

NATIONAL ARCHIVES**IRELAND**

Reference Code: 98/6/101

Title: Londonderry: One Man, One Vote pamphlet, produced by the Campaign for Social Justice in Northern Ireland

Creation Date(s): 1965

Level of description: Item

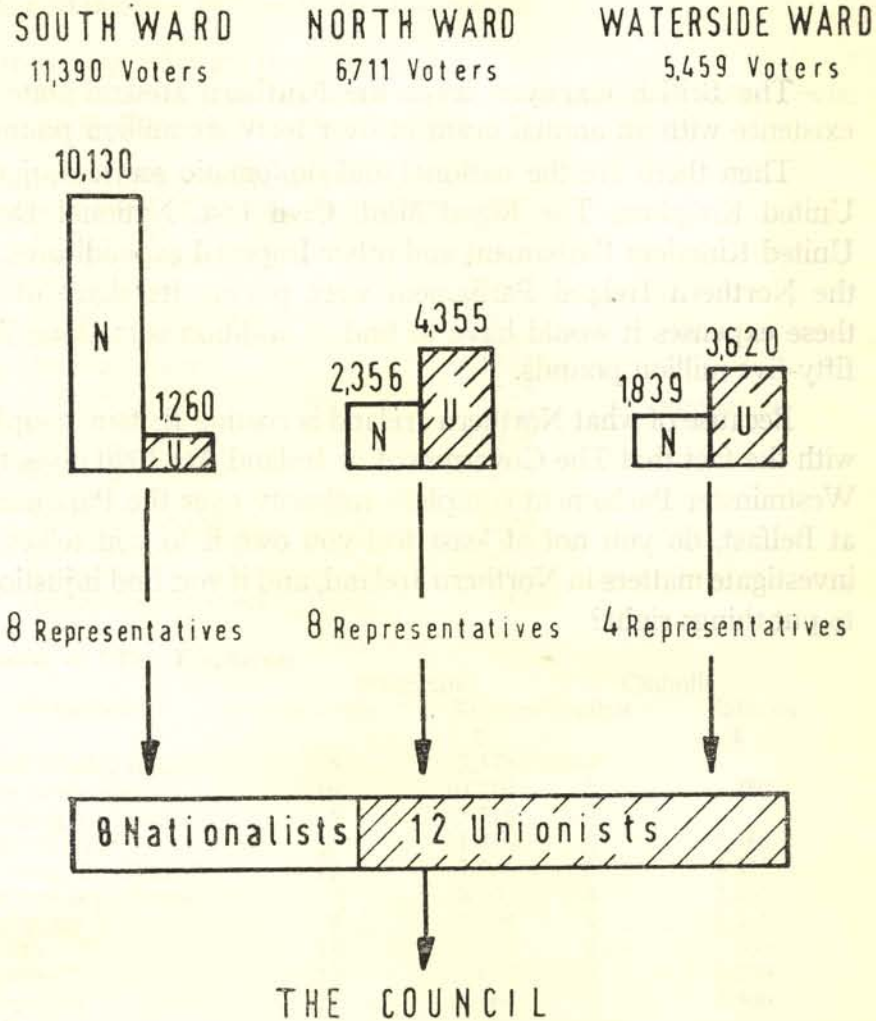
Extent and medium: 8 pages

Creator(s): Department of the Taoiseach

Access Conditions: Open

Copyright: National Archives, Ireland. May only be reproduced with the written permission of the Director of the National Archives.

THE WARDS SYSTEM IN LONDONDERRY



This diagram takes into account the restricted local government franchise.
 If everyone over 21 years had a vote the position would show up even worse.

LONDONDERRY

ONE MAN, NO VOTE

CAMPAIGN FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

NORTHERN IRELAND

Castlefields, Dungannon, Co. Tyrone.

Issued by

Castlefields, Dungannon.

19th February, 1965

Committee:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Mrs. Patricia McCluskey | J. J. Donnelly | Conn McCluskey, M.B. |
| Mrs. Maura Mullally | Peter Gormley, M.B., F.R.C.S. | Thomas McLaughlin |
| Mrs. Olive Scott | Conor Gilligan, F.R.C.S. | Sean McGivern |
| Maurice Byrne, B.D.S. | Brian Gregory, B.A., F.R.I.B.A. | Hugh P. McConville, P.T. |

INTRODUCTION

Since 1920, when Ireland was divided, the Republic of Ireland has been a separate independent state while Northern Ireland has remained an integral part of the United Kingdom, governed by a subordinate parliament at Stormont, Belfast. The Westminster Parliament has overall authority in Northern Irish affairs.

There are six counties in Northern Ireland, the eastern three, Antrim, Down and Armagh are predominately Protestant, the western three, Londonderry, Tyrone and Fermanagh, predominately Roman Catholic.

The natural capital of the eastern counties is Belfast, of the western counties, the city of Londonderry. Derry is the second city in size in Northern Ireland with a deep sea port and a naval base.

The Northern Ireland state has been controlled for over forty years by the Conservative and Unionist party. No Catholics are admitted to membership of this party.

The Conservatives have, through the years, continued to consolidate their position by strengthening the economy of the eastern half of the state and encouraging few industries to set up in the western counties.

In the past year or two even more determined attempts have been made to further weaken and depopulate the western three counties in the following ways:

1. There were two separate railway lines to Londonderry. In the interests of economy it became necessary to close one of them. The one to be 'axed' traversed the western region. This has left Fermanagh, Tyrone and practically all of the county of Londonderry with no railway whatever. The other three counties have two separate systems, one running north from Belfast, the other south.

2. In order to further strengthen the relatively prosperous east, the government of Northern Ireland is to build a New City in County Armagh. Mr. Geoffrey Copcutt was engaged as its chief designer. He is an Englishman who came here after planning Cumbernauld New City near Glasgow. After over a year's work he resigned saying, "I have become disenchanted with the Stormont scene." He suggested the abandonment of the New City and that the development of Londonderry should be concentrated upon in order to give the province a reasonable balance.

3. The government in February 1965 accepted the Wilson Plan for economic development. (H.M. Stationery Office in Belfast). This report outlined four centres for rapid industrial development all within a 30 mile radius of Belfast, and none in the western counties.

4. In February, 1965, the government also accepted the Lockwood Report. (H.M. Stationery Office, Belfast). Here, Londonderry was rejected as the site for a new university, in spite of the fact that Magee University College, a hundred year old institution, is at present providing the first two years of university education in certain subjects. Copcutt in his statement said "Londonderry is the obvious choice to expand as the centre for higher education outside Belfast . . . It could prove the most promising way of unifying the present populations and integrating future immigrant communities".

GERRYMANDER

In the three Ulster counties where the Conservatives are in a minority, control is still maintained by the manipulation of electoral boundaries in a very undemocratic way known as "gerrymandering."

There was a separate seat for the city of Londonderry in the early years of the Stormont parliament.

Because of the preponderance of Catholics the constituency returned a Nationalist (Catholic) member.

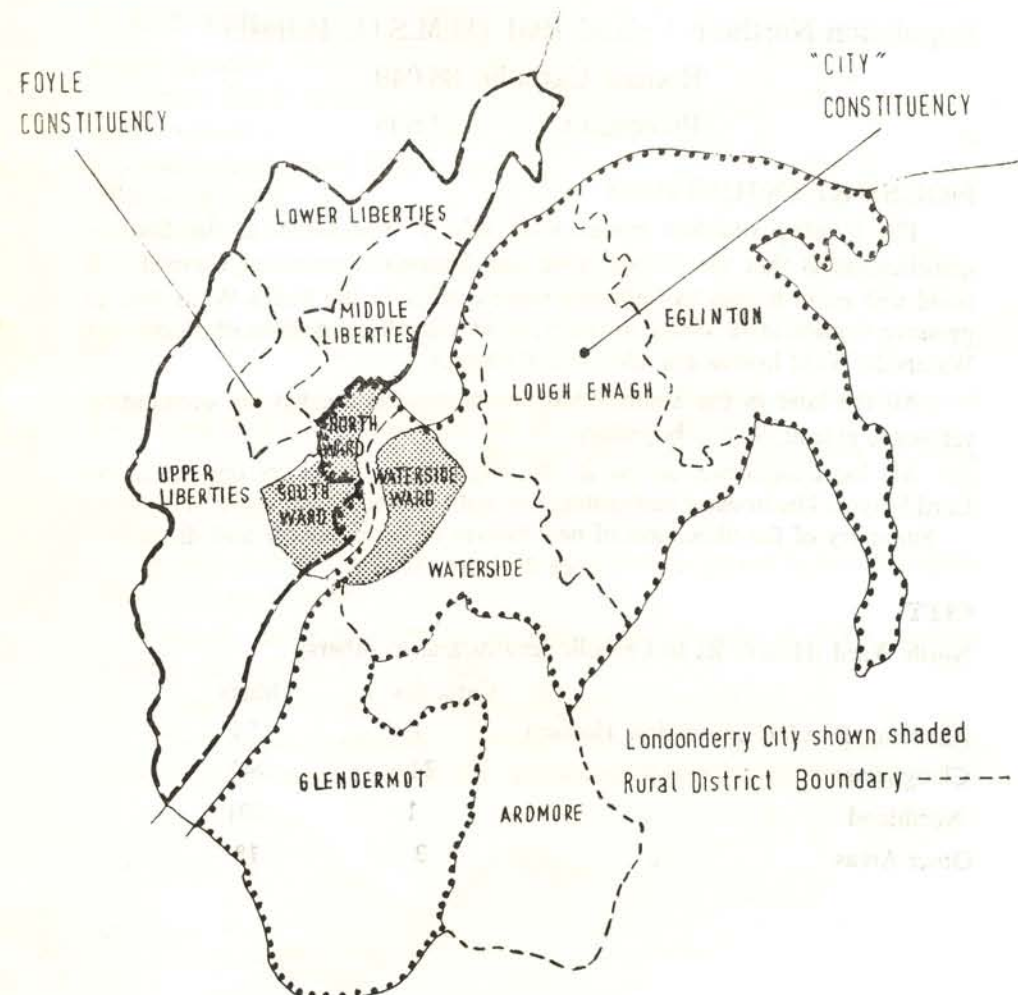
In order to neutralise the seat, the electoral division was re-arranged. The city itself was cut into two, Foyle returning a Nationalist.

The boundary of the 'City' was stretched eight miles into the country. The map below illustrates the way this was done and how the planners of the new boundary of the City constituency found it necessary to reach out to include pockets of Conservative (Protestant) voters, without reference to natural geographical features, in order to scrape together a Conservative and Unionist majority.

It is in local government franchise, however, that the "gerrymander" injustice is seen at its worst.

In local elections in Britain all adults over twenty-one have a vote. In Northern Ireland only a householder and his wife can vote. In addition limited companies are allotted six votes each. Catholics are denied houses and therefore lose voting strength. This is Conservative policy.

LONDONDERRY PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES



Here are the 1964 figures for Londonderry:

Roman Catholic adults over 21 19,870	Roman Catholics with local Government vote 14,325 (inc. 257 company votes)
Conservative adults over 21 10,573	Conservative adults with local Government vote 9,235 (inc. 902 company votes)

The wards are "gerrymandered" as to size and composition. The surplus Catholics are found in one large ward. The final result for Derry can be seen in the diagram on the back page.

The minority Unionist vote is thus able to elect the Mayor of Londonderry, who ex officio is a member of the Northern Ireland Senate, the salaried Upper House.

TOTAL POPULATION OF LONDONDERRY: Census of Population Northern Ireland 1961 (H.M.S.O., Belfast)

Roman Catholic	36,049
Protestant	17,695

HOUSING INJUSTICES

The housing situation causes most misery. The result of the housing qualification is that the Conservative and Unionist dominated Council will build and grant houses to Catholics more readily in the South Ward but, to preserve Conservative voting majority, only a small proportion of North and Waterside Ward houses are allotted to Catholics.

All the land in the South Ward has been used up, yet the corporation refuses to extend the city boundary.

All local authority houses in the city are allocated by one man, the Lord Mayor. The housing committee does not function.

Summary of the allocation of new houses in Londonderry and district since the war

CITY

North Ward (Houses let to Catholic tenants and to others)

	Catholics	Others
Academy Road (Corporation Houses)	1	34
Cloughglass "	34	242
Northland "	1	101
Other Areas "	3	18

Waterside Ward

Lisnagavin	"	34	275
Rosstown	"	11	83
Other Areas	"	74	122

South Ward

Creggan	"	754*	6
Other Areas	"	241	—
Creggan (Housing Trust)†		1,021	43
Other Areas	"	38	—

Totals for the City 2,212 924

RURAL AREA

Upper Liberties

(Rural district houses) ... — 16

Lower Liberties

(Ballynagan Rural district houses) 1 15

Middle Liberties

(Rural district houses) ... 25 19

(Housing Trust — Belmont) 37 239

Totals for the Rural District 62 258

* Please note the tendency, widespread in Northern Ireland, of both the Corporation and the Housing Trust to segregate the people into religious 'ghettos'.

† The Housing Trust is a government sponsored agency which builds houses for letting. It has freedom to choose tenants and usually selects the better off people since they make more stable tenants, the most needy are thus often passed over.

At first sight housing allocations in the Borough appear to be reasonable. This is not so, because:

1. Catholic councillors tell us that there are upwards of 2,000 Catholic families still waiting to be housed.
2. There are practically no Protestants unhoused in Derry.
3. The Catholic population is younger and is growing much faster. There has been an increase of 459 in the Catholic electorate during the past year.

4. The backlog of people waiting to be housed after World War II had a large preponderance of Catholic families.

Housing needs at that time were so desperate that hundreds of families, nearly all Catholic, 'squatted' into Nissen huts which had just been vacated by the American Army.

Even now, more than twenty years later, many of these people have not yet been re-housed (the precise number at this moment is 59 huts, housing 90 families), in spite of the fact that the huts are in a tumbledown condition and rat-infested.

Springtown Camp, as it is called, has been owned and administered during all this time by Londonderry Corporation.

EMPLOYMENT INJUSTICES

The Conservatives see to it that their adherents receive most of the favours. Herewith the Borough employment position:

DERRY COUNTY BOROUGH

Salaries of heads of departments (1st April, 1964)

Town clerk	3,310
City accountant	2,665
City surveyor	2,665
Electricity Superintendent	2,665
Director of Education	2,665
Medical officer	2,555
City solicitor	2,525
School dentist	2,020
Sanitary officer	1,805
Housing architect	1,700
Welfare officer	1,460
Housing manager	1,255
Rate collector	1,170
Librarian	1,060
Parks superintendent	900

All Protestants

Salaries of Other Employees

Department	Protestant		Catholic	
	Number	Salaries £	Number	Salaries £
Town Clerk's office	8	5,375	—	—
City accountant's	16	10,710	1	280
Rates department	5	3,715	—	—
City surveyor	25	21,870	8	5,480
Housing department	12	7,505	6	4,315
Sanitary department	7	6,845	4	2,455
Electricity	8	4,620	4	2,455
Health	11	8,890	1	305
Welfare	12	9,435	5	3,250
Education	23	13,664	3	1,860
Cemetery	2	820	—	—
Library	1	555	—	—
145 Protestants earning		£124,424		
32 Catholics earning		£20,420		

The British taxpayer keeps the Northern Ireland state in existence with an annual grant of over forty-six million pounds.

Then there are the national and diplomatic services of the United Kingdom, The Royal Mint, Civil List, National Debt, United Kingdom Parliament and other Imperial expenditures. If the Northern Ireland Parliament were paying its share of all these expenses it would have to find in addition something like fifty-five million pounds.

Because of what Northern Ireland is costing Britain, coupled with the fact that The Government of Ireland Act 1920 gives the Westminster Parliament complete authority over the Parliament at Belfast, do you not at least feel you owe it to yourselves to investigate matters in Northern Ireland, and if you find injustices, to put things right?