

bi-partisan camaraderie pervaded the Chambers as each front bench congratulated the other on 'not raising the temperature'.

Reforms were introduced. 'Moderate' Catholic leaders accepted and welcomed them. British politicians and commentators looked forward to the day, not far off, when Northern Ireland would be a decent, sane and civilized state—not unlike Britain. The more visionary discerned the possibility of peaceful progress towards a Federal Ireland in which North and South would at last join hands under the benign gaze, not to mention the economic stranglehold, of a friendly Britain.

But in the Bogside, the Falls, Ardoyne and other Catholic ghettos there was none of this happy optimism. The 'reforms' were making no difference.

Reforms have to be implemented by someone. They require a police force, a magistracy and an army of officials able and willing to put them into effect. Such a state machine did not exist in Northern Ireland.

The state machine which did exist had been pieced together during fifty years of one-party rule. It was locked into the Unionist Party structure. And it was a very formidable machine indeed.

The Unionist Party's adjuncts, the Orange Order, the Royal Black Preceptory and the Apprentice Boys, numbered an estimated one hundred thousand men—drawn from a Protestant male population of half a million. The Orange Order could reach into the Cabinet Office as easily as into the office of the housing manager of an obscure Rural District Council. It influenced the appointment of Prime Ministers and trainee policemen, judges and council road-sweepers. It was a machine such as Mayor Daley might have sighed for.

It was not possible to make this machine suddenly, after fifty years, change gear and operate in a new way. The reforms went onto the statute book, and stayed there.

Reacting against this, more and more people in the Catholic ghettos began to see that the only way they could ever guarantee their own civil rights and physical security, was to end the Northern Ireland state, to make it ungovernable, to smash Stormont. Once that feeling erupted onto the streets the Catholics were in conflict with the civil power—i.e. with the army. From mid-1970 until the present, the conflict has steadily grown more bitter and more bloody. And as that happened the IRA emerged from the shadows onto the centre of the stage.

The IRA is the organisational crystallisation of Catholic ghetto feeling. As such it posed the single greatest threat to British plans. While it operated successfully, the Catholics had sufficient self-confidence to sustain their intransigence; and while the Catholics remained intransigent all attempts by Britain to modernise the method of her rule over Ireland were doomed to failure.

Once the IRA was identified as the main enemy, once the Catholic aspiration to smash the state was demonstrated, the short-term aim of the British government co-incided exactly with the instincts of the Unionist right wing.

Thus, having come to end the rule of redundant right-wing unionism, the British Army, by mid-1971, was behaving exactly as Catholics remembered the RUC and the B-Specials behave. The only difference was that the Army was better at it.

How much better was demonstrated on January 30th.

The tragedy of Ireland is that even if the most far-sighted British plans worked out, even if the IRA was defeated and the Catholics thereafter accepted, albeit sullenly, a radically re-structured Stormont, even if the British forces then confronted and defeated any subsequent violent Protestant reaction, the bloody scenario of the past three years could, and almost certainly would, be played out again at some future date with but minor variations.

The only solution is not to change the way in which British big business dominates Ireland, but to end that domination forever. Only then will there be lasting peace in Ireland.

There was a day of national mourning in Ireland when the victims of Bloody Sunday were buried. Having mourned, the task now is to organise.

Postscript

Forensic evidence tendered to the Widgery Tribunal suggests that one of the foregoing points is seriously inaccurate.

On Page 10, I write that tests made to discover lead traces on the hands of the dead men were in all cases negative. This was based on evidence from a source inside Altnagelvin Hospital, where the post-mortems were carried out.

On 2 March, Dr John Martin, Principal Scientific Officer at the Department of Industrial and Forensic Science, told the Widgery Tribunal that tests he had carried out were negative in five cases—those of Duddy, Gerald McKinney, Gilmore, Doherty and William McKinney; that tests on McIlhinney and Gerald Donaghy were doubtful; that the other six tests were positive.

Swabs were taken from the hands of those tested by the RUC. The swabs were conveyed to Dr Martin by the RUC. Dr Martin agreed that the presence of lead particles did not indicate positively that the man in question had been firing a gun: a person standing near a discharged gun could be contaminated. He estimated that the British SLR 'could throw lead from the muzzle for up to thirty feet'. Contamination could also be caused by a body being handled by someone who had himself fired a gun, or by the body being transported in a vehicle from which a gun had been fired.

Most of the bodies were lifted by soldiers into saracen cars and taken in the saracens to Altnagelvin Hospital.

Professor Keith Simpson, Professor of Forensic Medicine at the University of London, told the Tribunal that contamination could be 'caused in four ways: by firing a gun, being struck by a bullet, because of fragmentation of a bullet, or by being close to a person firing a gun.'

The forensic evidence does not help towards any firm conclusion. It does not affect the case argued in the pamphlet.

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The following appeared on the front page of 'The Starry Plough', the newspaper of the Official Republican Movement, a few days after Bloody Sunday

DEMANDS CIVIL RIGHTS ASSOCIATION

THERE'LL BE ANOTHER DAY

BLOODY SUNDAY was carried out with one objective. The British Army decided coldly and deliberately to shoot the risen people off the streets. We were shot with our backs turned, in some cases, with our hands in the air as we went to rescue the wounded. We were killed on the barricades, in the courtyards . . . and a few died God knows where. The vultures picked them up first. But the siege goes on. The 808 acres of Bogside, Brandywell and Creggan remain free. Forty of the forty-two entrances to Free Derry remain barricaded.

Sunday, bloody Sunday, was a fine day and a foul day. It was a fine thing to swing down Southway, thousands of us singing, to pick up thousands more of our comrades at the Brandywell. And then to swell through the Bogside where it all began four years ago. Do you remember? . . .

We asked them to ban the Corporation, and they said no, and then they banned it. We demanded houses

and they said no, and then they built them. We demanded that Craig should go, and they said no and then he went. We told the police to leave the Bogside and they said no — running all the way back to barracks. And when Sam Devenney died, paying the price of it all, we thought it more than we could bear, but we did. Death was strange then. Death is no stranger now, but the price is higher, and no easier to bear. No one who died was a stranger to us.

What impossible things did we demand this time? That our internees be freed? That we walk on our own streets, that the Stormont cesspool be cleaned up — even the S.D.L.P. couldn't bear the stink. For the least of these and the best of these, thirteen men were murdered last week. Let it be said of them with pride, they died on their feet and not on their knees. Let it not be said of us they died in vain.

Stay free, brothers and sisters. There'll be another day.