2   What Did the Civil Rights Movement Want?

Changing Goals and Underlying Continuities in the Transition from Protest to Violence

Niall Ó Dochartaigh

Introduction

Early social movement research tended to draw a sharp distinction between peaceful protest and armed conflict. One consequence of this was that social movement researchers tended to focus on stable democratic societies rather than divided societies where political violence was an important part of the repertoire of contention. This sharp distinction between protest and political violence has been strongly challenged over the past two decades by research that locates both forms of contention within a broader continuum of contentious politics and explores the strong links and continuities between them. Della Porta's groundbreaking work on the transition from protest to violence in 1970s Germany and Italy (1995) was one of the first studies to show just how intimately they were interrelated. Robert White's work on the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) (1989) was one of the earliest social movement analyses of these links in the Irish context. The development of the contentious politics frame (see, for example, McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001; Tilly 2003; Tilly and Tarrow 2007) has reinforced this understanding. As Tilly (2003: 238) puts it:

> [C]ollective violence [...] emerges from the ebb and flow of collective claim making and struggles for power. It interweaves incessantly with nonviolent politics [...] and changes as a consequence of essentially the same causes that operate in the nonviolent zones of collective political life.

A growing body of work in recent years demonstrates the very close links between protest and subsequent outbreaks of violence, the persistence of peaceful protest tactics alongside the use of violence, and the important continuities in terms of social relations and political dynamics (for a review, see Bosi and Malthaner 2015).

Despite this, the literature continues to see a sharp distinction between protests and political violence in certain respects. Political violence seems to be accompanied by radically different aims and goals. Protests seeking reform and amelioration of grievances within existing structures give way to violent groups with strong ideologies and demands for dramatic territorial and constitutional change. This argument has frequently been made in analyses of the shift from civil rights protest to republican armed struggle in Northern Ireland after 1969. Modest demands for reform in housing allocation, the franchise and employment discrimination were replaced by the aim of reunifying Ireland and expelling the British state from Northern Ireland. Armed organizations might have emerged from a context of peaceful protest but their goals seemed to indicate a sharp break rather than continuity with the goals of protestors.

This chapter re-examines and reassesses the aims and goals of the civil rights movement and finds surprising continuities in goals between these two different phases of contention. It argues that these continuities are directly related to the distinctive political dynamics at work in divided societies where differential access to state power and institutions is at the heart of political disagreement and conflict.

The chapter begins by outlining contemporary debates on the character, sincerity, and material basis of the movement's goals and aims and the way in which those debates were linked to wider struggles over the allocation of political responsibility for the turn to violence. These debates shaped the first wave of academic analysis of the civil rights movement's goals. The chapter outlines how this first wave of scholarship on movement aims has been augmented in recent years by a large body of new work within the social movement tradition. This more recent work emphasizes political process and the dynamic and contested character of movement goals. The chapter then examines the importance of two major continuities in the goals of the movement, relating to repression and to the institutionalization of the power of the minority. It examines the extent to which these goals were present before mass mobilization and continued to be central to the programmes of armed republican organizations after the outbreak of violence. It explains the failure of reform and the transition to violence as the result, in part, of the failure of the movement to achieve these underlying goals. Finally, it looks at the way in which Provisional IRA negotiating positions during the conflict show surprisingly strong continuity with key underlying aims of the civil rights movement.

The chapter is based on extensive empirical research by the author over the course of more than two decades, including interviews with civil

rights activists, former IRA members, unionist and nationalist politicians and intermediaries; newspaper coverage in local newspapers; the private papers of republican leaders and intermediaries; and a wide range of ephemeral primary sources. This includes an exhaustive study of coverage of the civil rights campaign and the escalation of violence (1968-1972) in two local newspapers in Derry, the capital city of the civil rights campaign. These two local newspapers, the *Derry Journal* and the *Londonderry Sentinel*, catered to nationalist and unionist audiences respectively and act as an important check on each other. Primary sources that inform the chapter also include documentation on the IRA's goals and negotiating positions over the course of the conflict drawn from private papers and state archives. Sources are described in more detail in Ó Dochartaigh (1999, 2005, 2011, 2015).

Debating the Goals of the Movement

As the civil rights movement reached the peak of its influence in late 1968 questions about its goals were posed with increasing urgency. What would satisfy the protestors? What would bring an end to the agitation and restore order and stability? The argument that the movement had secured its goals and that the primary responsibility of its leadership was to secure demobilization and work to stabilize a reformed Northern Ireland emerged at a very early stage. After the first reforms in November 1968, for example, the liberal Church of Ireland Bishop of Derry Charles Tyndall was 'quite happy [that] everything seems to have come to a peaceful conclusion' and 'hoped it would stay that way' (Derry Journal 1968). When protests continued into 1969, and were increasingly associated with violent rioting, liberal unionists argued that the demands of the movement had now been met and that there remained no legitimate cause for complaint. After the deployment of British troops and the direct involvement of the British government in August 1969 a more far-reaching reform programme was introduced. When the IRA subsequently re-emerged as a major force, the British government moved closer to the unionist position that the goals of the civil rights movement had been met.

The liberal unionist and British government argument that the goals of the movement were limited and reformist, seeking only to remedy egregious abuses, found a strange echo at the other end of the political spectrum. Republicans who subsequently launched an armed campaign to end British rule also argued that protestors had only been 'looking for their

rights', seeking an end to discrimination and exclusion. The repression of the civil rights movement and resistance to its limited demands were used by republicans as evidence that peaceful protest was not effective and to justify the IRA campaign. As Gerry Adams puts it: 'The civil rights movement had been looking for democratisation of the state, but the state had made abundantly clear the fact that it would not and could not implement democratic reforms' (Adams 1986: 34). According to this version the protestors were seeking only universal rights but were beaten off the streets. The reforms that did come were too little too late. When the British Army was deployed it became implicated in this repression, upholding the power of a sectarian state. Where liberal unionists and British ministers characterized repression as regrettable and responsive, republicans focused on repression as the arena in which civil liberties were flouted most egregiously and flagrantly. The anti-internment marches by the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) in late 1971 and early 1972 are seen from this perspective as fully continuous with the early civil rights mobilization. And the killing of thirteen civilians by British soldiers at the NICRA march on Bloody Sunday in 1972 is seen as the apotheosis of the state's repressive response to mass civil rights mobilization.

Liberal unionists and the British government disagreed with republicans on the relationship between the civil rights agenda and the subsequent violence but they shared the same view of the movement's initial goals and aims. A quite different view of these aims was expressed in the contemporary loyalist placards proclaiming 'IRA = CRA'. Unionist right-wingers argued that civil rights was a front for the IRA and viewed the movement as dishonest and deceitful. As one prominent unionist put it: '[T]he civil rights movement was seen as a Trojan horse or stalking horse for Republicanism' (Clifford Smyth, quoted in Maney 2007: 22).

They argued that the movement's true goals, to weaken the Unionist government, destroy Northern Ireland, and reunify Ireland, were deliberately concealed. The fact that violence escalated despite reform was confirmation of this insincerity.

This view finds a strange echo at the far end of the spectrum, from left-wing radicals such as Eamonn McCann who emphasized far-reaching goals of social transformation and deliberately sought to provoke a repressive state reaction in order to radicalize people (McCann 1993). These contrasting contemporary analyses of the movement's goals, as limited and reformist or covertly radical, set the terms for subsequent academic debate.

From Conspiracy Theory to Political Process Theory

Scholarly debate on the goals of the movement moved through two distinct phases. The first phase began with Paul Arthur's 1974 study *The People's Democracy* and was subsequently dominated by John Whyte's key article on discrimination (1983) and exchanges between Hewitt (1981, 1983), O'Hearn (1983), and Kovalcheck (1987) in the *British Journal of Sociology*. Debates centred on the sincerity and the substance of the movement's declared aims. Hewitt argued that demands for reform masked a nationalist agenda:

> Since many nationalists believed that a separate 'Six County' state could not survive if Catholics 'got their rights' we can explain why they joined the civil rights movement. They were not implicitly accepting partition by demanding civil rights but instead confident that this was the strategy which would end partition. (Hewitt 1981: 374)

Hewitt argued too that the grievances the movement articulated were unfounded or grossly exaggerated: 'one must abandon the position that Catholics were severely discriminated against in Northern Ireland' (1981: 368). O'Hearn's reply focused accordingly on the question of whether discrimination did indeed take place, an issue addressed too in Whyte's (1983) 'How Much Discrimination Was There under the Unionist Regime?' Whyte concluded in his firmly understated way that serious discrimination had indeed taken place, but that it was concentrated in Unionist-controlled local authority areas west of the Bann.

The second element in this debate – the sincerity of the movement's stated aims – was first addressed forensically in Bob Purdie's 1988 article 'Was the Civil Rights Campaign a Republican/Communist Conspiracy?' The question of the 'real' goals of the movement and their relationship to the subsequent IRA campaign were dealt with at greater length in his *Politics in the Streets* (1990). Purdie was the first to systematically and convincingly demonstrate the extent of republican involvement. More recently, Maney's analysis of more than 200 civil rights events has established that republicans were involved in organizing almost 80 per cent of them (2007: 20). These findings are unsettling for those who seek to put clear blue water between the civil rights movement and the IRA. Purdie also found, however, that republicans did not see the movement as a means to prepare the ground for an armed campaign by the IRA (1990: 129-130). In fact, for many of the Marxist republican enthusiasts for civil rights it was conceived as part of a broader shift away from militarism and towards broad-based political

activism, even if they still aimed for the reunification of Ireland in the long-term.

Although radical forces were involved and never abandoned their long-term aims, their immediate ambitions for the movement were quite limited and reformist. Brian Hanley has recently brought to light an important new source of information on IRA thinking during this period, a report of a meeting in County Tipperary in August 1967 of 25 IRA officers, 'including almost all the IRA's leading figures' (Hanley 2013). One of them, Liam McMillen, was actually a member of the NICRA executive but the civil rights campaign was not even discussed at the meeting. There is little sense in these minutes that the IRA leaders regarded the civil rights movement as a particularly promising or important initiative or that they felt they were on the verge of a major political transformation. And there is no indication that the civil rights association formed any significant part of their military thinking.

This first phase in the academic debate concluded therefore that there was at least some substance to the grievances and goals of the movement. It demonstrated that republicans were more deeply involved than was acknowledged at the time but this did not mean that their support for the reformist goals of the movement was insincere or that reform was not significant and important to them in its own right. In confirming the extent of republican involvement in the movement, it did, however, undermine the argument that these two phases of contention – civil rights and the IRA campaign – were separate and distinct phenomena.

The last ten to fifteen years has seen a second wave of scholarship on the civil rights movement (Bosi 2006, 2007, 2008, 2016; De Fazio 2007; Hancock 2014; Maney 2000, 2007, 2012a, 2012b; Ó Dochartaigh 1999, 2005; Ó Dochartaigh and Bosi 2010; Prince 2007; Prince and Warner 2012). Much of this work focuses on key debates in the social movement literature, analysing the dynamics of mobilization, the diffusion of repertoires of contention, and looking at the relationship between protest and political violence. It includes comparative work on the US Civil Rights Movement which provides a kind of academic echo of the political comparisons made at the time (Dooley 1998; De Fazio 2009).

This work is characterized by a focus on process and on the dynamic and shifting character of the movement. It demonstrates that there were shifts in the composition of the leadership and in grass-roots support but there were shifts too in the movement's demands and goals. Bosi (2006: 83), for example, argues that a shift in structural conditions after the Second World War 'created conditions in which the CRM's initial reformist message (1960-1968) was able to resonate with selected segments of Northern Irish society' but

that 'sectarian cleavages in Northern Ireland reasserted themselves, and this led to the privileging of an antisystem master frame' by 1968. Maney, similarly references political process theory and emphasizes the changing political opportunity structure, arguing that: 'trajectories of contention alter the stated objectives and forms of collective action of insurgents' (2007: 5).

This work stresses that the civil rights movement was a site of struggle between political actors with competing agendas. The formal goals of the movement reflected a compromise between competing political forces, a product of complexity and struggle rather than conspiracy or insincerity. Bosi puts it clearly:

> [I]deologically diverse groups of activists began to forge new ties and relationships that spanned several groups in order to 'symbolically produce' a reformist mobilizing message of civil rights, social justice, and progressive politics, rather than getting mired in time-worn discussions about partition. (2006: 86)

In these circumstances we would not expect the stated goals to reflect the full extent of the political aims of those involved in the movement. They were a lowest common denominator around which all could unite. From this perspective, violence emerged as part of an unpredictably unfolding process in which expectations, demands, goals and political priorities all changed in response to circumstances. As violence and confrontation with the RUC and loyalists escalated through 1969, the movement's supporters and leaders focused increasingly on the issue of repression and Unionist political control. As Bosi puts it:

> Mobilizing messages [...] are social constructions reflecting complex interactions between significant actors in the political system. They do not simply exist a priori in a condition of stasis but they change repeatedly, generating identity shifts, collective redefinitions of opportunities, new alliance structures, strategy changes, and goal transformations. (2006: 83)

Bosi et al. (2014) identify movement-state interaction as one of the four processes that are crucial in radicalization and the transition from protest to political violence. It was direct confrontation with the unionist government and with state forces on the streets that brought the issues of repression and unionist political control to the fore.

This process was further intensified by loyalist counterdemonstrations which greatly increased the opportunities for violent confrontation. On

several occasions the security forces were seen to facilitate loyalist violence or even to work in tandem with loyalist civilians, at Burntollet in January 1969 and in Derry in August 1969, for example. De Fazio, who emphasizes the importance of interaction with counter-movement activists in radicalization, argues that these confrontations 'prompted an *object shift* among activists, as loyalist violence on civil rights demonstrations helped to displace the initial reformist agenda of the CRM' (2013: 484; emphasis in original).

The focus on repression and political control rather than discrimination and voting rights was the direct outcome of interaction with the state during the process of mobilization. But although these issues took on a new urgency and prominence during the campaign, they were not entirely new issues and the continuities here are just as important as the changes. The following sections trace the continuities in the aims of the civil rights movement as they related to those two key issues of state repression and the exclusion of the minority from political power.

Challenging Repression

At the peak of its influence the civil right movement was identified with two main goals: reform of the franchise ('one man one vote') and an end to discrimination in housing and employment. The NICRA constitution of 1967 makes no explicit mention of either voting rights or discrimination, however. Its five objectives were stated in rather general terms:

> (1) To defend the basic freedoms of all citizens. (2) To protect the rights of the individual. (3) To highlight all possible abuses of power. (4) To demand guarantees for freedom of speech, assembly and association. (5) To inform the public of their lawful rights. (Purdie 1990: 133)

We might reasonably argue that discrimination and the franchise were implicit in NICRA's aims of 'highlighting all possible abuses of power' and 'protecting the rights of individuals' but it is striking nonetheless that the word 'discrimination' is not used once. One demand is, however, spelled out in quite specific terms – for 'freedom of speech, assembly and association'. While there is a tendency sometimes to pass quickly over this, it indicates that repression and state restrictions on protest were a central issue even before the marching campaign began.

The Unionist government enjoyed extensive repressive powers under the Special Powers Act, including internment and the power to ban assemblies,

marches, publications, and parties. These powers had a freezing effect that was combined with occasional violent repression to control and restrict oppositional protest. Successful state repression of nationalist and republican demonstrations and protests in the 1950s and 1960s closed down the space for the opposition to exert pressure outside the formal parliamentary system. When the Nationalist Party tried to march in Derry city centre in 1952, for example, the march was banned and then broken up violently by an RUC baton charge (Derry Journal 1952). One consequence of such demonstrations of police force was a great reluctance to defy these bans. The next march to defy a ban in Derry was the civil rights march of October 1968 whose violent dispersal marked the beginning of the conflict.

Republican parades took place at Easter every year throughout the 1950s and 1960s but were banned from urban centres and often hedged about by restrictions on the display of symbols and on the routes they could follow. Sometimes they were banned outright, as in 1967 when Stormont banned the centenary commemorations of the Fenian Rising of 1867 (Purdie 1990: 134). The official history of NICRA states that the association began to realise in early 1968 'that a ban on demonstrations was an effective government weapon against political protest' and that marches would provide a more effective way of exerting political pressure than letter-writing (Purdie 1990: 135). The importance attached to challenging restrictions on protest was emphasized in spring 1968, a few months before NICRA organized its first march. In April 1968, republicans successfully defied a Unionist government ban on the annual Easter parade in Armagh. At around the same time republicans pressed for NICRA to begin a campaign of protest marches (Hanley 2013). The marching campaign was aimed in part at pushing back against state limitations on protest and asserting the right to protest. The banning of marches and the defiance of such bans were not therefore incidental to the campaign for civil rights. Challenging the restrictions on protest and clearing the political space for the use of mass mobilization to exert political pressure was one of the key goals of many of those within the civil rights movement. It was explicitly stated in that NICRA aim of 'freedom of speech, assembly and association'.

From the moment that the RUC baton-charged the march in Derry in October 1968 repression of protest became the central mobilizing issue (Ó Dochartaigh 2005: 291-292). Grievances surrounding discrimination and the franchise had mobilized very small numbers of activists in the previous years. The baton charge, however, immediately sparked off large-scale street rioting in the Bogside and spurred thousands of people to turn up at public meetings and join subsequent protests. The issue of repression, of how the

state treated oppositional forces associated with the minority community, generated mass mobilization in a way that no other issue could. It generated 'moral outrage' (Wood 2003) in a much more immediate and visceral way than the obscure workings of the franchise and housing discrimination.

By 1969, a grudging start had been made in addressing the franchise and housing discrimination, but the problem of state repression had been exacerbated immeasurably. The breakdown of order, the failure of police reform, and the militarization of policing in nationalist areas preceded the IRA campaign and the failure to resolve these issues opened up the political space for that campaign.

Now that repression had been placed at the heart of the political debate and its effectiveness eroded through mass mobilization by the minority population, how was order to be maintained? Those who argued that demands had been met and that protest should be ended provided one answer – renewed quiescence. This brings us to the second of those continuities in the goals of the movement.

Institutionalizing Oppositional Power

The argument that the civil rights movement aspired to relatively minor adjustments to Unionist rule obscures one of its most important goals. The various wings of the civil rights movement had different visions of the future, different strategic priorities, and different ideological preferences but for all of them a central element in that vision of transformation was the ending of the Unionist Party's 50-year monopoly of political power in Northern Ireland. Ending that domination, rather than simply presenting a fleeting challenge to it, would require some kind of institutionalization of oppositional power.

The civil rights movement stretched well beyond nationalists and republicans. Northern Ireland Labour Party and Liberal Party activists played a prominent role along with Marxists of several different varieties, from both Catholic and Protestant backgrounds. It was not a nationalist movement but it was nonetheless a movement that challenged unionist domination and the unionist monopoly on political power. This was one of the main reasons why even liberal unionists steered clear of it. There was a Young Unionist Party member on the first NICRA executive but not on any subsequent executive, and there were no Unionist Party members in the Derry activist groups or the Campaign for Social Justice. Protestant activists in the movement such as Ivan Cooper of the Labour Party or Claude

Wilton of the Liberals belonged to a broader unionist cultural community but they were anti-unionist in the sense that the Unionist Party was their primary political opponent. Although the different wings of the movement envisaged different paths by which the Unionist Party's monopoly on power might be broken, this aim nonetheless provided a unifying focus for almost all of those involved.

One possible route was through the building of an anti-unionist electoral coalition. This was precisely the role that some Marxist republicans saw for the civil rights movement and social agitation in general. Protestants would unite with Catholics on social issues and eventually form an anti-Unionist majority in parliament. Unionist domination would be ended and oppositional power institutionalized through the electoral system. This was not a narrow nationalist vision but a vision of Catholic and Protestant unity based on a shared goal of social transformation. The ending of Unionist Party domination was nonetheless at its centre.

The alliance of republicans and left-wing activists in Derry from the early 1960s focused on a variety of social issues and their agenda looked quite different to that of NICRA. They invoked the rhetoric of civil rights as early as 1963 and 1964 but their primary concerns were poor housing and high unemployment and they were driven by much broader goals of social transformation.

These activists asserted their independence from communal loyalties by stressing that they opposed both 'Green' and 'Orange' Tories, both the Nationalist Party and the Unionists. But the 'Green Tories' were a permanently marginalized, ineffectual, and demoralized opposition party with no power whatsoever. Ending 'Tory' power meant above all ending Unionist Party domination of government and politics. While Labour Marxists and republican Marxists differed in their views on the relative importance and significance of Irish reunification in this process, neither faction was seeking simply to end the most egregious abuses of the system. They sought a much broader social transformation, central to which was the ending of the frozen politics of the North and the domination of the Unionist Party.

As violence escalated the various forces that had united in the civil rights movement began to reformulate their goals. After British troops were deployed in August 1969, local defence committees demanded the abolition of the Stormont parliament as a condition for the removal of the barricades. By the early 1970s both the SDLP and Provisional republicans were demanding an end to unionist domination through the transformation of structures of government. The SDLP worked towards power-sharing arrangements that would guarantee the representation of the Catholic

minority in the North's government along with all-Ireland structures that would give a role to the Irish government. Provisional republicans also sought the abolition of the Unionist-controlled parliament at Stormont. They wanted to institutionalize oppositional power and the position of the nationalist minority through a reunification of Ireland that would make Northern Catholics once again part of an all-Ireland nationalist majority. From the perspective of many unionists this shift from a demand for the ending of discrimination to demands for institutional transformation was evidence that the movement had concealed its true goals. These shifts took place in response to rapidly changing and dramatic events. But they also reflect deep underlying continuities. From the beginning forces within the civil rights movement sought to bring an end to Unionist one-party domination.

The Failure of Institutionalization

The first reform programme was announced by the Unionist government in November 1968 under intense pressure from the British Prime Minister, Harold Wilson. Key reforms included the abolition of Derry Corporation, the end of restrictions on the franchise for elections to Stormont, and the introduction of a points system for housing (see Turner and De Fazio, in this volume).

One major problem with these changes was that the Unionist Party remained securely in control of government with only one significant threat to its parliamentary majority – the threat from the unionist right. This dynamic ensured that reforms were minimized for fear of losing right-wing unionist support. For example, the reforms included a points system for allocating public housing but left it up to local authorities to devise their own systems. Most importantly, this package did not end the restricted franchise in local government and included no measures that would actually guarantee the end of unionist control of districts where nationalists were a majority, except for Derry where a development commission was to take charge. The second difficulty was reversibility. All of the important levers of power remained in the hands of the Unionist Party. When local government was re-organized, when new ward boundaries were drawn, when decisions were made on how much power local authorities would have, Stormont would decide. If opposition parties won control of more local authorities the Unionist Party could ensure that important powers were moved to Stormont where oppositional forces were a permanent minority.

This would be difficult *if* there was intense scrutiny and direct pressure from the British government of the kind that was applied during the civil rights campaign. But this was a big if. The British government had breached the convention that Westminster should not interfere but this change was not put on any firm institutional footing. British involvement would only be assured if there was continuing disorder and pressure from oppositional forces in the North.

McAdam points out that the key problem facing actors outside the political system 'is to devise some way to overcome the basic powerlessness' of their position. Mass mobilization can do this but it is very difficult to sustain over the long term and for a movement to survive 'it must either parlay its initial successes into positions of institutionalized power [...] or continue to experiment with non-institutional forms of protest' (McAdam 1983: 735). If the campaign subsided now before there were major changes to the system of government it could prove extremely difficult to get the British government to intervene in a similarly decisive way in the future. And if sections of the movement were co-opted through a limited institutionalization of their power that left existing power structures intact it could split the movement and remove the more moderate voices.

The most important way in which the power of the civil rights movement was institutionalized was through the setting up of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) in 1970. It was set up by civil rights leaders such as John Hume and Ivan Cooper who had been elected to the Stormont parliament in 1969 along with other MPs who had supported the movement. But the limits of parliamentary power were illustrated at a very early stage. In spring 1969 Hume and Cooper announced that they no longer supported street protest due to the increasing likelihood of violence. Instead, they would move their activism into the parliamentary arena. Their first major stand in parliament was to oppose the Unionist government's new public order bill which outlawed a range of protest tactics, including sit-downs. But the unionist government had the same secure majority that it had enjoyed for the previous half century and the bill passed. The failure of parliamentary opposition in this case indicated that without a transformation of political structures, or ongoing pressure on the streets, unionist power could be restored and reinforced. It made clear the limits of British willingness to intervene on behalf of the nationalist minority. The power of the moderates within the civil rights movement had been institutionalized in parliament. But because this process was not accompanied by institutional change it served mainly to highlight the limits of this form of institutionalization. This form of co-optation separated moderates from more radical sections

of the movement rather than providing the basis for the co-optation of the movement as a whole (Bosi 2016).

The subsequent escalation was a consequence in part of what Maney (2012b) has called the 'paradox of reform' whereby reforms that are slowly and reluctantly conceded serve to demobilize moderate elements within a protest movement. But because reforms are limited, potentially reversible, slowly implemented, and accompanied by a violent counter-movement backlash, those who remain active are more likely to be convinced of the value of armed action. Turner and De Fazio (in this volume) further illuminate this dialectic between reform, counter-movement violence, and escalation. They describe how the Unionist government attempted 'to navigate high disruption and concession costs by alternating limited concessions and repression [...] a rational response to a very vulnerable political situation'.

This first wave of reforms did nothing to address the issue of repression and in fact intensified the restrictions on protest. The next major wave of reforms would address this issue directly, however. In August 1969 the Unionist government requested the deployment of British troops on the streets to restore order because their own coercive capacity had been exhausted. The price of assistance was a major reform package, including reform of policing. It also saw a strengthening of the British government's role in Northern Ireland with the appointment of a UK representative to liaise with the Unionist government. This was reinforced by the appointment of senior British officials to oversee police reform and of an English policeman, Sir Arthur Young, as Chief Constable of the RUC. The UK representative Oliver Wright now began to consult regularly with Cardinal Conway, the Armagh-based Primate of All Ireland, thus opening up a channel of communication with elements of the Catholic minority (Patterson 2008).

In the face of unionist and loyalist resistance, however, the British government retreated from its ambitious programme of change, allowing Stormont to reverse the effect of some of the most important reforms (Ó Dochartaigh 2016; Maney 2007: 17-18). The impact of the single most important reform – the disarming of the RUC – was entirely nullified by the intensified militarization of policing through deployment of the British Army in nationalist areas. Minority political influence remained very weak after these reforms, even as repression, the primary mobilizing issue of the civil rights movement, became an ever more urgent issue. The Sunningdale power-sharing initiative in 1973-1974 failed due to unionist and loyalist opposition and continued IRA violence and it would take almost 30 years before a system that gave institutionalized political power to the Catholic minority was established on a firm footing (Bosi 2016: 354-355).

The Civil Rights Movement and the Goals of the IRA

On the face of it, the Provisional IRA, which escalated its violence from 1970 onwards, had completely different aims to the civil rights movement, seeking to expel the British state by force and reunite Ireland as an independent republic. But while these ultimate aims served to keep the movement united and to motivate armed activists, the negotiating positions the republican leadership adopted during the conflict show very strong continuities with the underlying concerns that had driven the civil rights mobilization. One striking illustration of this is the front page of *An Phoblacht*, the weekly newspaper of the movement, on 24 December 1972. At the height of the IRA's violence, the paper chose to blazon across its front page four preconditions for the end of the IRA campaign:

> WE DEMAND
> Abolition of Repressive Legislation
> British Troops be Withdrawn
> Release of All Political Prisoners
> Full Support for Civil Rights
> Then – and only then – will we have a true and lasting peace in Ireland.
> (An Phoblacht 1972)

There is no mention here of Irish unification, of self-determination, or of core republican ideological positions. It does not mean that the movement had abandoned its goals of Irish unity and sovereignty. The republican leadership was seeking to provide space for a negotiated settlement with the British government in which they would have to compromise on ideological goals. But it is striking that in formulating their negotiating position they stripped it back to a set of issues that resonated very strongly with the original concerns of the civil rights movement and its focus on state repression. None of the demands directly involved Irish self-determination. These limited bargaining positions co-existed with strongly ideological and uncompromising rhetoric that suggested that the movement did indeed have completely different aims to those that underlay the civil rights mobilization. But this strong rhetoric had multiple functions. It was used to keep the movement united and ideologically coherent, to sustain morale and support, and to strengthen its bargaining position with the British state by presenting the movement as strong and confident. In a situation of violent conflict where people are risking their lives to pursue political goals, an ambitious transformative political programme is important in

motivating activists. But the fact that the IRA's bargaining position was so dominated by key issues that motivated the civil rights mobilization show that the highly ideological rhetoric of the IRA obscured deep continuities in goals and aims with the civil rights mobilization that preceded it.

Conclusion

The debate on the goals of the civil rights movement is connected to much broader questions in the social movement literature about the relationship between peaceful protest and political violence in cycles of contention. For many who seek to assert the peacefulness and legitimacy of the civil rights movement it has been important to draw a sharp distinction between these two phases. The way in which the goals of the civil rights movement developed and changed as confrontation intensified demonstrates, however, just how tightly and intimately linked these two phases were, as does the negotiating position the IRA adopted during its armed campaign.

It is widely agreed now in the social movement literature that protest and political violence can usefully be analysed as part of a continuum of contention. In understanding the transition from one phase to the next the discussion of movement aims and goals tends to focus primarily on change. Demands for reform are displaced by calls for revolutionary transformation. Interaction with the state, and with counter-movement forces as well as intra-party competition are important in understanding why new demands emerge and radicalization is defined in part by that transformation of goals and aims.

But given that the concept of continuum emphasizes the links between these different phases, a more systematic exploration of the continuities in goals and aims that run through these different phases of contention might enrich our understanding of this process of change. In the course of the civil rights campaign in Northern Ireland demands relating to discrimination and the restricted suffrage were superseded by the issues of repression and unionist political control. But these latter two issues had provided the deep underlying motivation for many of the movement's founders, before the dramatic confrontations that brought them to the centre of debate. These two issues were to the fore as well in the bargaining positions the IRA leadership adopted in the early 1970s when it engaged directly with the British state.

As well as identifying the importance of these issues in the initial emergence of the civil rights movement we can also trace them forward through the following 30 years to the peace settlement of 1998. That

settlement rested on two pillars. The first was new political institutions which included guaranteed representation of all significant parties in the Northern Ireland government. It firmly institutionalized the power of oppositional forces. The second was conflict resolution measures, including major reforms of policing and the withdrawal of troops from the streets. That is, the settlement secured an end to violent conflict by addressing two major issue areas that had been important to the establishment of the civil rights movement in the first place and that had become its primary focus by 1969.

Given how important these issues were in the settlement that brought a negotiated end to violence, the continuities in movement goals and demands may be as important as the changes. These continuities are directly related to the distinctive political dynamics at work in divided societies where differential access to state power and institutions, and control of the means of legitimate coercion, are at the heart of political disagreement and conflict. When the legitimacy of the state is contested it calls into question its right to monopolise the forces of coercion. In these circumstances political mobilization of a minority through peaceful protest is much more likely to be superseded by violent conflict. While violent conflict brings with it an escalation of demands, partly because of the intensified need to sustain morale, solidarity, and commitment in very difficult circumstances, the key goals that motivated the initial protests and dominated the peaceful phase of contention may well remain at the heart of armed groups' goals and aims, even if intensified rhetoric can obscure this. In excavating and tracing continuities in goals and aims from the earliest stages of mobilization through the most intense phase of radicalization we might ask which of these goals armed militants retain from the early stages of mobilization and which they abandon. Research should focus especially on the negotiating positions adopted. It is only here that goals and aims crystallize in a way that allows us to clearly trace the continuities with previous peaceful phases of contention. Bargaining positions, even if they are communicated indirectly, and even if negotiations are tacit, provide a crucial site at which to understand strategic interactions between challengers and targets and to 'unpack the decision-making processes within movements and authorities alike' (Turner and De Fazio, in this volume). Tracing these continuities might help to identify the underlying issues that run through all of these phases of mobilization, that help to power a violent challenge to the state but that were also present in the reformist phase and are therefore susceptible to resolution through negotiated compromise rather than revolutionary transformation.

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