social organization that

exists within the ghettos and offers protection to the racketeer and terrorist remains intact and, if anything, is becoming more solidified. Only by examining the social organization of the ghetto can one discover the main obstacles to the control of both racketeering and terrorism.

GHETTO ATTITUDE

The lower class urban neighborhoods of Northern Ireland that are populated predominantly by people from one religious and cultural tradition (Catholics or Protestants) will, for the purpose of this article, be referred to as ghettos. It is important to note that the word ghetto has a different meaning from that of the word slum and the social disorganization and physical deterioration that the word slum implies. A ghetto, in fact, may also be a slum, but in the Northern Ireland context the ghetto simply means an area of lower class ethnic and religious concentration. The police often refer to such neighborhoods as either "hard green" (Republican) or "hard orange" (Loyalist) areas.

The importance of the social class factor should also be emphasized because the paramilitaries primarily operate out of, have the most influence in, and receive the most support from the lower class neighborhoods. For example, in Derry the PIRA's stronghold is in the public housing projects (estates) in the Catholic Bogside. However, the Catholic middle class area of Foyle Springs is relatively untouched by the PIRA's influence and, therefore, is of little concern to the RUC in its attempts to combat terrorism and racketeering. In Northern Ireland, those living in public housing projects are often referred to as the working class. However, considering the excessively high unemployment rates in these areas, it hardly seems appropriate to label them as such.

The difficulties that those working within the criminal justice system face when attempting to control terrorism and/or racketeering can be fully appreciated only after clear explanation of some basic truths about the social organization of the ghetto and the socialization process that many of its inhabitants experience. As is true of many who grow up within the North American urban subcultures that produce organized crime figures, many of Northern Ireland's youngsters are the products of a socialization process that instills in them values alien to those of the larger society and its laws, which lead to behavior that outsiders may consider outrageous. It is probably not wise to read too much into the extreme opinions one hears voiced by some ghetto youth in Northern Ireland or, for that matter, in New York or Los Angeles. However, one does not have to interview many young Catholic or Protestant residents of the ghettos of Belfast to come up with examples of individuals who attribute no legitimacy to the values deemed important by most who live outside the ghettos, and who actually approve of behavior that is shocking by most standards.

During a conversation that the author had with several young men in Turf Lodge, a Catholic Ghetto in Belfast, I asked them if there was any one individual who they admired more than anyone else. "Mad Dog' McGlinchey" was the reply. The ruthless Dominic McGlinchey was the former Chief of Staff of the INLA. The young men were particularly impressed by McGlinchey's "volun-

teers” when they machine-gunned Protestant fundamentalists as they prayed in Church at Darkley, in November 1983.¹⁸ The young men did not seem to harbor strong dislikes for Protestants or have any real interest in the Republican movement. In the words of one, the massacre was just “a good thing to do.”

On the other side of the divide, Michael “Rambo” Stone is a new folk hero to some of the Protestants who live in the Shankill Road area of Belfast. The Catholic-born Stone, whose views were so extreme that he was even rejected for membership by some Loyalist paramilitary organizations, will be remembered for his one man attack on a Republican funeral in 1988 during which he killed several mourners.

Of course, the actions of such men as McGlinchey and Stone are considered outrageous by most of those who live in the ghettos and even by many, if not most, who are active within the paramilitaries. However, the viewpoints expressed by McGlinchey and Stone supporters are not so uncommon that they would be considered abnormal. They have, undoubtedly, been developed through social interaction within the immediate environments of those who hold them and do not stem from individual pathology. What is, perhaps, more alarming is the insensitivity to human suffering, often their own, that is evident in many ghetto youth. The author asked another Turf Lodge youth to express his opinion about the Enniskillen bombing in which 11 Protestants were killed and numerous others were maimed by a PIRA-planted bomb while they were attending memorial services. In his opinion, was it morally wrong to take these innocent lives? When asked, he thought for a moment and replied, “Ya, I guess it was, but fuck ‘em.” This young man had no love for the Provos, having been beaten in the past by PIRA punishment squads, and claimed that he really did not have anything against Protestants, although he seemed to regard fighting with them at soccer matches to be his primary mission in life. It goes without saying that such hard men and women who either support or are indifferent to the worst forms of violence can hardly be expected to concern themselves about racketeering activity within their neighborhoods.

Of course, it should come as no surprise to learn that a disproportionate number of ghetto inhabitants, in comparison with those who live in more stable societies, appear to be insensitive to human suffering and regard violence as a viable means of expressing themselves. When lower class Catholics and Protestants feel that they are being discriminated against, are constantly being subjected to propaganda and outright intimidation by various organizations, and live in the midst of a war that has taken a psychological and/or physical toll on most of their friends and relatives, they can hardly be expected to think and act like “normal” people. The fact that many, if not most do, act like “normal” people, is a tribute to those ghetto parents, clergy, and teachers who do their best to instill proper values in their children and work to ensure that they will stay out of trouble.

This author and others have written elsewhere about how the paramilitaries and their political wings influence the social, economic, and political life of the ghetto and, to a large degree, control the inhabitants’ access to information, community services, and sometimes even jobs and welfare benefits.¹⁹ By

denying assistance to non-supporters and socially ostracizing if not physically punishing those who speak out against them, they are able to maintain significant control over the ghettos and engage in racketeering activity that not only exploits the larger community but the very people that they claim to be protecting. The paramilitaries are able to maintain control over their neighborhoods because they enjoy a significant degree of support from ghetto residents and because they are such physically intimidating forces.

Examples of how and why PIRA-Sinn Fein has managed to cultivate and maintain a degree of community support will be provided shortly. Before doing so, however, the reader's attention must be drawn to the second point made earlier: without using their power to physically intimidate the ghetto populations, the PIRA and other paramilitary organizations could not develop and maintain their racketeering empires. A friend of the author from the Catholic Short Strand spoke for many when he angrily explained what the PIRA meant to him.

They're all scum bags—banging the same tune. They're street bullies. Like the class bully in school—you can hit everybody in class but don't hit him. Say something bad about everybody in class but don't say anything bad about him. They (those who live in the Catholic ghettos) don't like the Provies. For 20 years those fuckers have been walking in and out of their homes, taking their cars, telling them when to work, telling them when not to work. I could teach you a lot about guys that have been killed—crippled by the IRA—fucked up by the IRA—.

He went on to provide numerous examples of the PIRA's bullying tactics and of how people he knew were killed or maimed because of real, imagined or made up offenses against the Republican movement or because individual Provos used their affiliations with the organization to settle personal scores. A one-time high ranking member of the PIRA has, over the last few years, provided the author with some valuable information about his former organization. He probably would not disagree with much that was said by the above informant. When asked about the level of support for the Provisionals within the Catholic ghettos, replied: "Ninety seven percent wouldn't support the Provos—actually support them. I mean they stand in a pub or a bar and tell ye the Provos are great but to actually do something—to mind guns or mind explosives or let them use their homes or use their cars—no." It is natural and apparently logical to assume that when a person casts a vote for Sinn Fein, he or she is also voting for the PIRA. But, that is not necessarily the case, according to this former Provo.

I mean, they vote Sinn Fein because they don't see any other option. A lot of people see the IRA as their protectors if it came to a civil war, but that is all! If they felt safe enough they would criticize the IRA. Most people would absolutely criticize the IRA because the IRA has crossed most people in one way or another. An awful lot of people have been shot in the knees and beat up. Everybody has been touched. It amazes me the (low)

level of support that they have and manage to carry on—certainly in Belfast. The like of Crossmaglen—I'm not sure.

The most recent Ulster Marketing Survey poll lends support to the above contention that Sinn Fein voters do not necessarily back the PIRA. As reported in *Fortnight* magazine: "One out of every five Sinn Fein voters disagrees with the use of violence to achieve political ends, and one in three believes Sinn Fein should renounce the armed campaign of the IRA—contradicting the widely accepted assumption that a vote for Sinn Fein is merely a vote for the gunman".²⁰ The same poll indicates that fully one third of Sinn Fein voters are unemployed and those who are employed "are heavily concentrated among manual and semi-skilled social groups." Interestingly, the (SDLP), Sinn Fein's chief rival for votes within the Catholic community and a strong advocate of non-violent politics, has a 13% unemployment rate among its voters. This is lower than the rate for the population as a whole.²¹ Evidently, in the minds of many unemployed or semi-skilled Catholic ghetto residents, Sinn Fein may have its drawbacks, but it is the only party that comes close to representing them; the SDLP, from their perspective, is primarily a middle class Catholic party.

Few ordinary men and women openly criticize the Republican paramilitary organizations. There are too many "sympathizers" around for one to feel safe doing so. Also, it is essential not to neglect the fact that the paramilitaries are stable organizations that have the backing of numerous hard-core supporters. The next section will focus on the similarities between paramilitary organizations in Northern Ireland and criminal organizations in North America and how such organizations develop and maintain stability and support.

NORTH AMERICAN AND IRISH GHETTOS: A COMPARISON

Some American criminologists claim that there are certain types of subcultures that develop within some urban neighborhoods which produce individuals who enter into and are successful in organized crime (racketeering). Other types of subcultures do not provide youngsters with opportunities to enter into sophisticated criminal activity and, therefore, produce only street corner gangs and petty criminals or drug addicts and other dropouts. What Cloward and Ohlin²² describe as "criminal" subcultures, as opposed to "conflict"²³ and "retreatist"²⁴ subcultures, are characterized by two factors. This first is an "integration of age levels"; adult criminals become role models to youngsters and often teach them the finer techniques of crime and/or recruit them into criminal organizations. The second factor is contact and working relationships with those in the "semi-legitimate world", including lawyers who specialize in "mob cases", bondsmen, fences, and corrupt police officers. An established racketeering organization provides neighborhood youngsters who demonstrate potential with opportunities to serve apprenticeships and eventually be recruited into the organization, thus assuring the continuing existence of the organization through the infusion of new blood.

Robert Merton hypothesizes that lower class American youth turn to crime largely because they cannot obtain their "culturally defined goals"

(material success, the desire for which, he contends, most people in American society, regardless of social class, internalize to some degree). They cannot obtain their goals because, living in lower class neighborhoods, they do not have the "institutionalized means" (access to jobs and educational opportunities) to obtain legitimate success. Therefore, they often attempt to obtain their "culturally defined goals" through "illegitimate means" or, in other words, involvement in criminal activity.

Cloward and Ohlin claim that some urban subcultures, such as the "conflict" one, do not provide opportunities to obtain either legitimate or illegitimate success. Thus, individuals living in "conflict" subcultures have little chance of becoming accomplished criminals. However, while those who grow up in "criminal" subcultures may find it difficult to succeed in the legitimate business world, they do have opportunities to become successful illegitimately as organized crime figures.

Some scholars disagree with Cloward and Ohlin's theory, maintaining that it is oversimplified and that the pure "criminal" subcultures, in which life revolves around organized criminal activity, can seldom, if ever, be found. Nevertheless, research does confirm Cloward and Ohlin's basic contention that a certain type of subculture provides individuals with opportunities to succeed in careers in organized crime while other types of subcultures simply do not.²⁵ Even in some neighborhoods where distinct "criminal" subcultures cannot be found, "criminal" gangs or cliques often provide youngsters with opportunities to succeed in organized crime.²⁶

The theories that have developed from criminological research in the United States may help us to understand how the defensive subcultures that are so apparent within the ghettos of Belfast and Derry have presented and will continue to present barriers to the control of terrorism and racketeering. In fact, it can be persuasively argued that researchers are more likely to find Cloward and Ohlin's pure "criminal" subcultures within certain neighborhoods in Northern Ireland than within modern North American cities. Most social scientists agree that suburbanization and the demise of machine politics resulted in the breakdown of the solid urban subcultures in North America that sustained both criminal and political organizations during the first half of the century. Circumstances have been quite different in Northern Ireland over the last 21 years. Since the "Troubles" broke out in 1968 thousands of Catholics and Protestants who formerly lived in at least partially integrated lower class neighborhoods have, as a result of fear and intimidation, found refuge in the ghettos or, as the Northern Irish sociologist John Darby would say, retreated to the "heartlands."²⁷ For two decades now residents of the ghettos have become participants in defensive subcultures in which they often come under the influence of the dominant political and criminal forces in their immediate environments.

In the Addams section of Chicago and on Mulberry Street in New York City, children who are deemed to have potential have opportunities to run errands for, observe, and in other ways interact with powerful men who accept crime as a way of life. Like the young males growing up in these Italian-American neighborhoods, children in the Catholic and Protestant ghettos of

Belfast and Derry serve apprenticeships to individuals who have rejected many of the norms and laws of the larger society ("integration of age levels"). If anything, the role models for ghetto children in Northern Ireland are even more likely to demonstrate a commitment to violence, through words and example, and to completely deny the legitimacy of the law and existing criminal justice system than are their American counterparts. In Cloward and Ohlin's terms, the ghetto subcultures may not provide adequate means to succeed along legitimate lines, but they do provide some youngsters with opportunities to succeed illegitimately.

In the early 1970s the Provisionals developed a quite formal method indoctrinating ghetto youth. Through participation in a kind of PIRA minor league, *Na Fianna Eireann*, youngsters were not only subjected to Republican propaganda but actually received military training and carried out some assignments. The author has had the opportunity to observe the more subtle ways in which Sinn Fein-PIRA is currently attempting to win the hearts and minds of ghetto youth. These observations took place in and around recreation centers in Republican neighborhoods, particularly in Twinbrook.

To fully understand the extent of the influence that the paramilitaries and their political wings have over ghetto youth, it is necessary to provide some background information on the probation and social service programs that are available to boys and girls who live in these areas. Probation officers and social workers can only serve the youth of the Catholic and Protestant ghettos if they have the consent of the dominant paramilitaries in these areas. Therefore, representatives of social service agencies must convince Sinn Fein, as well as the UDA that they are politically neutral before they are allowed to operate within Republican or Loyalist controlled neighborhoods. In some instances, in order to be allowed to serve area youth, agencies have actually hired Sinn Fein and UDA activists as what amounts to be youth counselors.²⁸ As a result many youngsters come under the direct influence of the paramilitaries, or their political wings, through their participation in government-financed programs.

The author's observations allow him to conclude that Sinn Fein representatives are becoming increasingly successful in converting ghetto youngsters to their way of thinking. Sinn Fein's current efforts seem to be concentrated on winning over young delinquents, aged 12 to 15, before they enter into the ranks of the "Hoods", semi-organized groups of street hoodlums. Sinn Fein, in the author's opinion, views the Hoods as threats to its control of such ghettos as Twinbrook. Therefore, Sinn Fein leaders from Gerry Adams (the president of Sinn Fein) on down, are prepared to spend considerable time and effort in selling Republicanism to the very young. They are doing so by holding out the promise to these youngsters of attaining real success within the Republican movement.

The author has spent a considerable amount of time with a well-known Sinn Fein Counselor who is employed by a youth program in Twinbrook and has studied his interaction with young people in the neighborhood. Some regard this man as being nothing other than a crude and dangerous thug. However, in the eyes of the youngsters who participate in the government-sponsored youth program that employs him, he is nothing less than a god. Former common street

delinquents, under his guidance, have been converted into Republican sympathizers who see the Sinn Fein man, and others like him, as representing their only hope for the future and the “armed struggle” as the only solution to Northern Ireland’s problems.

The author was particularly struck by the comments made by three boys selling the *An Phoblacht/Republican News* (Sinn Fein-PIRA’s newspaper) when he first met them in Twinbrook. All of them were probationers who participated in the Sinn Fein Counselor’s youth program. The kids seemingly could not wait to present a copy of the latest edition to their hero and, when they thought that “the outsider” was not looking, to slip him a note. In much the same way that youngsters in certain neighborhoods in North America identify with “wiseguys”, the Twinbrook newsboys were sharing secrets with an important person, and that made them feel important too. They had been given roles to play in a cause and that was more than they had ever been given before.

Observing how they hung on the Counselor’s every word, it was somewhat surprising to learn, after interviewing the youngsters, that none of them could really articulate Sinn Fein’s political philosophy. They certainly did not engage in the same kind of Marxist sloganeering that their mentor did when the author talked to him privately.²⁹ Sinn Fein representatives appear to be clever enough not to engage in blatant forms of brainwashing. Most parents, particularly mothers, would strenuously object, even if they feared the PIRA, if they thought that their children were being subjected to extreme indoctrination techniques. As it was, all of the youngsters admitted that their parents would be very upset if they knew about their close relationships with the Sinn Fein man.

While the newsboys had not been schooled in Sinn Fein’s particular brand of Marxist revolutionary ideology and knew next to nothing about world affairs, Sinn Fein had, through the efforts of the Counselor and another Sinn Fein activist who is a school teacher, managed to direct the youngsters’ existing prejudices, hatreds, and frustrations toward nearly all other organizations and individuals that touched their lives. They had become paranoid to the point that they believed that all, save Sinn Fein-PIRA, were oppressing them. They disliked America (“The only good things about America is NORAID”), but all wanted to visit the United States and hoped that the author could help them do so. All of the major political parties, they had learned, supported the hated British government. Even the nationalist SDLP was “pro Brit.” With some justification, they viewed other radical and/or Republican organizations as their enemies. To them, the Workers’ Party was the OIRA who were nothing but gangsters and bullies. The INLA was simply written off as a contingent of Hoods. They did not hate Protestants in general, they said, but they were convinced that Protestants despised them.

These, in many ways likable, youngsters have been successfully converted by Sinn Fein-PIRA, ironically with the help of the British government, and within the next few years may very well join the ranks of the men behind the gun. They have already accepted the belief in the necessity of using torture, killing, (their words) and terrorism as means by which they can accomplish their goals.

The former high ranking Provo quoted above admitted that he had stayed in the organization as long as he did because of the sense of power that he felt as a result of his position in the ghetto community. He believes that others do so for the same reason. He might have belonged to a "secret army," but his connection to the PIRA was no secret to many in the community. Admirers ran errands for him, patted him on the back and praised him and, while he now knows that people probably feared him more than they respected him, being feared was good enough for him.

The Twinbrook newsboys, most likely, will soon be given a gift that only the paramilitaries are able to offer them, psychological and physical power over others. It is doubtful if any of these kids, as individuals, would have the courage or the ability to take on some of the genuine Hoods in the community. Contrary to popular opinion, the young Provos are not necessarily the toughest guys on the block. However, backed by a powerful and ruthless organization, and working in teams, young "volunteers" make up PIRA punishment squads and hand out beatings and kneecappings to many Hoods who would be more than matches for them in one to one combat.

Individuals who appear willing to engage in the worst forms of violent activity can hardly be expected to have any moral qualms about racketeering. In fact the Twinbrook boys attached no particular meaning to the word. When they get older they may learn to use such words as "revolutionary expropriations." However, right now they simply accept as justifiable whatever means of making money that the PIRA must use in order to finance the cause. Some might contend that Sinn Fein-PIRA applies at least psychological pressure on ghetto residents when soliciting contributions. However, to the youngsters, far from engaging in extortion, the organization is just collecting the "tax." If you do not pay the "tax", the boys were quick to point out, you will not receive assistance from Sinn Fein when you need it. Unlike their Sinn Fein mentor, who insisted that he was willing to help all members of the community regardless of their political affiliations, the youngsters pointed out that assistance only goes to the faithful, and that is the way it should be.

DEFENSIVE SUBCULTURES: OBSTACLES TO CRIME CONTROL

Current research continues to confirm what has been known for some time about delinquent behavior. While intervention on the part of law enforcement or social service agencies does little to reduce one's commitment to a criminal career, the aging process does tend to decrease the intensity and duration of criminal activity. In other words, as criminals get older their involvement in crime usually decreases. However, there are certain types of criminals, including those who are involved in traditional American Mafia organized crime and those who are members of Irish paramilitary organizations, who are more likely than ordinary criminals to be committed, on a life-long basis, to criminal careers. The leadership of traditional organized crime "families" is generally made up of middle-aged men and even some senior citizens.³⁰ Many men and women have passed through the ranks of the OIRA and PIRA during the past 20 years. Unquestionably, however, there are those

within the leadership of the PIRA-Sinn Fein and many who make up the hard-core rank and file who have been active members of the organization throughout most of its history. Some of the more important reasons why many continue to remain active within paramilitary organizations have already been discussed. The sense of power and the psychological gratification that one receives from playing a key role in a subculture or, perhaps for some, in a cause are too much to give up for most of those who have little else to fall back on.

Criminologist Gerald D. Suttles argues that the subcultural theories of crime causation are no longer satisfactory when explaining crime within America's complex urban areas where there is such a diverse mix of cultures. When critiquing Suttles, Robert M. Lombardo does not disagree with such a contention, but he does argue that in some urban neighborhoods in America the "social structures still support deviant behavior and, in particular, organized crime." When discussing the social relationships that develop within what Suttles has termed "defended neighborhoods," Lombardo provides some interesting examples of how "structural" support within certain communities "has worked against members maturing out of organized criminal activity." While this writer obviously believes that the old subcultural theories are still valid when explaining crime in Northern Ireland, Lombardo's more restricted sociological approach can help us more clearly understand how criminal organizations are sustained in both Northern Ireland and elsewhere. He provides examples of how criminal organizations can thrive even in areas where there is more of a mix of cultures than can be found in Northern Ireland's ghettos.³¹

Both Suttles and Lombardo have observed how some of the Social and Athletic Clubs (SACs) in the Addams section of Chicago help carry on ("criminal") traditions, integrate age groups, and recruit new members into the "Outfit", Chicago's Cosa Nostra family. The SACs, which were formerly linked to street gangs, currently include members who belong to the "Outfit." These members serve as role models, if not folk heroes, and, as such, are able to pass on criminal traditions. Undoubtedly, such individuals get a great deal of psychological gratification from the respect and admiration they receive from their fellow members—not unlike the gratification the above mentioned Sinn Fein Counselor seems to receive when cavorting with his cronies in a Provo bar.

The SACs in Chicago provide the same type of psychological haven for members of the "Outfit" as the social and drinking clubs in West Belfast and their counterparts in the Protestant Shankill area do for staunch Republicans and Loyalists. Such gathering places also serve the purpose of keeping individuals in the neighborhoods where they enjoy the most support. "Fat Tony" Salerno and John Gotti, the latest "Mob Star" in the United States, may be millionaires, but they still return to their rather dingy headquarters and/or social clubs in working-class areas on a daily basis.³² Likewise, PIRA supremos can be found in similar haunts in the middle of the neighborhoods where they receive the most respect and recognition. By remaining in the communities in which they grew up, they strengthen the defensive subcultures on which they rely for support.

If the paramilitary racketeers are making so much money, some ask, why don't they move out into some of the "better" areas? Certainly some have left

their old neighborhoods. A few, who at least operate on the fringes of the PIRA, particularly those associated with the legal profession, now reside in the exclusive Malone Road area of Belfast. Undoubtedly, such individuals have helped establish the links to the “semi-legitimate world” that Cloward and Ohlin claim are essential to the maintenance of a “criminal” subculture. Others, some with no visible means of support, have moved into the middle-class neighborhoods of Fruit Hill Park and Glengoland (as is evident from the number of Republican Black Taxis in the driveways) to form what amounts to be colonies of PIRA supporters.

However, most of those who are involved in the paramilitary organizations would seemingly rather remain in their old neighborhoods. Moving out of their patch into up-scale areas may make such individuals not only physically but psychologically vulnerable. A life-long resident of the Catholic ghettos explains:

What I'm saying is they're low class men. Guys like [he names four men whom he claims are top Provos] were all notorious since the early 70s. They hang out in their own clubs where they are all notorious and famous—where they can play their part. Their egos wouldn't allow them to hang out elsewhere. They hang out where their drinks are free—drinks are set up. They can drink after hours if they like. They can get a free taxi home and wallow in what they have achieved in West Belfast. A Provisional IRA guy I know bought a nice house—60,000 pounds—but it was no good to him. He was a nobody. He moved into a place called Murray Lake in the early 1970s. He couldn't handle it. There was nobody looking up to him. There was nobody. He couldn't mix with decent people. It would remind him of what he really was. It's all right when you live smack in the middle of a ghetto. When you shoot somebody you are a hero. You're bullying somebody. You're doing damage. It's okay. When you step outside your patch you become a nobody over night.

There is little hope that law enforcement officials will ever be able to penetrate Northern Ireland's defensive subcultures and gain the confidence and cooperation of ghetto residents. Of the many who feel that they are being exploited by the paramilitary racketeers, few are prepared to violate the subcultural code of conduct which prohibits such cooperation. By doing so they would risk losing the security which, if nothing else, the defensive subcultures provide them with.

Research conducted by John Darby clearly demonstrates how the defensive subcultures do, in fact, provide a sense of security to those who participate in them. This would be the case even if the paramilitaries were not consciously attempting to maintain control over the social and economic life of the ghettos. Darby analyzed the functions that certain neighborhoods, which he refers to as “heartlands”, perform for those who live in them and the obstacles that they pose to reconciliation between the two religious and cultural traditions. The “heartlands” are the most socially polarized areas in Northern Ireland. Residents are almost completely isolated from those of the other tradition and

in many ways alienated from the larger society in general. Many of the families who live in the "heartlands" moved there to escape from the intimidation and sectarian violence that had escalated dramatically in their old neighborhoods during the late 1960s and early 70s. As a result, Darby points out, the "heartlands" became strengthened. When Catholics and Protestants gravitated toward the relative safety of their respective "heartlands", conflict and misunderstanding did arise between long-time residents and the newcomers. However, contact and, therefore, conflict between Catholics and Protestants became less frequent. Individuals on both sides of the divide began to identify more than ever with those of the same religious and cultural backgrounds.

Darby concludes that the people who live in these areas now have no real interest in changing the status quo. "Compromise", or, in other words, attempting to establish peaceful relationships with people from the other tradition, is not on their agendas. They are willing to tolerate the current level of hostilities that are being carried on between the two communities, but they are not prepared to interact with those on the other side on a regular basis again. Both Catholics and Protestants remember only too well the threats and violence that they had to endure in the past. Such turmoil, they seem to think, could easily flare up again if they established closer contacts with each other and, therefore, attempts at reconciliation are simply not worth it.³²

HISTORICAL TRADITION: ANOTHER OBSTACLE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

The current armed conflict in Northern Ireland began two decades ago. However, certain traditions that most certainly have contributed to the development as well as the nature of modern terrorist organizations were established well over 200 years ago. Before delving into Irish history, however, a word of caution is in order. It would be a mistake to read too much into the historical evidence that is currently available. Therefore, it should be understood that these remarks are based only on (hopefully) common sense logic and are presented primarily for the purpose of suggesting future research.

It has been shown that Mafia criminal organizations in North America and the subcultures that support them are in some ways similar to those that exist in Northern Ireland. This article has attempted to explain why some of these organizations and subcultures which are so far removed from each other geographically and culturally have so much in common. When attempting to account for such similarities, one should also consider the fact that powerful "secret societies" have influenced the historical development of both Italy and Ireland.

Those who are at all interested in Italian organized crime and/or the history of Italy and Sicily before unification with Italy took place, are well aware of the impact that sinister secret societies had on Italian and Sicilian political and social development. In a somewhat similar fashion (and the word *somewhat* should be emphasized), past secret societies in Ireland have influenced the course of Irish history as well as the nature of modern paramilitary organiza-

tions. Even those readers who know a great deal about the emergence and growth of Loyalist and Republican paramilitary organizations in Northern Ireland since 1969 and the activities of the old IRA during the early 20th century may not be familiar with other Irish societies, particularly those that date as far back as the 18th century. Unlike the old IRA and the Provisional IRA of today, most of the older secret societies could not be accurately labeled as being truly revolutionary or even nationalistic. They were generally organizations that were formed by working-class men for the purpose of retaliating against rich landowners and others whom they felt had done them wrong. While the leaders of the early secret societies were more concerned with local grievances than with anything else, and were not usually intent on overthrowing the existing government, they may well have passed on many traditions that partially account for the organizational structure of and methods employed by modern organizations, as well as a rationale for using such methods.

The Whiteboys was such an organization. This secret society became known as the Whiteboys because of the white shirts that its members wore over their regular clothes when they assembled at night. They were also known as the Levellers. The first recorded violent action taken by the organization occurred in 1761. Their victims were usually members of the upper classes, particularly absentee landlords and their stewards in Ireland who had enclosed (fenced in) land that small farmers believed should have been used for public grazing of livestock. Also, the rates charged for tithes of corn and potatoes often incensed the Whiteboys and resulted in their retaliating violently against the rich and powerful. They concentrated primarily on tearing down, thus the alternative name of Levellers, the fences and homes of the landlords and their representatives as well as their deer parks, orchards and other "pleasure parks" that, as far as the Whiteboys were concerned, should have been open for public grazing.³⁴

From reading James S. Donnelly Jr's analysis of the history of the Whiteboy movement, one can develop a fairly clear picture of the organizational structure of the Whiteboys and the methods that they used to maintain solidarity and accomplish their goals. While Donnelly does not compare the Whiteboys with modern paramilitary organizations, it is obvious from his research that they exhibited most of the same characteristics that the modern, particularly Republican, organizations do. While certainly less ideological in nature and far from being guerrilla-type armies, modern Italian criminal organizations also have much in common with this early Irish secret society.

The Whiteboy movement was, as is Irish Republicanism today, firmly rooted in the lower social class. The organization's membership was made up mostly of small farmers, journeymen, weavers, and artisans. Just as current Republican leaders do, the Whiteboys identified themselves as the defenders of and spokesmen for the poor. It is of interest to note that some contemporary Protestants contended, with little in the way of evidence to support their claims, that a number of rich Catholics were Whiteboys. In fact, only one Catholic "gentleman," a woolen manufacturer, was directly linked to the movement, and he was acquitted when formal charges were brought against him.³⁵ Such accusations are quite similar to those made by some modern journalists who, also

offering no real proof to support their contentions, envision a mysterious "second tier" of wealthy Catholic businessmen who are financing the PIRA.

The organizational structure of the Whiteboys was also quite similar to that of the modern paramilitaries. Like the current organizations do, the Whiteboys established a permanent hierarchical chain of command and divided the membership into various military ranks. As today's "volunteers" are, the Whiteboys were required to take oaths, and in doing so not only swear allegiance to their organization but to obligate themselves to abide by the formal rules and regulations that were set forth in the oaths.

Like the masterminds behind the modern organizations have, the leaders of the Whiteboys demonstrated impressive organizational skills and created a durable movement which rapidly spread well beyond a few rural villages and towns. According to Donnelly, "But even if oath-bound popular organizations did exist on at least a local scale before the early 1760s, the Whiteboys should be considered innovators because they invested oaths with great practical and symbolic importance in fusing local activity into a wider network of regional movement."³⁶

Reportedly the Whiteboys even required those who were not actual members of their organization but were of the same social class to swear oaths of loyalty to them or run the risk of being buried alive. They also adopted the practice of issuing warnings to those whose behavior they disapproved of through letters and public notices.³⁷ Both Republicans and Loyalists employ this same method of intimidation today and appear to be well aware of the historical precedent for doing so. For example, not long ago in County Derry, a bank started foreclosure proceedings on the property of a Catholic businessman because he was no longer able to make mortgage payments. Through notices in the local newspaper, the PIRA issued threats against bank employees, using the rationale that the great landowners of the past had also used foreclosure as a means to harass Catholics. As defenders of the people, so they claimed, the Provos could no longer tolerate such discriminatory practices. Not unexpectedly, bank officials, fearing for their lives, abandoned their efforts to seize the man's property.

The publications produced by both the Loyalist and Republican organizations frequently make reference to injustices of the past and equate the threats made and violent action taken by the paramilitaries against their enemies with those of patriotic organizations of years ago. By relying on historical precedent, they have often attempted to justify behavior that is, indeed, outrageous by most people's standards.³⁸

CONCLUSION

Lombardo and Suttles argue that social polarization is a fact of urban life. Certainly the religious and cultural differences between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland accounted for a high degree of polarization prior to the late 1960s. Today, however, heavily armed paramilitary organizations and in some instances "peace walls," that remind one of the wall that used to separate

the two Berlins, create a level of polarization that is much greater than any that would occur naturally. As Darby's research findings clearly demonstrate, polarization in Northern Ireland provides a sense of security to the residents of those religiously and culturally homogeneous neighborhoods that he refers to as the "heartlands." Those who fled to the "heartlands" did so in order to distance themselves from the intimidation and violence that threatened their security in the old neighborhoods where they lived in closer proximity to those who belonged to the "other tradition." To the inhabitants of the "heartlands", the prospect of returning to a more religiously integrated neighborhood or of even having contact with the other side has no appeal.

The defensive subcultures that have developed within the ghettos have created near ideal conditions for some who want to carry on certain Irish traditions, such as organizing and maintaining secret societies. The passage of the new legislation and the stepped-up efforts on the part of law enforcement authorities may result in significant new victories in the fight against racketeering. It should also be noted that despite all the obstacles that face Anti-Racketeering Squad detectives, they continue to demonstrate their professionalism and tenacity when going after the racketeers. Nevertheless, those who investigate organized crime have no control over the social conditions that exist in Northern Ireland. Certain facts of life will not change in the foreseeable future. In the eyes of many, those neighborhoods that are "protected" by the paramilitaries have become nothing more than "thugdoms" that are controlled by gangster-led secret societies whose leaders have perverted patriotic traditions in order to further their own interests. While this may or may not be an accurate assessment of what has taken place over the last 21 years, the fact remains that the defensive subcultures within the "heartlands" have, indeed, been strengthened and will continue to provide havens in which the racketeer and terrorist can operate in relative safety.

Endnotes

1. This article is based on information that was gathered by the author during his five-year, on-going study of the involvement of Republican and Loyalist paramilitary ("terrorist") organizations in racketeering activity. The author's interest in the involvement of paramilitary organizations in racketeering was first aroused when two contacts, both former high-ranking members of the PIRA, independently attempted to convince him that the organization to which they devoted much of their lives had, in fact, become, in the words of one, a "mafia". That one insisted that the current "supremos" were virtually all "racketeers." While the second ex-Provo felt that the majority of today's leaders were "probably" still dedicated to "the cause," at least a sizable minority had lost all sense of ideology and were more interested in exploiting the residents of the Catholic ghettos than in helping them. At the present time, the author's research involves interviewing victims of the paramilitary extortionists. The author's sources come from differing walks of life and include representatives from all of the major paramilitary organizations and their political wings. He has conducted his research primarily in the Belfast area (usually in May and/or June of each year) and, in a much more limited way, in Derry (during May and June of 1988 and 1989) and in Strabane where he spent a very short period of time (two days) conducting several in-depth inquiries with Republican activists about their alleged

involvement in racketeering. The author is particularly indebted to the detectives who make up C-13 (the Anti-Racketeering Squad of the Royal Ulster Constabulary), including the last three Detective Superintendents in charge of that unit, for making themselves available for interviews and supplying him with relevant information.

A few sources are directly quoted in this article. The first quotes come from interviews that were conducted separately with two former high-ranking members of the Provisional IRA. The first man who is quoted has been an acquaintance of the author for approximately six years, and the second has known the author for three years. Comments concerning the second individual are based on taped interviews that took place in May 1988 and June 1990.

Access to some of the other sources who are quoted could not have been gained without the assistance of a Sinn Fein (the political wing of the PIRA) Counselor (who asked not to be identified) and a probation officer (who, for his own protection, should also remain anonymous). These sources were the "Hoods" (semi-organized street criminals) that the author interviewed in Turf Lodge, a Catholic ghetto in West Belfast, during May 1989 and the young PIRA supporters who were interviewed in Twinbrook, another Catholic ghetto, in May 1988. Two residents of the Catholic Short Strand area of Belfast are also quoted. The author also made reference to a former Catholic pub owner by the name of Jim Murtagh. Murtagh was the first to testify in open court against paramilitary extortionists. He has survived several assassination attempts and now lives under an assumed name in a secret location. As he has been for the last two years, Murtagh continues to be a valuable source of information and contacts for the author.

While the following brief list of publications is not intended to be exhaustive, it should provide the reader with some helpful sources of information on both the conflict in general and the paramilitary organizations that are involved in it.

2. Paul Arthur and Keith Jeffery, *Northern Ireland Since 1968* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988), pp. 6-11, 37, 64.
3. Patrick Bishop and Eamonn Mallie, *The Provisional IRA* (London: William Heinmann, 1987), pp. 34-42, 89-105.
4. See Paul K. Clare, *Racketeering in Northern Ireland: A New Version of the Patriot Game* (Chicago: OICJ Books, University of Illinois at Chicago, 1989) pp. 16-23. Also see Fintan Cronin, "Swindlers Bankroll Workers' Party: The Official IRA is alive, armed, and on the fiddle," *Irish Independent*, 20 August 1987; Fergal Keane, "Behind the Image," *The Sunday Tribune* (Dublin) 28 December 1986; Fergal Keane, "Old Soldiers Never Die," *The Sunday Tribune*, 4 January 1987; "Counterfeit plates at Workers' Party HQ," *The Sunday Tribune*, 28 December 1986; "Worse than the Mafia," *The Cook Report* (Birmingham: Central Television, 19 August 1987) and "The Patriot Game (Dublin: Radio Telefis Eireann, 1986). RTE is the television network of the Republic of Ireland.
5. See *Sinn Fein Policy Document* which is available at Sinn Fein advice centers throughout Northern Ireland and in the Irish Republic. On the evolution of Sinn Fein's political orientation in the 1980s and its implications, see Henry Patterson, "Gerry Adams and the Modernisation of Republicanism", *Conflict Quarterly*, 10, no. 3 (Summer 1990), pp. 5-23.
6. Michael O'Higgins, "The INLA Devours Itself", *Magill*, 10, no. 7 (March 1987), pp. 16-26.
7. On the Protestant extremist groups, see Sarah Nelson, *Ulster's Uncertain Defenders: Loyalist and the Northern Ireland Conflict* (Belfast: The Appletree Press, 1984); see also Keith Maguire, "Loyalist Terrorism in Northern Ireland," *Armed Forces*, (October 1988), pp. 465-71.
8. Martin Dillon, *The Dirty War* (London: Hutchinson, 1988), p. 418.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 419.

10. In the opinion of this author, however, it would be a mistake to regard the brewers as being true victims of the Republican extortionists. The brewers continue to do business in the paramilitary-controlled areas because they are profiting from the lucrative markets within these neighborhoods. It is worth noting that the construction of the two newest PIRA-Sinn Fein and OIRA-Workers' Party drinking and social clubs was financed, in part, from loans from British and Irish breweries.
11. Dillon, *The Dirty War*, p. 420.
12. Jim Cusack, "RUC gets powers similar to US anti-Mafia laws," *The Irish Times*, 23 March 1989, p. 7.
13. Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Statute (Title IX of the Organized Crime Control Act of 1970).
11. For some time now, various underground sources have been providing the Official IRA, as well as other organizations, with false tax exemption certificates. The tax exemption racket works as follows: the tax rate, if a sub-contractor on a building site does not have a tax exemption, is 33%. The main contractor, acting on behalf of Inland Revenue (the British government's tax enforcement agency) is required to hold back one third of the contractor price. Therefore, if a sub-contractor completes the requirements of a 9,000 pound contract, for example, and he does not have a tax exemption certificate, he only receives 6,000 pounds. The main contractor keeps 3,000 pounds and sends it to Inland Revenue. The racket occurs when the OIRA, or some other organization, provides the sub-contractor with a false certificate and he presents it to the main contractor. After examining the apparently legitimate document, the main contractor pays the sub-contractor the full 9,000 pounds. The OIRA usually charges the sub-contractor ten % for the use of the false certificate. The ten %, or most of it, goes into the coffers of the OIRA, and the sub-contractor makes 8,100 pounds rather than the 6,000 that he would normally receive.
15. Maguire, p. 469. Maguire describes the circumstances leading up to McMichael's murder, but does not attribute it to UDA-PIRA collusion.
16. Statistics analyzed by INTERPOL indicate that the "risk factor" for Northern Ireland was twice as high as in El Salvador, the second most dangerous place in which to do police work. See Chris Ryder, *The RUC: A Force Under Fire* (London: Methuen, 1989), p. 2.
17. Red diesel is a very cheap fuel that is used for agricultural purposes. Large amounts of the fuel are obtained by the PIRA and treated with a chemical to remove the red dye. It is then sold as dealer fuel for, reportedly, as much as double that of its original price. Since October 1989 the RUC has been involved in two major investigations of the racket.
18. There is no conclusive evidence that links McGlinchey directly to the killings. See O'Higgins, pp. 24-25.
19. Clare, *Racketeering in Northern Ireland*. Also see James Adams, *The Financing of Terror* (Great Britain: New English Library, 1988), pp. 197-228.
20. *Fortnight*, No. 273, (May 1989), p. 8.
21. *Ibid.*
22. Richard A. Cloward and Lloyd E. Ohlin, *Delinquency and Opportunity* (New York: The Free Press, 1960).
23. A more primitive type in which relatively recent migrants or immigrants to the most socially disorganized sections of the city attain status by demonstrating their ability to "defend their turf," fight courageously, and endure pain.
24. The "retreatist" subculture is made up of drug addicts, alcoholics, street people, and other dropouts.
25. Irving Spergel, *Racketville, Slumtown, and Haulberg* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964).

26. James F. Short, Ray A. Tennyson, and Kenneth I. Howard, "Behavior Dimensions in Gang Delinquency," *American Sociological Review*, 28, (1963), pp. 411-428.
27. John Darby, *Intimidation and the Control of Conflict in Northern Ireland* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1986), passim.
28. For an analysis of this problem from the perspective of a professional social worker, see Vincent McCarthy, "Social Work in Northern Ireland: Professional or Political", Master of Social Work Dissertation, Queen's University-Belfast, 1982.
29. Is the PIRA-Sinn Fein a true Marxist revolutionary organization? Scholars disagree over the answer to that question, and I do not believe that it is a question that is relevant to this article. Suffice it to say that the Sinn Fein Counselor to whom I am referring identifies himself as a Marxist revolutionary but, apparently, has not attempted to preach Marxism to his young charges. See Patterson, pp. 7-16, on the influence of leftist thought on Gerry Adams and on Provisional Sinn Fein.
30. See Robert M. Lombardo, "Criminal Careers and Organized Crime," *Criminal Organizations*, 4 (1989), p. 3.
31. *Ibid.*, pp. 3-6. Also see Gerald D. Suttles, *The Social Order of the Slum* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1968).
32. Gene Mustain and Jerry Capeci, *Mob Star: The Story of John Gotti* (Franklin Watts, 1988).
33. Darby, *Intimidation and the Control of Conflict in Northern Ireland*.
34. James S. Donnelly Jr., "The Whiteboy movement, 1761-5," *Irish Historical Studies*, XXI (1978-79), pp. 20-54.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 43.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
37. *Ibid.*
38. On the PIRA's use of history to justify its campaign, see Joanne Wright, "PIRA Propaganda: the Constructional Legitimacy," *Conflict Quarterly*, 10, no. 3 (Summer 1990), pp. 24-41.