

IBIS NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2002
Issue 5

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ISSN 1649-0304

LECTURE SERIES

The current lecture series, *The path to peace: negotiating and implementing the Belfast Agreement*, organised in association with Cooperation Ireland, continues. Former Taoiseach Albert Reynolds and RTE journalist Kevin Rafter will address the subject on 12 December (see also back page). Further updates are available on the Institute's web site.

IBIS CONFERENCE

As reported in the last newsletter, the Institute held a major conference on 3 April 2002. Entitled *Renovation or revolution? New territorial politics in Ireland and the United Kingdom*, it was opened by Dr Art Cosgrove, President, UCD. For space reasons, only a short report appeared in the last issue; the full report has been held over to the present issue.

Overviews

The conference began with a wide-ranging interpretative overview by **Arthur Aughey**, who used Schopenhauer's fable of the porcupines to explore the theme of renovation and revolution. The fable,

when applied politically, suggests that relationships within these islands are always changing. In the modified relationship after devolution, Scotland and Wales have recovered a sense of relative autonomy from England without sacrificing the historic solidarity of Britishness. The most persuasive interpretations of the new territorial politics, he argued, understand devolution to be both a *renovation* of an ideal as well as a democratic *transformation* of that ideal. He concluded by relating that interpretation to Ireland.

This was followed by another paper that took stock of the changing character of the British-Irish relationship. **Ronan Fanning** argued that the Good Friday agreement was the culmination of a process, which can be traced from the Sunningdale agreement of 1973 through the Anglo-Irish agreement of 1985, by which a framework was created within which the sovereign governments regarded each other as allies rather than as antagonists. The abandonment of the Irish constitutional claim to jurisdiction over Northern Ireland contributed to this process of normalisation in British-Irish relations, as did im-



Professor Brigid Laffan and Dr Garret FitzGerald at the conference

proved personal relations at prime ministerial, ministerial and official level. Continuous threats to the stability of the institutions established under Strand One of the agreement reinforced the necessity for this intergovernmental alliance in order to shore up the middle ground; inter-governmental cooperation at EU level has further contributed to the process of normalisation. The workings of the British-Irish Council have been incidental, rather than fundamental, to the improvement in the intergovernmental relationship, he concluded.

Devolution

Three presentations then looked at specific aspects of devolution within the United Kingdom. **David McCrone** examined the position at a time when the first term of the Scottish Parliament was more than halfway to completion, with 15 months to run. He assessed what the new institutions have achieved, and their prospects. He drew attention to the importance of appreciating that (a) there is no uniform game-plan for devolution in the UK; and (b) the so-called "Scottish anomaly", a self-governing Scotland within a unitary British state, has a dynamic of its own. He reviewed the outcomes of the parliament in the context of people's expectations, and argued, by means of recent surveys, that while Home Rule has become the prevailing consensus in contemporary Scotland, people are by no means averse to a parliament with extended powers and responsibilities.

The Welsh case was reviewed by **John Osmond**, whose presentation outlined the character of the National Assembly as envisaged in the 1998 Wales Act and charted the evolution that has taken place in Wales's constitutional architecture during the first three years of devolution. He assessed the extent to which the changes that have taken place were anticipated, examined the aspirations for greater powers for the Assembly, analysed the impact of devolution on the emergence of a Welsh civil society, and discussed the implica-

tions of the Welsh experience for the development of territorial politics in the rest of the UK and Europe.

The implications of devolution for the remaining part of Great Britain, England, are sometimes overlooked; this question was the focus of a presentation by **Simon Partridge**. This outlined devolutionary moves within England (including also Cornwall), and the forthcoming white paper. The eight regional development agencies with their associated regional chambers were described, as was the weak challenge so far posed by elected mayors. The presentation suggested that such a quasi-federal England could fit well into a broadened British-Irish Council.

The Irish case

The conference then switched to the issue of Ireland. **Jennifer Todd** provided an overview of the changing structure of conflict in Northern Ireland after the Good Friday agreement, arguing that the agreement defined a radical change in the structural form of the Northern Ireland conflict. Its proposed institutions embodied a form of binationalism which promised at once greater equality and greater stability. However this "ideal" redefinition contrasts with the practical implementation of the agreement. In practice, remnants of the old, unstable, conflictual structure remained and the emergent structure has diverged from a stable binationalism towards a multi-centred instability.

The implementation of the Good Friday agreement in the context of the North-South relationship was the subject of **John Coakley's** paper. This concentrated on one element of the agreement: strand two, formerly known as "the Irish dimension". It began by assessing the challenge that the institutions in this area were designed to tackle: the pragmatic need for cross-border collaboration in a range of areas, and the need to reconcile conflicting nationalist and unionist territorial visions. Following an overview of the framework for North-South relations that emerged

in the agreement, it examined the measures so to implement strand two—an active North/South Ministerial Council with the support of a secretariat based in Armagh, a set of implementation bodies, and a degree of cross-border cooperation in designated areas. It concluded with some speculation on the future evolution of the institutions for which the agreement makes provision, and seek so to interpret the broader meaning of the institutional changes that have taken place in this area.

Wider dimensions

The two remaining papers looked at the broader European and international dimension. **Brigid Laffan** analysed the European dimension of British-Irish relations and the EU's role in altering the environment within which relations between these islands are played out. She examined relations between the two states in the context of EU membership and proceeded to an analysis of the evolution of an EU role under four headings: the EU as an arena, EU policies and reports, the EU as a model and the EU in Northern Ireland. Her paper then assessed the EU dimension of the Good Friday agreement in all three strands and finished with a brief analysis of the longer-term contribution of the EU.

Finally, **Adrian Guelke** discussed the role of the international system. He examined the impact of two major events in the international system: the end of the Cold War and the attack on America on 11 September 2001. The thesis first advanced by Michael Cox that change in the international context of the conflict in Northern Ireland was a major influence in pressurising the Republican movement to adopt its peace strategy in the early 1990s was analysed. He also examined the reasons why the thesis has proved so contentious and why more generally there remains considerable scepticism as to the capacity of external events to shape events in Ireland in any fundamental way. He concluded with a discussion of the impact of September 11.

New book

The first volume in a new UCD Press series entitled *Perspectives in British-Irish Studies* has just appeared. This is *Changing shades of orange and green: redefining the union and the nation in contemporary Ireland*, and is edited by John Coakley. Based largely on the IBIS-CRI lecture series of 2000, it brings together academics and politicians in a set of analyses of recent changes in political perspectives. Two further volumes are in preparation.

New working papers

The IBIS pre-publication working paper series is based on work in progress. Individual papers are available free of charge from IBIS (though a small charge applies to orders of several copies). The most recent additions are:

19. Paul Dixon, *Contemporary unionism and the tactics of resistance*

This paper emphasises the importance of the political context for shaping unionist tactics for defending the Union and resisting Irish unity. Notwithstanding the dichotomy frequently drawn between “constitutional” and “unconstitutional” unionism, the paper argues that the principal unionist parties (JUP, DUP) have operated in the “grey area” between violent and non-violent politics, veering towards one pole or the other depending on the wider political context..

20. Gladys Ganiel, *Conserving or changing? The theology and politics of Northern Irish fundamentalist and evangelical Protestants after the Good Friday agreement*

This paper seeks to correct the overemphasis on fundamentalism as a source of opposition to the Good Friday agreement, exploring the relationship between fundamentalist and evangelical Protestants in Northern Ireland. Through a case study of 20 members of the Queen’s University Belfast Christian Union, the author explores

issues such as theological belief, political belief, and modes of political and perceived personal trajectory. The paper concludes with an exploration of the role of evangelicals in fostering social change amongst the Protestant communities in Northern Ireland.

21. Adrian Guelke, *The international system and the Northern Ireland peace process*
22. John Coakley, *The North-South institutions: from blueprint to reality*

These two papers are based on the proceedings of the conference organised by the Institute in April 2002. See elsewhere in this issue for a summary of their contents.

A full list of the available working paper is available on the Institute’s web site.

IBIS Web Site

The Institute’s web site is currently undergoing a face-lift. All comments and suggestions on the site are very welcome and can be sent to ibis@ucd.ie.

Our extensive links page continues to be a significant resource for anyone working in the field of British-Irish political and constitutional research. Links fall into six main categories:

- Official information
- Political activism
- Education
- Irish political documents
- Guide to periodicals
- Miscellaneous

Stonehill College conference

On the invitation of Richard Finnegan, Stonehill College, and the New England chapter of the American Conference for Irish Studies (ACIS), the Institute co-organised a number of sessions at the New England ACIS regional meeting on 25-26 October 2002.

Held at Stonehill College near Boston, the conference theme was “Northern Ireland four years later: security, society, politics”. It consisted of a wide range of panels. Those co-organised by the Insti-



Stonehill College, Easton, MA

tute, and the presentations made, were:

The United States and Northern Ireland. This included papers by Mary Doughtrey (PHR Consulting), “Strategies for US engagement in foreign conflicts: the case of Northern Ireland”; David Schmitt (Northeastern University), “9/11 and Northern Ireland”; and Joseph Thompson (Villanova University), “Percolating support: US Northern Ireland relations”.

Northern Ireland: politics and peace process. Three papers were presented here: John Coakley (University College Dublin), “Relations between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland since the agreement”; George Fergusson (Consul General, United Kingdom), “Negotiating and implementing the agreement”; and Isolde Moylan (Consul General, Ireland), “The view from Dublin”.

New challenges in contemporary Ireland. The three papers in this panel were Máiréad Nic Craith, (Magee College, University of Ulster), “Exploring cultural citizenship in Northern Ireland”; Yvonne Galligan (Queen’s University Belfast), “Pathways to power: Irish women politician’s perspectives”; and Catherine Shannon (IACI Fellow, NUI Galway), “Reflections on women and the North”.

A lively roundtable on the agreement and its implementation also took place, with speakers Martin Mansergh (Seanad Eireann), Paul Bew (Queens University Belfast) and Kevin Cullen (*Boston Globe* and Harvard University).

BRITISH-IRISH DEVELOPMENTS

Chronology

This continues the chronology last updated in Issue 4 of the Newsletter. For a detailed chronology of the Northern Ireland conflict see the Conflict Archive on the Internet (CAIN) web site at www.cain.ulst.ac.uk

2002

May 18 Protestant and Catholic residents in north Belfast asked to sign up to a statement of principles aimed at rebuilding community relations

May 22 Secretary of State Reid states view that IRA and UVF ceasefires remain intact

May 26 Gerry Adams calls for review of implementation of GFA

May 28 Police ombudsman justifies use of plastic bullets in several riots last year

May 29 Mr Justice Peter deCarteret Cory appointed to conduct investigation of allegations of collusion between security forces and paramilitaries

Jun 2 Three people shot as a new wave of sectarian rioting erupts in east Belfast

Jun 5 Secretary of State John Reid holds talks with loyalist and republican political leaders in an attempt to end violence in east Belfast; Bill Clinton opens Enniskillen peace centre

Jun 6 Belfast riots prompt First Minister Trimble to meet Prime Minister Blair

Jun 6 Alex Maskey elected first Sinn Féin Lord Mayor of Belfast

Jun 11 Secretary of State Reid says UVF and IRA ceasefires not under imminent threat

Jun 14 Third summit of the British Irish Council in Jersey

Jun 19 Protestant women from east Belfast interfaces demonstrate for peace

Jun 28 Plenary meeting of the North-South ministerial council in Armagh

Jul 1 Lord Mayor Maskey lays wreath at cenotaph to commemorate the dead of the first world war

Jul 4 Taoiseach and prime minister hold crisis talks on the peace process

Jul 7 Violent clashes at Drumcree

Jul 12 Britain and Spain agree to share sovereignty over Gibraltar

Jul 16 IRA statement of apology for the death of "non-combatants"

Jul 16 LVF and UDA added to Washington's A-list list of active global terrorist groups

Jul 31 Unsuccessful talks to try to bring an end to sectarian violence at interfaces

Aug 6 Workers at three Belfast hospitals protest for the withdrawal of death threats

Aug 13 New hardline commander of the UDA warns of more violence

Aug 14 Families of some of the Omagh victims sue the British government and the North's police force

Aug 23 British Post Office announces trial scheme to process Irish passport applications

Aug 28 David Trimble visits interface at Cluan Place

Sep 2 New PSNI chief constable Hughie Orde takes office

Sep 4 Secretary of State Reid visits Short Strand peace line

Sep 15 Lord Mayor Maskey travels to Messines, Belgium, to lay wreath to commemorate deaths during first world war

Sep 21 Special meeting of Ulster Unionist Council agrees withdrawal of ministers from North/South Ministerial Council and threatens withdrawal from executive on 18 Jan 2003 unless republicans offer evidence of "real and genuine transition" to peaceful means

Oct 4 Police raid Sinn Féin offices in Stormont, leading to arrests and allegations of IRA spying

Oct 11 Two DUP ministers resign from the executive

Oct 14 Devolved institutions suspended by Secretary of State

Oct 15 Two new parliamentary under-secretaries appointed to share running of Northern Ireland ministries

Oct 17 BBC NI opinion poll shows unionist support for agreement at lowest level ever (33%)

Oct 17 During visit to Belfast, prime minister Blair called for decisive action from republicans to demonstrate commitment to peace

Oct 19 Second referendum on Nice treaty in the Republic supports Ireland's accession (63% yes, 37% no, turnout 48%)

Oct 22 Meeting of British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference at Hillsborough Castle

Oct 24 John Reid replaced as secretary of state by Paul Murphy as part of British cabinet reshuffle

Oct 30 IRA announces withdrawal from cooperation with International Commission on Decommissioning

INSTITUTE FOR BRITISH-IRISH STUDIES-CO-OPERATION IRELAND LECTURE SERIES

The next lecture in the series takes place in the University Industry Centre, UCD, Belfield, on Thursday 12 December 2002 at 6 pm. The theme is *The Irish government and the peace process*.

The speakers are Mr Albert Reynolds, former Taoiseach, who played a formative role in the launch of the peace process, and Mr Kevin Rafter, RTE, who has been researching various aspects of the peace process for several years. The event will be chaired by Dr Jennifer Todd, UCD.

Persons intending to attend are asked to confirm their attendance with the Institute. The Industry Centre may be reached by the main entrance to UCD, off the Stillorgan dual carriage-way. The nearest car park is car park 3. Tea and coffee will be served from 5.30 pm.

IBIS Newsletter online

The current and back issues of the IBIS Newsletter are now available on our website www.ucd.ie/~ibis.

Mailing list

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