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Moscow State Pedagogical University

Snigir Aleksei

The Plan:

***1. The position of Northern Ireland within the United Kingdom***

***2. British policy towards Northern Ireland***

***3. Theories of political violence in the Northern Ireland conflict***

## I The Position of Northern Ireland within the United Kingdom

*The inhabitants of Ireland are mainly Celtic by origin, and the majority never accepted the Reformation. In 1801 a new law added Ireland to the United Kingdom. By this time much of the land belonged to Protestant English landlords, and the Act of Union followed the period in which rebellions peasants were brutally suppressed. But in the six Northern Counties the Protestants were not a dominant minority: they were the majority of the population. Most of them were descendants of Scottish and English settlers who had moved into Ireland several generations before. They considered themselves to be Irish but remained as a distinct community, and there was not much intermarriage. There had been conflicts and battles between the two communities, still remembered along with their heroes and martyrs.*

*In 1912, when the liberals were in power, with the support of the main group of Irish MPs (for Ireland had seats in the UK parliament). The House of Commons passed a Home Rule Bill, but the House of Lords delayed it. It was bitterly opposed by the Protestant majority of the people in the six northern counties and by the M Ps they had elected. They did not want to be included in a self-governing Ireland dominated by Catholics.*

*Eventually, the island was partitioned. In 1922 the greater part became an independent state, and (in 1949) a republic outside the Commonwealth. Its laws, on divorce and other matters, reflect the influence of the Catholic Church. The six northern counties remained within the United Kingdom, with seats in Prime Minister and government responsible for internal affairs. In the politics of Northern Ireland the main factor has always been the hostility between Protestants and Catholics*

*Until 1972 the Northern Irish Parliament (called Stormont) always had a Protestant majority. By 1960s Catholics produced serious riots. The police were mainly Protestants. They used their guns. Several people were killed. The UK Labour government of the time had sympathy with the Catholics grievances. The Protestant parties regularly supported the Conservatives, while some MPs elected for Catholic parties took little or no part in the work of the Parliament.*

*In 1969 the UK Labour Government sent troops to Northern Ireland, with others to help impartially to keep order. But to most Catholics UK troops have become identified with the Union of Northern Ireland with the UK. Many Catholics don’t like the idea of the division of the island, but recognize that the union of the North with the Republic could only be imposed against the wishes of the majority in the North, and would probably lead to a civil war. Less moderate Catholics have some sympathy with their own extremists, the Irish Republican Army [IRA], who are prepared to use any means, including violence, in support of the demand to be united with the Republic of Ireland.*

*In 1969-72 the UK governments, first Labour, then Conservative, tried to persuade the Protestant politicians to agree to changes which might be acceptable to the Catholics, but made little progress. In 1972 the UK government decided that the independent regime could not solve its problems, and put an end to it. Since then the internal administration has been run under the responsibility of the UK cabinet. In political terms this decision of Mr. Heath’s government was an act of self- sacrifice. Until 1972 the Irish [Protestant] Unionist MPs had regularly supported the Conservative in the UK Parliament, but since then they have become an independent group not linked to any UK party. Most of them, like the Northern Irish Catholic MPs, have taken little part in UK affair except those involving Northern Ireland.*

*From 1972 onwards successive UK governments have tried to find a « political solution» to the Northern Irish problems, that is, a solution acceptable to most Catholics and most Protestants. Several devices have been tried with little or no success. Protestant politicians are elected on programs, which involve refusal to accept compromise.*

*Meanwhile, the IRA continues its terrorist campaign. It receives both moral and financial support from some descendants of Irish people who emigrated to the US. Although so many innocent victims have been killed, many of them by chance or through mistakes, it does not seem likely that any different British government policy would have succeed in preventing the violence that goes on.*

*Northern Ireland’s economy, based partly on farming, party on the heavy industries of Belfast, has brought its people to a standard of living well above that of the Republic, but lower than Great Britain’s. With the decline of shipbuilding there is no serious unemployment, and vast seems have been spent by UK governments in attempts to improve the situation.*

### ***II British Policy towards Northern Ireland***

*The links between Northern Ireland and Britain were close and of long standing, for Britain’s involvement with Ireland is dated from the 12th century. Ireland had been ruled directly from Westminster since 1800 under the Act of Union, and the Irish economy was intimately bound up with that of the rest of the United Kingdom. Moreover, when Britain abandoned the union after the First World War, it bestowed wide self- government on Only part of Ireland, the twenty- six county Irish Free State. The remaining six counties of Northern Ireland were given a regional parliament and government with limited powers and remained an integral part of the United Kingdom. But there was no political consensus to the nature of the state to be established. Northern Ireland was riddled with ethnic and regional divisions, and to crow all, in 1920s and 1930s its economy was hardly healthy with its inefficient agriculture and ailing industries. In fact, Britain was faced with a problem of establishing a regime, which would be self- supporting and would survive manifold divisions. But Britain failed to find adequate solution to this problem, and all its attempts brought to a bloody end.*

*Britain determined both the boundaries and the form of government in the 1920 Coverment of Ireland Act. The controversial six counties included a large Catholic minority, some one- third of the population within Northern Ireland, including some predominantly Catholic areas on the borders with the Irish Free State. The form of government was modelled on Westminster and a subordinate regional government and parliament were given restricted financial powers but almost unlimited powers over such vital matters of community interest and potential conflict as education, local government, law and order. The 1920 settlement gave the two- thirds Protestant and Unionist majority a virtual free hand and ended in anarchy and the fall of Stormont in 1972. From the beginning the British government was anxious that the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland should accept the legitimacy of the new creation and to that end Westminster did urge the government of Northern Ireland to adopt a friendlier and more accommodating attitude towards the minority, particularly in respect of law enforcement, local government and education. Nevertheless, in the last analysis, it refused to exercise its sovereignty to block such divisive measures as the abolition of proportional representation in local government elections or to counteract sectarian tendencies in education and law enforcement. The reason that Westminster did not do so was that any firm stand would have meant the resignation of the unionist government and, in view of its in built majority, its immediate return to office. Such an eventuality would have presented alternatives: a humiliating climb down or the resumption of direct responsibility for the government of the six counties -- the very thing that the 1920 government of Ireland act had been designed to avoid. As far as Westminster was concerned, minority rights in Northern Ireland had to be subordinate to the broader interests of the United Kingdom and British Empire.*

## III Theories of Political Violence in the Northern Ireland Conflict.

*There have been various attempts to sympathize the range of theories which have been put forward to explain the Northern Ireland conflict and to relate these two practical remedies and solutions to the problem. The diversity of the theories which have been put forward have necessarily limited attempts to test them concisely using empirical data. For example, aside from the theories such as religion and class which have been most widely canvassed, explanations as diverse as Freudian social psychology and caste have been put forward. Clearly it is impossible to attempt to test all these theories using survey data, and for the purposes of this analysis, only the major theories are examined. There is a fundamental dichotomy in these theories between those, which are economic in nature and non-economic. Each has particular implications for the future and for the possibility of solving the conflict. From the economic interpretation it logically follows that the conflict is essentially bargainable, and that a change in socioeconomic conditions will after the intensity of the conflict. Better living conditions, more jobs and material affluence will make people less interested in an atomistic conflict centering on religion. By contrast, most non-economic theories imply that it is a non-bargainable, zero- sum conflict: the gains of one side will always be proportional to the losses of the other. These theories are summarized in the words: « the problem is that there is no solution». The Irish, according to popular account are an intensely historically minded people. Present day problems they explain by what seems to others an unnecessary long and involved recital of event so distant as to shade into the gloom of prehistory. History indeed lies at the basis as to shade into propagandist issue of contemporary Ireland: one nation or to? To many radicals, this issue is already an archaism in a world increasingly dominated by transnational capitalism. They prefer to substitute an analysis of « divided class» for an outdated propagandist device adopted to split the workers. The idea of « two nations» occupying the same territory has a long provenance throughout the world.*

*Catholics tend to have lower status jobs than Protestants but once we take differences in family backgrounds and education into account the disadvantage disappears. There is no evidence of occupational discrimination. In terms of the financial returns of work, Catholics receive a lower wage than Protestants, and this persists even after family background, education and occupation are held constant. There are a variety of explanations, which could account for this pattern, none of which, unfortunately, can be tested by the data to hand. Protestants tend to predominate in well paid, capital intensive industries, such as engineering and shipbuilding, while Catholics are concentrated in more marginal and competitive industries, such as building and contrasting, with generally lower wage rates. Consequently, it is possible for a Protestant to receive a high wage for performing the same task as a Catholic working in another industry. Since most of these capital-intensive industries are more extensively unionized than their counter parts, it could be argued that Protestant bargaining power, and hence wage levels, are greater than similar non-unionized Catholic workers. Finally, these differences in incomes could be interpreted as the direct result of religious discrimination against Catholics, with Catholics simply being paid less than Protestants in the same jobs.*

*There is, therefore, not much of an economic basis for the Ulster conflict—actual differences between the two communities can be explained by family background and inherited privilege. There remains, however, the possibility that it is less the objective economic differences that cause the conflict than individual subjective perceptions of those differences.*

*It is often argued that economic deprivation is a major cause of violence, rioting with Catholics feeling economically deprived compared to Protestants, becoming frustrated, and venting their frustration through aggression: much of the British government’s policy for Northern Ireland has focused on alleviating the economic deprivation of the Catholic minority. But in fact, socioeconomic considerations have little to do with rioting either for the population as a whole, or among Catholics and Protestants considered separately. The combined effect of all socioeconomic variables, is a negligible. Only one of the five socioeconomic variables has a statistically significant effect. Unemployment has no significant effect, in spite of the prominent role it plays in official thinking.*

*On this evidence, it seems unlikely that economic changes will reduce conflict in Northern Ireland. It is, however, possible that economic improvements for the Catholic community would effect the climate of opinion among Catholics as a whole, and hence reduce conflict.*

*Religion by itself does not have much to do with rioting. Catholics, in particular, are not significantly more likely than Protestants to riot. The recent troubles may have been presaged by Catholic civil rights activity in 1968 and 1969, which led to violence, but in 1973 the violence had escalated and spread to both communities more or less equally. Nor do religious beliefs have any significant effect; the devout are neither more nor less likely to riot then their less devout compatriots. In this, as in other ways, the conflict is not one of religious belief.*

*Finally, political views about the origins of the conflict are important for Catholics but not as much for Protestants. Let us examine Catholics, beginning with the comparison of two groups: those who think Catholics are entirely to blame for the troubles and those who think no blame at all attaches to Catholics. The first group is some 18 percent less likely to riot than is the second group. So for Catholics, rioting seems to have strong instrumental overtones in that those who have well defined views that attribute blame to Protestants are much more likely to riot. Their riots, like many block riots in the United States, are in part a means of seeking address for grievances. But for Protestants the interpretation placed on the conflict is much less important. Those who think Protestants themselves are entirely to blame are only 9 percent less likely to riot then are those who think Catholics are entirely to blame. Protestant rioting thus seems to be more reactive in the sense that its stems not so much from a coherent view about their aims, or their adversaries’ aims, or the nature of the conflict, as it does from other sources, notably reaction to Catholic violence.*

*Inhabitant житель*

*Majority большинство*

*Rebellion восстание*

*Peasant крестьянин*

*Suppress запрещать, подавлять*

*Minority меньшинство*

*Descendant потомок*

*Martyr мученик*

*Partition расчленять*

*Internal внутренний*

*Hostility враждебность*

*Riot бунт ,беспорядки*

*Grievance жалоба , обида*

*Impartially беспристрастно*

*Regime режим*

*Campaign кампания*

*Intimate объявлять , хорошо знакомый*

*Bound граничить*

*Bestow давать, дарить, помещать*

*Riddled изрешеченный*

*Controversial спорный*

*Subordinate подчиненный*

*Urge убеждать, побуждение*

*Enforcement давление, принудительный*

*Sovereignty суверенитет, Верховная власть*

*Abolition отмена, уничтожение*

*Counteract sectarian tendencies нейтрализовать сектантские наклонности*

*Resignation смирение, отставка*

*Eventuality возможный случай*

*Humiliating унизительный*

*Resumption возобновление*

*Diversity различие, разнообразие*

*Empirical эмпирический*

*Canvass обсуждать, собирать(голоса)*

*Diverse разный ,иной*

*Caste каста*

*Survey изучаемый, рассматриваемый*

*Dichotomy деление класса на 2 противопоставляемых подкласса,*

*Bargainable выгодный*

*Gloom мрак , уныние*

*Contemporary современный*

*Device устройство, средство, план, девиз*

*Wage зарплата*

*Hence с этих пор, следовательно*

*Income доход*

*Inherited наследованный*

*Deprived лишенный*

*Frustration расстройство(планов), крушение(надежд)*

*Alleviating смягчающий, облегчающий*

*Negligible незначительный*

*Recent новый, свежий, современный*

*Presaged предсказанный*

*Devout искренний, набожный*

*Compatriots соотечественник*

*Coherent понятный, последовательность*

*Adversary противник, враг*

***The List of Books:***

1. *Richard Kearney. The Irish Mind. Exploring Intellectual Traditions. Dublin 1985*
2. *Harold Orel. Irish History and Culture. Aspects of a people’s heritage. Dublin 1979*
3. *Jonah Alexander, Alan O’Day. Ireland’s Terrorist Dilemma. Dordrecht 1986*
4. *T.M. Devine, David Dickson. Ireland and Scotland .Edinburgh 1983*
5. *Peter Bromhead. Life in Modern Britain .Longman Group UK Limited, 1992*