"WE'RE ORDINARY PEOPLE CAUGHT UP IN AN EXTRAORDINARY SITUATION" A LIFE HISTORY ANALYSIS OF DISENGAGED NORTHERN IRISH PARAMILITARIES

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ABSTRACT

This thesis focuses on the processes that lead people to join, stay in and leave paramilitary organizations like the Irish Republican Army. Seeing as though there has been an upsurge in the amount of paramilitary activity by violent Irish Republican splinter groups since 2009, it is important to know what influenced the previous generation of paramilitaries the most. To this end, six disengaged paramilitaries were interviewed.

The data shows that the combination of youthfulness and personal victimization with a social context that creates a platform for active protest will most likely lead to radicalization. Youthfulness is also an important factor in explaining willingness to join paramilitary organizations. Similarly, personal relations have a significant impact on entry decisions: most of the interviewees joined with their friends.

With regards to the length of involvement the data shows that those that were coached when they first joined, stayed in the organization the longest. All the interviewees spent time in prison in the course of their involvement. While in prison, relative freedom to organize themselves played a significant role in furthering paramilitaries' engagement. Additionally, solitary confinement in combination with violent prison conditions lead to more emotional detachment and a higher dependency on glorifying violent behaviour.

If individuals no longer believe in the ideology, this is a more important factor in their decision-making process than the possible personal costs of leaving. Also, after a long spell in prison it is likely that individuals will disengage, at least temporarily, to experience normality. If someone's time in prison was not a cause for disengagement, then the chances are higher that deradicalization and disengagement happen simultaneously. Lastly, those that are the most educated, are less likely to stay engaged very long.

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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

In this thesis the life histories of six formerly imprisoned ex-members of Northern Irish Republican paramilitary organizations will be analyzed in order to make a multilayered analysis of the factors that influenced them to join, stay in and leave the paramilitary organizations they were part of. More on how this multilayered analysis will be approached will be explained in Chapter 2. In this Introduction the necessary background information on the conflict they were involved in (1.1) and the paramilitary groups they were part of (1.2) will be given. In paragraph 1.3 important definitions of terms will be given and the terminology used in this thesis will be explained.

1.1 The Northern Ireland conflict

The Northern Ireland conflict, often referred to as 'the Troubles', officially came to an end with the 1998 Good Friday Agreement. The difference between the fighting parties during the 'Troubles', from 1969 until 1998, is often made based on religious denomination. However, the conflict is better explained by classifying the warring parties in terms of their constitutional aspirations. Most Catholics consider themselves to be Irish and are Nationalist; they would like to see the island of Ireland reunited and fully independent of Great Britain. Most Protestants on the other hand, consider themselves to be British and are Unionists; they want Northern Ireland to stay in the United Kingdom. When the whole island of Ireland was under British rule, before 1921, religion was used as a marker to discriminate between sections of the population. Laws typically favoured Protestants so that they could acquire land and wealth, whilst Catholics were reduced in status. The inequalities between Catholics and Protestants continued after the partition and were the root cause of the emergence of a civil rights movement in the 1960s. The British

government's response to the Catholics' civil rights marches eventually led to the outbreak of the Troubles.[1]

The Good Friday Agreement marked the end of the paramilitary activity of one of the most active forces in keeping the cycle of violence alive: the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA). As part of the Agreement, Northern Ireland remained in the United Kingdom but significant power sharing was assured. The PIRA's mission had been to end British rule in Northern Ireland but in 1994 it agreed to a cessation of military activity and to using politics to try to attain its goals. The history of the IRA is rife with internal feuds leading, amongst other things, to the emergence of breakaway groups. In fact, in 1970 the PIRA itself emerged out of a split in the IRA. A large part of the leadership joined the PIRA, those that stayed became known as the Official IRA (OIRA) and soon after the split the PIRA became known as the IRA. Nonetheless, the 'new' IRA is also still referred to as the PIRA, or 'the Provos'. For clarity they will be referred to as PIRA in this thesis.[2] The Official IRA ceased its paramilitary activity in 1972.

In 2009 it became clear that for some the Troubles are not over, and that the PIRA's disarming in 2006 has not led all other violent Irish Republican groups to follow suit. In March 2009, splinter groups claimed responsibility for three murders. The so-called 'Real IRA' (RIRA) shot dead two soldiers and 'Continuity IRA' (CIRA) killed a police officer. Currently three violent Irish Republican splinter groups have been responsible for the deadliest activity since 1998. Besides the RIRA and the CIRA, an organization called Oglaigh na hEirann (ONH) is actively engaging in armed attacks. All of these organizations reject the Good Friday Agreement and disarmament. They assert that any agreement that does not lead to a united Ireland is insufficient to end the armed campaign.[3] There has been a significant rise in activity in 2010; 185 violent acts were claimed by violent Irish Republican splinter groups. In this, one of the most

important findings of recent research is that there is significant involvement of former PIRA members in these splinter groups. One of the indicators of the latter is the sophistication of the bombs that have been used.[4] Another alarming indication is the age distribution in the organizations. The largest active age group is 31-40-year olds, closely followed by 20-25-year olds. This suggests that older, more experienced members are training new recruits.[5]

1.2 Key players

As stated, a significant number of internal feuds led to the emergence of violent Irish Republican splinter groups throughout the Troubles. In this paragraph a very short overview will be given of the paramilitary organizations and political parties that the interviewees were/are part of.

The IRA has a rich history. It was responsible for the guerilla campaign that ultimately led to the 1921 partition of Ireland.[6] Between the partition of Ireland and the outbreak of the Troubles in 1969, they were not very influential.[7] As stated, very soon after the outbreak of the Troubles, the PIRA emerged out of a split in the IRA. Sinn Fein is considered to be the PIRA's political wing. Not long after the PIRA broke off, another paramilitary group emerged out of the echelons of the OIRA. The INLA was formed in 1975 by disaffected members of the OIRA. The INLA agreed with the OIRA's socialist ideology but, as opposed to the OIRA, the INLA supported using force to achieve their shared goal of creating a socialist, united Ireland. Its political wing is thought to be the Irish Republican Socialist Party (IRSP) which was also founded in 1975. This Party's main aim is to establish a united, sovereign Ireland and it is opposed to the Good Friday Agreement.[8] The INLA agreed to a ceasefire in 1998.[9]

The RIRA was formed in 1997 and consists of former PIRA members that did not agree with the peace process and the political leadership of Sinn Fein – that was heavily involved in

the peace process. It is believed to have political links with the 32 County Sovereignty Movement (32CSM) which was also founded in 1997.[10] This movement was formed by a breakaway group of former Sinn Fein members that did not believe in giving up the claim to the North and opposed all elements of the peace process. It is a single issue party and it does not take part in elections. The link between the RIRA and the 32CSM has been denied by both organizations.[11] The RIRA is also believed to have close ties with the CIRA.[12]

1.3 Definitions of terms

The lack of consensus among researchers and governments when it comes to defining 'terrorism' is mirrored in their lack of consensus on how to define 'radicalization'. However, in an effort to respond to continuous pressure to tackle it and its possible (security) implications, policy makers have come up with different definitions. On the subject of radicalization those definitions can be classified into two categories. Concerning paramilitary activity they emphasize the active pursuit or acceptance of the use of violence to attain a certain goal. When radicalization is defined in a broader sense, it is "the active pursuit or acceptance of far-reaching changes in society which may or may not constitute a danger to democracy and may or may not involve the threat of or use of violence to attain the stated goals."[13] In this thesis the term radicalization will be used to refer to the process of developing extremist ideologies and beliefs. 'Extremism' can most simply be defined as those attitudes that are far removed from the ordinary attitudes in a given society, what is labeled as extremist therefore depends on the political and historical context of a given moment and on power balances in a given society.[14]

A wide array of terms can be used to categorize those that were formerly part of the IRA and similar organizations and the choice of terminology is a delicate matter. In literature on the Troubles, members of violent Northern Irish Republican organizations are alternately referred to

as, amongst others, terrorists, violent extremists, violent dissident Republicans, Republican ultras and paramilitaries. One of the most influential research institutes in Northern Ireland[15] calls those involved in the armed struggle on either side 'paramilitaries'. As this term therefore does not seem to have any connotations with one side being more violent or more illegitimate than the other, the terms paramilitary, paramilitary activity and paramilitary organization will be used in this thesis. Paramilitary organizations will be defined as "groupings of people who adopt forms of military organization in support of political aims"[16] and paramilitaries as the members of such military organizations. The term 'action pathway' will be employed to denominate the road from radicalization to paramilitary activity.[17] 'Involvement' will be used to refer to the degree in which someone has progressed on the action pathway.

Regarding the interviewee's disengagement or deradicalization, it is important to note that the term 'disengagement' implies a change in behaviour while the term 'deradicalization' implies a change in attitude. In this thesis, disengagement will be used when talking about a paramilitary's disengaging from the organization, i.e. leaving it. Deradicalization will be used to indicate that a (former) paramilitary has abandoned the organization's ideology. This distinction is especially important because individuals who disengage do not necessarily deradicalize.

At the beginning of this Introduction the terms 'Nationalist' and 'Unionist' were introduced. These terms should be distinguished from 'Republican' and 'Loyalist'. In the Northern Ireland context both the terms Republican and Loyalist signify that a person gives tacit or actual support to the use of force by paramilitary groups. Not all Nationalists are Republicans and not all Unionists are Loyalists.[18]

CHAPTER 2 - ANALYZING PATHWAYS OF RADICALIZATION, PARAMILITARY ACTIVITY AND DISENGAGEMENT

Before examining pathways from radicalization to paramilitary activity and, potentially, disengagement, a framework in which to place these transitions will be outlined here. This framework includes the most important questions that need to be answered to elucidate why people are members of paramilitary organizations.

Over the years many scholars have conducted research on the question why people decide to join, stay in and leave paramilitary organizations. Research on the motivations of former members of violent extremist groups like Spain and France's Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA - Basque Homeland and Freedom), Germany's Rote Armee Fraktion (RAF - Red Army Faction) and Italy's Brigate Rosse (Red Brigades) has lead to important indicators of the most salient factors of influence in people's entry and exit decisions. When politically motivated violence became the object of social scientific research in the 1960s it was predominantly viewed as a condition or state that some were more disposed to than others. Extremism was construed as a reflection of deviation from moderation and as inherently indicative of an individual's irrationality. This irrationality supposedly signified dichotomous thinking about the world and about the difference between right and wrong.[19] More contemporary research has steered away from this, especially in the last decade.[20] Various leading researchers on the subject are advocating looking at the road to paramilitary activity as a process in which radical beliefs are translated into compelling bases and justifications for violent action. This approach leaves room for individual trajectories in which different mechanisms and pathways have an effect.[21]

Approaching involvement in paramilitary activity as the result of a process opens up the possibility of creating a framework that simultaneously explains certain individuals' proneness

and susceptibility to radicalizing and engaging in paramilitary activity, and addresses the socio-political circumstances in which this proneness and susceptibility to radicalization and paramilitary activity are activated. This approach is more likely to yield useful results than trying to find a 'type' as there is little evidence to suggest that specific individual traits can be identified that can help determine which people are most likely to become paramilitaries. Regarding the latter, researchers in the field ostensibly agree with the position that paramilitaries are essentially normal individuals. Studies on the psychology of paramilitaries have predominantly lead to the conclusion that there is no distinct personality type or psychotic or neurotic illness to explain the action pathways of these individuals.[22] [23] Thus it is useful to depart from the premise that the subjects of analysis are ordinary people that make choices based on the situation they find themselves in.[24]

Moreover, looking at involvement in paramilitary activity as the result of a process allows for the analysis of sequences of events. At the outset these sequences should be viewed as chains in which there is correlation, but not necessarily causality, between various events and mechanisms. Acts of paramilitary activity should be viewed in the context of other actions and reactions whilst keeping in mind that there is no magic formula; no sequence of events will inevitably beeline someone into becoming a paramilitary. Nonetheless, commonalities may be found in the life histories of paramilitaries. As stated, commonalities in individual traits of paramilitaries always need to be viewed in their social and political context in order to have explanatory value.[25] Viewing involvement in paramilitary activity as a process also leaves the framework within which commonalities are identified open to being a conglomeration of mundane, everyday things and unexpected combinations of activities.[26]

In order to get a grasp of why people are members of paramilitary organizations, the following questions need to be answered:

1/ Why do people want to get involved in paramilitary activity?
2/ How do people get involved in paramilitary activity?
3/ What roles do they get attributed/tasks do they fulfill once they have become a member?
4/ How and why do people move up in the echelons of the organization?
5/ How and why does an individual assimilate the shared values and norms of the organization?
6/ How and why does an individual accommodate to unexpected levels engagement and how and why does that differ among different members?
7/ How and why do members commit specific acts of violence?
8/ How do members influence those around them in the organization at the various stages of their involvement?
9/How and why do people (want to) disengage from paramilitary organizations?

The answers to these questions are not necessarily related and answering one does not necessarily reflect on any of the others. Thus the answer to the question why people become involved in paramilitary activity may have no bearing on the answers that explain their roles and what keeps them involved.[27] It is also key to note that radicalization is neither a necessary precondition for paramilitary activity nor something that necessarily leads to paramilitary activity[28] and that the factors that lead someone to radicalize may be different from those that lead an individual to engage in paramilitary activity.[29]

2.1 Conceptual framework for analyzing membership of paramilitary organizations

The contributing factors to an individual's radicalization and action pathway into paramilitary activity can only be deemed analytically useful when they include the forces of a given context and the opportunities that this context offered in terms of engaging in violent behaviour. Because commonalities in the factors that explain the behavior of individuals that participate in paramilitary activity in a given context do not explain why one individual engages and another does not, the psychological and emotional context on which bigger, non-psychological forces operate must be established.

As paramilitaries should, at least provisionally, be viewed as people that make rational decisions just like ordinary people, it can be assumed that a cost benefit analysis of sorts precedes their decision to join a paramilitary organization. In this, it is important to make a distinction between the decision to join and later decisions to engage in specific activities.[30] Thus, in the broadest sense of the word, the individual engaging in paramilitary activity will expect to reap some rewards from this decision to join, even if it is just a sense of agency, direction in life, or higher self-esteem because of a sense of belonging to a righteous and/or powerful organization – the important influence of the latter will be explained further in Chapter 3. In this, "emotional arousal" can impede rational decision-making.[31]

There is no definitive answer to the question whether certain individuals are predisposed to being more influenced by external factors that offer the opportunity for deviant or extremist behaviour.[32] However, three critical process variables have been identified that might explain both the process of radicalization and of engagement in paramilitary activity. They are 'setting events', 'personal factors' and 'social, political, organizational context' and they will be explained in the next paragraph.[33] After the most influential 'push' and 'pull' factors have been analyzed in Chapter 3, a list of expected predisposing factors will be given in 3.2.3.

2.2 Process variables influencing the rate of progression on the action pathway

The first variable of influence, setting events, denominates an individual's socialization. Setting events are characterized by the fact that they are simultaneously too general to have any predictive value and pivotal for understanding the behaviour choices of an individual. Setting events can be related to social and political circumstances, family life, economic circumstances, peers and life experiences.[34] The latter categories are based on a typology by Ronald Clarke and

Marcus Felson on criminal involvement but various authors have argued that they apply equally to other types of deviant behaviour.[35]

The second variable, personal factors, includes an individual's emotional state during certain experiences. This needs to be juxtaposed with the quality of involvement at that time – where on the action pathway this individual is – in order to have explanatory value. Examples of possible influential experiences are a perceived negative experience with security forces and peer pressure, the response to them will differ based on personal factors and the influence of personal factors will be subject to change depending on how far the individual is on the action pathway. Personal factors differ from the above mentioned setting events because of their impingement and salience.[36]

The last variable is the social, political or organizational context that defines someone's social environment. This is the defining variable for distinguishing between frameworks geared at explaining criminal behavior and those that seek to explain (violent) extremism.[37] It is here that political and ideological expressions come to the fore. Ideology is important to understand the external narrative that influences internal socialization and the individual's determination of his place in the world. In that sense it is not necessarily the purpose or end-goal of the ideology that drives individuals but what that ideology prescribes with regard to how the social world works and how individuals ought to behave in it.[38] Moreover, the benefits an individual's actions reap for the political framework in which he operates – the ideology under the banner of which they were carried out – may help elucidate the rationale behind that person's choices.[39] Therefore, with regards to the political context an individual finds himself in, special attention needs to be paid to the ideological qualities of that context. Some elements of this variable might already have been of influence on setting events and have impinged on personal factors.[40] Lastly, case studies suggest that the action pathway can be greatly influenced by the framework that

paramilitary organizations set up for new members - the 'organizational context.' The level of exposure those new members have to the social and political context as defined by the organization, can be of decisive influence. Training and an ideological framework that gives meaning to the organization's actions, and therewith the individual's involvement, become the determinants for behavior and thought patterns. This usually coincides with a growing sense of acceptance into a group.[41] Also, the fact that new members acquire skills in phases, thus slowly gaining the ability to defend themselves both physically and verbally when having to respond to violence, is an important factor in prolonged engagement. In the process of this, new members will often feel a strong sense of being coached and supported by more senior members. This can consolidate their feeling of being part of a powerful, well-oiled machine.[42]

In short: to get a comprehensive overview of the important factors and mechanisms pushing someone forward on the action pathway, the ideological qualities of the political context need to be combined with individual psychology as viewed through the lens of the type of social, political and civil society someone lives in, the organizational framework of the paramilitary organization and temporal frames of reference.[43]

To conceptualize the factors that are the most dominant in explaining an individual's level of involvement in (violent) extremism, the above three variables need to be analyzed in terms of their influence at different stages on the action pathway. At the initial stage, setting events and personal factors play a big role but the critical element is how personal context interplays with setting events and the social/political/organizational context. The reciprocal relationship of violence, changes in social/political/organizational environment and the effects of those changes for the personal context of the individual, is the critical factor in measuring someone's level of involvement. Once an individual has acquired membership of a paramilitary organization the weight that each of the variables has in explaining an individual's involvement

is likely to shift from personal to social/political/organizational context, especially as the latter

becomes more institutionalized in the individual's decision-making process.

CHAPTER 3 - RADICALIZATION AND PARAMILITARY ACTIVITY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter the factors and mechanisms that induce radicalization, paramilitary activity and the transformation from radicalization to paramilitary activity will be examined.

Paramilitaries are commonly adept at identifying the root causes of their engagement in paramilitary activity. Factors such as illegitimate government, inequality of power, social injustice or other so-called triggering events, will be publicized as the grievances that lead to their becoming actively involved. These grievances often lay the basis for the ideologies of paramilitary organizations and usually purport to represent the legitimate grievances of a wider community. Furthermore, paramilitary organizations can be very adept in changing the nature of their grievances over time. However, when paramilitary activity is viewed as being rooted in any of these factors there is no framework for explaining the fact that extremism is a strategy or tactic that is open to any group for any reason. Thus, triggering events can be preconditions, but they cannot explain why certain people get involved whilst others do not.[44]

In order to get an overview of the factors that can build a sequence of events explaining the interviewees' involvement in paramilitary activity, this chapter examines the role of identity, group identification, imprisonment and the most common 'push' and 'pull' factors. Push factors, triggering events are an example, push individuals into the arms of the organization and pull factors are appealing side effects of the individuals' joining a paramilitary organization. Some notable push and pull factors will be listed in paragraph 3.2 after which the role of group identification will be examined in paragraph 3.3. Lastly, the effects of imprisonment on individuals' self-perception, identity and proneness to radicalization and engaging in paramilitary activity will be explained in paragraph 3.4.

3.2 Push and pull factors in joining the IRA

3.2.1 Triggering events

Since triggering events can serve as preconditions, and important push factors, for people's active engagement in paramilitary activity it is important to have an overview of the key events that took place in Derry during the Troubles: the Battle of the Bogside, Internment and Bloody Sunday.[45] After a brief explanation of the significance of certain areas in the city, a brief overview of these events will be given in this paragraph. In addition the significance of the Blanket Protest that took place from 1976 until 1981 and the 1981 Hunger Strike will be explained.

Two neighbourhoods in Derry played a significant role in the Troubles and are mentioned by the interviewees on numerous occasions. These are the so-called 'Bogside' and Creggan. Both are 'working-class' neighbourhoods and they are situated right next to each other. The Bogside is smaller than Creggan and closer to the city walls around the city centre, it was the scene of two of the triggering events mentioned in this paragraph and it is the area where most of the Republican Murals, that will be mentioned in paragraph 3.2.2, are. Creggan is larger than the Bogside and lies directly behind it. In both areas the majority of the population supports the Republican movement.[46] One of the interviewees is from Strabane; this little town south of Derry was the most bombed town in Northern Ireland during the Troubles.

Between the partition of Ireland and the outbreak of the Troubles, Catholics in Derry were heavily discriminated against both politically and economically. Because they formed a majority in Derry, the city became the focal point of the civil rights campaign.[47] The peaceful protests were met with repression by the British state as the civil rights marches continued, and the city became the center of severe state repression.[48]

In August of 1969 riots erupted during the annual parade of Apprentice Boys[49] through the city centre. Police forces tried to subdue the riots and entered the Bogside and Creggan with armoured cars and water cannons. They were followed into the neighbourhoods by Loyalists but both were forcibly removed from the areas by their residents. The next day rioting by Catholics spread across Northern Ireland. This spiraled into serious sectarian conflict and culminated into many families, mainly Catholics, being forced from their homes. Two days after the parade, the government of Northern Ireland asked for the deployment of British Army Troops as the police could no longer control the situation.[50] The two days of fighting between the residents of the Bogside and Creggan and Loyalists and the police have become known as the Battle of the Bogside.

In August of 1971 Internment, incarceration without trial of suspected paramilitaries, was (re)introduced in Northern Ireland. On the first day of the reintroduction of the policy, three hundred and forty two people were arrested and taken to camps. This policy was used until December 1975 by which time almost two thousand people, of which almost nineteen hundred were Catholic, were being interned. The policy had been proposed by Unionists to manage the security situation in the North, but instead it lead to more violence and wider support for the IRA.[51]

On the 30th of January 1972 a civil rights march against internment took place in Derry. It was meant to start in Creggan and end in the Bogside. A handful of marchers diverted from the route and toward an army barricade and riots broke out. By 1972 riots between Catholic youth and the British army had become common and witnesses report that this one was not particularly intense. After the British Army had begun arresting people, members of the Parachute Regiment opened fire. Thirteen people were shot dead and fourteen were wounded. This event has become known as 'Bloody Sunday'.[52]

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The Blanket Protest was the protest launched by IRA and INLA prisoners in Long Kesh prison in 1976. Because they had been stripped of their political status by the Thatcher government, they refused to wear the prison clothes. The latter meant that they were 'dressed' in nothing but their blankets. The protest escalated into the 'dirty protests' in which the prisoners, after all of their rights including the 'right' to use a bathroom had been suspended, smeared their feces on the walls of their cells. The prisoners were kept inside their cells twenty four hours a day and suffered severe beatings from the guards. The protests lasted for five years, culminating in the 1981 Hunger Strike. One of the icons of the struggle was Bobby Sands. He was the first to go on strike and the first, of ten, to die.

Key events like this directly affected some of those that became actively engaged but were also known of great significance for those who were indirectly victimized. The latter often have a strong sense of communal identification with the directly victimized. As stated, triggering events like the above mentioned key turning points, can be push factors but they cannot explain why certain people react by becoming involved whilst others do not.[53]

3.2.2 Social status

In this paragraph the most important pull factor, acquiring social status, of joining paramilitary organizations will be outlined. Seeing as though the IRA had a long tradition of opposing British rule, people that joined could identify with a long heritage of violent uprising against oppression. Many of the leaders of the early days were celebrated in the community as role models. This happened through the usual routes, such as education, and from 1981 onwards through the emergence of Republican Murals (examples of which can be found in Appendix 3). These murals were painted on the corners of housing blocks around the 'Free Derry Corner'[54] in the Bogside.[55]

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Role models can serve as both a justification for joining a paramilitary organization and for continuing on a violent path once having joined. Members of paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland were usually not ostracized by their friends, family members and communities. This was especially true at the beginning of the outbreak of the Troubles when the Catholic community in Derry was being targeted by state security forces. Especially in the early days, involvement in radicalism or paramilitary activity could solidify one's place in the community. Thus, trying to attain a position of respect, being looked up to and appreciated could have been a pull factor during the Troubles. Acquiring certain positions within the IRA could also have raised someone's social standing outside of the organization.[56]

3.2.3 Predisposing factors

As stated in Chapter 2, there is no evidence that certain types of people are inherently more prone to participating in paramilitary activity than others. Nonetheless, based on the analyses in Chapter 2 and paragraphs 3.2.1 and 3.2.2, the following possible predisposing events in people's lives can be identified:

1/ the individual's experience, degree and nature of previous engagement (for example participating in non-violent protests, riots) and the consequences this had for that individual on an emotional level
2/ the individual's level of prior knowledge and interest in the group conflict
3/ the nature and extent of an individual's early experiences (for example being stopped and searched by security forces or experiencing victimization at the hands of the group that the individual perceives as the 'other')
4/the nature of the community context and the importance of that context in the individual's life
5/ the nature and extent of adult socialization (as a measure for the likelihood that an individual will be open to engagement and for the likelihood that the organization will welcome the new member)
6/ how grounded an individual is in his current personal activity, this also goes for the likelihood that someone will be open to progressing on the action pathway once he has already joined a paramilitary organization
7/ (linked to 6) the range of competing possible activities that exclude membership or participation in paramilitary activity[57]

3.3 The psychology of group identification

The psychological foundation of people's sacrificing their individual self-interest for a political cause, lies in group identification. Thus it is important to understand the nature of this group feeling in order to understand the pathway towards paramilitary activity. Firstly, however, it is important to specify what is meant with the terms 'identity' and 'group'.

Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper argue that the use of the word 'identity' as a category of analysis is misleading. One of the clusters of terms they suggest as alternatives is 'self-understanding and social location.' This cluster designates how people act due to their subjective interpretation of themselves and the social situation they are in. It encompasses a combination of cognitive and emotional understanding. They state that the terms 'self-categorization' and 'self-identification' are similar to 'self-understanding' aside from the fact that they imply an effective articulation.[58] These terms will be used as defined by Brubaker and Cooper when applicable. Similar to his objection to using the word 'identity', Rogers Brubaker criticizes the use of the concept of 'groups' as part of "an analytical toolkit." He calls this tendency "groupism." Groupism reifies groups as if they are "internally homogenous, externally bounded (…) with common purposes."[59] In order to really explain moments of high solidarity between people, he states that it is more useful to view "groupness" as an event instead of a constant, real category.[60] The distinction between groups and categories marks the difference between groups as "mutually interacting, mutually recognizing, mutually oriented, effectively bounded collectivities with a sense of solidarity, corporate identity, and capacity for concerted action" and numbers of people who share a commonality such as religion or social class – categories.[61] That said, the purpose of this section is not to explain how groups as abstract units are formed, or to determine when a unit of individuals can and cannot be defined as a group, but to explain the reasons that individuals classify themselves in groupist terms. Using the term

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'group' as a category of analysis in this section will therefore not jeopardize the clarity of the analysis.

Group identification is most likely to occur in face-to-face interaction. Especially if this interaction occurs in a framework in which the individual is cut off from interacting with other groups, the social reality value of the group as the determinant of right and wrong becomes more important.[62] Once an individual has joined an organization the willingness to self-sacrifice for the group may depend on the size of the unit that this individual is a part of. Combat performance has shown that the smaller the group is, and the more extreme the situation that the unit has to operate in, the more extreme individuals' willingness to self-sacrifice will be.[63]

Another way of looking at the strength of group identification is through the lens of the psychology of commitment. In this framework, the smallest act for or against a group is a predictor for later and larger actions. The premise in this framework is that once someone has been willing to do a small action for the group, the justification for that action also justifies doing a little bit more, it if it wouldn't, the small action also wasn't justified. Thus, in order to keep justifying previous behaviour individuals slowly but surely snowball into more extreme behaviour. In order for an individual to maintain a positive self-image escalation will occur so that previous actions can be justified.[64]

As stated, identification with a group results in individual's expanding the scope of what they care about from narrow self-interest to an interest in both the glory and misery of others - including groups that one is not a part of.[65] Research has shown that political opinions do not necessarily reflect individual self-interest. It is not until the relevant costs and benefits are "substantial, imminent, and well publicized" that self-interest becomes an important factor in individual political opinion.[66] However, real or perceived group interests have proven to be an important predictor of political opinions before the threshold of substantial, imminent and well

publicized costs and benefits has been reached.[67] This group-centric view on politics is supported by research into motivations for political activism, the outcome of which was that political activism is more saliently motivated by perceived group disadvantage than by perceived personal disadvantage. The political power of deprivation lies predominantly in the perception of collective, not personal, deprivation.[68] These conclusions indicate that political action and activism can best be explained as the results of identification with a group than as the effects of individual self-interest. The fact that group identification functions as a precursor for political activism does not, however, explain why individuals identify with certain groups as opposed to others and how individuals are prone to favouring the interest of one group as opposed to other groups.

One reason why people identify with certain groups, if they have a choice in the matter, is that they are successful. Even mere association with successful groups can lead to a more positive self-esteem – for example when this association is with a football team that wins a championship. Regardless of actual group membership, identification with certain groups is telling of an individual's status and values. In that, some identifications are more powerful than others.[69] One of the theories that explains when individuals identify strongly with a certain group is Tajfels' social identity theory. The parameters of this theory as well as the effect that strong in-group identification can have on inter-group conflict will be explained in the next paragraph.

3.3.1 Social identity theory

In this paragraph the effect of group identification in people's self-esteem is explained. Additionally, the consequences of being part of a group that one cannot leave for potential inter-group conflict will be analyzed.

The term social movement denominates a wide variety of collective attempts to bring about change in certain social institutions or to create a new order. Social movements' key trait is that they are geared towards promoting or resisting change in society. They are brought about by large groups of people that feel that they have a common problem and they are relatively long-lasting.[70] When looking at social change through the lens of the relationships between large-scale social groups, for example socio-economic or religious categories, social movements become efforts by large numbers of people that self-categorize, and are categorized by others, as a group, who try to collectively solve a problem they feel they have in common and that they perceive as having arisen from cleavages with another group.[71]

Tajfel argues that the image we have of the social groups to which we (perceive to) belong is imperative for (the development of) our definition of 'self'.[72] Juxtaposing the latter with the fact that we strive towards a positive self-image,[73] it can be stated that we will seek membership of groups that will contribute to a positive self-image and that we will try to leave groups that undermine it.[74] When individuals find themselves in the position that they feel that they cannot leave their own group, when the chances for individual mobility – 'social mobility' - are low, the only way for them to achieve higher social status is by increasing the social status of the entire group. Social change is only possible through a major shift in the in-group's status – in the status of the group to which the individual belongs. Thus, the necessary condition for extreme forms of inter-group behaviour is the perception of group members that the social boundaries between the in-group and out-groups are "sharply drawn" and that it is impossible for them to, individually, move between groups.[75]

For groups that have started to work towards change, the perceived illegitimacy of the status quo is the lever towards change. For the group(s) whose position is being challenged it is the legitimization for working towards maintaining the status quo. Inherent to these diverging

positions is a conflict between the in-group that recognized potential similarities and rejects the status quo and the out-group(s) that have a vested interest in maintaining it.[76]

In this case study, the in-group through which social change can be achieved because social mobility is low, is Derry Catholics. The out-groups that are attacked are the British Army and police, everybody belonging to the 'Crown forces', and Loyalist organizations. They represent the authorities that put the sharply drawn boundaries between Catholics and Protestants in place and were at the heart of enforcing oppression. None of the interviewees mention Protestants as being their target, however in the wider context of the Troubles, Protestants were being targeted. In the case of Northern Irish Catholics, short of leaving the country, there was no opportunity to escape their collective external categorization and discrimination.

3.3.2 Group extremity shift

The group extremity shift underscores how group discussions can extremize the attitudes and judgments of individual group members toward the standpoint that was favoured by the majority before the group discussion started. When this is the case, the in-group is the group with which the individual perceives to have the most in common. When it comes to paramilitary organizations it is safe to assume that there is a large common basis in the attitudes of the individual members. When there is a majority opinion to start the discussion, the main arguments in favour of this opinion will be brought forward. The fact that the majority supports this position makes it likely that more arguments will be brought forward in support of that viewpoint. The majority will be empowered by the fact that they dominate the discussion, making it more difficult for minority opinions to be expressed. New arguments in favour of the majority opinion, or those merely supporting it, will persuade the majority even more. At the same time, the discussion having been dominated by this strong opinion will influence former minority

members. Those that were already on the extreme end of the majority opinion will achieve a higher social status and in competition for status in the group, other members will be pushed towards this opinion if they want some of the social status attributed to those extremists.[77] The fact that acquiring certain positions within a paramilitary organization can raise someone's social standing outside of the organization can be a contributing factor in this.

3.4 The impact of imprisonment on identity and radicalization

Imprisonment has a double function on the action pathway of individuals. It inescapably has a psychological impact and, when it comes to extremists, it can also have a significant impact on someone's involvement. The psychological impact of imprisonment will be explained first after which the special case of imprisoned extremists will be analyzed.

3.4.1 The psychological impact of imprisonment

Being imprisoned is a life-changing event for almost everybody, regardless of its duration, the circumstances, or the age of the prisoner. Prison inevitably means subjection to deprivation, and a-typical social interaction with fellow prisoners and wardens. However, unsurprisingly, certain conditions and the timing of imprisonment can have significant added effects on former prisoners. The more extreme the experience is, the more psychologically strenuous it will be, and the more psychologically strenuous it is, the higher the chances are that it will leave a permanent mark. The effects of imprisonment vary from individual to individual but they are often irreversible.[78]

In order to adapt to life in prison, prisoners undergo a transformation process that is often called "prisonization." This process typically occurs in stages and the adaptations are normal, prisoners do not choose to undergo the transformation but it is a natural response to the

conditions they are subjected to. Few prisoners are aware of it happening to them.[79] The longer a

person is imprisoned, the further reaching the prisonization will be. Research shows that the

duration of captivity has a significant effect on the psychopathology of prisoners. For instance,

significantly higher levels of anxiety were found in prisoners that were imprisoned for a year as

compared to those that had been imprisoned for eight weeks.[80] Prisonization is enhanced when

the prisoner was not used to making life choices before being imprisoned. Thus, the younger the

prisoner is when imprisoned the more significant the impact of prisonization will be.[81] One of the

possible effects of prisonization is that, because institutionalization inherently means that

prisoners are subjected to a regime over which they have little control, prisoners become

dependent on the institution for their daily routine. This system of constraint, especially in very

young prisoners, may lead prisoners to abandon their own internal controls or to fail to develop

them. This may lead them to lose the ability to do things independently or to exercise self-

constraint when it comes to doing things that are self-destructive.[82] If there is any kind of

freedom of movement, chances are high that prisoners will be drawn to an illicit prison culture to

meet their basic daily needs and desires.[83]

The threatening environment that prison can be may lead prisoners to develop a tough

exterior to avoid victimization. Again, the younger the prisoner is the higher the chance that he

will develop aggressive avoidance strategies as a means of self-protection. In a similar vein

prison requires prisoners to suppress emotional reactions to avoid looking vulnerable – which is

dangerous as it invites exploitation. On the long term this can lead to "emotional flatness" that

can lead to alienation of the prisoners from themselves and others. If this emotional flatness

becomes chronic it will have a permanent effect; chronic emotional flatness leads to the

abandonment of social interaction of any kind. If the prisoner does express emotion it is likely to

be anger, especially if the prison culture is such that it is a sign of vulnerability not to respond aggressively to others' portrayal of weakness.[84]

Additionally, being locked up in a small, modestly decorated cell whilst having no control over daily routines, may lead prisoners to feel infantilized. This can result in a compromised sense of self and self-worth which may lead prisoners to believe that they deserve to be degraded and stigmatized.[85] Especially if imprisonment follows earlier traumatic life experiences it may rekindle and exacerbate memories of earlier damaging experiences.[86]

Solitary confinement creates a set of psychologically distressing pressures that are incomparable to normal prison conditions. There are few forms of imprisonment that impose such a large variety of traumas on a prisoner. Long-term solitary confinement can have the following psychological consequences: "an impaired sense of identity; hypersensitivity to stimuli; cognitive dysfunction (confusion, memory loss, ruminations); irritability, anger, aggression, and/or rage; other-directed violence, such as stabbing, attacks on staff, property destruction, and collective violence; lethargy, helplessness and hopelessness; chronic depression; self-mutilation and /or suicidal ideation, impulses and behaviour; anxiety and panic attacks; emotional breakdowns and/or loss of control; hallucinations, psychosis and/or paranoia; overall deterioration of mental and psychical health."[87]

The effect of the above process of adaptation and the psychological consequences of some of the more extreme exposures to threat and solitary confinement can strongly influence the psychical and mental well-being of prisoners on the long term and can seriously hamper their reintegration into a community of ordinary people.[88] Especially if an ex-prisoner does not have a close network of personal contacts to return to after having served his term, the effects of prisonization, especially those of maintaining a state emotional flatness and a tough outer

appearance, are likely to lead to internal chaos, anxiety and stress that goes undetected by the outside world.[89]

3.4.2 Prison and the action pathway to paramilitary activity

When imprisonment of paramilitaries on a large scale is common, prisons can be a hotbed for furthering people's progression on the action pathway. It is not uncommon for prisons to be used to educate other prisoners in the ideology of the organization and give them tangible skills to help further its goal as well as mobilize outside support.[90] The latter is especially salient if the prisoners enjoy the freedom to interactive with a lot of fellow prisoners

One of the reasons that prisons are conducive to (further) radicalization is that they are "places of vulnerability." As explained in 3.4.1, they have significant impact on people's psychological state. Inmates might experience isolation and a range of feelings of despair and personal crisis as they have been taken out of their own environment, away from their family and social circle. Social isolation and personal crisis are both significant factors in people's openness to extremist rhetoric. The desire to find meaning and secure personal identity, which is intense when prisoners are trying to adapt to their new situation, and the need for protection are catalysts in this. Another important element of this openness to extremist rhetoric, is the fact that prisons typically generate a quest for defiance. This thirst can be quenched by voicing grievances and the need to rebel by engaging with (fellow) extremist prisoners. Inmates typically have a lot of time on their hands, this factor combined with the fact that amongst them they usually have a wide variety of skill sets, allows for the furthering of both all of their practical skills and in-depth exchanges on the merits of the extremist ideology.[91]

Outside of radicalization through paramilitary fellow inmates and the formation of 'gangs' of extremist inmates that provide protection, books, visitors and other channels from

outside can also play a significant role.[92] The motivation of paramilitaries entails that they perceive everything through a different lens than a 'normal' criminal would; they will not perceive of themselves as criminals and are likely to view their time in prison as a continuation of their involvement in paramilitary activity.[93]

CHAPTER 4 - DERADICALIZATION AND DISENGAGEMENT

As explained in paragraph 1.3, there is a significant different between disengagement and deradicalization and one does not necessarily lead to the other. It is equally important to make a distinction between physical and psychological disengagement. Physical disengagement is externally identifiable as it indicates a significant change in a paramilitary's involvement in the organization. In this it is important to note that people's involvement is usually not constant and that visible physical disengagement may only be temporary. Moreover, it can be the result of external forces such as arrest and imprisonment, being ousted, or the organization's changing their priorities – for example from military to political action. Visible disengagement may merely mean that the individual has changed roles from being an active member to having a supporting role. Again, this role change may be the result of either an individual or a collective shift in priorities and it can be voluntary or forced. As stated in paragraph 1.3, a person's disengaging does not necessarily imply that they have abandoned the organization or feel remorse about their earlier decision to join. What is more important to note, however, is that it is not necessarily permanent.[94]

Psychological disengagement, on the other hand, is more complicated. Similar to the factors pushing and pulling people into paramilitary organizations, the factors pushing and pulling people out are complex and multi-layered. When it comes to disengagement, push factors are social forces that make continued membership of the organization unappealing. Pull factors are those forces that provide the individual with an alternative that is on the whole more attractive than staying in the organization. Prior research suggests that push and pull factors rarely independently lead to disengagement. Thus the components that can be identified need to be juxtaposed with each other.

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Numerous factors influencing disengagement decisions have been identified in previous research.[95] These factors are grouped together in three components and are listed in table 1. All of the factors are of influence on the likelihood that someone will disengage permanently.

Table 1[96]

Normative:	Affective:	Continuance:
Ideology is no longer appealing	Disappointment in movement	Cost of membership
Change in individual's viewpoint	Frustration with group dynamics	Longing for ordinary life
Desired future is not achievable	Disloyalty between members	Negative social sanctions
Rejection of means to achieve goals	Mutual competition, contempt and distrust between members	Competing social relationships
	Failing leadership	

Normative components are those factors that compel individuals to leave because of disillusionment with the success of the organization in sustaining a viable ideological purpose. Continuance components are to do with the need for leaving because of personal reasons, while affective components are to do with the desire to leave the paramilitary organization because of internal matters.[97]

4.1 Normative components

The ideology of the organization provides members with a framework for their beliefs, goals, expectations and actions. This framework can include a set of ideas on how people should view their position in society and can identify a distinct enemy responsible for the grievances of the organization.[98] If the individual's normative framework is no longer based on the organization's ideology, his view on membership of the organization will inevitably change. This may mean that he no longer feels that he ought to stay involved and that alternative goals in life

become more attractive.[99] However, usually people disengage first and change their belief and value systems later.[100]

4.2 Affective components

Affective factors are paramount for explaining a person's loyalty to the organization, even when there is a sense of ideological disillusionment. These factors include the psychological commitment that a person has to the group and his role.[101] Feeling a sense of belonging and of competence in a certain role can be considered to be the strongest precursors for people's affective attachment. Therefore failing intra-group interaction, a lack of organization and a lack of, for example, social elements to membership can cause someone to detach.[102] A reduction of affective commitment can both be the source and the consequence of an individual's finding fault with the organization. In paramilitary organizations each member is typically assigned a status in which being a "prototypical" group member is both necessary for survival and for being considered a worthy member. This tacit requirement influences the members' self-esteem.[103] Examples of factors that cause people to lose their affective commitment are a failing group interaction and failing leadership. Examples of the former are internal power games, disloyalty, and feelings of rejection or uncertainty due to a lack of positive reinforcement of the energy an individual is putting in.[104] These things can lead to people becoming disheartened, paranoid and insecure within the context of the group.[105]

When a member no longer feels secure, he might become fearful of being ostracized. With regards to the effect this has on affective commitment, that person's level of involvement and the strength of his identification with the group determine how strongly he will react. If there is relatively little identification, an individual may disconnect to avert deeper feelings of insecurity and rejection but he may be able to sustain a positive outlook on a non-prototypical

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identity. However, when there is relatively high identification with the group, an individual will most probably develop a negative self-image as he continues to admire prototypical group members. The latter has a significant influence on the likelihood that the person will disengage. Research has suggested that the lower the levels of identification are, the easier this will be.[106] Similarly, when paramilitaries become disillusioned with their leadership they may become prone to disengaging. The most important factors leading to this are psychological abuse and emotional rejection, both of which tend to have a deeper impact than physical abuse. Another way that members can get disillusioned by their leaders is because of a lack of clear focus and direction or their failure to inspire members; this can lead group members to start doubting the group's capabilities. However, the latter can also have the adverse effect of members' looking for a more extreme group.[107]

4.3 Continuance components

Continuance commitment is a member's estimation of the drawbacks of leaving the organization. The factors influencing this decision-making process have to do with the practical consequences that leaving will have on someone's quality of life. In this, the level of investment, the perceived viability of alternatives and the perceived consequences for the person's social identity play an important role.[108] This component does not usually start playing a significant role unless there is outside pressure or stigmatization.[109] The factors described here commonly play a supporting role to normative and affective factors for disengagement.[110] One of the most influential factors in the continuance component is age. Youthful group members are usually largely unaware of the seriousness of being involved in paramilitary activities and of the details of the group ideology or its long-term vision. They are typically preoccupied with getting a piece of the action and are driven by excitement rather than by ideology. These two realities can make

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them less committed as they grow older. Firstly, because they might become disillusioned with the reality of the organization's goals and abilities, and secondly because their hunger for action is bound to dwindle with age. If young members have not shown an early interest in the goals and strategies of the organization, they might cause to disengage when they get older.[111] It is also possible that competing social relationships, such as a wife and children, cause paramilitaries to reconsider their group membership. Life changes like having a family can give members a sense of belonging that reduces the necessity for the security coming of the paramilitary group.[112] The latter is especially the case if the member experiences social isolation because of group his membership. A person's individual self-understanding can be ignored in the context of the paramilitary organization but also in social interaction with 'ordinary' people. This may produce feelings of disappointment and stigmatization, especially if the individual considers his paramilitary identity to be irrelevant in those social situations. This can lead to a heightened dependence on the organization but it can also cause individuals to reevaluate their membership.[113]

Because being in a paramilitary organization costs its members a significant amount of personal and emotional investment, deciding to leave the group can be perceived as a personal failure.[114] Group commitment is enforced by ensuring that members have to make significant sacrifices and socio-psychological investments. Moreover, paramilitaries are constantly presented with the benefits of reinforcing this commitment by increasing involvement. These mechanisms serve to further radicalize members and increase members' dependence on the organization. Additionally, spending time in the organization has taken time off of members' acquiring the necessary skills to survive in the outside world which may make it difficult for them to see the viability of life outside the paramilitary organization. The prospect of marginalization in combination with fear of reprisals and the loss of reputation and the

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organization's protection, may prove to be significant barriers in paramilitary's decision to disengage. Besides this it can also lead to an identity crisis and a loss of one's place in the world.[115]

CHAPTER 5 - METHODOLOGY

As explained, leading authors in the field agree that there is insufficient evidence to draw too big conclusions on radicalization based on a complex multilayered analysis of different frameworks.[116] Moreover, the research community has mainly focused on factors that lead to radicalization and becoming actively involved in politically motivated violence as a result of which empirical research on deradicalization and disengagement is scarce.[117] With this in mind, this thesis aims to test the framework of the factors that came to the fore most poignantly in previous research, against data collected from six interviews with formerly imprisoned ex-members of Northern Irish Republican paramilitary organizations. Seeing as though the Troubles are effectively over, all of the factors that have been identified before can be tested against the data provided by the interviewees: they have gone through the process or joining, staying, being imprisoned and leaving. A multilayered analysis of the different frameworks and factors that influenced the interviewees throughout their life will be made. The main research question of this thesis is: Why are people members of paramilitary organizations?

The method used is qualitative; it is a case study of Northern Irish paramilitaries. The theoretical framework will be tested against the specifics of this single case.[118] The latter makes its relevance largely instrumental, the main goal is to apply the conceptual framework outlined in Chapter 2 to better understand the significance of this framework and the main factors it identifies.[119]

Methodological literature makes a distinction between life history interviews covering an individual's whole life and oral history studies that concentrate on specific events or periods.[120] The approach used here had both of these goals in mind. In part, it is life history because the interviewees were asked to give an account of parts of their entire life, from childhood to present,

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and were asked how certain historical moments came to influence their lives. Also, by the above definition, it is oral history because the interviews are focused on a specific aspect of the interviewees' life: their special role in the Troubles, what they remember about specific events, times, places and issues.[121] Life history interviews usually go on for very long time, sometimes including several sessions on different days, which was not possible given the scope of the research.[122] Also, since the purpose of this research is instrumental, not all aspects of their lives were touched on.

Since the approaches to life history analysis vary - some authors define it in broader terms; as a narrative about a specific significant aspect of a person's life[123] - the life history approach fits more closely the scope and purpose of this research.

In the description of the life histories (Appendix 2), descriptions of the data have been mixed with the first-person narrative.[124]

In order to get relevant data for this research I contacted my uncle who is a journalist in Derry. For security reasons, we agreed to discuss the details of the sample of interviewees when I arrived in Derry. Upon my arrival on the 14th of April, I explained my topic and we went through a list of people that he has access to. In order to get as representative a sample as possible, I asked him to contact people in different age groups and with different levels of prior involvement in paramilitary organizations as well as different, expected, levels of deradicalization and disengagement. Seeing as though my uncle has reported on the Troubles for decades he had quite some insight into who fits these criteria. An important limiting factor in my selection of interviewees is that none of the disengaged paramilitaries that had not been convicted of membership of a paramilitary organization wanted to talk to me. This is because recently, the transcripts of interviews with former high-ranking IRA members were made public after a court order on the Crown Prosecutor's request.[125] Based on these transcripts various

former paramilitaries are being investigated. Therefore I only managed to interview former prisoners who did not face such a risk. In the course of my research it became clear that my access to interviewees very much depended on my uncle's network. I tried, through other channels, to talk to disengaged Loyalists but I have, to date, not heard back from my contacts.

I based my topic guide on the conclusions of previous research on factors leading to radicalization, engagement, deradicalization and disengagement. I used the topic guide (Appendix 1) mostly for my own reference. The interviews were semi-structured and my questions were loosely based on the questions in the topic guide. The concepts I researched were refined as the research progressed.

I asked all the interviewees where they would prefer to be interviewed. The first interview took place on the 23rd of April at an NGO in Derry. Interview two was on the 24th of April in a coffee bar in Derry, and interview three in a community centre, Derry. Interview number four took place on the 30th of April in a library in Derry, and interview number five on the 1st of May at a hotel in Strabane. Lastly, interview six took place over the phone on the 25th of May. The interviews took between 53 and 136 minutes. The interviewees, except Shane, were guaranteed anonymity, for that reason I have given them fake names.

I recorded five of the interviews and fully transcribed them myself. Some of the interviewees, Conan and Terry, agreed to talk to me after they had been sent the list of questions. Conan preferred not to be recorded so I took notes while we talked. Terry initially also did not want to be recorded but after about half an hour he told me that it was alright, but that he may ask me to switch off the recorder every once in a while. The latter turned out to be unnecessary.

In order to operationalize the theoretical framework, I categorized the data into four analytical categories: 'Triggering Events', 'Social Status', 'Group Identification' and 'Prison'. I divided both 'Triggering Events' and 'Social Status' into 'before' and 'during' group

membership sections. The Group Identification category was divided into 'organization', 'prison experience' and 'leadership.' Lastly, 'Prison' was divided into 'organizational context', 'personal factors', 'political/social context' and 'solitary confinement.'

One of the limitations of this study is that it is difficult to get a comprehensive overview of someone's life history in a one or two hour interview. In order to try and minimize the effects of this limitation I have focused the questions on radical turning points in the interviewees' lives. Another limitation is the fact that I asked the interviewees to go back in time, this inevitably means that there can be memory lapses or mistakes. Also, the fact that I could not sample interviewees randomly from a group of disengaged former paramilitaries may mean that there is a bias in the sample: the fact that I got in touch with the interviewees through a journalist may mean that I have talked to people who are relatively open to the press and who have a very clear idea of the picture they want to paint of themselves and their (ex)organizations.

The relevance of this study, despite the fact that it is a small sample, is that it tests the conceptual framework in which to place the factors previously identified as being important in explaining people's entry and exit decisions. Life history analysis of radicalization and deradicalization is relatively new. The smallness of the sample does mean that the results are not externally generalizable, but the results can provide a starting point for further research using this methodology.

CHAPTER 6 – ANALYSIS OF THE LIFE HISTORIES

The analysis in this chapter will follow the logic of the framework that was outlined in Chapter 2. Thus, 'setting events', 'personal factors' and the 'political/social/organizational' context at various stages in the life histories of each of the interviewees will be examined. Setting events are the most separate from this framework in that they are important to note but too general to have any independent explanatory value. They will be examined separately in paragraph 6.1 after which the factors leading to radicalization and/or engagement will be examined in paragraph 6.2. The factors of influence on the interviewees' action pathways to deradicalization and/or disengagement will be outlined in paragraph 6.3. An overview of the most important details of the life histories of each interviewee is given in Table 2 (Appendix 4) and a summary of the life histories per interviewee is given in Appendix 2.

6.1 Setting events

The age range of the interviewees is from sixty to forty one. Those that were born before the Troubles were respectively seventeen, fourteen, thirteen, ten and six in 1969. Patrick is the oldest and Conan the youngest, he was born just before Bloody Sunday. Patrick and Conan grew up in Creggan. Niall grew up in a similar neighbourhood, bordering both Creggan and the Bogside, and Shane, Terry and Aidan come from different areas. Terry grew up in Strabane and Aidan and Shane are from more affluent parts of Derry. The latter is reflected in the fact that Aidan's father was a doctor and Shane's father a teacher, whereas all of the other interviewees' parents did manual labour.

Patrick did well in school, despite the fact that his teachers thought that he was not reaching his full potential he left with a scholarship to go to college. Terry also recalls having done well in school, Niall left without a diploma.

Except for Terry and Conan all of them were raised as Catholics, Terry and Conan were Catholics 'in name only' and Shane's family was very religious – he went to mass multiple times a week. Aidan, Terry and Niall come from 'political' families and their parents were involved in the civil rights movement. Terry recalls that his father was a central figure in the movement in Strabane and that there were always people in the house; a lot of meetings would have been held in their living room. Aidan's father set up a doctor's post in the Bogside during the Battle of the Bogside. Aidan, Niall and Conan participated in marches and demonstrations when they were children. Shane also participated in marches and riots but was already a member of the OIRA by this time. Patrick was seventeen by the time the marches started and he participated in them, this soon culminated in his participating in riots. Terry also participated in riots for a while but recalls that this did not last for very long as he signed up. Conan also comes from a Republican family but a year after he was born the civil rights movement held their last march. He did participate in demonstrations and riots, but these would have been more ad hoc and their purpose more focused on one issue – such as prison conditions. Conan is also different in the sense that he remembers going to visit people in prison at the end of the 1970s, early 1980s – which would have been around the time of the Blanket Protest – and because he recalls going to a lot of funerals.

Patrick had befriended Protestant students in college, which was where he had intensive contact with Protestants for the first time in his life. He liked some of them and had Protestant friends. Shane is the only interviewee that grew up in a mixed Catholic/Protestant street; he had regular personal contact with Protestants before joining the IRA. Aidan came from a relatively rich part of town and remembers that his views on the civil rights situation of Catholics and the

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IRA were not shared by his class mates. Terry on the other had socialized with children that were of the same persuasion as him. They rioted together and joined the IRA together.

6.2 Radicalization and engagement

6.2.1 Radicalization

All of the interviewees had some sort of involvement in acting against the British before joining the IRA. If they were not taken to the marches by their (grand)parents, they participated in riots. Shane lived around an army checkpoint and had been aware of the fact that people's houses were being raided in the Bogside and Creggan. He was stopped by the army one night and beaten up for no reason. After having written a letter to the local newspaper complaining about this – in which he had included his full name and address - he was regularly harassed by the army. Three of the interviewees were present on Bloody Sunday, one rioted during the Battle of the Bogside. That is not to say that they all had a good understanding of what was going on. Patrick, who rioted during the Battle of the Bogside, had only become aware of what the civil rights movement was advocating shortly before he participated in it. His interest in civil rights was very low until he realized that the rampant discrimination of Catholics was the reason for his having spent ten years of his life in an orphanage. After the death of his father, his mother had been unable to get a house because she was a Catholic. This meant that he did not meet his sister until he was ten or eleven, and he was sexually abused in the orphanage. Patrick had not given any thought to the reunification of Ireland before Bloody Sunday. It was not until it was clear that the IRA could not protect the community, which had been his goal until then, that he felt that the unification of Ireland should be an important objective. For Aidan the politics were simple, the objective was to get the British out of Ireland. Shane also had the objective of protecting the community, they were afraid that Catholic areas would otherwise be overrun by the Army of

Loyalists. He never wanted it to be a clash between Catholics and Protestants and recalls that he was not aware of the fact that the PIRA was running an offensive campaign until later in his life. Because the PIRA was running a very strong propaganda campaign, Bloody Sunday had been a "giftbox" for them. Terry became interested in socialism and the politics of it after he had joined the PIRA. Niall was first educated on the ideology of the organization by the PIRA after he had signed up and says that he was not politicized until he had gone to prison. Conan started reading about Irish history and Irish heroes while he was in secondary school, this coincided with his joining the youth wing of Sinn Fein. In his view the IRA was fighting against an occupying force.

Except for Patrick and Shane, who did not explicitly describe their families as such, all of the interviewees' grew up in Republican families and were exposed to violent conflict between the (P)IRA and the British during their youth. Three of them had their houses raided on a regular basis and two of them report having been harassed regularly. Shane was harassed but his house was never raided nor was there a lot of violence on the streets while he was growing up.

Since these personal factors were of influence on their lives so early in the action pathway to radicalization, and because they were so young when they took place, the conceptual framework suggests that they were of great significance. The latter especially applies to the two most directly victimized by the British presence in Derry. Patrick could directly relate the experience of having been given a number and having been sexually abused in the orphanage to the fact that his mother was unable to get a house after his father died. Niall's father was shot dead on Bloody Sunday, an event he still does not want to talk about if he can avoid it, and shortly after that the Widgery report[126] exonerated the perpetrators. Niall says about this that effectively the choice was made for him, from when he was ten years old onwards he wanted to do something about British presence in the North.

Four of the interviewees were mainly exposed to other Catholics in their youth. Shane had had the most contact with Protestants in his life and Patrick had some contact with Protestants just before he joined the IRA. They explicitly state that their initial motivation was to protect the working class community, for Patrick this was both Catholics and Protestants, Shane did not perceive the Protestant community as being in need of protection. They were all extremely young when they joined and had thus not yet set up a life outside of secondary school.

The social/political context of the time was one in which there were regular marches in which whole neighbourhoods participated. From the above one cannot, however, derive that the interviewees had a significant amount of exposure to the ideas that the IRA advocated. Four of them, Aidan, Terry, Niall, and Conan, did grow up in a violent environment in which the British State was being fought by the IRA. In this, they were personally harassed on the streets by the British Army which was the same force that raided their houses. Early life experiences like this, combined with all Catholic neighbourhoods, made it easy for them to create an in-group and an out-group and to see the boundaries between them and the 'other' as sharply drawn. It was the Catholic population (in-group) versus the state (all of the state representatives: out-group) in Derry and Strabane.

Three of the interviewees mention how the IRA was perceived when they were young. Shane recalls an explosion of Irish nationalism in 1966 when the 50th anniversary of the Easter Rising[127] was celebrated. He had an uncle that had fought in the Irish was of Independence and was heavily influenced by the stories he read. His father was a pacifist and Shane decided at a very early age that he wanted to be like his uncle. Niall's family was vehemently on the side of the IRA and Conan thought of them as heroes because of the books he read and because his family took him to visit IRA prisoners in jail as a young boy.

All the interviewees, except Conan, mention events that can be deemed triggering events. Patrick was participating in the riots that culminated in the Battle of the Bogside and says that the slogans of the IRA started sounding good to him because of it. Shane had joined the OIRA when he was fifteen. He recalls that this organization was not very serious and that their amateurism led him and his best friend to join the Provos once they heard about them. Within a year, two of his friends were shot dead and he remained dormant for a while after that. It was not until after Operation Motorman[128], more than a year later, that he definitively decided to rejoin the organization. He was sitting in class, listening to a machine gun battle and decided that he could not let his friends risk their lives while he was reading books. Aidan says that a combination of things led him to join the IRA, he does not mention a specific triggering event but he was marching on the first day of the Battle of the Bogside and on Bloody Sunday. Terry unequivocally says that he joined the IRA after Bloody Sunday; that was when he swapped stones and rocks for guns and bombs. For Niall, the decision "had been made for him" when his father was shot dead on Bloody Sunday.

The image of the IRA before the interviewees joined played a significant role in some of their lives. The only one for whom one specific role model was very important is Shane. His uncle's fighting in the War of Independence, juxtaposed to his father's lack of firsthand experience with the struggle, combined with his having read books in which the glory of the Irish war of Independence was reified, had an important impact on him. Terry mentions James Connolly[129] as a factor of influence but he started reading about him after he had joined the IRA. Conan mentions that he became interested in Irish history and politics when he was in secondary school, he exclusively read books about that and mentions the story of Bobby Sands as having had a big impact on him.

The above is the background against which the interviewees, except Conan, joined the IRA. When looking at table 2, the factors that are most salient among the interviewees are the fact that they come from a Republican family and that they were personally exposed to violence at the hands of the state in their youth. Except for Shane, all of them participated in demonstrations and/or riots before they joined the IRA and all of them grew up without having had much contact with Protestants. The context that they found themselves in was rife with opportunities for them to express their unhappiness about the oppression they experienced from the British. This framework would suggest that the most important factors in the pathway towards radicalization are that there is a high level of exposure to violence at the hands of the 'other' during youth, that the family and community framework endorse action against this other' and that the individual gets the opportunity to participate in this action. On the list of predisposing factors, paragraph 3.2.3, four out the seven are partially related to age. Thus, it seems that out of the predisposing factors mentioned in paragraph 3.2.3 all of them are applicable to the interviewees except the individual's level of prior knowledge and interest in the conflict.

All the interviewees all joined the IRA at a young age. In the above analysis Conan is no exception to the conclusion that a high amount of violence during youth and the opportunity to do something with the personal significance of that, predisposes people to radicalization. Conan admits to having the political opinions that classify him as an extremist[130] but says that he never joined a paramilitary organization. He is also the only interviewee whose house still gets raided and who reports that he gets abused by the police regularly. Because he denies ever having been involved in paramilitary activity he will be left out in the analysis on the influence of the organizational context, group identification and the experience of prison on (continued)

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engagement and involvement. Therefore the effect of imprisonment on Conan's pathway of radicalization will be discussed here.

Conan was arrested a number of times, he has been slapped around during interrogations and while he was imprisoned there was a policy of forced integration between Loyalists and Republicans. That was a very scary experience for him. The last time he was arrested, he was beaten up but he got charged with assaulting the policemen. He recalls how he had broken bones after this experience while there was 'not a mark' on the policemen. He has also been kept in a prison in which the conditions contravene basic human rights and the last time he was inside he participated in a dirty protest. The facts that he was, for example, subjected to forced integration, and how scary he thought this experience was, make it possible that he suffers from emotional flatness and anxiety. This can have lead to a loss of self-control and self-destructive tendencies although he did have a support network outside of the prison. All in all it is not possible to draw too big inferences about the influence of his prison experience on the level of his radicalization. Still, Conan's rhetoric's about 'the occupying force' and the injustices that the British have committed suggest that, at the very least, prison had not made him less radical.

6.2.2 Engagement

The IRA was renowned for having very young members and the data supports that those who joined, joined at a very young age. Age as the basis for a sense of invincibility is mentioned in the theoretical framework and all the interviewees mention being driven by a sense of excitement. The fact that all those that became active, mention the 'excitement' of it underscores that the folly of youth might be a significant predisposing factor for both radicalization and engagement.

Aidan and Patrick briefly touch upon the social status linked to being a paramilitary. Patrick remembers having been a bit of a cult figure because of it and Aidan would be approached to help with social problems. Niall recalls that the fact that he is a prominent Republican sometimes made it difficult for people to see him as the family member of a Bloody Sunday victim during his campaign to reopen the Bloody Sunday inquiry – the significance of this will be mentioned more in-depth in paragraph 6.3. It is unclear, however, whether he achieved the status of being 'prominent' through being in the PIRA. Other than that, status did not come up in the interviews – possibly partially because the interviewees did not tell anyone that they had joined. It also did not come up in a negative sense. As can be seen in table 2, all of the interviewees received support from the community during their membership – even though they received no support from the church – but most families were not aware of their membership until they got arrested. Shane's parents did find out earlier and tried very hard to convince him to leave the organization. However, when that failed and he was apprehended, his mother supported him while he was in prison. Aidan and Niall mention a sense of exclusivity about PIRA membership, their joining the organization was not just dependent on them but also on whether or not the PIRA would have them. This did not apply to Patrick, Shane and Terry because they joined when the IRA was still growing. The fact that it was difficult to join for Aidan and Niall could have had an impact on their self-image because being accepted meant getting a vote of confidence.

The interviewees that describe the initial phase of their membership all mention a degree of training. Niall's training was the most elaborate, took the longest, and included training on the history and politics of the PIRA. After training he was kept under the wing of a more senior member to learn the ropes. Terry too mentions significant amounts of training and being kept under the wing of more senior members. This gives off the impression of the PIRA as being

highly organized which has proven to be a factor leading to prolonged engagement. The fact that they were all trained and educated on the goals of the organization, even though Shane now states that they were not telling the truth about it, suggests that the organizational framework had an impact on the interviewees' behaviour and thought patterns.

Four of the interviewees mention that they sometimes felt that some of their peers were not competent. Both Shane and Niall felt that this could endanger them which led Shane to try and execute his operations alone. Both Aidan and Niall would report suspected incompetence and, the longer they had been active, the more they were trusted and listened to. Thus they gained respect in their time in the IRA and, as it seems, the organization had a functional purging system in place. When Shane decided to report back after the summer of 1972 the IRA was almost non-existent in Derry. He requested to go back full time, got permission and successfully set up operations and convinced people to volunteer. Within a year, the PIRA in Derry was very strong again. He almost single-handedly accomplished this at the age of seventeen and was asked to do an important operation in London, the letter bombing campaign, as a result. His letter bombing campaign in London made him the most wanted man in the United Kingdom and became world news. The fact that he was part of the leadership of a large organization at such a young age and that they were successfully carrying out numerous operations that made the PIRA look strong must have had a positive impact on his self-image.

Those that were imprisoned before the 1976 Blanket Protests, mention a high level of organization on the part of the IRA/INLA. There was discipline, education and a lot of camaraderie and they all recall how strong the ties with their fellow inmates were. Especially Terry mentions on numerous occasions how excited he was to meet people from other towns and cities. Niall, who was imprisoned after the 1981 Hunger Strikes also mentions a high level of organization of the PIRA in prison, he felt safe in Long Kesh because he was part of a structure.

They were, for example, able to negotiate certain privileges and by the time he left in 1985 they had almost achieved political status again. This indicates that there was relatively little loss of a framework to make individual choices and have individual control and that there was a high degree of protection from the group. Seeing as though Niall and Patrick are the only ones that were only imprisoned in times of relative freedom, the latter conclusion only applies to them without reservations. For both Terry and Aidan the period between 1976 and 1981 will have impinged on their agency significantly. However, due to the fact that they were both imprisoned for a long time after the end of the Hunger Strikes their agency was slowly given back to them. From the interviews there is nothing that indicates that they have lost the ability to make independent choices and Aidan shows no signs at all of being self-destructive. Terry, having been in solitary confinement for significant amounts of time, shows more signs of being emotionally detached. He speaks about very violent events in a non-remorseful way and alludes to his own role in assassination schemes and bombings with a sense of pride.

With regards to the circumstances in prison, the experiences of the interviewees vary widely. Patrick is the only interviewee that says that he was not impressed with the condition of being imprisoned. He was inside for seven months which is comparatively little time. Aidan on the other hand was severely maltreated during interrogation, convicted to life in prison for a crime he did not commit and spent five years on the Blanket. While he was on the Blanket he was seriously beaten and abused on a daily basis. The circumstances were excruciating. He says he adopted a 'live for today' mentality, and recalls that everybody tried to keep each other's spirit up by telling stories, jokes and teaching/learning Irish. He actively participated in this and says that he felt a lot of camaraderie. Terry was also in Long Kesh during the Blanket Protests. He had a similar experience to Aidan. Terry, however, was a bit more antagonistic than Aidan. After having been beaten so badly that he was in hospital for a week, he decided that he was

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never going to let them beat him up again. He kept his promise, got into a big fight and ended up in solitary confinement because of it. Terry also participated in the Hunger Strike, he was on for fifty days.

Niall recalls that the prison system was quite draconian when he was inside. It was difficult for him to adjust but now he says the he would not have wanted to miss it. He recalls that there was a lot of boredom, but he learned Irish and got his high school certificate in English. He had to fight for education and remembers that slowly but surely political status was more or less reintroduced. The latter leads him to say that it was quite a happy time sometimes, he was surrounded with like-minded people of the same age, felt like he was part of a structure and it was therefore impossible for the prison system to isolate anybody.

Upon leaving prison, Niall still felt vengeful and he reported straight back. Aidan also reported straight back after the first time he got out, when he was nineteen, as the experience had made him even more determined. Terry says his life went in one direction after he had escaped and Patrick also went 'straight back in.' For both Aidan and Terry their reaction to being released was different after they got out again in the nineties. Both wanted to take time to acclimatize. After having been released Aidan had not decided whether or not he would rejoin and Terry expected to. Terry's rejoining the INLA was sped up by the fact that his friend got assassinated. He says that with that, the choice was made for him. Thus, prison did not lead Terry to rejoin and it also did not deter Aidan enough that he did not consider the possibility of rejoining. Shane had decided to leave the PIRA shortly after he was arrested and prison played no role in this decision.

Shane was imprisoned in London and had a very different prison experience from the other interviewees. After he had been apprehended he first spent some months on remand in Belfast. Here he heard from PIRA men from Belfast that the local Brigade carried out sectarian

murders. Because he felt that killing civilians went against everything the PIRA stood for, he wrote a letter to the local leader inquiring after this. As a result he was ostracized and became isolated in the prison. Soon after he was moved to London where he was sentenced to thirty consecutive life sentences and kept in solitary confinement for the first fourteen months because he was protesting against the fact that he was not given political status. Shane refused to wear the prison outfit, before the Blanket Protest in Long Kesh began, and was naked while he was in solitary confinement. A negative experience he had with the PIRA leadership in Dublin – this will be dealt with more in-depth later - and the fact that he had found out about the sectarian murders made him detach from the PIRA. He did not recognize the court that tried him but took the opportunity to apologize to his victims. Because of this he was rejected by most of the Irish prisoners after he was moved out of solitary confinement. Thus, he did not have a support network like the interviewees that were in Long Kesh. The only people that did agree to talk to him were those that needed his help with getting in touch with politicians, journalists and members of the clergy to try and attract attention to the fact that they had been convicted of crimes that they did not commit. Shane helped the Guildford four and the Birmingham six [131] get the attention that eventually led to their release. He remembers that the situation in the prison was always tense but that there were some incredibly fair people there, including some of the wardens. Therefore his time in prison in England was not particularly violent. In his prison career Shane spent a total of four and half years in solitary confinement, he started protesting to be brought back to Northern Ireland after about eight years in prison. He describes this time as one in which he took the opportunity to reflect on his life, practice yoga, read the Bible and other books and, during the second stretch, conduct his letter writing campaign about the prison conditions in peace. Shane recalls that he did feel angry, frustrated and depressed on many occasions but he mainly recalls his prison time as one in which he had the time to become

himself. At some point he even 'tuned in' to London life, albeit through the prison. After he came out of solitary confinement the first time, he did not become violent and he did not change his mind about leaving the PIRA. After the second time he was brought back to Long Kesh in Northern Ireland where he refused to go to the wings controlled by the PIRA. He was placed in the criminal/sex offender wing where he set a precedent for others who were sick of being controlled by the Republican or Loyalists organizations, to join him. This wing became the first mixed wing in Long Kesh and it even led to the opening of a mixed prison. He recalls that there was a lot of sectarian hostility in Long Kesh but that the former Republicans and Loyalists stuck together to try and divert this. Shane therewith experienced a level of group protection towards the end of his time in prison. All in all it appears as though Shane's time in solitary confinement prepared him for handling the repercussions of his decisions by himself, his conviction of the fact that he was right made that he never doubted them and that he did not want or expect to be part of a protective PIRA structure after he went back to a 'normal' wing. He did manage to set up a support network amongst those that needed him for their letter writing campaign and those that grew out of their paramilitary membership when they were in prison.

The organization was less helpful to most interviewees once they were in prison. Only Terry recalls that they would support the families of prisoners and help organize transport for them to come visit the prisoners. On the other hand, Terry is also the only one who was most disappointed in his organization. The INLA did not help them deal with vengeful prison wardens after they had helped nine prisoners escape. Aidan is the only one who mentions having gotten support after he got out of prison. This may be insignificant as he is the only interviewee that disengaged after he was released.

Now that the organizational framework that the interviewees were part of has been examined it is important to look at the psychology of group identification. As described in

paragraph 3.3, individual's willingness to sacrifice themselves for a political cause depends on group identification. Research suggests that the easiest way for individuals to start identifying with a group is in face-to-face interaction.

Before applying this theory to the interviewees it is important to denominate what 'groups' we are talking about. There can be considered to have been a social movement amongst Derry Catholics at the end of the 1960s. They were externally identified as such and discriminated based on this categorization. Because of this, Catholics and Protestants lived largely segregated lives. This means that the most of the interviewees, as explained in 6.1, did not have any interaction with non-Catholics. The latter inherently means that their face-to-face time was predominantly with other Catholics and, after they were targeted by the British, with others who had been targeted. Seeing as though three out of the five interviewees that joined the PIRA had parents in the civil rights movement and seeing as though they all either marched or rioted in support of this movement, the interviewees were part of a group in Brubakerian (paragraph 3.3.1) terms before they became a member of the PIRA. After they joined, their face-to-face time would have alternated between PIRA members and Catholic/Republican non-members. In any case they would have had little interaction with non-Catholic members outside of fighting them.

The interviewees were all heavily influenced by the injustice that was done to the Catholic community and themselves as part of that community. Only Shane and Aidan were not part of the lower class Catholic community that was being targeted by British legislation but their being Catholic meant that they participated in the uprising against discrimination which led to their being victimized personally. In this, the legacy of his uncle and the excitement of joining a powerful paramilitary organization played a big role in Shane's decision to join. The former implies that he was trying to achieve a higher social status by becoming involved, the latter that

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he tired to enforce a sense of agency after he had been victimized. For the other three the only way for them to achieve social change for themselves was through collective action.

The interviewees' actions signify a strong identification with the paramilitary group, which led to an expansion of the scope of things that influenced them – i.e. a shift from purely personal factors to factors influencing the group. As explained in 3.3, the stronger the identification, the less likely it is that an individual will put personal deprivation above collective deprivation. A good example of this is Shane's rejoining the PIRA after a period of being dormant because he could not stay on the sidelines while the people he had been involved in the PIRA with one year earlier were "risking their lives" in a battle that could decide "the future of the entire country." Patrick, Shane, Niall and Terry all mention joining the IRA/PIRA with a group of friends to which Patrick adds that his friends had a significant impact on his decisions: they joined the PIRA therefore he joined the PIRA.

Group identification can become stronger the more involved someone is. None of the interviewees have gone into the details of what they did for the cause but it seems that for one of the two that stayed active the longest, Niall, the psychology of commitment played a role in explaining his continued membership. He is the only one that recalls having had doubts about certain actions but executing his task anyway. Terry, the other interviewee that stayed active for a long time, still speaks of the actions of the INLA with great pride and enthusiasm. He is still involved with the organization and it is possible that this mechanism also applies to him but, based on the data, there is insufficient evidence to justify drawing any conclusions on. This mechanism did not apply to Shane. After his letter bombing campaign in London he was asked to go back to carry out 'no warning' bombings and refused. This went against his principles and, despite the fact that his life was being threatened, he told the leadership in Dublin that he would not do it.

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For as far as the interviewees joined the IRA because of a perceived impossibility of social mobility, the strong group identification with Derry Catholics explains why they became active. The strength of their identification could explain why they did not stop at marching but took the inter-group conflict to a higher level once they were old enough to join the group that was trying to force social change. This especially applies to Patrick and Shane who felt that their community might be overrun by the Army or Loyalists if the PIRA did not take up arms.

Two of the interviewees were on the Blanket, the Blanketmen can also be considered to have been a group who tried to collectively force social change in the prison. Seeing as though Aidan left the IRA after his prison experience and Terry rejoined the organization, no strong conclusions can be drawn from the effect of this on their involvement.

In the action pathway to engagement, age again comes up as a significant factor. All interviewees mention feeling a level of excitement and desire for action and a sense of invincibility when they joined, they also admit that this was probably mostly down to their youth and the fact that they had little realization of what they were getting themselves involved in. The latter suggests that the predisposing factor that was not found in the previous paragraph could actually have played an inhibiting role in their decision to engage.

6.2.3 Summary of the findings on engagement

The social status that came with being a paramilitary is mentioned by some of the interviewees, mostly in the general context of receiving support from the community. The data suggests that this social/political factor plays an supporting role in creating the further involvement of engaged paramilitaries, especially if the community organized campaigns on prisoners' behalf. For those that had to go through a vetting process before they could join, a sense of exclusivity seems to have fueled continued commitment, one of them stayed active for six years after having been

released from prison and the other did not actively decide to leave the PIRA for any other reason than to see what normality is like – this applies to Aidan and will be further explained in 6.3. Two of the interviewees were coached in the beginning of their involvement and they stayed active the longest, outside of prison, suggesting that this part of the organizational context plays a significant role.

Outside organizational support for prisoners is not a significant factor in prolonged engagement. The only one who reports a negative experience in this sense stayed active the longest. Those that were in prison when there was relative freedom speak fondly about some of the memories of being inside. They all experienced high levels of solidarity and training and met people from outside of their own network, thus expanding the scope of this network. The two interviewees that were not in prison between 1976 and 1981 went straight back to the PIRA after they were released saying that their experience had made them more determined. Those that were in prison in Northern Ireland for longer, suffering through the excruciating experience of the Blanket Protest, also recall some relatively happy times in prison during the Protest due to a heightened sense of camaraderie. Because they were both in prison for a long time after that, and because political status was slowly but surely reinstated during that time, this experience does not seem to have had a lasting effect on them. However, one of them spent considerable time in solitary confinement and seems to suffer from emotional detachment to a degree that the other interviewees do not. He is the only one that speaks about his actions without any sense of remorse. Prison conditions in general seem to play an important role in prolonged engagement. For one of the interviewees, who spent most of his time in prison in London, the fact that he met fair people that were part of the institutional structure that he used to fight, seems to have helped him in his process of detachment from the PIRA. He too spent considerable time in solitary confinement but this does not seem to have made him emotionally flat, detached or anxious in

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any way. This suggests that solitary confinement in combination with a very stressful prison experience outside of solitary, Terry suffered through both, leads to prolonged engagement and more emotional detachment.

Outside of the organizational framework and prison experience, face-to-face interaction with the in-group and little to no interaction with the out-group plays a significant role in prolonged engagement. Both Shane and Patrick had positive experiences with Protestants and they disengaged the soonest.

When becoming involved, personal relations play an in important role in the decision to join and once involved, solidarity with other members of the paramilitary group and a shared motivation to work towards the common purpose, become important factors in prolonged engagement. The latter also plays a role in the covering up of wrongdoings because the ideology of the organization is deemed more important. The psychology of commitment can be a significant factor in this but not all of the interviewees spoke about the details of their engagement. This makes it impossible to infer anything about the self-fueling cycle of action and further action. Four of the interviewees did mention, in broader terms, that the ideology of the organization helped them cover up individual wrongdoings under the banner of the perpetrators' having previously shown high levels of commitment and motivation.

Not all the interviewees were part of the directly discriminated part of the population but those that were not, felt a great sense of solidarity with the working class Catholics and were personally victimized because of it. The latter fueled their decision to engage. The former stayed in the background as a motivation for collective action.

6.3 Deradicalization and disengagement

Out of the six interviewees, four can be considered to have disengaged and one, Conan, was never active. With regards to Conan there is nothing to suggest that he has deradicalized. He iterates how being involved in politics means that you do not have a personal life and how the authorities try to make your life miserable. Conan does not believe that he will see a united Ireland in his lifetime because other Nationalist politicians have given away too much in the Agreement, which he considers to be undemocratic. However, he feels that it is simply an issue of right and wrong and stays involved because generations before him have done so.

Out of the other five Terry is the closest to having merely physically disengaged whilst the other four have psychologically disengaged. Terry realized that the armed struggle was detrimental to achieving the main objective because it was dividing society almost twenty years ago. He took part in the negotiations for the peace process on behalf of the INLA and agreed to it because he wanted to get their political prisoners released. Seeing as though he alludes to the fact that that only meant that the INLA stopped claiming certain actions, his reasons for negotiating the disarmament of the INLA seem largely strategic. The latter also applies to his decision not to go back to the INLA immediately after prison. The first time he was released, in 1983, he did go back immediately and was caught within the year. He ascribes that to the fact that he had not taken the time to register the changes in the conflict. He emphasizes that all of the structures of the INLA are still in place and alludes to the fact that they might still have weapons. He also mentions that he would get re-involved if the circumstances warranting it would arise. Terry disengaged from the PIRA in 1975 because he did not believe in their decision to go on ceasefire. This decision to disengage led him to join a more violent organization. Seeing as though he had the most extreme combination of traumatic experiences in prison, it is possible that his mere physical disengagement is the result of emotional flatness and or self-destructive

behaviour. The latter is countered by the fact that he has managed to get European Union funding and assured himself employment through that funding for the last fifteen years. Terry got married after he was released in 1993 but he also rejoined the INLA in 1995, thus it seems like his getting married has not had an influence on his engagement.

Patrick, Shane, Aidan and Niall have all psychologically disengaged. Patrick first had doubts about his membership because he saw the amount of civilians that were getting killed. For a while he tried to justify the killings under the banner of the ideology, but after he had been ill for a year he could not but be shocked to have attended two funerals in the course of two weeks after his return. He took a step back to think about what his goals had been and where the city of Derry was now and realized that the situation was worse than it had been when he joined the PIRA. Thus, Patrick's individual viewpoint was no longer based on the organization's ideology and his view on membership changed dramatically. In this, it is important to note that Patrick was not very radicalized when he joined the PIRA. His personal purpose was, and always stayed primarily, to better the situation of his community. Thus, despite enormous personal costs he left the PIRA. His normative change of heart was strong enough for him to accept the personal costs that would come with his decision. He got married shortly after his decision to quit but he was quite sure during the interview that he had not met his wife properly before he left the PIRA and that the two events were not related. Patrick does not give much thought to the question of a united Ireland and fully supports the Good Friday Agreement. He is involved in community building and outreach between Catholics and Protestants and can be considered both disengaged and deradicalized.

Shane first left the PIRA after two of his friends had been shot dead, however, solidarity with his friends lead him to become reinvolved. After a few years he had an important disagreement with central command over the way the PIRA used force and shortly after that he

found out that the Derry Brigade had been kept out of the loop on the strategies that were being used in Belfast. The latter happened after he had participated in the brokering of a ceasefire, having felt that the conflict had gone on for too long. Thus Shane disengaged for normative reasons and affective reasons. He mentions a sense of relief after having been arrested because it took him out of the game but does not relate this directly to his leaving the PIRA. Shane apologized to his victims while he was on trial, talked to representatives of British institutions while he was in prison and set up a mixed wing in prison after he had been sent back to Northern Ireland. After he got out of prison he was fearful of retaliations but decided to go ahead with public appearances with former Loyalists anyway. Shane went to university after he was released, has several degrees and currently works in a homeless shelter. He considers every day to be about redemption and is both deradicalized and disengaged.

For Aidan the decision was less thought through. Aidan says that he never really made the decision to leave the PIRA, he just decided not to rejoin immediately after he got out. He mentions the continuance component of age, stating that he was too old to go back. But it is also likely that the personal cost of membership would be too high. Aidan had obtained a degree in prison and was accepted to Ulster University, while he was studying he met his wife and after that he got the opportunity to live a normal life. He had wanted to see what that was like after he was released from prison. Thus it seems like 'competing social relationships' had some influence on Aidan. He does not mention this but it is possible, given the year that he got out, that he realized that peace was in the air and that he considered 'the desired future to be unachievable'. He does, however, not rule out the possibility that he would have gone back if his first year out of prison had gone differently. Aidan is not deradicalized in the sense that he still hopes to see a united Ireland in his lifetime and that he thinks that the Good Friday Agreement is a flawed document. He does not support the use of violence anymore though.

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Niall started doubting his membership from 1990 onwards. At the beginning of that year, the PIRA had detonated a bomb right next to the Bloody Sunday commemoration that was taking place. The debris of that bomb killed a little boy. This was such a stark contrast for Niall that he seriously started considering leaving. He says that his IRA career was over by the end of 1991. Niall had gotten married in 1988 but there were no plans for a family yet so he does not consider this to be a factor of influence. His viewpoint on both the means that the PIRA was using as on the chances that their efforts would be a success, they had their first ceasefire in 1991, were significant factors in his decision to leave. Another important factor was that his membership was not getting him any closer to achieving his goal of getting justice for the Bloody Sunday victims and that the release of the Birmingham six and Guildford four signaled that the British government might be willing to start an inquire into Bloody Sunday. Getting revenge for Bloody Sunday had been his main motivator for staying in the PIRA for so long and, having realized that he had failed in achieving his goals through violence, he was glad to leave the PIRA. He considers the campaign for the inquiry to have been the biggest 'pull' factor. His efforts were successful and the Bloody Sunday victims were exonerated in the 2010 Saville report. Niall fully supports the Good Friday Agreement and can live with the fact that he does not think that he will see a united Ireland in his lifetime. He is involved in community work and can be considered both disengaged and deradicalized.

From the above it can be derived that once individuals no longer believe in the ideology, this will be a more important factor in the decision-making process than the possible personal costs of leaving. After a long spell in prison it is likely that individuals will disengage at least temporarily to experience normality. If someone's time in prison was not a cause for disengagement then the chances are higher that deradicalization and disengagement happen simultaneously – Patrick, Shane and Niall. Continuance factors play a secondary role but can

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help individuals feel more confident about their decision to disengage temporarily after prison. Lastly, those that are the most educated, with several university degrees among them, are less likely to stay engaged very long. Terry and Niall are the least educated of the five interviewees that were engaged and they stayed active the longest.

CHAPTER 7 - CONCLUSION

This research suggests that the most salient factors predisposing individuals to radicalization are (1) personal exposure to violence at the hands of the state (2) in youth whilst living in the (3) social framework that provides and endorses a reaction. Factor two has the biggest influence whilst knowledge of the conflict or the ideology of the idealized organization is secondary. The image that the paramilitary organization has in the community through past actions can play a significant role in this.

The interviewees in this study were all radicalized before they engaged. One of them only radicalized but claims never to have become a paramilitary. An important factor in individuals' willingness to join paramilitary organizations is again age. The data shows that youth has the effect of making people feel invincible and influences their willingness to join paramilitary organizations because they do not fully realize what they are getting involved in. Personal relations are also an important factor, most of the interviewees made important decisions about who to join and when based on what their group of friends was doing. A supportive community, for example protesting on behalf of political prisoners, can play an important role in their sense of achievement of the organization's goals and can function as a justification for its methods.

Those that were coached at the beginning of their involvement stayed in the organization the longest, and later on the action pathway, solidarity with friends in the organization that are risking their lives can function to keep people involved.

Relative freedom to organize in prison plays a significant role in further engagement, fueling paramilitaries in their skills and beliefs and helping them expand their network. The data suggests that solitary confinement in combination with violent prison conditions leads to more emotional detachment and a higher dependency on glorifying violent behaviour.

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With regards to deradicalization the data shows that once individuals no longer believe in the ideology, this will be a more important factor in the decision-making process than the possible personal costs of leaving. After a long spell in prison it is likely that individuals will disengage at least temporarily to experience normality. If someone's time in prison was not a cause for disengagement then the chances are higher that deradicalization and disengagement happen simultaneously. Continuance factors play a secondary role but can help individuals feel more confident about their decision to disengage temporarily after prison. Lastly, those that are the most educated, with several university degrees among them, are less likely to stay engaged very long.

Thus, when applying the results of this case study to the current upsurge in violent Republican paramilitary activity, the most dangerous factors for the future are the combined effects of the young new recruits with older more experienced reengaging paramilitaries. The fact that there is little community support, outside of the Bogside and Creggan, for this type of activity should subdue the speed at which disaffected youth progress from radicalization to engagement and it is unlikely that triggering events like Bloody Sunday will take place in the near future. Nonetheless the ideology of a united Ireland in combination with a long history of fighting British rule in Northern Ireland still proves to be a strong enough pull factor to keep some individuals engaged.

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INTRODUCTION

I am studying nationalism at Central European University in Budapest. For my final thesis I am conducting interviews on the factors that influenced people's decision to stop being actively engaged in the armed conflict. My questions therefore focus on your personal life experiences.

Please know that I understand that I will be asking you questions that touch upon your private life and that I will handle the information you give me discretely.

In order to make sure that I don't miss any of the details of what you're telling me, I would like to record the interview. These recordings are purely for my personal use and will be destroyed after having been transcribed. They will not become available to anyone else at any point in time.

All of the information that I will gather from this interview will be processed anonymously and your name will not be used or recorded anywhere.

QUESTIONS:

Where did you grow up and what do you remember most about it?

What did your parents do for a living?

How were you personally affected by the Troubles in your childhood?

1 How did you become involved in the organization's activities?

2 Did any of your friends join when you did?

3 How did your social life change after you had joined, did you go on dates?

4 Did you feel that the pursuit of the organization's goals was in line with your ideas of what those goals should be?

5 Did you feel that the organization's activities were in line with what you had expected?

6 Did you feel that your role was in line with what you had expected?

7 Did your role change in the time that you were active? How did that influence you?

8 Was there ever a time that you felt that the organization was going beyond what you felt comfortable with?

9 Did you ever experience doubt regarding the competency of a fellow member?

10 Did you feel that you got closer to reaching your political objectives while you were a member?

11 What kind of feedback did you receive on your work?

12 Was there a social element to being a member?

13 How did your membership influence your personal relationships?

15 How much time was there between your joining the organization and your being apprehended?

16 How do you remember the trial and the relations between you and prison wardens?

17 Can you tell me what a typical day in prison was like?

18 Was the organization able to provide support of any kind while you were interned?

19 How did your environment react to your internment?

19 Did you ever considering leaving the organization before you actually did?

20 What were the circumstances under which you left?

21 What kind of changes in your life did you envision when you were considering leaving the organization?

22 What are the most significant changes in your life in the years after you left?

23 Was there any kind of outreach from institutions or the church that helped you rebuild your life?

24 Do you think you will see a united Ireland in your lifetime?

25 How do you feel about the Good Friday Agreement?

26 How do you look back on your time being a member?

APPENDIX 2 – LIFE HISTORIES

This Appendix contains an abbreviated version of the data that was collected in the interviews. An account of the most important events and influential factors in the lives of each interviewee will be given. The quotes have been retouched to make them more reader friendly but everything is in the interviewees' words as much as possible. The latter does not hold good for Conan because the interview was not recorded. Nonetheless certain parts of the interview have been paraphrased in his life history. Any clarifying comments are in italic and between brackets.

1 Patrick

Patrick was born in 1952. His father converted from Presbyterianism to Catholicism when he married his mother – who was a Catholic. His father was in the Royal Air Force and his mother worked in a shirt factory. When he was a toddler, his family lived in a house that was owned by the Air Force. In 1956 his father had an accident due to which he was flown to a military hospital in England. His mother was 8,5 months pregnant at the time and upon her hearing the news she went into premature labour. With both of their parents in hospital, Patrick and his two brothers were placed in an orphanage. The boys were separated, had their names taken away and were given numbers. He ended up spending ten years in the orphanage which was run by nuns. He was sexually abused while he lived there.

When he was 14 his mother had gotten a house in Creggan and he moved in with her. He started going to a local school where he excelled in sports, and did "ok" in class. He says that his teachers felt that he did not reach his full potential and that he made friends very easily. After secondary school he received a scholarship to study engineering in the local college. There he was in a mixed, Catholic and Protestant, class for the first time in his life. He recalls thinking that "they weren't bad, they were great guys" even though he was not "making judgments based on

anyone's religion anyway." Soon after his classes had started, someone put up a poster in the Student Union about the civil rights marches. He was not very politically conscious at the time and figured that the civil rights issues did not have anything to do with him. However, when one of his Protestant friends asked him to come along to a march his curiosity got the better of him and he went along. When they arrived at the river in the city centre, they saw a lot of policemen at the foot of the bridge. His friend left when they saw the policemen but Patrick decided to go down to see what was going on. He ended up watching them spray water cannons into the crowd and beating people across a bridge. He recalls that his community had had very little contact with the police up until then and that they had been "more scared of the priest than the police." He recognized some of the people that were being attacked as pillars of Catholic society in Derry. After he had followed the crowd to a rally, somebody explained to him what the link was between the local housing corporation, housing and votes and "within seconds almost everything changed." He realized that only those that owned a house could vote, and that a Protestant majority in the city council was guaranteed by not allowing Catholics to become home owners. The latter had had a direct influence on his life as the reason that he was left in a boy's home for so long was that his mother could not get a house. He started joining the marches and soon after found himself throwing stones at the police. He was at the Apprentice Boy's march in 1969 and Patrick ended up participating in the Battle of the Bogside. After 2,5 days of teargas, baton charges and petrol bombs he had "started to become quite ok with the slogans and everything like that." When the first military truck pulled up, Patrick realized that the army had come to finish the police's job and that they should be ready for it. He dropped out of college and joined the IRA.

When he reported to the head of the IRA in Derry, he was only asked whether he was sure about joining. He said he was and "that was more or less that, I was in." He had not

discussed joining the organization with anyone nor did he tell anyone about it. After he had sworn his allegiance to the Irish flag he was, among other things, trained to use guns, make bombs and set ambushes. In 1970 "what was considered the honeymoon period with the army" was over. He was still going to marches but admits that he was more interested in throwing stones and that his participation in the marches merely provided him with a platform to do that. When internment was introduced in 1971 he was one of the targets but he had been warned and was not home when they came for him. Patrick manned the barricades while there were marches against internment and he took part in the civil rights march on Bloody Sunday. He says:

> *"I took part in it; I was a member of the IRA but that day as far as I was concerned I wasn't a member of the IRA, that day I was marching against internment."*

He was part of the group of people that started rioting but soon felt that something was off. He describes how the soldiers who had been there for a few months "knew the rules" of "what was classed as recreational rioting" but that water cannons were pulled out and that soldiers started getting replaced. Twenty five minutes after an armoured truck had pulled into the Bogside twenty eight people had been shot. By 1974 he had seen three of his high school classmates getting shot dead.

After internment was introduced, Patrick was on the run. He was a full time IRA man - estimating that the IRA was no bigger than 20 people - and, as he stands out in a crowd - he is unusually tall for a Derry man -, he thinks that people knew that he was in the IRA by then. He describes a typical week as: a lot of exercising, moving weapons around, ensuring that the support network was there and sometimes burying the dead. He also says that at that point he had not "given that much thought to the reunification of Ireland" because for him, it was purely about the defense of his community. He envisioned his role as being to make change and recalls feeling a false sense of safety in the barricaded areas after having lived in them for 2,5 years. He also thinks that because he was so young he felt invincible:

"you think it's never going to happen, you'll think it'll happen to the other guy, you also think that all of your decisions are the right decisions because today I'm still alive so the decision must have been right."

There was no social element to being in the IRA but he does remember that the community supported what they were doing. When asked about his dating life he says that he was almost like a cult hero and that the PIRA did not get in the way of his dating life. Patrick got married in 1978 – after having seen his wife six times over the span of a year: "I'm impulsive, it gets me into an awful lot of trouble so it does" – and they had nine children.

He had some moments of doubt about his membership when civilians were getting killed but:

"you rationalize it out I think, and you find some way of trying to justify it. (…) Originally we were talking about the defense of the community but, certainly by the middle of 1972 and into 1973, we were talking about an armed campaign to free Ireland. Part of me was thinking, 'this is a picture bigger than the picture that I had originally imagined.' If I was talking about the defense of my community, I was talking about the defense of my community. I was happy enough to be doing that but, again, it wasn't one of those where you can have a wee bit, you had to take it all, this is the way it worked"

It was not until the death toll started rising and after Bloody Sunday, that he found that protecting his own community was not enough:

"We don't want to be a part of this, we don't want to give them the right to interfere in our country and certainly not after they have just murdered, in front of us, our people in the streets of this city."

According to Patrick "the united Ireland agenda" became more popular after that:

"it was used to justify a reaction; we're now fighting for a country rather than just fighting for the defense of our people because we had already proven that we couldn't defend our people against the power that they were going to throw in it."

Patrick was arrested on numerous occasions. He was held on remand for seven months in 1973, after which the charges were dropped. In 1973 PIRA prisoners still had political status. He says the following about his prison experience:

"I'm not saying it was good craic[1], it was probably just as difficult on the inside as it was on the outside. It wasn't that bad to me because I had been brought up in a boys home, I'd been brought up in an institution, I mean what was prison going to offer me that this place hadn't already offered me.

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[1] Craic means fun.

You go in there and they give you a number, well guess what, that happened there. And they put you in a room and they lock the door, so what, it had already happened to me for 10 years, so I didn't find it threatening that much. And that's why I don't make such a big deal about it (…) It probably would have been easier to get killed than arrested (…) It certainly wasn't the most frightening part of the experience. I've had scarier experiences in cars and ditches and buildings in this town, than I had in all of the 7 months that I was in prison."

He was held in Long Kesh prison and Crumlin Road prison and he did not receive any support from the IRA while he was there.

He feels that the institutional churches all failed their congregations "miserably":

"some of their policies further and further isolated those who were engaged in the armed conflict, and a lot of it was one-sided condemnation of violence (…) they were very quick on a lot of occasions to condemn deaths that were caused by the Republican movement"

As for his own faith he says that, having been brought up by nuns, he always knew an awful lot about religion but that he would not put a religious denomination on his faith even though he is proud to be from a Catholic community. The fact that his father was born Presbyterian had no influence on his life because his father had converted to Catholicism.

In 1976 he got sick and spent almost a year in a hospital in the Republic. After he was released he reported back to the PIRA. Within weeks of his return he had attended two funerals. This got him to think about what almost ten years of IRA activity in Derry had meant for the city. He concluded that the legislation was more draconian than it had been in the 1960s and that there was less employment for young people. Another important issue for Patrick was the fact that most of the Protestant population had moved out of the city. His idea of fighting for civil rights also applied to bettering the situation for working class Protestants. That's when he decided that "bombs and bullets" was not going to help and he quit. He recalls that quite a few Provos understood his decision to leave because they understood the frustration of being in the PIRA.

Patrick left to try and change the framework in which the war was fought, full well realizing that the violence was not going to end. He joined the Peace and Reconciliation Group.

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Seeing as though "peace was a dirty word" in Derry back then, he now thinks that fighting for peace made him more vulnerable than fighting a war:

> *"certainly the next 10, 15 years my family has had to pay a price for it. I've had my windows broken, I've had my car burnt, I've had my kids kicked up and down the street, I've been pulled into the back of a car with a gun to my head, stuff like that."*

Patrick felt comfortable that he would not "disappear into the woodwork" and thinks that he might have considered going back to engineering but ended up continuing his community work with the Peace and Reconciliation Group. He works there up until this day.

When asked whether he thinks he will ever see a united Ireland he replies: "no, I wouldn't say so. I don't give much thought to it to be honest" and when asked about the likelihood that the conflict will flare up again:

> *"well, I never set out in the 1970s to stop a war, although I think we've made a valuable contribution in doing that, I mean what I believe I set out to do was to change the circumstance that made war the only option."*

His life is dedicated to the Troubles:

> *"it's been interesting challenging, painful, bloody, hurtful. There are parts where I am extremely proud of what I've done and there are still parts that I want to shy away from. But as the man says: you do with what you do, you know."*

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2 Aidan

Aidan was born in 1956. He grew up in Derry, in "a very political family." His father was a doctor and his mother a housewife, they were both involved in the civil rights movement. His parents took him and his siblings to the civil rights marches and he was present when the Battle of the Bogside started as well as on Bloody Sunday. He says that there was no such thing as a 'typical' week when he was in school:

"It was a very interesting childhood. It was very exciting, growing up 12/13/14 years old with rioting on the streets. (…) We were literally, some mornings, going to school through gun battles, if the British army had made an incursion into what was known as the 'no-go areas' and the area had the IRA oppose it, that gun battle would still be raging as we were going to school (…) We could come down through the town from school, through the Bogside and if you came down through the town you would be liable to get stopped by the soldiers, searched and all this. There may have been an instance where you would have been afraid to get a kicking or something but you didn't live your life in fear."

Coming from a very political family he felt that there came a point for him to decide whether he was going to be a spectator or not and that:

"I couldn't say that there was one specific incident that made me get involved. It would be just the whole situation, just the whole combination of things and actually saying to yourself 'a to hell with this' (…) I don't like being a spectator, if I feel strongly about something then I feel that I should do something about it."

Therefore, at 16, Aidan joined the IRA:

"everyone knew the local Republicans so you would know who to approach, but then it became quite difficult , they didn't make it easy for you. They wanted to make sure that you were sure. The whole processes that you had to go through was quite arduous and quite long, and they kept stressing that at any time you could change your mind and walk away (…) I was excited and maybe my only concern would have been that they would say 'no' (…) there were people coming along and they'd be 'ooo no, we don't want him, not in a million years.'"

He says that his classmates, because he was not "from the area", were not in the same frame of mind and that he did not tell anyone that he had joined: "there is this secret culture where you don't tell people that you're in the IRA." After he joined his life stayed relatively normal:

"you stayed in school, you chased girls (…) one moment you'd be fighting as an IRA man and 5 minutes later you'd be chatting up a girl or do both at the one time. You did normal things, we were normal people (…) You were living a double life too, you had to keep it quiet from your parents (…) You know the joke used to be that many a young man in the IRA or young girl in the IRA was more scared of their mother than they were of the British army, 'o there's my mother and there's the soldiers, I'll take my chances with the soldiers.'"

His activities were very much dictated by what he wanted to do:

> *"it was more or less up to you what you were prepared to do and what you weren't, you always had the option to say 'no' to some suggestions (…)They rarely would say we need you tomorrow morning, because they knew you were at school. There might have been the odd day you missed school but we're not going into that (…) We believed that the only reason that someone would ask you to do things is that, you basically thought if you don't do it, we're going to miss the boat, it's going to be all over."*

He never felt that the organization was going beyond what he felt comfortable with:

> *"there was fierce rows about all sorts of things but never the overall direction we were going in. You felt that the movement was on the right track and that this was the way to do it. The disagreement would have been over how you go about it and the nitty gritty of the best way to drop the bomb in the town. But there were plenty of arguments; it was a very healthy organization in that sense."*

If he felt that one of his peers was untrustworthy or incompetent he could report that:

> *"and the more you'd be trusted and grew the more they'd sort of take your word for it if you went and said 'listen, he's fucking useless.'"*

His role changed very soon after he had joined:

> *"the rate of attrition was very heavy (…) you were a veteran at 16 (…) your responsibilities would increase because you were somebody who knew more than the guys just in (…) it didn't increase the pressure, it was just part of the game I suppose."*

Aidan remembers socializing with fellow IRA men because they were likeminded and because "we could be ourselves when we were together, we didn't have to live the double life." IRA membership did not interfere with his dating life: " the option was there if any girl was ever going to take you on (…) you did as much as possible what normal 16 year olds did." Sometimes people from the community would ask them for help if they had "social problems."

He recalls feeling a sense of urgency about his activities:

> *"you'd be like, actually, I'd better get something done now because they'll be away in 6 months time (…) if you'd think this could go on for 20, 30 years, you took less risks but at 16 we believed, well no. 1 at 16 you believe you're invincible anyway; 'they can't catch me and they can't kill me'. Not true but you did believe it so you were really anxious to drive forward. You took risks that other people might have thought 'ooo, I'll look at that one again', and o yeah, you really did believe that you were progressing."*

His personal objective was to "get the Brits out of Ireland" and recalls that their "politics were quite simple." On a personal level he recalls that:

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"the more you did, the more you were asked to do, once you had proved that you were a very willing volunteer, that you were very willing to take this or whatever, then you'd be asked to do more. So that was your sort of feedback, it would be recognized, that people were saying that you were a good operator."

It was not until he was arrested that people knew that he was in the IRA. He first got arrested in 1974, when he was 17, because he was caught with a gun. He spent two years in prison. He was tried by a single judge and did not recognize the court. He described his time in jail as follows:

"You had the Republicans all together, all likeminded individuals so it was secure in that way. You knew when you got sentenced you were going down to political status in either Long Kesh or Magilligan. (…) They knew you were coming because word spread that so and so had been arrested (…) people from Derry would have come and met you and said this is your cell. You see we did all that ourselves with political status. There was always a bit of craic, and like with a new job, the silly initiation things? Well, there's similar things in jail, the jokes that they'd pull on you in your first time (…) One of them was, they would come along and they would tell you that there was an escape on, that the prison officers didn't know and that you were picked because you were just in the door. And they told you that they'd put you in this rubbish bag and this rubbish bag would be taken out the gate and then when you got out you'd have to get out and run. So then you'd get in the bag and they'd leave it in the corner for 2 minutes and then you'd get out and everybody would be standing round going 'yoooooo,' silly things, but it was amusing (…) The British army came in every couple of weeks to search the prison and they could be quite aggressive at times but most of the time we just did our own thing (…) We would have had our own discipline, rather than having people lying around all day. During the day we had some classes, we'd organize our own education or there would be education from outside, played football, keep fit, run, whatever took your notion (…) We used to make pochin, alcohol, pochin, it was lethal like, it really was, a cup that size there [he pointed at my coffee cup] and you'd be drunk for a week (…) Some of the guards used to come in and offer a bottle of brandy and a bottle of whiskey for a bottle of pochin because they could get more drunk on a bottle of pochin."

His family was supportive when he was in prison, when his mother first came to visit him she scolded him about having started smoking, not about having joined the IRA.

When he got out he reported straight back to the IRA, "it made you more determined" and "it was without a doubt much more dangerous, the gloves were off on all sides at that stage but quitting wasn't an option." Nine months after he got out he was arrested again, he was charged with murdering a policeman. Aidan was interrogated "not too gently" for three or four days and:

"signed the statement, you reach the point where you're just 'I'll get them to stop now' and so you just said 'What was it? John F. Kennedy?' 'I shot him too, no problem.' We called it the conveyor belt system, you got arrested, you got battered, you signed a statement, you went to court, you went to jail."

After having been on trial for four months, "we didn't go easy", he was sentenced to life in prison – out of which he served 15,5 years. He was sent to Long Kesh and went directly on the Blanket Protest:

> "It was horrendous, you had no clothes, you had a blanket around you, you had nothing in the cell, well they called them mattresses, two bits of sponge, a Bible… I read the Bible from cover to cover on several occasions."

The IRA was supportive in that they "shot quite a few prison officers." His family took part in:

> "the H-Block committee or something like that, that was set up by relatives. When you had the Hunger Strikes the support really grew. I mean you really, you never felt totally abandoned, you always felt that support outside kept you going and you had each other as well. You're locked up 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, you do build up a lot of close relationships in terms of camaraderie."

About his experience 'on the Blanket' in Long Kesh he recalls the following:

> "you kept yourself intellectually stimulated as much as you could and people learned Irish. I could speak Irish so I would teach and we told books out the door (…) But it was very grim, I was doing a life sentence by this stage and I knew that could mean forever (…) I think what your mentality changed to was: 'I'm going to get through this no matter what it takes.' It was very much survival (…) you lose your future perspective. So if I was sitting in my cell at 10 o'clock on a Wednesday morning I think my future perspective would have been what's for dinner at 1 o'clock or 12 o'clock, that would be about as far as it would go (…) We didn't look at it like 'ooo poor us', we'd slag about it and joked about it, you had a lot of, a lot of camaraderie (…) It was dangerous, it was violent, you would get assaulted a lot. We hated having the door open. Going to visits was quite stressful because of the potential violence. You had to pretend 'ooo, I'm grand' but, the walk back was just as stressful as the walk over had been. You're also thinking like, long hair, you hadn't washed in years, you had a beard, long hair, you'd be wearing a prison uniform, you must have stunk to high heaven. But, well that was my strategy, you'd just pretend that everything was alright (…) We had times where there was protesting, left us all night with no blanket, no mattress no nothing in the middle of January."

During his time in prison after the Blanket Protest he spent his time reading books and getting

his Bachelor's degree:

> "I read everything except Westerns and Science Fiction, novels (auto)biographies, history books, modern/classics, took a course on the 19th C novels, Ulysses, Dostoyevsky, Norman Mailer, English/Irish authors alike, I did not really have a favourite, read novels for pleasure and based on availability in the prison."

After ten years his sentence was reviewed. He was put back in prison for the maximum time

possible, five years, before would be granted another review. However, in 1990 "they introduced

a scheme that if you had served more than 13 years you got a parole in the summer and a parole

at Christmas." He describes his first parole as "totally surreal", he had to get used to walking on

uneven surfaces, slept three hours in the four days that he was there and could tell that:

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"things had moved on dramatically (…),the war was still on but it was at a different level at this stage. It wouldn't have been so much a daily occurrence at that stage (…) it was still very much present in your head but not as much as it was when I was growing up."

Having people got out on parole had its effect in the prison, it:

"brought more realism to the discussions we were having because you would actually see things on the ground. You would see that things were not as simple as they looked 15 years ago."

After he was released in 1992 he did not consider reporting back:

"I was too old for it that was a very simple decision. And you're tired, 15 years in prison, it was a a daily struggle. You were constantly fighting with the authorities over the conditions and you just get tired. I was like 'I would like a bit of normality for a while'. Settling down and doing things that normal people do without having to look over your shoulder and saying to yourself 'what about this or what about that.' So I just decided that I would not bother (…) That's another one of the myths: 'you're never out'. That's rubbish, 'they come knocking', the only thing is that they gave you money when you got out. It's not very much, it's 5 quid or something, or a 100 pound but that's the only knock I ever remember getting (…) When I got out, which didn't exist in the 1970s but did in the 1990s, there was the opportunity to get involved politically (…) but I just decided not to be bothered. I'm still a Republican but I just didn't want to get involved with Sinn Fein and all that (…)Politically I hadn't changed my views, I still felt the same thing, I still felt the struggle was justified and all the rest of it, I just felt that I'd rather not take part in it. I hadn't had normality since I was 16, either in jail or outside. It could have been that after a year I would have been like 'ooo fuck this let me get back to', but that didn't happen. (…) My prison mechanism stepped in, I didn't worry about what I was going to do, I just said 'ok, I'm out now.' Some people think when they're in jail 'everything is going to be alright when I get out' and I was like 'no when you get out you change one set of problems for a different set of problems' so I never took that attitude (…) I had done my Bachelor of Arts when I was in jail and I got into McGee to do a masters. That made me not under an immediate pressure to find a job and all the rest so I did that, and then just took it as it came along."

Aidan went to prison a Catholic but due to his prison experience he is now a Catholic "in name only." The fact that he was accepted to the University of Ulster while he was still in prison saved him from having to go through a process of working in Belfast for six to eight months as part of a slow release program. He went straight from prison to University and while he was there he met his wife. After he obtained his MA, in Peace and Conflict Studies, he worked as a journalist, which he still is today. In his current job he has more problems with Nationalist politicians that think that his background makes him more favourable to Sinn Fein than to them, than with Loyalists. He thinks that he would have still joined the IRA if he would have known the consequences because he does not believe in regret. The only way he could sometimes feel content in prison was by living in the moment and says:

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"I've taken my jail strategy out with me, I still live for the present. When people say do you regret it, I'm like 'no that won't get you anywhere so I'm here, I'm here now and what's done is done.'"

After he got out he appealed his prison sentence again and it was quashed. He is currently waiting for compensation from the British state. When asked how he feels about Northern Ireland still being part of Great Britain Aidan replied:

"I'm going to put this right because I don't want to sound like I'm a dissident but at the same time, I feel that the peace process is a flawed process although it's the only game in town. It had to happen (...) I don't see any violent alternative. So I would still love to see the British out of Ireland, and I hope I will, by peaceful means, but I think things have changed too much to justify a sort of armed campaign"

Aidan hopes, but is not hopeful, that he will see a united Ireland in his lifetime.

3 Terry

Terry was born in England in 1959 as the oldest of eleven children. His father was from the Republic of Ireland and his mother from Strabane, in Northern Ireland. When he was four or five years old his family moved to Strabane. He remembers his childhood as a happy one, even though 'they were living on the bread lane'. His father worked as a lorry driver and factory worker and his mother took care of the children. His father was also very active in the civil rights campaign, and he remembers that there were always people coming in and out of the house for meetings. Is family was not particularly religious, "I was a Catholic in name only." He became more aware of what was really going on when he was eleven or twelve. This was also when the gun battles started to become regular and when he would routinely hear bombs going off. He also remembers that their house was raided a lot in this period. He sometime woke up in the dead of night to find a soldier holding a gun to his head. After Bloody Sunday he joined the youth wing of the IRA. His circle of friends all did, but this was not necessarily a common thing among Strabane youth. Terry recalls that they all started out rioting but that they soon moved on to actual incursions. He remembers feeling a lot of hatred but says that he was not politicized at all at that point, that did not happen until he went to prison. All of his brothers were involved, three of them spent considerable time in prison and two were never caught. His sisters were no militarily involved but they would help out by, for example, moving weapons around.

At a very early age he became interested in socialism and the legacy of James Connolly.[2] His personal motivation was to instill a 'leftist type' of government in the whole island of Ireland.

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[2] James Connolly was an Irish Republican and socialist leader. He was the leader of the Dublin Brigade when the Easter Rising took place in 1916; de facto he was in charge of what happened.

He was arrested several times, once for throwing a blast bomb into the back of a Landrover. There were four soldiers inside. There had been insufficient evidence each time but he did receive serious beatings during his time on remand; once his ribs were fractured.

In 1973 he left the OIRA and joined the PIRA, when he was fifteen he moved on to their senior wing. He was also captured and convicted for the first time when he was fifteen. He had been on a sniping mission when he was caught with the rifle in his hands. He recalls having tried to forge an escape by pretending that he needed to have his appendix taken out but this failed miserably as the operating surgeon saw that there had been nothing wrong with his appendix. He was taken to Crumlin Road jail. When he turned sixteen they took him to the main wing:

> *"which was governed by the Provisional IRA. Them days you had what they called political status, so basically it was prisoners run the wing itself. So I actually thought it was brilliant. I was the youngest on the wing at the time, and I was viewed as a wee mascot type person like, like the baby of the wing, so I was well looked after."*

His solicitors argued that he should not be kept in an adult's prison because he as a minor. They won and he was moved to "like a high school, run by Christian brothers" in Belfast. He had made contacts with the Belfast IRA while he was in prison and they helped him escape the next day. As soon as he got the chance he reported back to the IRA and from then on his life:

> *"just went in one direction (...) I think my desire to be involved in armed conflict became stronger and stronger at that age, from when I was 15/16 I was involved in bombings and shootings, hijackings, robberies."*

His focus had always been mostly on his IRA membership but he did go to discos, even when he was on the run after he had escaped. He had a girlfriend before he got arrested. She was also in the IRA and in the time he spent in prison she "was blown up" which left her badly burnt. Terry recalls that the relationship ended because of the circumstances.

Terry remembers that the young volunteers did not respect the older ones because they thought they were too cautious they "couldn't understand why these men couldn't have the same

effort and input as we did you know." However, he never felt that he was in any danger because of the incompetence of his peers. When Terry firs joined they had been free to do what they wanted to do but later "you had to submit your operation to the command and you had to get the 'yes' or 'no.'" He was never asked to do anything that he did not want to do.

He was arrested again in 1975, during the first PIRA ceasefire. The ceasefire had been reason enough for him to leave the PIRA:

"even though we didn't understand all the ins and outs of it we wanted to continue with bombing, shooting, because we were quite contempt with it, we were quite happy with it, you know it was basically the excitement as a youngster to be involved in them type of things."

He had joined the INLA after having gone to a funeral in Belfast. He discussed setting up a unit in Strabane with the leadership there and when he went back "a number of us became involved."

He had been told that there was an agreement with the Brits that there would be no arrests during the ceasefire. Since he was an active volunteer, taking part in bombings and shootings, all the security services knew who he was. He was arrested because, as it turned out, the 'no arrests'-policy did not apply to people who "already had charges on their head." He says that his "guard was completely down" but that "in some ways maybe it was a good thing because I could have ended up dead at that time." He remembers sitting *Shane, interviewee six*, because he was also arrested during the ceasefire, his guard had been down as well: he was arrested doing his mother's garden. Terry was interrogated for a few days and ended up getting sentenced to three years imprisonment. While he was in prison he also got charged with a bombing offense. In 1976 he got sentenced to twelve years imprisonment. Terry explains that a movie was made about his trial and that seeing that at the Belfast Film Festival brought back a lot of memories about the injustice.

Terry had turned 17 during the ceasefire so he was tried as an adult. He was kept in Crumlin Road jail again but things were completely different this time around. Soon after he arrived the INLA prisoners were moved to Long Kesh. Initially:

"we just controlled everything within and the Screws[3] controlled everything in the outer parameter like. So it was very much run along a multi-type basis then. We had different ranks in the prison itself, you also had like education, classes on socialism, Marxism and we had 'multiclass' as well where you were being taught how to make explosives for example, booby-trap bombs and given weapons training as well."

The 1976 conviction took him into the Thatcher era. He recalls that, in 1977, there had been a power struggle in his cage [they lived in units with 70, 80 prisoners and called those units 'cages'] which led him and twenty others to walk out in protest. He was placed in solitary confinement for two months and after that they all lost their status as political prisoners and were moved to the H-Blocks. The power struggle had led to people getting killed; they had access to chisels, and it influenced his life in prison.

"I took offense at the INLA on the outside for not being able to pressurize these other people for resolving the problems that we were faced with. Because it did lead to serious problems for myself. I remember I went down to one of the H-Blocks and so many Screws who had been in our cage at one point in time were actually in my block, so there was a bit of revenge time for them."

Terry was involved in helping nine prisoners escape through a tunnel and that he had been on the forefront of taking a turn in digging the tunnel. He recalls that as having been a fantastic experience but that:

"the Screws were very much aware of it like so from the summer of '77 until the summer of '78 we had continuous beatings, continuous solitary confinement. I remember the first time. The Screws would get in on you and you'd fight back and then they would charge you under prison discipline. You'd get anything from like 3 days to 21 days solitary confinement and I remember the first time I got like 3 days solitary confinement, 3 days with a no. 1 diet. I remember thinking 'what the fuck is this no. 1 diet'. The no. 1 diet was that for 3 days for breakfast you'd get 4 rounds of bread and a cup of black tea, then for your dinner which was around say twelve o'clock, we got wee bowl of watery soup and for tea you had another 4 rounds of bread and black tea. I remember being sentenced to 28 days with that so what they done then was you're on it for 3 days they take you off for 1 day and then

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[3] A derogatory term used to denominate the prison wardens.

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put you back on. It was very much a starvation diet (...) This was abolished in 1979/1980 which was good because, to be a bit frank, when you're doing solitary confinement the only thing you're really looking forward to is some food. (...) Solitary confinement was known as the boards area because your bed was basically a board (...) there was no light getting in. (...) At the far end was a jug of water and they'd bring you out to this yard, this wee tiny small yard which would be probably smaller than this area here [points at niche where we're sitting, about 6m2] and you would be allowed to go there one hour a day and that was it then. (... There'd be 10 maybe 15 on the boards in total but you'd never see them, you'd shout at them at night time (...) I guess you don't really call on sort of innermost emotions then, feelings, I guess we just took it in the chin 'this is what we're up against' it's all sort of part of the struggle, this is all part of the fight (...) even though we weren't using bombs, and we weren't using bullets but we were using our body you know."

When the Blanket Protest started Terry participated. He describes it as follows:

"when you left your cell you had to go to what they called the big cell, you had to put on the uniform to go to a visit or if you were going to mass. So I remember when we actually left the cell, we were really in danger from a kicking. I'd got a serious kicking in 1978, it was 3 kickings in the one day. I was hospitalized, I was in hospital for a week, and what I'd done, I went on the hunger strike at that point in time, I was on for 50 days. I always promised myself after that that I was never going to take another kicking; I was going to turn on them regardless what the consequences would be. I kept that promise to myself so some Screw threw a punch at me and I threw one at him and then the rest of the Screws all jumped at me, and I was totally naked and they had me sort of pinned to a wall and battered me with brushes and stuff and then another Screw said 'he's had enough, let him go' and basically I was threw down to the boards area (...) You really just took it each day as it came, you were able to attain wee small luxuries for example smoking would be a luxury. I would be a heavy smoker and my mother would have been very, very much in how to smuggle stuff into the prison."

Terry was not released until the Blanket Protest had ended:

"after 1981 you were getting all your privileges back so my focus was very much on drawing and stuff like that, also on books and education. Books on socialism, Marxism, but also I'd be reading novels. It was pure escapism, Robert London books for example like there's a few films about it now, the Bourne Identity. And also sort of head wrecking stuff, books on psychology, for example non-verbal communication, ones that would really fry your head you know. You're reading and then you're looking for all these signs with different people and you could read the wrong thing into it. You'd also be very much involved with the outside organization, actually involved in trying to get operations going from the inside as well, things you'd be aware of on the outside, you'd be gathering intelligence on Loyalists (...) One example that we passed on to the outside was that we reckoned that Billy Wright[4] was in the wing. We recommended to kill him as soon as possible and they did try and do him when he got out. I remember when he got out he was involved in killing Catholics, they never got him but eventually they got [killed] him in the prison itself. There was a public inquiry about that

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[4] A very prominent Ulster Loyalist, when he was killed he was the leader of the breakaway 'Loyalist Volunteer Force'.

and I would be named quite often in the public inquiry, named by my own name, named by this what they call secret designations, they were able to work out the secret designations after a while."

He was released in 1983 but was back in before the end of the year:

"I came back into prison again uhm at the end of 1983, I got 20 years for a bombing offense which I did 10 out of. I would have spent 18 months on remand, Crumlin Road, then sentenced and down to H-Blocks again which would have totally changed from the time I would have been in there before. Basically it was mayhem from the mid-70s up until 1981, then there was this sort of campaign to break down the Screws and get out political status back in full."

The church did not play a big supportive role in their lives in prison:

"the Provos were very much fucking pure Catholics so they were, they were tripping over themselves to go to mass you know whereas we would have a different point of view in relation to the Catholic church."

The INLA, however, did support them by giving money to the family every week and helping them to make it to the prison to visit them.

Up until the mid-1980s Terry thought that the INLA's struggle was achievable. But as he got older, "a wee bit more wiser", he realized that the armed struggle was detrimental to achieving the main objective because it was dividing society. He realized that the OIRA had been right about that in 1972. He thinks that he realized this because he saw the continuous cycle of imprisonment, death and because he was not convinced that:

"the Brits were under any real sort of pressure, (…) what they had in their big favour was the technology, the manpower, weaponry, finance as well. So they had everything going and we had very little going for us."

He met his wife before he got out of prison; he met her through a friend in prison and went with her while he was out on parole in the year before he got out. His intention when he got out was to stay involved in some way, through the IRSP or the INLA. He did not consider leaving the organization but he was not active for two years after he got out. The reason for that was he considers it to have been his biggest mistake to get involved again straight after he was released in 1983. Terry says that he was still thinking in 1970s mode but that things had moved

on. So he stayed out for eighteen months. It took him about three or four years to settle back into civilian life but that he still associated mostly with paramilitaries:

"one of the great things about being in prison is that you meet people from all around the country and even today them friendships still exist, very, very strong friendships. So when I got out in 1993 like I would have been going to Belfast, Derry, Armagh looking up people."

He does not consider himself to be a very social person, partially because he does not like drinking, but when he does his social life is with people that were actively engaged themselves in one way or another.

When asked why he wanted to rejoin despite the fact that he no longer believed in the effectiveness of paramilitarism Terry answered:

"There was what was known as the INLA feud, and what we had was a guy called Gallagher who would be a very close friend of mine through prison and whenever he got out of prison he came up and visited me before I got out (…) Even though I viewed myself to become acclimatized to life before I would make a decision, then the decision was really made for me whenever he was assassinated. There was a team of us down here, we were ex-prisoners some of them were, also just out of prison, had sort of acclimatized themselves to outside life again but we all joined en bloc again to defend the INLA (…) It was 5 people who were involved in his killing and the INLA killed the whole lot of them in retaliation, we got every single one of them, the last one was only killed a couple of years ago in Lisburn, he was taking his kids to school (..) That sent a good signal: 'no matter how long we have to wait we'll get out revenge.' (…) There was a lot of speculation pointing to a guy called [name] who I know as well, he would appear in the INLA in the 80s but he left, he went his own way, he became a major drug dealer, so the family were blaming him but I know he didn't done it. So the INLA attacked his house during that feud and they fired in the house, which is probably wrong but they did it and his young sister was killed."

Since getting revenge for the assassination of his friend did not take all of their time Terry:

"was pretty much involved with prisoners, basically at the very start. I took over the department and the department really was practically non-existent and what I did was build on several departments but also setting up satellite departments you know like in Derry, Dublin, Belfast so we would get it all together and what it involved was welfare type stuff, like providing families with money, providing families with transport (..) And I was also involved with the INLA at leadership level and we had the IRA ceasefire in 1994 and it was more in play that the INLA would follow suit at some point in time (…) Our position like it was, it was called defense and retaliation: we won't go on the offensive but if there's any sort of attacks in say Nationalist areas then we respond (…) Billy Wright was killed, he was killed in the prison, which was spectacular. He was still conducting his business from within the prison itself and we were very much aware of that so basically the boys put on an operation and it got passed and he got killed. We always knew with the UVF there could be retaliation for it, but we felt in the long term that it would save more lives than it would cost"

The INLA went on ceasefire in 1998 because that was the only way that their prisoners could get released. Terry was involved in the negotiations and says: "we knew that the armed struggle was finished, so let's get the best we can out of it." The INLA opposed the Good Friday Agreement, but knew that it would get passed in the referenda so they took what they could. The latter meant that they were not opposed to an end to armed struggle; it's what the people wanted.

> *"But even in 1998 when we called the ceasefire things didn't really end there, even on a semi-military type side, in 1998 we would have got into a period of 'no claim no blame' but certain things did happen. The INLA were involved but they just didn't claim it."*

His purpose of staying in the INLA for so long was to make sure that the name would not get tainted, it was common practice that other organizations would try to do so. After he got out of prison he applied for a couple of jobs but there was a lot of discrimination, for one he did not pass the security check. After he had become involved with the INLA again he applied for an EU fund in relation to the peace process. He used the money he was granted to build a 'Welcome House' for ex-INLA prisoners and their families. Terry says that he feels very lucky that he got this job; it has kept him employed since 1997:

> *"but the INLA still exists, the structures still exist as well and, there's not guns, so they say, haha (…) If you glance over Irish history it suggests that there's going to be some type of armed conflict at some point in the future so some people would be saying 'well why not build underground in case that does happen.'"*

The purpose of the INLA now is to support the IRSP:

> *"what we're hoping for now to go down the political road. We're hoping that these austerity measures, the whole financial crisis in the Free State and the financial crisis coming here is going to galvanize the working classes."*

Terry does not believe that he will see a united Ireland in his lifetime and it bothers him that, despite all the sacrifices that were made, Northern Ireland is still in Great Britain. Terry does not regret having become involved and would get re-involved if the circumstances arose. When asked about his son's reactions to his having been arrested Terry says:

> *"the last time I was arrested I think it was two years ago like they read out the warrant 'you're being arrested for the murder of such and such and such and such', so that's obviously going to have some*

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sort of impact (…) They're aware that I'm involved in something with those guns and stuff like that you know (…) so that's obviously going to have some sort of impact even though I'd never talked about it."

4 Niall

Niall was born in 1963, and remembers his early childhood as being idyllic. He is from Brandywell, next to the Bogside. His family was "a typical Catholic working class family, 6 children, my mother and father married when they were young." His father worked as a plumber's mate and his mother worked in a shirt factory. His father was involved with the civil rights movement and he remembers going to demonstrations with his grandparents. From 1971 onwards his childhood became:

> *"more and more preoccupied with the occupation. Our home would have been quite near the British army base, just on the banks of the Foyle, which received a lot of attention, both in terms of riots and gun battles and so on. My father was shot dead on Bloody Sunday (…) I suppose for me, and for a lot of our people in the city you know, our lives were changed utterly. I'd lost a father, the family dynamic changed quite a lot and I think sort of the whole dynamic in the city changed as well (…) I mean we went out in the morning after the gun battles to pick up the remnants of what was left behind you know, like bullet shells and that type of thing and I suppose the IRA would have played a part in our childhood as well. We were solidly on the side of the IRA and had no cause to even think of what the other side was or looked like (…) I always remember the time of the Widgery report[5] coming out into Bloody Sunday, I always remember it being on the news and people commenting that that was an injustice (…) I remember actually in 1972 or 1973 I can't remember which one, I remember there was shooting at the bottom of our street and it was a very hot day, it was a sunny day, and I remember saying to my mother who was standing at the front door along with my aunt, the shooting had happened and people had come back out of their houses you know, saying, 'what age do you have to be to join the IRA?' and my mother sort of laughed back and said 'o it will be well over by the time you're 16' (…) as children I suppose we were hoping for the Long War so we could get involved. (…) I suppose my destiny was sort of written for me, (…) our house would be raided quite often but I was stopped in the street and searched far more often. I remember coming out of school, out of secondary school and being harassed by the British army at the school gates."*

Niall was at home on Bloody Sunday and remembers what happened but said:

> *"I don't want to talk about it, it's difficult. But I have to say the experience of that day in relation to my own experience, it remains with me and I choose not to visit because it's too painful. So I don't, I mean it's part of me and the memory is there but I choose not to probe it too often."*

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[5] The first inquiry into the events of Bloody Sunday. The findings of this report were countered in the 2010 Saville report in which it was established that soldiers lied about their actions and falsely claimed to have been attacked.

He joined the IRA in 1980, after "letting it be known" that he wanted to join. He recalls that you

had to wait and see whether or not there would be a response, in his case there was. He had to go

and talk to the same person on a weekly basis for about six weeks and that they:

> *"covered a whole range of areas, none of which I will go into, but you know it ranged from history to education through to the commitment you're making and the threats that lie before you if you do decide to join. So you were basically given the whole sort of, the whole sort of gamut of what it means to become an IRA volunteer and at the end of it you were asked whether you chose to continue or not and I chose to continue."*

When asked what the 'commitment' meant Niall replied:

> *"Basically what it was, was that you volunteered to join, you were still described as a volunteer but essentially your volunteering days were over. You know you were joining a disciplined organization and, you know, a disciplined military structure and you know you basically joined and fitted into the organization as it was."*

Part of 'fitting into the organization' was that you didn't talk about your IRA membership: Niall

did not tell anybody that he had joined. When he joined, some of his friends also did; he had

discussed it with a small number of people beforehand and they all decided to go ahead with it.

By that time Niall was no longer in school. He had left the year before and had a couple of part

time jobs in between. After he joined his life didn't change dramatically in the sense that:

> *"it's not as if being in the IRA you'd be active 7 days a week, or 7 nights a week, that's not the way it was, it was more sort of planned activity at the discretion of your unit leader, your unit leader was basically your next in command and, given the type of conflict that it was, it didn't call for everybody to be active 7 days a week, potentially you were but not actually (…) Most of the time during 1980 I'd be going on training, training weekends and so on and then you spent a lot of time talking to people just in terms of gaining the experiences and helping out in a, sometimes a low level way."*

But this changed in February if 1981 when he "was basically arrested and charged with IRA

membership and possession of a weapon, causing an explosion." After having spent 11 months

on remand, his trial was "short and sweet." The day he went into prison was the day that Bobby

Sands started his hunger strike:

> *"so my whole ehm early prison experience was, it was very, very important to me but I was only a small fish in a large sea and the large sea at that time was the whole sort of Hunger Strike situation that was developing at that time. (…) But by the time we went to the H-Blocks most of the protests were over."*

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He describes his time in prison as follows:

"during the Hunger Strikes a lot of people were arrested because there was a lot of activity at the time. A lot of people would have been in prison for rioting so they would be coming in for a short time. But mostly you were in the wing with another 1 or another 2 (…) I always remember my first day in prison, looking out into the yard and everybody was walking around in a circle and I found it really strange, why would they be walking around in a circle you know. And then it dawned on me that there was nowhere else you can walk, the only way you can go is round and round, that's just to keep the blood flowing you know. so your typical day would be, at that time the prison was mixed between Loyalists and Republicans, so basically what happened was there was an agreement between the, the 2 structures and the 2 sort of unofficial structures in the prison to do things on a day about basis, every other day you would go to the canteen for your breakfast, go to the canteen for your lunch and then go to the canteen for your tea (…) I mean there was a lot of reading, a lot of newspapers, listening to the radio, books and that's it really. On remand you got a couple of visits a week, when you were sentenced you got one. There was a lot of boredom (…) My first Irish lesson was after I went to prison (…) So I came out of prison speaking Irish, fluent in what they call 'Long Kesh Irish' which wouldn't be 'Gweedore Irish', it'd be pools apart, but it opened up a cultural interest in me and I've stuck with it ever since (…) The prison wardens would have been mostly of Unionist persuasion (…) so you would have always held them in deep suspicion and you would have been guarded in terms of what you would speak to them about and sort of always kept your distance. The unofficial sort of IRA structure in the prison would have negotiated certain things with the prison staff at a higher level (…) more in Long Kesh than in Crumlin Road because in Long Kesh there was more or less a static prison population. The prison system was quite draconian up until say 1993 and then things started to relax a wee bit. But they had to be fought all the time and things were taken to the European Court of Human Rights you know. You had to fight for education, you didn't have to fight for unofficial education because that's what you got in the prison and sometimes I would help deliver it, but we had to fight for official education. See I did an O-level in prison, English; this would be like secondary level English. That would all have been fought for and the prison service would have cancelled it at the least notice (…) Eventually the IRA structure broke the prison structure just by sheer determination you know and by the time I left in 1985 they you know, political status had more or less been conferred upon the prisoners (…) I think a lot of IRA people would have been brought up as Catholics and would have remained Catholics right up until the Hunger Strike but progressively from the early 1980s onwards... IRA people would have been regular attendants at mass but that would have plummeted big time, but that was more out of philosophical disagreement between the Republican movement and the church as to the morality of Hunger Strike. The church and the Republican movement split in the 1980s and have never really seen eye to eye since (…) My experiences as a prisoner, I don't think I would swap for anything, there's now literally an early sort of manhood experience and, you know it wasn't all, it wasn't all happiness or great but at the same time my memories of that period are all quite happy believe it or not (…) You're not on your own, in prison you always have several 100 people around you who are the same age, you're likeminded, you're part of a structure and that structure was maintained from the early 70s right up until the year 2000 you know when the prisoners were released. In Long Kesh, the prison system can't sort of isolate you or pick you off and that worked for the benefit of everyone. I made some great friends with people who weren't from Derry; I still would remain very friendly with them until the present day."

After he was released in 1985 he became involved again. He was involved politically with Sinn Fein and he was still involved in the IRA. He says that the ideology of the IRA, that British presence had destroyed Irish nationhood and that Ireland could only get it back and proclaim its own destiny without British interference, was "quite important" for him. Niall recalls leaving prison "still feeling vengeful" and with "a certain degree of politicization" but that he "was a rougher cut Republican" and that "a lot of the motivation was around personal vengeance." About this time in his life he says:

> *"1980 and 1985, you had the Hunger Strike in between and you had a whole sort of process of politicization on the outside and on the inside within the prisons as well. I would have personally benefitted from and been part of that, and so when I got out in 1985 the political landscape had been transformed in that there was more political debate, there was more of a political sort of consciousness and I think people were consciously trying to place equal emphasis on the benefits of political awareness and activity and armed struggle. Sometimes there were major contradictions between them all but they didn't keep you up at night you know."*

He recalls that by the time he got out of prison most of his social life "would have been with people who were likeminded." His social circle "would have been Republican, members of Sinn Fein, members of the IRA" and that out of security "you would socialize with your own kind."

He would receive 'feedback' on his work through casual comments and, although he doesn't remember exactly how it impacted him, thinks that that was important to him. Moreover, he felt that he was progressing towards fulfilling his goal but that they:

> *"all excused the excesses of the foolishness of a lot of the IRA's actions because the motivation of those who carried them out was beyond question."*

Nonetheless, Niall sometimes doubted the competence and trustworthiness of some of his compatriots:

> *"there were a lot if informers within the IRA who were executed, who were caught and executed, because they had gone over to the other side because they had acted basically as double agents."*

His role in the IRA was more or less as he had expected it would be but he:

"was apprehensive about some of the things that I was asked to do, which I done (…) Some of the things that I was asked to do I was apprehensive about because I was not happy with the morality of it nor of the necessity of it. But, and again I'll not go into any detail, I think we all need to keep morality in our minds with regard to anything that we do but particularly in terms of engaging in armed conflict because in armed conflict people get killed, sometimes the wrong people, sometimes innocent people as well and I think hat sometimes the assessment of risk with regard to innocent people wasn't conducted with enough thoroughness you know (…) I'm saying that there are some things that I'm not comfortable with, that's not to say that they were wrong in particular, it's just that I'm uncomfortable with the memories of and that I would have preferred if someone else would have been asked to do them rather than me but there you are."

When asked whether this happened often or more during certain time periods Niall replied that it didn't happen often and that incidences like these were dispersed. However, in the period just before he left the IRA, which was in 1992, he does think there were:

"some actions that were carried out (…) which I thought were just folly and completely, not just contradictory but also very damaging to the Republican cause. One of them was in Derry, where a young man was killed with a bomb and there was another one in 1987."

But what happened after that had a bigger impact:

"I suppose the act that really made me think about my involvement in the IRA was a bomb that went off, not far from here actually, in January 1990 on the same day as the Bloody Sunday commemoration. That was a massive contradiction for me. A young boy was killed just at the corner here by debris from the bomb and I thought that was particular ill-advised and foolish. That really was my first point where I seriously questioned my own involvement and it's probably fair to say that my involvement tapered off during the beginning of 1991. To be honest with you by, the beginning of, I think by the end of 1991, my career in the IRA was over. I don't think I officially left until 1992, so saying you know 'I've had enough, I'm leaving.' I think at that stage as well, there was talk I mean 1991, 1990 saw the first sort of trial ceasefire so at that stage the possibility of a cessation of armed struggle was in the air, there was more talk about bringing around the conditions for lasting peace and I think those things also influenced my thinking at the time. By that stage I had major differences with other people let's say within the IRA and I left you know. I didn't leave with any particular grudge you know, I just felt there are other things that would like to do."

He remembers having started doubting his membership from 1990 onwards. He got married in 1988:

"and I mean we didn't have children until 1996 so it had nothing to do with children or nothing but I thought, we got married it sort of, I mean I remained on in the IRA but I suppose, it's probably fair to say that I was having niggles about what I was, who I was and what I was doing and I suppose I started sort of questioning more my own morality and the morality or armed struggle (…) By 1990 there was no chance of not only a military victory but you know, it was probably fair to say that the military campaign was damaging the Republican cause (…) I also had a bigger choice to make: what

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I should do about Bloody Sunday and during 1990 and 1991 there was a lot of discussion in the city about human rights abuses by the state (…) There was a couple of events that happened in 1989 and one in 1991, the Guildford [6]4 were released in 1989 and the Birmingham [7]6 were released in 1991 and I think that actually created a sort of sense of intrigue in me, because these historical human rights abuses, you know, to live people had taken place in the mid, early to mid 1970s which wasn't too long after Bloody Sunday and there was a palpable sense when the Guildford 4 were released, and then certainly since the Birmingham 6 were released, that change was on the way. I don't know whether that was a signal or not, by the British that they were prepared to do business differently than before, but for me personally I connected the release of those prisoners with something else that could be done around Bloody Sunday (..) My motivation of being in the IRA I've always directly related to, not that I was particularly successful I mean I wasn't a Che Guevara figure and there weren't too many of them about, a protracted act of vengeance. I suppose by 1991 that wasn't getting me very far, on a personal level, but the motivation around Bloody Sunday was the exact same. I think I felt that my own life was becoming increasingly unfulfilled because of the legacy of Bloody Sunday and because as a human rights case it hadn't moved beyond January, or April, 1972. And so I basically left that and took that up."

In 1991 Niall and a couple of other people, his social circle had changed by then, set the ground for the campaign for an inquiry into what happened on Bloody Sunday. The 2010 report exonerated all the victims and placed the blame for what happened firmly on the side of the British Army. He recalls that:

"it was a marvelous time to be active and just doing something, it was a great sense of achievement and fulfillment and I never got any of that when I was in the IRA, there was no great sense of fulfillment, I didn't get it personally anyway."

When asked what it was that had motivated him for so long if he did not feel any fulfillment, he answered that he believed that he was trying to put a historical wrong to right. Niall also confirmed that he had been driven by anger and said that it wasn't until he had become involved in the human rights issues around the Birmingham six and Guildford four that he realized that his anger was more about him than anybody else and that it damaged him, as did vengeance. The fact that he had been victimized and that the state lied about it had made him very bitter.

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[6] The Guildford four were four men that were sentenced to life imprisonment in 1974 for the Guildford pub bombings. Their convictions were quashed by the Court of Appeal in 1989.
[7] The Birmingham Six were six men that were sentenced to life imprisonment in 1975 for the Birmingham pub bombings. Their convictions were quashed by the Court of Appeal in 1991.

Niall says that by the time he left he was "glad to" and that he didn't think that it was going to go on much longer which, he thinks, was probably a contributing factor. If he would have to choose he thinks that Bloody Sunday was the biggest "pull factor."

After he left he "sometimes felt a wee bit sort of at sea" but he didn't change his "political viewpoints nor opinions" or his social circle. A problem for him was the fact that:

> *"people would have saw me as a prominent Republican in the town, so on the one hand I was a prominent Republican and on the other hand I was a family member campaigning for something and sometimes people just saw the one person. And that was difficult at times."*

Niall is currently involved in the Museum of Free Derry and in community work. Now that the Bloody Sunday inquiry has been completed he thinks that Derry is a good place to be and he fully supports the Good Friday Agreement. He doesn't think he will see a united Ireland in his lifetime and he "can live with that." When asked whether, he would have joined the IRA if he had known what he knows now, Niall answered:

> *"I didn't dictate my history, that was dictated to me by others, and then the choices flowed from there. I think by and large it was probably the best choice that a person in my position at that time could make. (…) I don't regret my choice to do, to become a volunteer. I do have some regrets about some of the things that I was involved in but that doesn't remove the morality of the original decision, for me, I can stand over that, it doesn't keep me up at night."*

5 Conan

Conan was born in 1971 and grew up in Creggan, just outside of the city cemetery. He grew up in a Republican family, his father worked in a factory and did some taxiing and his mother was a homemaker. Conan has two brothers and a sister. There was constant violence in his youth. At school he would often see masked men when he looked out the classroom window, sometimes high jacking vans, and that would make it very hard to concentrate on what the teacher was saying. He remembers that a boy in his class was shot dead and that it was announced but that they didn't hear anything else of it. Conan compares this to the amount of counseling that the class of an eighteen year old girl that was recently shot dead in Belfast received, highlighting that he was ten when this happened and that they received no support. In his mind the British Army shot children.

He also recalls that the British Army raided houses and that they put people out of their homes. Despite the fact that his parents weren't actively involved in the struggle, their home was 'always being raided', 'same as now they have a list and just target the people on it every which way.' Conan was throwing stones or throwing bottles every day. The kids in the neighbourhood would make 'silly devices', like wooden planks with nails sticking out of them, that they hoped would stop and derail tanks. He also remembers that they would playact riots, some of them would play the British Army and the rest would throw small stones at them.

In secondary school Conan became interested in Republican politics and he joined the youth wing of Sinn Fein. This is also when he started reading history books, mostly about the struggle and about volunteers, about Bobby Sands and the Hunger Strikers. He didn't read any other books.

Conan would have thought of the IRA as defenders, heroes, as good people standing up to the British Army. Politics was always there in his family, they would visit the jail regularly:

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I remember going into prison and being searched and going in to see the big IRA men, I don't remember what it looked like really. It was a day out.

He does not recall ever sitting down with his family to talk about joining the IRA but he does vividly remember participating in marches. He also went to a lot of funerals; he especially remembers those of prominent Republicans like, for example, Hunger Striker Patsy O'Hara. He remembers that mourners would sometimes get beaten or attacked, that plastic bullets would be fired at them and that Loyalists sometimes showed up to mock the mourners.

When he looks back at it now, not even 'the most ardent supporter' of either side could say that 'their side was squeaky clean' but that there weren't a lot of things that the IRA did that were wrong. He has always admired those that took the step to join a resistance group.

Conan thinks that the goal of the IRA is important, even though there is nothing good about war and despite the fact that the objective should not be for people to use force. He does question the necessity of certain acts. The human bomb, where people were forced to detonate a bomb that would hurt them as well, would be an example of a tactic that generated a lot of discussion. 'Older ones' now wonder, from a moral point of view, should that tactic be used. Some would consider those people to be collaborators and wouldn't consider it immoral. There was also a stage when the British Army and police were attacking mourners and when the IRA would attack an RUC man's funeral by 'back placing' a bomb.

We would have had the situation where mothers, wives, were arrested and where Republicans would start seeing that as an attack on their families. That meant that they would place bombs targeting families of serving police officers. This would sit uneasy with a lot of people, there would be zero sympathy for a British police officer or a British soldier but it was not so straightforward when bombs were placed outside of funeral processions or at the houses of parents of serving RUC members.

When asked about the purpose of the IRA Conan replied:

In my view the purpose of the IRA, their job, was that Ireland was occupied, the British had no mandate for being here, they were an occupying force, the IRA were resisting the British because of the occupation.

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Conan comes from a Catholic family but was not raised as such. He remembers there being a lot of resentment because they sided with the occupiers. As an example of this, he juxtaposes the funerals of British soldiers killed in action in Afghanistan and being buried with a flag on their coffin to the fact that the church would always ask the IRA to remove the tricolour.

Conan was arrested a number of times. The first time was when he was 19. He recalls that the RUC tried to frame him for something and that he was slapped around the interrogation room: it was a nerve wrecking experience, partially because of 'the shock of knowing that you have nothing to do with it.' The case ended up getting thrown out of court, by then he had already been released on bail. He also recalls spending some time in Crumlin Road. At the time they had a policy of forced integration [*they put Republicans and Loyalists together*]:

> *The orders from both sides were that you had to start fighting if you saw a Loyalist. There was fighting every day, it was a situation of total conflict. I was still a child then really, I was scared. The guards would be Loyalists, they would facilitate attacks. The policy of forced integration was a silly policy of the British. The IRA would put bombs inside prisons to kill Loyalists, there would be attacks on people's parents and even on families of inmates who were being driven to the prison in minibuses would be attacked with assault rifles. We would usually be in a cell with 2 people and the cells were alternately Loyalist/Republican/Loyalist/Republican. I have seen people being locked up next to their kid brother's killer. They would be put next to them in a cell and then come and gloat through the hatch. Time was split: Loyalists would take one night and Republicans the next night.*

The second time he got arrested he spent nine months in prison in the Republic for IRA membership. He says that you don't need evidence for internment in Ireland and that this practice has been ruled unlawful by the European Court of Human Rights but that Ireland just pays the fine every year and keeps it open. Conan says that you can be convicted on the word of one guard and that they lie all the time. His arrest had been unlawful, which is why he was released. He spent some time in Portlaoise [*Ireland's only high security prison*] and in Maghaberry. When comparing the two he stated that the guards in the former were ok but that the regime in the latter was very sadistic. He was in Maghaberry last year and the guards 'would try to inflict physical and mental torture' on him:

Examples would be that they wouldn't feed you or, when it was visiting time, taking you out to see your family and just at the threshold after you have seen each other for a second being taken back. And then the kids have to go again. Imagine what that's like for a 3 yr old who came to see his father, how do you explain that?

When he was arrested two years ago he had been attacked by the police:

I received serious injuries, but got charged with assaulting them. I was given a fine which I refused to pay and because of that they gave me 7 months in prison. I ended up with a plaster, the bones in my arms were broken in three places and there was no mark or injury on any of the police officers. I refused to go on probation or to do community service, so I was sent to prison for 7 months. There were dirty protests there. The things that were happening 30 years ago are still happening now. But the government wants to keep the lid on it. I participated in those dirty protests. I was released after 3,5 months. It was a very compacted 3,5 months, I went through a lot. This experience reinforced that nothing has been fixed, it epitomizes what is wrong with the state.

The only support he got when he was in prison was from his family. He remembers that there was a priest that would come round to the prisoners but that he 'didn't have time for him.' He would come and quote Winston Churchill: 'jaw jaw is better than war war'. He did have a nice conversation with a Baptist minister – adding that this probably surprises me.

When asked about it he says that he was horrified by the 1998 Omagh bombing[8]:

It was soul destroying, the tragic loss of life, such a slaughter or innocence. It did nothing for Republicanism or for militant Republicanism. I think that every civilian death should have an effect on those taking part in armed struggle but it doesn't influence my opinion on the armed struggle, it wouldn't make me think that the political solution is the only solution. It's the absence of a political solution that leads to armed struggle, civilian deaths are horrible but don't push the buck either way. The solution is simple: give the people of Ireland a democratic vote, if this would be allowed, then the 6 counties could be voted into Great Britain or Ireland without external interferences. That would be democracy working properly.

Conan never considered leaving politics, he has been in Republican political parties all his life: Sinn Fein youth when he was thirteen/fourteen, Sinn Fein when he was seventeen/eighteen and from 1988 the 32 Country Sovereignty Movement [*this party was not officially erected until 1997*]. He says that he left Sinn Fein because it fundamentally changed its principles. About his membership of 32 CSM he says:

If you are involved in politics you don't really have a personal life, particularly if you're involved in Republican politics. You're being followed 24/7, your home gets raided, they do everything to make

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[8] The Omagh bombing was a car bomb attack carried out by the (RIRA) on Saturday the 15th of August 1998. Twenty-nine people died as a result of the attack and approximately 220 people were injured.

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your life miserable, you know, take your driver's license off you, there's a constant campaign of harassment.

Conan does not think that he will ever see a united Ireland or that the political route will be a success:

In the early days there would have been graffiti with for example 'freedom '76', 'freedom '78', they thought that the IRA's campaign would work, Republicans were saying that freedom was around the corner and it ended up in the Long War. I don't think that we're even close to a united Ireland, I don't think I'll see it in my lifetime, I don't think my 3 year old son will see it in his either. It could even be true that the last 2 decades have led us further away because of former Republican leaders and how much they have compromised. But there is no alternative to the Long War, we have to adapt.

He says that he does not think about the Good Friday Agreement a lot because 'it's still in

operation' but he thinks it undemocratic. When asked why he sacrifices so much for the cause

despite all of the above he answers:

I am still engaged because this is a simple issue of right and wrong. The Irish people have put 800 years in it, generation after generation have stood up against the British, I can't not be involved, they have raped our country and I have the duty to try and stand up to them. Every generation has and should continue to resist.

6 Shane

Shane is from Derry, he was born in 1955 and he grew up in a very religious upper middle class family, he was a choir boy and he went to mass two or three times a week. Several of his family members were priests and they took their annual holidays with Christian Brothers in the Republic. His father was a teacher working for the Christian brothers. His parents were patriotic but peace loving. He lived in the city centre in a mixed Catholic/Protestant area. His street was two streets away from the street that was the heart of riots and marches. Shane remembers the celebrations of the 50[9] anniversary of the Easter Rising in 1966 as a time in which there was an explosion of nationalism in the Republic of Ireland; "music, culture, folk music suddenly record sold and a lot of books." Shane says that one of uncles had fought in the Irish War of Independence and that he "didn't want to end up like my father, who only heard about the struggle, I wanted to be my uncle, at the heart of it all, getting the kudos." He had joined "some kind of youth wing" of the OIRA in 1970 but it "wasn't particularly serious." The amateurism in the OIRA and the fact that they were robbing local shops to buy gas guns, which Shane thought would be completely useless, lead him and his best friend to want to join "the action men" - the Provos. The switch was initiated by his best friend who had heard about their activities in Belfast. When his friend told him that he was going to join them the next day Shane decided to come with him. Once they had found out who to contact in the Creggan "ghetto" they were immediately accepted. They were the first fifteen year olds to join the IRA. After they had joined they were told:

> *"'This is where the action is, you may not be alive in 2 or 3 years, if you are, you'll very probably be in prison.' It's going to be action, action, action (…) We were sitting in houses and they would show us handguns, all types of machine guns, how to make car bombs, nail bombs, but we started with the baby stuff, which was homemade devices made from sodium,*

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[9] When Great Britain was heavily involved in the First World War, Irish Republicans staged the Easter Rising with the aim of ending British rule in Ireland. Several large and small attacks were carried out, most notably on the post office in Dublin's main street – lead by James Connolly.

chlorine, sugar and wax capsules of acid and they taught us how to make these. We were just a couple of kids but we probably burned down a third of the city centre with these incendiary devices and we were glad to make the bombs, so within weeks or months we were fully active."

When asked whether he saw it as a game or took the warnings seriously he replies:

*"we were a couple of 15 year old kids, with no experience of real violence, didn't know what it was, didn't see the consequences of any war, except on TV and you know, they were taking in teenagers who had been watching TV series like Man from U.N.C.L.E and other types of sort of silly, spy stuff (…) we had heard romanticized songs about 1916, you know about the glory days, you didn't see anything about the **gory** days. We were raised on songs about heroes in the good old days, we had no capacity to understand what these adult men were signing us up to."*

He recalls having been fourteen when the British Army was redeployed to Northern Ireland and that there was no animosity in the beginning. However, when they started turning against the Catholic population, by searching their houses, and by stopping people at the army checkpoints he realized that they were not there to protect the population. There were also armed checkpoints around his neighbourhood and one night he was stopped and beaten up for no reason. He was so shocked by this incident that he wrote a letter to the Derry Journal in which he explained what had happened. He had given his name and address and as a result he was harassed regularly by the police and soldiers:

"surely enough when I came home from school I used to be stopped by soldiers, officers, who would threaten me, they didn't like the letter."

He has the most vivid memory of an incident during one of the marches in the Bogside. The Catholic rioters had been beaten back by UDR soldiers[10] and he could see some of his Protestant neighbours standing behind the soldiers. When one of the people on his side starting yelling "let's attack them, let's attack them" he realized that this could turn into a civil war; two sets of civilians at each other's throats and only one street separating them. He was standing at the front

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[10] Ulster Defense Regiment, part of the British Army.

of the Catholic crowd and started shouting "don't do this, don't do this". When this happened he

was already with the Provos but:

"a lot of the time it wasn't that you were a Provo every night of the week, I mean it was maybe 1 to 2 nights a week and other times you were just like everybody else, so we would just be attending a riot or attending a civil rights march. It didn't really affect the rest of your life at that time because you were still, you needed to go home, go to school, you needed to do your homework. You could be just a normal person with normal reactions."

When asked how this reaction fits into his zealousness in joining the PIRA he replies:

"On the radio and in newspapers there was this big fear that Catholic areas would be overrun by Loyalists or the police and there had been an incident in the Bogside where drunken police officers had gone in and smashed the doors of windows and houses clearly inhabited by elderly pensioners. (…) So the main basis for joining or wanting to join was that we as teenagers had to organize to be trained to defend Catholic areas. The very emphasis was defend your family, defend the streets, defend an area. It was all defense oriented. The IRA in Belfast was classed as defenders of the people and with a few people held off large Protestant mobs from entering Catholic areas, this was the early mindset. Of course the Provos had a different mindset, they were going to employ an offensive operation, aimed to destabilize. But this was not communicated to us 15 year olds, they just said, 'we're going to train you, arm you and we're going to defend your Catholic area.'"

Shane recalls that as teenagers they did not realize that their goals were different from the

Provos' goals. He says that they ran a very strong propaganda campaign. In that, Bloody Sunday

"proved to be the biggest giftbox ever" as it helped them "portray themselves throughout Ireland

as the protectors of the people." When asked whether the friend he joined with was the same

friend that was shot dead a year later he recalls that this was not the case. In fact, the friend that

he had joined with had been arrested but was released so soon after that the IRA considered him

to be a traitor and he had to leave the country. The friend that got shot was the first IRA man to

get killed in action and Shane had been with him minutes before it happened. They were hiding

in a house and he had fallen asleep, his friend left him to sleep and left the house. When he got

outside he was shot almost immediately. Because he came from a well-known Catholic family

and was the first to die in action, tens of thousands of people came to the funeral. He was killed

just after internment without trial had been introduced and Bloody Sunday happened a few

months later so there was a lot of support for the IRA from the community at the time. Another one of his close friends got shot dead within forty eight hours after the first one. This led Shane to "drift away virtually completely until Bloody Sunday." The deaths were so overwhelming that he needed to take some time to think and he could effectively leave the organization because these deaths and the introduction of internment without trial had led to a dramatic increase in volunteers. However, in the summer of 1972 the British Army carried out Operation Motorman. This Operation was geared towards taking back the no-go areas in Northern Ireland and for that purpose the British Army deployed tanks and thousands of extra troops. It effectively cleared out the IRA in the area. Shane recalls that in the autumn of 1972 nobody in Derry wanted to volunteer. When he was sitting in class one day, listening to a machine gun battle going on just outside the classroom he realized that he was the only one in the class who would be able to name the IRA men fighting that battle. He decided to go back because he thought:

> *"I can't be sitting here, holding a book, where the future of the whole country could be decided on the streets, where very close friends of mine could be killed on the street, I just couldn't do it so I just made the decision."*

He had stayed with his brother in London during the summer and when he came back, after the Operation, the Army was even more oppressive and aggressive than before. Shane went to see Martin McGuinness[11] to ask permission to "go full time in the city" and was welcomed back with open arms. By 1973 a lot of people had gotten involved. When asked whether he single-handedly revived the PIRA in Derry Shane replies that there were a few of them but that he was "right at the heart of it." For a short time, while they were trying to figure out what the best approach was, he was a sniper. After about eight to ten weeks he went back to "my normal skill and methodology which was explosives and bombs, these booby traps for soldiers and stuff." He recalls that it was always up to him what type of action he wanted to take, there was no need for

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[11] Martin McGuinness is a former PIRA leader who is now a prominent politician for Sinn Fein, he was their candidate for the 2011 presidential elections in Ireland.

coordination because the point of action was just to show strength and any kind of action "made it look as though we had a lot of support in the community." While the PIRA grew rapidly it also got more organized and as Shane recalls they "had phenomenal control over things, with all these new gadgets and the first letter bombs." He was injured when showing somebody how to make a letter bomb and shortly after that he was asked to go to London. Ten people from Belfast had been captured after a bombing and they asked him to "wreak havoc, will you go over there with these letters of yours." He ended up doing a one man operation for a few months, it made world news.[12] After he got back, and a few operations later, he got into a "row" with General Head Quarters, they:

> *"wanted me to stop giving warnings; any time you planted a bomb you'd give warning, a coded warning. I had set this up with the press association myself and gave them the code 'double X' so if I rang up and said 'this is double X there is a bomb in Oxford street' or something, they knew it was true because I had proven to them that this was real. So I was called back to Dublin and I was told to do no warning bombs in London. I refused and I was threatened by this guy who pulled a gun and put it at my head and said I had to take orders."*

He stayed in the Republic for a while after this and when he got back to Derry the Brigade there "wasn't too happy because they thought that I was too hot for this city."

Shane recalls that there was not much time to be social while he was in the IRA, nor did they ever celebrate any of the victories. About his dating life he says:

> *"we had these ridiculous short periods of dating and it was really weird because both parties could get arrested or killed any second so it was very simple, it was such an innocent age, you couldn't even hardly imagine how innocent it all was, we didn't know about dating but we were prepared to die or go to prison, didn't even know what sex was for God's sake, we were kissing and cuddling, young teenagers because it was an innocent age in that sense."*

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[12] The letter bombs were delivered to, amongst others, 10 Downing Street, where it sat in a waste bin for 24 hours, and the London metro. He became the most wanted man in the United Kingdom after this campaign.

Shane's family did not support him after he joined the PIRA, and he would lie to them as much as possible to keep them happy. By the time he was arrested his father had died. His mother did support him fervently, she visited him in prison in London for the full fourteen years.

Shane doubted the competence of a lot or IRA members recalling that at times it was like a 'Dad's Army', this is why he preferred doing things himself.

In 1974, just after he got back from Dublin, there was talk of a ceasefire He and the Derry Brigade were pro "because we felt it had gone on too long." "As soon as the ceasefire happened we were told we were safe, myself and Martin McGuinness." But, like Terry, he was arrested anyway. The police that came for him told him that they were arresting him because they wanted to break the ceasefire. And indeed, within two days the PIRA had ambushed and killed a policeman. In prison, guards came into Shane's cell and told him that the policeman that had been killed was the son of the principal officer in charge of the prison and that they were going to hang him: "it was a very violent time in the prison, they beat the shit out of me, I was amazed by how sectarian and extreme the Belfast prison was." In his time in Belfast he found out that the PIRA in Belfast carried out sectarian killings, he was outraged by the fact that they targeted civilians and wrote their leader a letter: "saying that this went against everything we stood for." The result was the he was isolated from the prison population having had the nerve to even ask that question. He recalls:

> *"November 1974 was the first time that many, many people doubted. I was in Derry in a safe house with Martin McGuinness in November 1974 when you had the Birmingham pub bombings. This prominent Republican, Martin, was really very angry, I had never seen Martin so angry, I was really shocked that he was talking about it in terms of leaving the Republican movement if it turned out that we had done it. GHQ really covered this up and we were really glad that the whole ceasefire thing came to being in 1975. But, to be arrested during the ceasefire after I had been such a proponent of it and the bad treatment I got from this Belfast Brigade person who was shocked that I was asking about the sectarian murder of Protestants this really, really caused me huuuuge distancing. It had the effect of creating huge doubt in my mind that they weren't telling other peripheral parts what was going on.*

we were really being treated like dumb schmucks, rednecks who were constantly being told that the people getting shot were UVF or UDA members."

After four months he was released, immediately rearrested and flown to London to face charges

for the letter bombing campaign. He spent about a year on remand and:

"began to read a lot, studying prisoners rights and human rights and I was reading about the faith and the gospel and so on. I did a very unusual thing at trial, I didn't recognize the court but I made an apology to the innocent working class people injured by me and anything I did (…) I just did it because I thought it was right and then I when I was sentenced I refused to wear the prison uniform, I was naked in solitary for 14,5 months. In fact, this protest about criminalization, I was naked in solitary before the H-Block thing even began, I had my own battle, I refused to put on the criminal uniform, was put in solitary and it was during that period of reflection, reading, thought and prayer that I didn't really want to be a member of the movement anymore and I plotted my resignation."

Shane was protesting because he was not given political status in London, while the prisoners in

the North did have this status. About this period he says:

"You're talking about being naked in solitary confinement from September the 10th 1976 to God, early November '77, it was a very long time. When you're naked in solitary you're freezing cold, you're always hungry because your metabolism has to burn everything to keep you warm because you're living on the worst prison food. I practiced yoga, could read, I really read like 2 books a week, I had the bible and a dictionary, I read the dictionary from end to end and colour coded it, and I read novels like Hemingway's 'For Whom the Bell Tolls' and this book about a young father in the civil war, that gave me the idea to write my story. They took the bed, they took the mattress and the bed out of the cell at 6:30 AM and I had a very, very small towel around my waste that I had to fold together with this wee screw that I found, this tiny screw and I could get out of the cell you know to slap out 2 or 3 times a day, in this pissing pot in the bathroom area and they'd be watching me while I did this. Food was taken to my cell door, I didn't have any exercise, I was basically in the cell 24 hours, I got a visit every 4 months and they'd bring the bed back into the cell at 8 o'clock at night, around 8:30 or something, with the mattress and the blankets. I didn't get into it until about 10 or 11 to steel myself, I would jog on the spot and just entered a different zone, trying to keep fit, walking up and down, reading, thinking, reading books about faith and prayer. I wouldn't speak to any priest, there was a chaplain there, he hated me, I hated him, but during that year we became friends and then we became very good friends. It was this English priest, he eventually confessed me out of the IRA, so what did I do? I thought, I was a thinker, I became a thinker."

When asked if he ever felt incredibly angry, frustrated or depressed Shane replied that he did, "a

ton of times", but that the great thing about solitary confinement was that he had his own space.

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He also recalls coming across some very fair people, a senior prison officer for example. He was not angry with himself for the choices he had made but he had felt a sense of relief when he was arrested, because it took him "out of the game." He even says that he was "tuning into life in London" by listening to British radio and reading British newspapers: "the largest amount of time I was in London, and I quite liked that and I got very used to that life." When he was moved out of solitary confinement he:

> *"had to learn how to cope with being rejected, literally by all the other Irish prisoners, except for 1 or 2 of them. But then I met the Birmingham 6 guys and some of the Guildford 4 guys and as I wrote a lot of letters for them and got MPS, Bishops and Cardinals to visit them. So on the one hand I was rejected and on the other hand I really got close to them. I also had my own campaign and eventually won it to get back to Northern Ireland but, later I was back in solitary for 2,5 years, up until 1985 I was again in solitary but I eventually won that."*

In the 2,5 years that he spent in solitary confinement he wrote a lot of letters, a few a day and:

> *"eventually there was a huge amount of publicity about my conditions, there was such a lot of it that I was moved back. After about 8 or 9 months I was taken out of Category A top security to a prison that I could just walk out of if I wished. When I didn't do that, suddenly I was moved back to Northern Ireland."*

When Shane got back to Northern Ireland he was kept in Long Kesh, where he refused to go to the wings that were being controlled by the IRA. Because of this he was kept in solitary confinement for a week, after which he was moved to the criminal/sex offender wing. He says that it took two years but that int this time hundreds of men joined him there. Both Loyalists and Republicans who wanted to "get away from the Loyalist and Republican paramilitaries." Because they were 'mixing' they were all taken to Maghaberry prison. This prison became the first prison where Loyalists and Republicans were not separated. He remembers that the situation in Long Kesh was always very tense but that there was not much opportunity for violence. The fact that he was not in a controlled wing did mean that they were constantly picked on by the guards. They would be charged with "silly offenses."

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"When we were mixing we were all working together but there was great stress and tension always about the life sentence review board, I was one of the few people to engage with them."

Shane was released after his case had been taken up by the International Red Cross as a pilot case to get life sentencers that were not being held for murder charges released. He had been accepted to Trinity College in Dublin and went on to do a degree in English.

After he got out he was sometimes fearful of acts of retaliation, especially when he appeared at a public function with a former prominent Loyalist leader – he later found out that the INLA had plotted to kill them both – but this faded away after a while. Because he needed to earn a living while being in University, he tried to get a job as a journalist. In order to convince the magazine that he wanted to work for to hire him, he told them that he would get them a story about Martin McGuinness wanting to broker peace. He talked to McGuinness and the article in which it was indeed announced that the IRA was willing to negotiate became national news. This marked the unofficial beginning of the peace process that eventually led to the signing of the Good Friday Agreement. Shane made a lot of money in IT, did a degree in philosophy and studied theology. He considered joining the clergy and studied to become a priest for a few years but he decided it was not for him and currently works for a homeless shelter. He says that every day is an act for redemption for him but. Nonetheless, if he would have to go back in time and make the decision to join the IRA again "I would have done it again, there's no doubt." That does not mean that he does not regret killing people "for transient political reasons." He is grateful for his time in prison 'because it gave me time to become myself, to grow and become independent."

The Free Derry sign.

Mural depiction various scenes during the Battle of the Bogside.

Mural in commemoration of Bloody Sunday.

Mural related to the Blanket Protest and the Hunger Strikes.

	Patrick	Shane	Aidan	Terry	Niall	Conan
RADICALIZATION						
Born	1952	1955	1957	1958	1963	1971
Republican family	?	?	+	+	+	+
Parents in civil rights movement	-	-	+	+	+	-
Violence during youth	+ (sexual abuse)	-	+	+	+	+
Raids, harrassment	-	+	+	+	+	+
Marched as a child	-	-	+	-	+	+
Rioted as a child	+	-		+		+
Status IRA – pre	-	+	-	+	+	+
ENGAGEMENT						
Joined IRA	1969	1970	1972	1974	1980	X
Trigg. Event – pre *direct	Discrimination* Battle of Bogside*	Battle of Bogside	+	Bloody Sunday	Bloody Sunday* Widgery report*	X
Level of training	+	+	+	++	++	X
Trigg. Events- during *direct	Internment* Bloody Sunday*	Internment Bloody Sunday Operation Motorman	-	-	-	X
Support org - prison	-	-	-/+	-/+	-/+	X
Support org – > prison	-	-	+	-	-	X
Family/community support	+	-/+	+	+	+	X
Church support	-	-	-	-	-	X
Level of violence	+	+++	+	+++	++	X
Years in par. group	8 yrs	5 yrs	15 yrs	34 yrs	11 yrs	X
PRISON						
Age to prison	19	20	17	15	18	19
Time in prison	7 months	14,5 yrs	17,5 yrs	18 yrs	4 yrs	> 1 yr
In prison before '76	+	(n.a., in UK)	+	+	-	-
In prison 1976-1981	-	(n.a., in UK)	+	+	-	-
In prison after '81	-	+	+	+	+	+
Solitary	-	4,5 yrs	-	< 1 yr	-	-
DERAD/DISENG						
Normative	+	+	-/+	-	+	X
Affective	-	+	-	-	-	X
Continuance	-	-	+	-	-	X
Deradicalized	+	+	-	-	+	X

[1] Martin Melaugh and Brendan Lynn, *Some Frequently Asked Questions - The Northern Ireland Conflict*, accessed 25 May 2012, http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/faq/faq2.htm#what.

[2] The interviewees, however, use the different names.

[3] John Horgan and John F. Morrison, "Here to Stay? The Rising Threat of Violent Dissident Republicanism in Northern Ireland,"*Terrorism and Political Violence* 23 (2011): 642-643.

[4] Ibid: 660.

[5] Ibid: 654.

[6] J. Bowyer Bell, *On Revolt: Strategies of National Liberation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), 201-205.

[7] Robert W. White, "From Peaceful Protest to Guerilla War: Micromobilization of the Provisional Irish Republican Army,"*American Journal of Sociology* 94-6 (1989): 1282-1283.

[8] "The Party comprehensively rejects the Good Friday Agreement as an imperialist-backed undemocratic sabotage of true peace and freedom in Ireland." IRSP website: http://www.irsp.ie/Background/whoweare.html (accessed 24 May 2012).

[9] Martin Melaugh, Brendan Lynn, and Fionnuala McKenna, "Abstracts on Organizations", http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/organ/iorgan.htm (accessed 25 May 2012).

[10] The website of their Derry wing is: http://www.derry32csm.com/ (accessed 25 May 2012)

[11] Melaugh et al, *Abstracts on Organizations.*

[12] CIRA's political wing is considered to be Republican Sinn Fein, which was formed in 1986, as was CIRA.

[13] Tinka Velduis and Jorgen Staun, "Islamist Radicalization: A Root Cause Model," *Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael* (2009): 4.

[14] Peter T. Coleman and Andrea Bartoli, "Addressing Extremism,"*ICCCR and ICAR* (2012): 2.

[15] The International Conflict Research Institute. http://www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/

[16] Melaugh, Martin and Lynn, Brendan. "A Glossary of Terms Related to the Conflict", http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/glossary.htm (accessed 25 May 2012).

[17] Randy Borum, "Radicalization into Terrorist Activity I: A Review of Social Science Theories," *Journal of Strategic Security* 4,4 (2011): 7-36.

[18] Ibid: 7- 36.

[19] Nick Hopkins and Vered Kahani-Hopkins, "Reconceptualizing 'Extremism' and 'Moderation': From Categories of Analysis to Categories of Practice in the Construction of Collective Identity," *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 48-1 (2009): 99-113.

[20] Hence the title of this thesis, which is taken from the interview with Aidan.

[21] Maxwell Taylor and John Horgan, "A Conceptual Framework for Addressing Psychological Process in the Development of the Terrorist," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 18 (2006): 585-602.

[22] The only exceptions to this rule are the cases in which there is individual radicalization to political violence; cases in which an individual acts alone. In general, groups of extremists are unlikely to accept someone as a member when the person has traits that will make them unreliable.
Clark McCauley, and Sophia Moskalenko,. Mechanisms of Political Radicalization: Pathways toward Terrorism. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 20 (2008): 408.

[23] Andrew Silke, "Cheshire-Cat Logic: The Recurring Theme of Terrorist Abnormality in Psychological Research," *Psychology, Crime and Law*, 4-51(1998): 69.

[24] Maxwell Taylor, "Rational Choice, Behaviour Analysis and Political Violence, *Routine Activity and Rational Choice: Advances in Criminological Theory*, ed. Ronald V. Clarke and Marcus Felson (New Jersey: Transaction Press, 1992).

[25] Taylor and Horgan, "Psychological Process in the Development of the Terrorist," 585.

[26] Ibid: 586-588.

[27] John Horgan, *Psychology of Terrorism* (London: Taylor and Francis, 2005),71.

[28] Borum, "Radicalization into terrorist activity," 7-36.

[29] Maxwell Taylor, *The fanatics: a Behavioural Approach to Political vVolence.* (London: Brassey's, 1991).

[30] One of the most notable criminological rational choice theories makes a core distinction between offenders' choice to get involved in criminal activity and their decision to engage in specific criminal offences arguing that they require different types of decision-making. Seeing as though these theories are geared towards explaining deviant behaviour that poses a risk to the perpetrator they can be deemed possibly applicable to explaining an individual's pathway from radicalization to paramilitary activity John Horgan. *Psychology of Terrorism* (London: Taylor and Francis, 2005): 70.

[31] Taylor and Horgan, "Psychological Process in the Development of the Terrorist," 588-589.

[32] Taylor and Horgan, "Psychological Process in the Development of the Terrorist," 589.

[33] Ibid: 592.

[34] Ibid: 591.

[35] Taylor, "Behaviour Analysis," 175; Horgan. Psychology of Terrorism, 70.

[36] Taylor and Horgan, "Psychological Process in the Development of the Terrorist," 592.

[37] Ibid: 592-593.

[38] S. Hall, "Signification, Representation, Ideology: Althusser and the Post-Structural-Debates," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 2,2(1985): 91-114.

[39] Taylor, "Behaviour Analysis," 172.

[40] Taylor and Horgan, "Psychological Process in the Development of the Terrorist," 593.

[41] Taylor and Horgan, "Psychological Process in the Development of the Terrorist," 594-595.

[42] Horgan, Psychology of Terrorism, 85.

[43] Taylor and Horgan, "Psychological Process in the Development of the Terrorist," 588.

[44] Horgan. Psychology of Terrorism, 72-73.

[45] Robert W White, "From Peaceful Protest to Guerrilla War: Micromobilization of the Provisional Irish Republican Army," *American Journal of Sociology*, 94-6 (1989):1283.

[46] Melaugh, Martin and Lynn, Brendan. "A Glossary of Terms Related to the Conflict", http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/glossary.htm (accessed 25 May 2012).

[47] The division between Nationalists and Loyalists in Belfast, the other big city in Northern Ireland, was much more even.

[48] White, "From Peaceful Protest to Guerrilla War,"1283.

[49] The Apprentice Boys of Derry are Unionists that commemorate the siege of Derry in the 17th century, on the 12th of August each year by holding a festival that ends in marches through the city. Martin Melaugh, Martin and Brendan Lynn, "A Glossary of Terms Related to the Conflict", http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/glossary.htm (accessed 25 May 2012).

[50] Martin Melaugh,. Conflict Archive on the Internet. A Chronology of the Conflict – 1969. http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/chron/ch69.htm (accessed 23 May 2012).

[51] Martin Melaugh,. Conflict Archive on the Internet. A Chronology of the Conflict – 1969. http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/chron/ch69.htm (accessed 23 May 2012).

[52] Martin Melaugh,. Conflict Archive on the Internet. A Chronology of the Conflict – 1969. http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/chron/ch69.htm (accessed 23 May 2012).

[53] Horgan. Psychology of Terrorism, 75- 76.

[54] In the summer of 1969, after the Battle of the Bogside security forces were prevented from entering the neighbourhoods through the erection of barricades. This happened all throughout Northern Ireland due to which these areas were referred to as 'no-go areas'. As a result of this the slogan 'You are Now Entering Free Derry' was painted on the gable of one the houses in the area. The site became known as the Free Derry Corner and still exists, even though the house was demolished.
Martin Melaugh and Brendan Lynn,"A Glossary of Terms Related to the Conflict," http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/glossary.htm (accessed 25 May 2012).

[55] Bill Rolston, Drawing Support: Murals in the North of Ireland. http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/bibdbs/murals/rolston1.htm (last accessed 23 May 2012).

[56] Horgan, Psychology of Terrorism, 78.

[57] Horgan, Psychology of Terrorism, 87-89.

[58] Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, "Beyond Identity," *Theory and Society*, 29 (2000): 44-46.

[59] Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity without Groups*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004),164.

[60] Brubaker, Ethnicity without Groups,168.

[61] Brubaker, Ethnicity without Groups,169.

[62] Clark McCauley and Sophia Moskalenko, "Mechanisms of Political Radicalization: Pathways toward Terrorism," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 20 (2001):354.

[63] IIbid:354

[64] M.B. Brewer and , R.J Brow, "Inter-group Relations," *Handbook of Social Psychology I*. Vol. 2., ed. D.T. Gilbert, S.T. Fiske and G. Lindsey (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1998): 578-579.

[65] McCauley, "Mechanisms of Political Radicalization", 343.

[66] D.R Kinder, "Opinion and Action in the Realm of Politics," In *Handbook of Social Psychology I*. Vol. 2. ed. D.T. Gilbert, S.T. Fiske and G. Lindsey (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1998): 801.

[67] Kinder, "Opinion and Action in the Realm of Politics," 803.

[68] Ibid: 837.

[69] Clark McCauley, "The Psychology of Group Identification and the Power of Ethnic Nationalism," *Ethnopolitical warfare. Causes, Consequences, and Possible Solution,* ed. David Chirot, and Martin E.P Seligman, (Washington D.C.: American Psychological Association, 2001): 346.

[70] Hans Toch, *The Psychology of Social Movements* (London: Methuen, 1971), 5.

[71] Tajfel, Human Groups and Social Categories, 244.

[72] Henri Tajfel, *Human Groups and Social Categories* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 254-258.

[73] Brewer and Brown, "Inter-group Relations," 564.

[74] Tajfel, Human Groups and Social Categories, 256.

[75] Tajfel, Human Groups and Social Categories, 245.

[76] Ibid: 267.

[77] Robert Brown, *Group Polarization in Social Psychology: the Second Edition* (New York: Free Press,1986):200-244.

[78] Craig Haney, "The Psychological Impact of Incarceration: Implications for Post-Prison Adjustment," *Working Papers for the "From Prison to Home" Conference, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, The Urban Institute January 30-31* (2002): 4-5.
[79] Ibid: 6.
[80] Ibid: 5.
[81] Ibid: 6.
[82] Ibid: 7.
[83] Ibid: 10.
[84] Ibid: 9-10.
[85] Ibid: 11.
[86] Ibid: 12.
[87] Ibid: 14.
[88] Ibid: 15.
[89] Ibid: 12.
[90] Coleman, Peter T. and Bartoli, Andrea. 2010, 1.
[91] Ibid: 25, 26
[92] Ibid: 28
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[126] The first inquiry into the events of Bloody Sunday. The findings of this report were countered in the 2010 Saville report in which it was established that soldiers lied about their actions and falsely claimed to have been attacked.

[127] When Great Britain was heavily involved in the First World War, Irish Republicans staged the Easter Rising with the aim of ending British rule in Ireland. Several large and small attacks were carried out, most notably on the post office in Dublin's main street – lead by James Connolly.

[128] This Operation took place in the summer of 1972 and was geared towards taking back the no-go areas in Northern Ireland. For that purpose the British Army deployed tanks and thousands of extra troops. It effectively cleared out the IRA in the area.

[129] James Connolly was an Irish Republican and socialist leader. He was the leader of the Dublin Brigade when the Easter Rising took place in 1916; de facto he was in charge of what happened.

[130] He is an important member of 32 CSM.

[131] The Guildford four were four men that were sentenced to life imprisonment in 1974 for the Guildford pub bombings. Their convictions were quashed by the Court of Appeal in 1989. The Birmingham Six were six men that were sentenced to life imprisonment in 1975 for the Birmingham pub bombings. Their convictions were quashed by the Court of Appeal in 1991.