2001

1. Desmond O’Malley, *Redefining southern nationalism: a political perspective*
   Tom Garvin, *Redefining southern nationalism: an academic perspective*

REDEFINING SOUTHERN NATIONALISM-
A POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE

Southern Irish nationalism was traditionally aggressive and negative, and tended to view Northern Ireland as a colonial remnant; but economic protectionism and isolationism did little to stem the flow of emigrants out of the country. Evolution under the leadership of Sean Lemass from 1959 onwards led to a more outward-looking Ireland, but the more negative aspects of Irish nationalism began to appear again in the 1970s. The tension between two forms of republicanism should be resolved, the author argues, by an effort by liberal democrats to reclaim the term for themselves, redefining it as a belief in the primacy of the people through an exclusively democratic process.

REDEFINING SOUTHERN NATIONALISM
AN ACADEMIC PERSPECTIVE

The phenomenon of nationalism, the leading political ideology of the late twentieth century, is intellectually opportunist and intrinsically revisionist. In Ireland, political cultural change and the break-up of the alliance between nationalism and Catholic triumphalism was delayed by a number of factors, including British-Irish tensions, the great depression of 1929, isolationism during the second world war and misguided economic and educational policies after 1945. Ireland missed out on the economic boom of the post-war period, much of its energy diverted into the pursuit of linguistic revival. Only in the last quarter of the twentieth century has rapid cultural change been associated with a new, more pluralist, form of nationalism.

2. Dermot Nesbitt, *Redefining unionism: a political perspective*
   Richard English, *Redefining unionism: an academic perspective*

REDEFINING UNIONISM-
A POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE

The main unionist political demand in the years immediately after 1972 was for the return of the Northern Ireland parliament based on the principle of majority rule. Government-sponsored efforts to provide alternative solutions collapsed. More recently, attempts to resolve the problem on the basis of human rights and equality have been made, and the new unionist case is grounded largely on the belief that non-unionists should be persuaded that there is a place for them in Northern Ireland. The Belfast Agreement offers hope of a real and honourable accommodation, even if there continue to be difficulties in its implementation.

REDEFINING UNIONISM-
AN ACADEMIC PERSPECTIVE

The contrasting attitudes of unionists towards the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985 and the Belfast Agreement of 1998 illustrate a significant change in unionist politics. The perspective of paramilitary groups has changed, and a section of unionism prepared to negotiate a deal with nationalists has emerged. This was a response *inter alia* to changes in the character of republicanism, to social and political change in the Republic and to devolution in Great Britain. The new unionism is, by comparison with unionism in the past, more fluid, more complex internally and more articulately defended by intellectuals. Although it can also be accommodated to a developing rapprochement between Ireland and Great Britain, there is little evidence of the emergence of a stable sense of communal self-confidence.
3. Alban Maginness, *Redefining northern nationalism: a political perspective*
Jennifer Todd, *Redefining northern nationalism: an academic perspective*

REDEFINING NORTHERN NATIONALISM-
A POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE

The idea of “northern” nationalism is a questionable one, since the nationalist tradition within Northern Ireland sees itself in an island-wide context. From its origins in the civil rights movement, the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) has grown to become the predominant voice of nationalism within Northern Ireland. In many respects, the Good Friday agreement represented the culmination of the SDLP’s efforts, representing a fair and imaginative attempt to redefine relationships within Northern Ireland, between North and South, and between the two islands. It also reflects a strong European dimension, with the European Community serving both as ally and model. There are several indications that the future for the agreement is bright, with deepening European integration, economic development and vigorous efforts to combat sectarianism playing a major role; but none of these facts can be taken for granted, and the prospect of a difficult path ahead must not be discounted.

REDEFINING NORTHERN NATIONALISM-
AN ACADEMIC PERSPECTIVE

In recent years, the academic study of northern nationalism has been largely neglected, partly because – unlike unionism - it is seen as unexceptional. Dating organisationally from the constitutional nationalist movement of the early decades of the twentieth century and reorganised as the SDLP after the civil rights movement of 1968-69, its ideology has evolved from single-issue anti-partitionism to a much more subtle blend of policy positions that is difficult to categorise. In terms of other kinds of nationalist movements, it may be seen as combining elements of liberal nationalism, regionalism and civic republicanism – an ideology entirely compatible with the Good Friday agreement of 1998. This new formulation offers a fresh perspective on relations within the British Isles, but especially within Europe and within a new Ireland, though its capacity to protect the SDLP against the electoral challenge from Sinn Féin is as yet unclear.

4. David Ervine, *Redefining loyalism: a political perspective*
James McAuley, *Redefining loyalism: an academic perspective*

REDEFINING LOYALISM-
A POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE

Although loyalism in its modern sense has been around since the 1920s, it acquired its present shape only at the beginning of the 1970s. Then it was reborn in paramilitary form, and was used by other, more privileged, unionists to serve their own interests. Yet the sectarianism within which loyalism developed disguised the fact that less privileged members of the two communities had much in common. Separation bred hatred, and led to an unfounded sense of advantage on the part of many Protestants who in reality enjoyed few material benefits. The pursuit of accommodation between the two communities can best be advanced by attempts to understand each other and to identify important shared interests, and the peace process can best be consolidated by steady, orchestrated movement on the two sides, and by ignoring the protests of those who reject compromise.

REDEFINING LOYALISM-
AN ACADEMIC PERSPECTIVE

In recent years a division has emerged within unionism between two sharply contrasting perspectives. On the one hand, traditional unionism has relied on a discourse of perpetuity, relying on long-standing values and political attachment to the old order, and seeing in the developments that have been taking place since 1998 evidence of a creeping form of Irish unity. By contrast to these, “new loyalism”, represented in particular but not exclusively by the
Progressive Unionist Party, is based on a reinterpretation of the past of unionism, seeing in this a pronounced and politically significant class structure, and putting the case for the defence of working class interests. This alternative vision rests on a more pluralistic conception of the politics of Northern Ireland.

5. Mitchel McLaughlin, Redefining republicanism: a political perspective
Paul Arthur, Redefining republicanism: an academic perspective

REDEFINING REPUBLICANISM-
A POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE

The core principles on which Irish republicanism is based include commitments to popular sovereignty and to unity between the people of the island of Ireland. The struggle of republican leaders in the past resulted ultimately in the Good Friday agreement, which presents republicans and others with a challenge for the new century. The republican vision of the future is one in which the goals of equality, democracy and the maximum welfare of the maximum number will be achieved, with due attention to the needs of the international community. It also implies rejection of British government interference; but it is inclusive in its definition of the new multicultural Ireland, which extends a position of great influence to the unionist community and a welcome to immigrants.

REDEFINING REPUBLICANISM-
AN ACADEMIC PERSPECTIVE

The concept of “republicanism” has been a strongly contested one in contemporary Ireland. Some have argued that the Republic of Ireland, notwithstanding its name, fell short of the reality of republican status. Especially within Northern Ireland, “republicanism” acquired a meaning that was very different from the similarly named ideologies to be found in France and the United States. The theoretical development of Irish republicanism was strikingly limited, with advances in this area largely confined to recent decades. In particular, from the mid-1980s onwards, republicanism began to experience a fundamental redefinition, as the primacy of politics over violence began to be established. This culminated in a new relationship with constitutional nationalism and ultimately in the signing of the 1998 agreement, implying a new and more inclusive vision of the future.

6. Ned Thomas, New Wales? New culture?

Starting with an interpretation of the 1997 Welsh referendum result in terms of identity, the paper broadens the discussion of political culture to include changes in the Welsh economy, the influence of the European Union, the status of the Welsh language following devolution, and concludes with some perceptions of a more subjective kind from within recent Welsh literature. The new weak constitutional arrangements consolidate some gains made in an earlier period and set a different and problematic context for future development.

7. Máiréad Nic Craith, Cultural diversity in Northern Ireland and the Good Friday agreement

The Good Friday agreement gave an impetus to interest in the issue of cultural diversity in contemporary Northern Ireland, extending to the issue of smaller language groups, such as Irish and Ulster Scots. While these two languages have deep roots, their importance today is not just linguistic but also political: tongues and dialects may operate as emblems of identity and as endorsements of specific political perspectives. The history of the Irish language in Northern Ireland is well documented, as is its importance as a symbol for Irish nationalists. More recently, its cultural significance for those outside this tradition has been recognised, and its position has been acknowledged also by the state. The position of Ulster-Scots is more problematic: not only is its identity as a language less clearly defined, but so too is its social and political significance. Nevertheless, both languages are likely to profit from the inter-communal compromise that was encapsulated in the Good Friday agreement.
8. John de Chastelain, *The Northern Ireland peace process and the impact of decommissioning*

This paper examines the impact that the decommissioning of paramilitary arms has had, and continues to have, on the Northern Ireland peace process. It selects the beginning of the paramilitary group cease-fires in 1994 as the beginning of that process, and examines how decommissioning has affected progress in it up to the present date. It looks at the involvement of the Independent Body, the International Chairmen and the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning throughout the whole period. It notes why the unionist community seeks the decommissioning of paramilitary arms as fundamental to democratic government, and why unionists regard it as the principal issue currently preventing the full implementation of the Good Friday or Belfast Agreement. It looks at why the nationalist and republican community regards as equally or more important the installation of a police force attractive to all elements of the community, and the removal of those military structures and installations which are offensive to nationalist feelings and deemed unnecessary while the guns of the main paramilitary groups remain silent. The paper assesses that a satisfactory conclusion to decommissioning, and to the issues of policing and demilitarisation, are fundamental to the future of an inclusive government with devolved powers in Northern Ireland, with all that that implies for an end to violence and for participatory relations North and South and East and West.


The agreement reached between the British and Irish governments and the Northern Irish political parties in April 1998 was a complex and subtle political document that built on experience in other societies and that itself has some capacity to serve as a model for others. This paper begins by examining the nature of the problem that the new settlement is designed to resolve, commenting briefly on the extent to which it shares common features with other cases of ethnic conflict. It proceeds by describing the contours of the process by which a successful accommodation was arrived at, and concludes with an analysis of the central features of the settlement. In addition to their three-part constitutional core, these included wide-ranging compromises in the areas of equality and citizenship, rights, reform of policing and of the criminal justice system, prisoner release, and demilitarisation and decommissioning of paramilitary weapons.

10. Eunan O’Halpin, *The geopolitics of republican diplomacy in the twentieth century*

This paper explores what might be termed the external relations of the Irish republican movement since the foundation of the Irish state. It reflects on the ways in which republicanism’s various alliances have been analysed by the Irish, British and other states, and the impact of such analyses on state policies and actions. It asks whether “England’s difficulty is Ireland’s opportunity”, rather than a shared sense of suffering amongst oppressed peoples, or attachment to some vaguely transnational political ideology—bolshevism in the 1920s, communism or nazism in the 1930s and 1940s, anticolonialism and socialism in the 1950s and 1960s—remains the best single explanation for Irish republicanism’s eclectic range of ideological bedfellows.

11. Deaglán de Bréadún, *Building government institutions in Northern Ireland-strand one negotiations*

Steven King, *Building government institutions in Northern Ireland-implementing strand one*

BUILDING GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS IN NORTHERN IRELAND
-STRAND ONE NEGOTIATIONS

The Good Friday Agreement was the culmination of almost two years of multi-party negotiations designed to resolve difficult relationships between the two main communities
within Northern Ireland, between North and South and between Ireland and Great Britain. The three-stranded approach had already been in use for some time as a format for discussion. The multi-party negotiations in 1997-98 secured Sinn Féin’s reluctant acceptance of a Northern Ireland Assembly, which the party had earlier rejected, as a quid pro quo for significant North-South bodies. Despite the traditional nationalist and republican slogan of “No return to Stormont”, in the negotiations the nationalists needed as much devolution of power as possible if their ministers were to meet counterparts from the Republic on more or less equal terms on the proposed North-South Ministerial Council. Notwithstanding historic tensions between constitutional nationalists and republicans, the SDLP’s success in negotiating a cabinet-style executive, rather than the loose committee structure favoured by unionists, helped ensure there would be a substantial North-South Ministerial Council, as sought by both wings of nationalism.

BUILDING GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS IN NORTHERN IRELAND
-IMPLEMENTING STRAND ONE

Though bearing some similarity to the new devolved institutions in Scotland and Wales, those in Northern Ireland are in important respects unique. The existence of the institutions depends on the will of Westminster, but politicians in Belfast were given large discretion in working out the details of the scheme. The number of departments was of great political significance, since on it depended the degree of representation of the four main parties. In return for an arrangement relatively favourable to nationalism, nationalists agreed to a less ambitious array of cross-border bodies. The new departments were created on the basis of careful compromise, with political criteria overriding administrative ones. The balance sheet to date would suggest that, notwithstanding tensions on specific issues, the Executive, the Assembly, and the Assembly’s committees have been working effectively and to the satisfaction of a large portion of the population.

12. Martin Mansergh, Cross-border bodies and the North-South relationship- laying the groundwork
Andy Pollak, Cross-border bodies and the North-South relationship- implementing strand 2

CROSS-BORDER BODIES AND THE NORTH-SOUTH RELATIONSHIP
-LAYING THE GROUNDWORK

The new North-South institutions established under the Good Friday agreement need to be seen in both historical and contemporary political contexts. Their roots are as old as partition: efforts to overcome some of the more negative consequences of the division of Ireland date back to 1918, when the idea of a Council of Ireland was first raised, and found more concrete form in 1920 and 1973. The inclusion of an important set of North-South bodies in the Good Friday agreement arose from a need to respond to certain practical considerations, but was also intended to provide a balance to the devolved institutions within Northern Ireland and the strong British link. Notwithstanding difficulties in several other sensitive areas, the North-South bodies have managed to function in a positive atmosphere of cooperation between ministers from very different political backgrounds, and it is possible to be relatively optimistic about their future development.

CROSS-BORDER BODIES AND THE NORTH-SOUTH RELATIONSHIP
-IMPLEMENTING STRAND TWO

The development of the new North-South institutions has been one of the more surprising success stories of the Good Friday agreement. At their apex is the North/South Ministerial Council, which in principle meets in three formats, but in practice has so far met in two: plenary and sectoral. The council oversees the work of six implementation bodies, which are responsible for policy implementation throughout Ireland in specific sectors, each of which has its own staff and budget. It also supervises cooperation in other areas designated by the Good Friday agreement. The council has a small but very active staff in Armagh, and owes
much of its success to the willingness of politicians to agree on measures of cooperation that are of practical benefit, even in the face of significant political difficulties.

13. Adrian Millar, *A Lacanian psychoanalytic interpretation of conflict in Northern Ireland*

The aim of this paper is to demonstrate the power of Lacanian theory to bring to light the unconscious dynamics at work in the formation of ethno-national political identities. I begin by identifying the need for a Lacanian approach to communal identity. I then apply Lacanian psychoanalysis to interview I have carried out into republicans and loyalists in Belfast, Northern Ireland, highlighting what it is both communities are in denial of as they constitute their self-interpretations. I point out how such denial helps sustain or reproduce relations of domination. I conclude that Lacanian psychoanalysis enhances our understanding and study of inter-religious and ethno-national conflicts and can be readily applied in conflict management.

14. John Reid, *The British government and the peace process*

One of the lessons to be drawn from the history of Northern Ireland is the need for unionists to be involved in the peace process: unionist opponents of the agreement, however sincere, are only undermining the long term interest of unionism. Even those who oppose the administration are governed by it, and it would be a needless tragedy if a disaffected nationalist community was replaced by a disaffected unionist community. The Catholic community once felt disaffected, but the civil rights moment gave it a more assertive voice. The civil unrest of these early years culminated in the Sunningdale agreement of 1973 which anticipated several of the key provisions of the 1998 settlement; but this agreement collapsed in the face of unionist opposition. An improved British-Irish relationship in the 1980’s and 1990’s permitted two fundamental principles to gain widespread acceptance: those of consent, and of the equal validity of nationalist and unionist aspirations. The Good Friday incorporated these principles and provided a detailed blueprint for the future. Major strides towards its full implementation have already been undertaken and, while the agreement might not have provided a final solution, it has provided a framework within which to people of Northern Ireland can themselves arrive at an accommodation.

15. Brian Cowen, *The peace process and quality: toward a transformed society*

The Good Friday Agreement represents in an important sense the triumph of politics over darker forces in Irish society. Rather than seeking to define the contours of a final settlement, it lays out the ground rules in accordance with which polical progress may be achieved. It represents a reversal of many of the more negative perspectives that were characteristic of the different parties to the conflict, such as the tendency to deny the nature of the problem and to attribute blame only to others. Change has been particularly traumatic for the unionist community, which has seen old certainties challenged. But the principle underlying the agreement, that of equality, offers the most secure prospect for a better life for all. It represents a shift from the old pattern of competition for supremacy between two communities to a new concern to transform the nature of the question in the pursuit of common interests.