CLEAVAGE IN IRELAND
AND INTEGRATION IN EUROPE

by

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ABSTRACT:

The object of this study is to examine the implications a new united states of Europe could have for a divided island such as Ireland. The purpose is to assess the extent to which "Project 1992" has affected, directly or indirectly, a member of the European Community (EC), for which there is separate representation for its northern and southern parts.

Specifically, the discussion will be related to the Single European Act (SEA) and its 1992 deadline and the possible consequences for the Irish political scene. Membership of the EC, it is suggested, currently provides the island of Ireland, with major opportunities to make real progress. The potential is there to greatly improve Ireland's present troubled circumstances, if the Irish themselves wish to do so.
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INTRODUCTION:

Recently Europe has been at the center of many dramatic events. These events have taken place both inside and outside the European Community. They have changed and are changing the nature of the Community, primarily by strengthening it as a political entity.

Great historic upheavals, destroying old orthodoxies and old certainties are leaving Europe with new hopes, new visions and a sense that the future is blessedly open. Political and ideological divisions are disappearing. Europe, it has been said, has emerged from a period of Eurosclerosis and Europessimism.¹

There has been a new discovery of Europe by Europeans, particularly with the EC, following the adoption of the Single European Act. The Single European Act marks the culmination of several years of debate about how to restore the impetus to the process of European integration. It represents a great step forward in the history of European integration and has a symbolic and practical importance both within and outside the twelve member countries.

The governments of the EC have committed themselves to grand sounding European goals and currently there is well underway the process of passing three hundred European laws to result in the opening of Europe's frontiers. The project set for 1992 aims to open up a frontierless market in which
twelve nations with very different traditions and systems of
government will co-exist and compete.

In a blitz of speeches and advertising, European
governments are proclaiming the benefits that will flow from
a single European market of the nineties. Citizens of Europe
are being told that by the end of 1992 they will belong to a
sort of European haven and genuine common market in which
neither physical nor commercial barriers will divide them,
and to a market and free trade arrangement which stands to
make them all richer than they otherwise would be.

The creation of a real common internal market is the
biggest single contribution that the community as such could
make towards the restoration of Europe's industrial
competitiveness. It aspires to the overcoming and
reconciliation of previously warring peoples and also
provides for a classic example of how Europe can enhance the
scope and capacity of what can be achieved at a national
level. By 1992 the members of the EC are expected in union
to constitute a real European working order.

Designed to break down the barriers which had hitherto
prevented the EC from becoming potentially the largest
market in the free world, the main aims and objectives of
the Single European Act are for the provision of an economic
environment in which the industries of Europe can be more
competitive on the world stage. A competitive business
arrangement is to be created to foster wealth and job
creation across the whole of the EC and to bring down prices and reduce inflation.

The material benefits of the Community are obvious, and each member judges that there is more to be gained from being in the Community than being out. For although the particular balance of advantages and disadvantages varies from state to state, Community legislation aims to have a direct effect on member states, offering the opportunity for countries to pursue specific interests through collective action.

In particular, the European Commission considers Northern Ireland an area of special significance for two member states and assumes that the thrust of European economic and social development must logically involve integrating the whole island of Ireland. Its document, detailing the Community Support Framework 1989-93 for the north, contains clues to this thinking.

As with all aspects of EC policy, the document attaches special significance to frontier regions. The political conflict provides the main reason why Northern Ireland was made an "objective one region" and the report declares: "...that it is, therefore, important that the EC should contribute in some ways towards alleviating its consequences and, within the EC's possibilities, make some contribution towards achieving a solution."²

The latest manifestation of E.C. assistance, the "Transportation Programme, Northern Ireland 1989-1993" has,
specifically, a cross-border dimension. But it is the Inter-Reg Programme which will raise north-south co-operation to new heights.

The Inter-Reg Programme which covers the years 1990-1994 will have a budget of ECU 800 million. This, in particular, provides a tangible commitment to integration within Ireland (as does the Community's support for organizations like Co-operation North). The fact that, since the announcement of such an initiative in early 1990, there has been little comment, might appear simply to reflect the underlying sensitivity of a programme with a large budget, capable of transforming north-south relations.

Reinforcing the EC's interest in the cross-border dimension within the island of Ireland is also its substantial subvention to the International Fund, amounting to more than ECU 200 million over the next two to three years. There exist those politicians (and businessmen with investments on both sides of the border), therefore, who hope that the EC will ultimately help provide a settlement of the partition problem by contributing to the convergence of the northern and southern economies and by making re-unification with the Republic more palatable to the north.

There is, at the same time, a special role for the EC to assist the British government in disentangling itself politically from Northern Ireland and from a problem that has spanned eight centuries, from the very first time Britain involved herself in the affairs of Ireland.
Britain presents itself as an honest broker in Ireland, desperately trying to establish peace between the two hostile communities of the north. But its involvement is partisan. Since the Northern Ireland state is a partisan creation, Britain is upholding a state which represents the victory of one community over another; discrimination against nationalists and Catholics is built into its very being.

British politicians, moreover, have insulated themselves from the more general problems of the region and have proved themselves incapable of understanding the various difficulties there.

Furthermore, Direct Rule from London is not, in fact, considered a long term solution to the Irish problem. It exists mainly because the variety of settlements, tried in the past, failed to command enough local support to succeed.

There is the hope now, though, that a new solution can be found with future European assistance. Positive intervention on the part of the "new" EC, be it in economic, political or social terms should improve, at least, Britain's own track record in the governance of the island, and increase the amount of financial aid and support Ireland already receives.

Britain and Ireland are currently the only two members of the European community with such an acute outstanding territorial quarrel. In 1922, after one of the first wars of national independence in modern times, the majority of the
Irish people established the politically independent state which is now the Republic of Ireland. Sovereignty over Northern Ireland rests with the British crown in parliament but is disputed by the Republic, whose constitution claims right to jurisdiction over the whole island. The Irish state claims jurisdiction over the six Irish counties which constitute Northern Ireland and remain part of Britain, and the British government refuses to relinquish sovereignty.

The island of Ireland, however, constitutes a single geographical entity, its natural unity destroyed as a result of conquest and colonization, with the existence of a separate six county state standing in basic contradiction to the natural national unity of the whole country. Northern Ireland is regarded by the Republic as a fragment society having broken away from a larger society of which it was once an integral part. In so far as territorial contiguity is significant in theories of nationalism, the proponents of Irish nationalism would argue that the whole state of Ireland should occupy the island to itself. For them, geography, not to mention the history of Ireland and Great Britain, should lead to the existence of two separate island states. The feeling of Irish nationalism, moreover, is already so well established in both Northern and Southern of Ireland that it provides a strong source of identity.

There is the problem within the north-east corner of the Irish island, though, that not everyone has the same
sense of identity and a rivalry now exists between two different nationalist groupings.

In contrast to the Irish Nationalists, comprising one third of the state of Northern Ireland, there are, at the same time, those descendants of the original settlers sent to colonize Ireland more than three hundred years ago, the Ulster Unionists. Comprising two thirds of the population, they refuse to accept Irish re-unification, insisting instead on the continued integration of the area with the British mainland.

Their differences, incidentally, have never been confined to party competition. Religion and disagreement about national identity have led Ulster Protestants and Unionists and Irish Catholics and Nationalists to take up arms to settle matters outside Parliament, and the whole political battle has been waged largely by violence on the streets.

Both parts of Ireland accept the need for violence as a necessary means to their political ends. Discord had been institutionalized for centuries and its intensity involved the use of force to break the deadlock.

Yet, all the inhabitants of Ireland, north and south, are now within an EC which is making a big push towards integration. Integration within Europe is linked to greater integration within Ireland, for integrating Europe involves integrating Ireland. European integration is a dynamic
process in which one step invites and leads on naturally to others.

Within the new Europe which has now opened up there are provided the conditions for an evolving and modernizing integration of the whole island. For Ireland, partitioned as it is, a Europe without borders in the future has especially significant implications.

The 1992 programme of European integration is fast becoming an important economic and social determinant, and a political stimulant in the island of Ireland. Yet is the possibility of progress ultimately to be held back by the by-products of historic British policy and the rivalries of Ulster Unionism and Irish Nationalism, on the one hand, or retarded by the parochialism of economic and other interests in the Republic on the other?

The European Parliament (EP) provides the opportunity for members from Northern Ireland and the Republic to discuss their social as well as economic problems in an assembly that is accepted as legitimate by both. The facilities and encouragement given by the European Commission and the projects carried out through Community funds enable regular meetings to take place on a local and national level between Irish politicians from both sides of the border. These are meetings, incidentally, which take place amidst the conflict within the province of the north, and offer the hope of possible reconciliation.
The growth in mutual understanding among the participants could well be the invisible power which eventually leads to genuine peace and justice on the island of Ireland.

The European framework has also made it easier for the British government (especially after much barren negotiation) to officially discuss with the Irish government the problems of Northern Ireland and to foster an improvement in Anglo-Irish relations.

More significantly, whereas the British government has typically failed to deal adequately with the problems of the north, there now exists a provision in the Single European Act which stipulates that anything that can not be carried out satisfactorily at the local, regional or national level is to be managed at the European level.

The completion of the internal market within the EC, scheduled for 1992, holds out major opportunities from the Irish point of view, both north and south. In a wider European political perspective, with all the strategic social and economic consequences of membership, integration into a single market is expected to create the feeling of common destiny among all EC countries despite their differences. This should contribute to allaying some of the differences between the two Irelands, thus drawing them closer together and improving their present situation. Such, at least, is the hope that underlies this thesis.
CHAPTER ONE: A COMMON EUROPEAN HOME.

As a consequence of World War II, the countries of Western Europe were demoted to a subordinate place in world affairs, facing increased competition from the United States and Japan, as well as the Third World. Hence the governments of Europe have pre-occupied themselves with a collective approach and with attempts to erect a more manageable and effective political unit at some "supra-national" level. The increasing cohesion throughout these years has resulted in the recognizable integration of Western Europe today.

Having long recognized the need to consider, not only defense, but also social and economic decisions within some wider alliance, and in an attempt to maintain peace and prosperity, several of the smaller powers and medium sized states of Western Europe came together in 1952 to remove the customs frontier, the main symbol of the divisions between the countries of Europe, and to erect a common external tariff. This was followed by moves towards the eventual creation of a common market which came into being in the Treaty of Rome in 1957. This European Economic Community (EEC) set up rules to eliminate the monopoly of trade, thus protecting the less developed regions, and also established conditions of genuine competition throughout the Community. It also created a common agricultural policy.
The economic component in the integration of Europe, however, should not be overestimated. European unification in the aftermath of World War II was fundamentally a reflection of the political realities at the time. This was the "functionalist" theory to assure peace and stability in Europe. Thus, economics may have brought the individual European states together, but it was the necessity for political integration that inspired it.

In view of the practicalities, the need to hold Europe together, as well as to face the common problems of "recession, unemployment and inflation", the European Community was a political enterprise formed to stabilize and co-ordinate "a dynamic community in an environment of change". But whereas the Rome Treaty did not state any provision for political integration, in the sense of foreign policy or defense, it was, in fact, aimed and "determined to establish the foundations of an ever closer union among the European peoples". The Founding Fathers of the Community in 1953 had quite simply felt that the coming together of the economic interests of the Community could create a sense of common welfare.

It should be noted that the initial agreement had only involved six members, namely France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. In 1973 Britain entered, along with Ireland and Denmark. Ten years later Greece opted for membership as did Spain and Portugal in 1986.
Yet while the economic union was expanding in those years the same can hardly be said of the political union. It soon became clear that political unification simply did not arise automatically as a consequence of the Community's economic decision making arrangement as had first been expected.

In subsequent years, however, there was a move towards establishing various procedures for political co-operation to speed up consultation and decision-making, especially during emergencies. The endeavors to improve mutual understanding through more regular contact resulted in the development of the European Political Community (EPC). Designed to exist alongside the external relations of the EEC, the attempts at the co-ordination of foreign policy views, while conducted outside the institutions of the EEC, more often than not mirrored the views and progress inside.

The European Commission also remained very much an inter-state or an inter-governmental body, its power subordinated to the Council of Ministers (usually the foreign ministers). Many decisions were, in fact, reached during meetings of government leaders, with national differences placing narrow constraints on common plans.

By contrast, in more recent years, there has been the general recognition of the need for a "true common market" to take place in 1992. The countries of the EC were seen to need a common objective which could raise their sights above daily routine problems and thereby concentrate their
energies. Hence, in 1983, the heads of government of the member states met at Stuttgart and acknowledged the need for the Community to "strengthen its cohesion, retain its dynamism and intensify its actions." And they were resolved to transform themselves into a European union.

Then in 1985, already involved in a wide range of economic and other functional interdependencies, the member states adopted the Single European Act. The Single European Act was designed to sweep before it all national self-interest which had hitherto prevented the EC from becoming a single internal market.

The creation of a homogeneous internal community area was its chief priority and was to be achieved in the main through the completion of the Rome Treaty. Designed to break the log jam of legislation which had piled up for nearly a decade through the internecine rivalry of quarrelsome and competing governments, the Single European Act intended to break down the barriers which had up to then prevented the EC from becoming potentially the largest market in the free world.

The legislation itself covers the most difficult parts of the task originally set out by the Treaty of Rome, including matters that have implications for personal freedom and security, monetary stability and various other politically sensitive issues. Its contribution, moreover, means not just the elimination of constraints sapping effective business performance, but more importantly the
creation of a new and pervasive competitive climate in which the players of the EC can exploit new opportunities and better reach available consumers. Wealth and job creation are to be fostered across the whole of the EC, with the free movement of persons and goods and abolition of distortions in intra-community trade. This will result in the establishment of an integrated common market and also a fiercely competitive business environment, bringing down prices and reducing inflation.

In order to strengthen the Community decision making process, the Single European Act will also allow most of the 1992 legislation to pass by qualified majority voting, rather than by the unanimous vote by individual members which up to now has always operated. Equally important, the act fundamentally re-orientates that legislation away from "harmonization" or the quest for uniform Community wide rules toward the concept of mutual recognition.

1992, moreover, implies a major transfer of power to EC institutions and there has been the push to make them more democratic. The existing European Parliament (EP), for example, will play a large role and will have a more significant legislative function than in the past.

The extra powers of the Parliament are embodied in the Single European Act which re-arranged the responsibilities of the Council of Ministers, the European Council and the European Parliament. For the 518 Euro Members of Parliament (MEPs), this means a new power to amend draft laws on the
1992 project and a right of veto on international agreements concluded by the Council of Ministers. The Parliament’s new powers come on top of those it already had: these include the right to sack the Commission and joint responsibility with the Council of Ministers for fixing the Community’s budget.

The EP’s position has attracted substantial support among individual governments, parliaments, interest groups, and the public in member states. Certain contrary forces, however, remain strong particularly in bureaucracies, policy making processes and different civil service traditions. Nevertheless, there is still a good chance that the end of the century will see an economic and monetary union, as well as a Common Market governed by institutions that can be called federal.

1992 has infused the EC with a new sense of confidence and purpose. There is a vision of Europe. It is a vision of peace and hope, and growing political and economic, but also cultural and social interdependence. It permits a historical opportunity to turn fragmentation and the threat of armed conflict into a broader process of European concertation and unity.

Members of the Community have, together, come to place greater emphasis on cohesion and more equal sharing of economic opportunity and success. They have moved on from the practice of loose political co-operation to a more systematic and consistent strategy. The continuing process
in Europe is one that brings an ever stronger commitment to democracy, pluralism, the rule of law, full respect for Human Rights and the principle of market economy.

The single market is beginning to take shape. The member states have recognized the need to quickly translate Community directives into national law and have adapted themselves to a new rhythm of Community decision-making. Progress towards completing the internal market is irreversible and there is the widespread feeling, both inside and outside the Community, that the objective will be achieved on time.

When Western Europe takes its giant step in 1992, it will have institutionalized what has been true for years. Borders will be open to people, commerce and ideas.

The EC is today a community of twelve nations all heading in the same direction: more than 340 million people heading towards a common future. A successful model of economic integration has evolved into a major political project, and has created a pattern and a pole of attraction for all European countries.

The new framework developed by the Community grows out of a radical change in consciousness. Whereas, the old European nationalisms of the past placed their trust in ideology, the new community ethos puts its trust in people. These people are, then, in turn, realizing that 1992 means some fundamental change that will benefit them and also their children in years to come.
1992 will see the removal of all borders in Western Europe. Boundaries will come down between Northern and Southern Ireland, and between Ireland and other European countries. The development of Europe, particularly the completion of the internal market of 1992, will undoubtedly decrease the significance of the Irish borders, making it harder to deny, therefore, the mutual interests of the two parts of the island relative to Britain.

European passports are now replacing traditional British and Irish ones, and independently sovereign states, as we have traditionally viewed both the Irish Republic and the United Kingdom, are, in the near future, to be something of the past.

The potential for a new international politics unifying forces in Northern and Southern Ireland has never been brighter. The widespread support for the EC is not merely sentimental and rhetorical, whereas the Community itself has more than thirty years of experience in bringing small and medium sized nations together in an economic unit.

Far from halting the great journey towards European Union, the events in Eastern Europe have speeded it up. Those who had expected the eruption of post-communist nationalism to infect Western Europe are amazed. Most EC members have, in fact, become keener to strengthen their mutual ties and proudly independent non EC Europeans, such as the Swiss, are also keener to scramble aboard.
Growing political freedom in the East, a Berlin without barriers, a cleaner environment, a less militarized Europe, all taken together, are the foundation of a larger vision of Europe that is free, prosperous and at peace with itself.
CHAPTER TWO: THE IRISH CRISIS

No discussion of Ireland at all, or the Irish, can begin without a brief survey of the country's history. For the Irish themselves are very inward looking, appealing to the past and allowing it to dominate them. To understand Irish mentality, and something of the island's political culture, the subject matter must be placed in historical context.

Any examination of Irish politics must start from the experience of colonialism and imperialism which ended in a compromise with the former colonized denied true emancipation. The roots of the political divisions in Northern Ireland are set in the differential success of British colonial policy in the island of Ireland.

Ireland, it said, is Britain's oldest problem and Britain is Ireland's. The province of Northern Ireland has never been absorbed and integrated into the rest of the United Kingdom and has never been treated in the same way as other parts of Britain. Ever since Britain directly involved itself in the government of the country in 1169 there has been intermittent strife and warfare. This has traditionally been portrayed as a conflict between the British imperial state and the native Irish population, with the conflict becoming increasingly marked during the latter part of the nineteenth century when Ireland began to assert itself with
renewed vigor in the struggle for home rule and then national independence. Plantation was the means by which English rule was firmly established. An attempt was made to uproot one group of people, the Catholics, and replace them with Protestant outsiders whose loyalty was assured. The greater success of the policy in the north-east set the province of Ulster apart.

The Republic of Ireland, by contrast, received nominal independence in 1922. Political independence was recognized as a precondition for the economic development of Southern Ireland, whereas the continued prosperity of the more industrialized north-east depended on maintaining its function within the British free-trade system. Hence two distinct and specialized sub-economies emerged, fundamentally independent of each other although more or less still dependent on Britain.

Politically speaking, what developed in the north of the country from 1921 onwards was an "institutionalized caste system" with the Protestant majority of the province in permanent and complete control of the government. The Protestant ascendency protected its identity and organized its own state in conformity with the notorious siege mentality. Ulster Protestants had avoided becoming a hopeless minority in Catholic Ireland and the continued defense of their position was in the building of a British statelet of their own where they had a helpless Catholic minority to dominate. Protesting their apprehensions of
Catholic nationalism and Republican threats, the northern Protestants showed their continued real fear of a union of the Protestant and Catholic working class and maintained "the classic appliance of the principle "divide et impera". Irishmen of different religions and political persuasion were set against one another and the old belief "that dissenters were a people differing in character from the aboriginal inhabitants of Ireland" was enforced.

Indeed, a significant defense against "the apprehended threat to Protestant liberties" still operates today through an elaborate system of discrimination along the lines of religious cleavage, unfair employment opportunities, prejudice in the allocation of housing, and electoral manipulation. Everything from its past has been "dredged up to build these fortifications...the cults of King William and July the twelfth" to mention but a few, with the result that Northern Ireland emerged as a one party state where the "unionist manipulators of prejudice, of genuine fears and traditions had produced a system of tyranny that operated on more than one third of the whole population."

To Catholics, their Protestant fellows appeared as "canting bigots and hypocrites", for the very liberties they feared to lose for themselves in an overwhelming Catholic state of all Ireland, they deprived others of. Northern Ireland, however, had to be a one party state in order to exist. It was forced to discriminate in order to preserve
itself. It was simply that a section of the population (the Catholic section) was defined as inherently disloyal. Any chance of political power or influence for them, therefore, had to be avoided.17

If political power or influence for Catholics might be gained through the ballot box, then arrangements had to be made to counter it. In a state where votes were only given to the tenants of the houses, that meant not giving tenancies to those who were known to be disloyal. That led to discrimination in housing. There were not enough jobs for everyone, and if there had to be discrimination, that would involve the work place. The lack of jobs was used to stoke up sectarian feeling. If political boundaries had to be gerrymandered in order to return unionist majorities in areas (like Derry City or in the County of Fermanagh) that were patently anti-unionist, then they had to be gerrymandered.

Within the boundaries of the statelet of Northern Ireland, many Catholics were discriminated against with British acquiescence. Institutional injustices were built into the system from the very start. The Catholic population was systematically excluded from political power, treated as the enemy within, and deprived of its economic and civil rights.

At the end of the sixties, a section of the Catholic community finally rebelled, and for the past twenty years Britain has been struggling to put this rebellion down.
Having been driven out of predominant places of employment (i.e. the shipyards and many of the larger engineering works) in the early years of the Stormont regime, Catholics today remain excluded, with the problem of job discrimination especially acute in recent years of high unemployment. At the same time, Catholics and nationalists living in predominantly Protestant areas were driven out of their homes and forced to seek refuge in Catholic areas, where they continue to live. They remain unable to acquire positions of prestige and importance in areas such as the civil service, and private industry, within the security forces and in local government. All these jobs and associated benefits are awarded on the basis of ethnicity, mostly to Protestants. Civil liberties, limited for nearly fifty years under Northern Ireland's "emergency legislation", have been cut back and abused even further.

Repression in terms of criminal justice with the Prevention of Terrorism Act, entailing arrests without warrant and internment without trial for up to seven days, was enacted by the almost exclusively Protestant Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) and the Protestant auxiliary police unit, the Ulster Defense Regiment (UDR). This act, incidentally, was until 1984 only temporary, being considered and renewed every year. Now, however because of persistent Irish terrorist activity and increased Republican violence, it is permanent statute.
The right to trial by jury has been removed and the rules of evidence so relaxed that a person can be sentenced to life imprisonment solely on the basis of a confession which was not made voluntarily. The implications for civil liberties are very serious indeed.

Finally, whereas Protestant gerrymandering of local elections is now somewhat circumscribed, it still exists to weaken the Catholic vote especially in Fermangh, where despite their majority position, Catholics are still underrepresented at the local government level.

Hence, successive Southern governments have claimed that Northern Ireland discriminates against the minority of Catholics there, depriving them of social, political and economic rights. They have concluded that as long as the unit of Northern Ireland remains, it would, entail the majority repressing the minority. The obvious solution, as seen by the Republic is to dissolve the artificial boundary which cuts across Ireland.

Partition is seen in the Republic of Ireland to be the "root cause" of the problem, denying Northern nationalists their democratic right as part of the Nationalist political majority" on the island, by turning them into a permanent political minority. Northern Ireland was an artificially created entity, and its genesis was illegal not merely because it partitioned the island, but because of the particular boundaries drawn. It was contrived to ensure a 3:1 protestant majority and a system stacked heavily against
Catholics and nationalists who were made to compromise a permanent minority of the total population. Consequently, Northern Ireland's inclusion within the United Kingdom (UK) constituted the denial of the right to self-determination of the majority within the island.

Currently Direct Rule from Westminster and the presence of British troops on the streets have enhanced the credibility of the Republic's position internationally. The continued British presence constitutes a form of colonial rule, a point the Southern government and the sub-national elites of the north have been quick to appreciate and exploit. It is unthinkable that the national territory should in principle be regarded as detachable, all the more so in light of the emergence of a re-united Germany of close to 80 million people in the heart of Europe. Divided sovereignties on islands are rare, and the continued division of Ireland is an anomaly left over from an earlier period.

Much has been made inside the EC of the British government's overall attempt and failure at "crisis management" of the Irish problem. Particular criticism has been leveled at Britain's failure to tackle the continuing phenomenon of employment discrimination against Catholics. This has put the issue of discrimination against Catholics firmly back on the political agenda.

As an important part of necessary reform, the EC has suggested a new bill of rights for Northern Ireland. The
introduction of a bill of rights, it is said, would be a clear expression of Britain's committment to Human Rights. It is seen, by the EC to be an essential element in any eventual resolution of the conflict of Northern Ireland. It is thought, by the European Commission, to be the primary means to tackle minority grievance in the troubled province of the north.

To the British government's evident annoyance, the EC has also internationalized the whole question of the conflict in Northern Ireland.

Much criticism has been leveled internationally at Britain's most recent and half hearted effort to share the burden and partial responsibility of Northern Ireland with the government of the Irish Republic.

In November 1985, largely as the result of British and Irish interaction at a European level, and following a barren phase of Anglo-Irish disagreement, there was the introduction of an Anglo-Irish Intergovermental Council and an arrangement whereby the twin governments of London and Dublin became locked into an Anglo-Irish Agreement to deal, on a regular basis, with political, legal and social matters stemming from the conflict in the north.

However, despite the persistent enthusiasm on the part of the Thatcher (and now Major) governments, more than five years later little, in effect, has changed. Many of the specific reforms spoken of, such as a change in the operation of the non-jury Diplock Courts, with the suggested
replacement of one judge by three, have been rejected
outrightly and repeatedly by the British government. The
latter has apparently failed to stop the "shoot to kill"
policy of the British Security Forces, a subject of
continuing controversy since the RUC have not as yet
published a code of conduct as promised. Shootings,
explosions and deaths have all persisted, and the loyalist
parliamentary presence has increased on the scene. The strip
searching of political prisoners continues, as do the
allegations of police brutality and ill treatment at
interrogation centers.

At the same time, the issue of religious
discrimination in all areas of public life has still to be
tackled properly and successfully, and in cultural areas
there still exists the ban on the political and cultural
symbols of the nationalist community. High emigration within
Catholic society (at the alarming rate of 17% of the
community's total) also continues, as does the disrespect
that Catholics receive as a group.

Thus, while the British government apparently conceded
to the Dublin government an advisory role in the affairs of
Northern Ireland, it, nevertheless, typically failed to deal
with the problem of Northern Ireland adequately. The
parameters of the British policy remain much the same.
Crisis management is still the most suitable description of
how the British government rules the province.
The approach is to concede as little as possible as late as possible. Any reforms that have been introduced have been more a grudging response to Catholic agitation and violence than anything else. Britain has usually only ever brought reforms in at the last minute, and what has been done has normally been inadequate. At no stage has Britain ever taken any real reforming initiatives, and the combined effort of its half measures in the past twenty years has only had limited effect.

Notwithstanding the partial sharing of responsibility with the Republic, the burden of governing Northern Ireland has not diminished. The difficult problem of governing the north persists alongside the Republic’s irredentist challenge to the six Irish counties in the face of Britain’s insistence on maintaining sovereignty.

Left to themselves, the two Irelands and the United Kingdom of Great Britain have not been able to resolve a conflict whose roots are centuries old. Yet it just might be that the simultaneous entry of all the inhabitants of Ireland, north and south, and the two surrogate governments, the British government and the government of the Republic of Ireland, into a new European arrangement, can provide a larger canvas against which the Irish question can be addressed in a different light.
CHAPTER THREE: NORTHERN IRELAND. THE PROBLEM PERPETRATED.

As a fringe statelet on the periphery of the United Kingdom outside British society, Northern Ireland is far removed in physical terms from the rest of mainland Europe. Psychologically too, and to a far greater extent than the Republic, it is cut off from the continental mainland for its external relations are channeled through London.

Northern Ireland has been described by Arend Lijphard as a plural society possessing the attribute of a "colonial fragment" and often referred to by many as a constitutional oddity since it has never been fully integrated into the UK, either constitutionally or politically. At times it has been considered a political entity in its own right and not simply a subordinate part of the UK, but ultimately it lacks international recognition.

There exist in Northern Ireland two rival polarities and ethnicities. They are two powerful detached and unmistakable nationalist groupings both vying for the same small statelet and neither one prepared to give up. There are two nations in one state, namely those people descended from the English and Scottish settlers of the seventeenth century, and those representatives of the old Gaelic stock, the so-called native Irish. This latter group, its roots traceable far back into time, existed in some form as a
nation long before the arrival of any nationalist ideology. Indeed, this form of a nation was so strong that it survived the depletion of the Irish population at the time of the Great famine in 1847, when one million Irish died due to starvation and another million emigrated.

Within this fundamental division there are further differences. But whereas the distinction between more extremist and less extremist unionists and between constitutional and non-constitutional nationalists serves merely to compound the whole problem, each side’s factions agree on the same grievances and long term goals. Nationalists agree on the natural unity of the whole island, unionists on the need for maintaining the link with Britain.

Catholics and Protestants have been able to co-exist peacefully in the other countries of Europe and of the world but they are unable to do so in the north of Ireland. There, Catholic and Protestant are terms that refer to profound ethnic differences, standing as important symbols of solidarity at least since the seventeenth century, with outbursts of violence serving to reinforce the solidarity of each side. As neither party, therefore, has ever shown an aversion to violence, this stands in sharp contrast to the prevalent atmosphere and ethos of integration taking place in the rest of Western Europe.

Northern nationalism has created an intractable problem. The problem is not that everyone in Northern Ireland has a sense of national identity but rather that
there is no agreement about the nation to which they belong. The cause of the difficulty is the strong association of Irishness with Catholicism. Irish nationalism is a form of nationalism in which the Catholic identity is crucial. Protestants reject this definition of nationalism. They feel their own religious and civil liberties would be eroded by a state dominated by Catholics. It is a case, therefore, of one nationalism contradicting the nationalist aspirations of the other.

Yet there are real benefits for all in Northern Ireland in any new organization of Europe. In particular, there is the provision in the Single European Act that where policy cannot be carried out satisfactorily at the local, regional or national level, it can instead be executed more effectively at the European level. The European Commission has also given the Community's regions and municipalities a fresh opportunity to express themselves on all questions as regards the EC's regional policy and regional and local implications of all its other policies. Thus, there should, in the future, be encouraged more active and direct regional participation in the EC.

A superstate of Europe providing for increased local autonomy at the expense of central government, enabling the interaction of regional elites and community Eurocrats could, in fact, prove itself a success in view of the North Irish problem. Indeed, this is especially so in the context of the current British Conservative government's endeavors
to display its pro-European sentiments and also since the province of Northern Ireland currently enjoys a representation at the European level out of all proportion to its population per head. For there are three Members of the European Parliament in the province for a population of 2.5 million people, compared with Scotland, for example, which has five MEP's for a population of 7.5 million people.  

But the people of the Northern Ireland are apparently still unaware of this potential. Despite the fact that local government of the north (the province being considered a special region at European level) has benefitted from Community membership as a financial recipient of European economic assistance in general and particularly with huge farm subsidies and grants from the Regional Fund, local people remain preoccupied with the national question. Between 1973 and 1988, the area was allocated ECU 118 million from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and ECU 160 million for Agricultural Guidance. Then, for the 1979, 1984 and 1989 elections to the EP, a separate voting system was also used in the province, different from the rest of the United Kingdom, to ensure the Catholic minority there was properly represented at Strasbourg. Yet, matters still remained provincialized. Indeed, the bigoted election campaigns and the subsequent victories of the elected over the defeated candidates could even be seen to have reinforced such views.
The majority of the Ulster Unionist's loyalty continues to be paid to the nation-state of Britain rather than to any "embryo equivalent"20 of Europe, whereas most nationalists, including those middle class elements who can be seen to benefit directly from European subsidies, continue to look instinctively to Dublin, as opposed to Brussels, as the focus of their national allegiance. Thus, in spite of Northern Ireland's declining industrial base, excessive unemployment, poor living standards and low wages, not to mention the British government's consistent neglect of the political problem, no real improvement by the way of European action can be made without the significant local support that is ostensibly lacking there.

The sub-national elites of the north have never perceived their own struggle against the central authority as necessarily compatible with the object of supra-national organization. Hence, any sophisticated European organization might be seen to pose a threat to the regionalism of the province, especially if the new arrangement is to be considered in terms of the continued colonization of Ireland lifted to a higher more international plane. In view of the Marxist rhetoric of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), the escalation of violent resistance to a capitalist convention of Western Europe would appear all the more likely if it is seen to perpetuate and reinforce British capitalist imperialism at home. Feeling that the supra-national model of the EC might detract from their localized
national struggle, Irish Republicans might seem likely to step up their campaign of violence.

Irish terrorism has been transported to the continent with random, indiscriminate attacks on individual British army personnel, particularly in West Germany. Since the shooting in Gibraltar of three unarmed IRA volunteers by the British SAS in 1988, however, Irish terrorist cells abroad (apart from those in operation around metropolitan London) have held their activities in check. The IRA currently considers itself forced to concentrate its violent campaign back in the North of Ireland.

Simultaneously, Ulster Unionists might be expected, especially as they have always espoused their British tradition and heritage as the principal protection for their continued constitutional insurance inside the UK, to also fear a "true" European community after 1992 and a predominantly Catholic European Assembly usurping the sovereignty of British Westminster rule.

Having in the past proclaimed themselves more British than the British, they have, at the same time, resorted to violence in defiance of the British parliament (exemplified most recently in their objections to the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985, as in 1912 and 1974 when Protestant Ulstermen were prepared to fight against the British government with extra parliamentary means, and all in a bid to remain part of Britain.). They maintain their claim to be British, but refuse to be part of Britain in the most
elementary sense of obeying the British government's plans
for the province, and have demonstrated their capacity to
render Ulster ungovernable by taking up arms against their
Queen and country. The Protestant majority of the north
insists that their province has rights and duties no
different from any other part of the UK and that they are
totally loyal to the Crown, while at the same time, harshly
opposing the British government. Thus, in relation to
Europe, Ulster Unionists might be expected to withhold their
support as they have in the past, rallying around their
traditional cry of "no surrender", this time to Brussels
instead of Dublin. Europe, for Ulster Unionists, is to be
cast in the role of a divisive alien, encroaching body,
hastening the dilution of cherished traditions 26.

Amid an ever increasing tension in Northern Ireland.
Ian Paisely, leader of the Democratic Unionist Party (D.U.P)
throughout the eighties and now in the nineties,
consistently repeated that "...the majority here are
determined to remain British and will not be swayed in that
conviction by the bombs and bullets of the IRA .......still
less by the machinations of Europeans who understand little
of the situation here ....."27. In the hope of improving on
his general election success to the Westminster Parliament
earlier in 1987, in a highly personalized manifesto and
election campaign to the European parliament in 1989 he made
it clear that "for a free, fearless Protestant and loyalist
voice in Europe "he was the best possible nominee from the Protestant community.

Any possible united and central convergence of Europe could be seen to threaten unionist sympathies and values, their loyalty to the Monarchy, their Protestantism and their commitment to the sovereignty of the Westminster Parliament. Their concerns, moreover, are rendered all the more acute by the fact that Northern Ireland borders the Republic of Ireland and exists, in the unionist view, alongside another neighboring hostile and annexationist member of the EC. Unionists consider the successive governments of the Irish Republic to have pressured the British government at the European level to recognize an Irish dimension to the problem within its borders. They have repeatedly denounced during the various meetings of the heads of the two states throughout the eighties and now into the nineties, a "contrived sell-out" and "abandonment with European contrivance". This is the reason that supporters of the EC are usually associated with an "un-Ulsterness" and also the reason unionists have voted against EC membership right from the start in 1971.

Thus, whereas creating an enlarged democratic Europe of nations and regions could have been seen to help reduce conflict in Northern Ireland by providing a formula whereby the province's citizens and representatives could relate to each other and to the rest of the Community through Brussels rather than Westminster, it might not seem that this is the
way for matters in the province to turn out. It is not likely that the Protestant majority of the north will want to bypass Whitehall when dealing with Brussels and any prospect for the integration or possible re-unification of the island, therefore, might seem unimaginable.

Ultimately though, surely Ulster Unionists must also realize the patently undemocratic manner in which they too have been governed. The present system of government in Northern Ireland dates from the abolition of the Stormont Parliament and the introduction of Direct Rule in 1974. For seventeen years the province has been subject to an unsatisfactory and undemocratic political system in which the people of the province, both unionist, as well as nationalist, have been deprived of any effective say in how they are governed. The people of Northern Ireland have all been left with a heritage which includes political institutions designed to prevent significant social change.

On its own, moreover, Northern Ireland has no prospect of real and sustainable growth. Because of its weak manufacturing base and high unemployment, the economy will continue to be dependent upon outside resources for some time to come.

The economy of Northern Ireland is in severe crisis. In the fifties and sixties, the province was transformed as local industry was run down and multinationals moved in to dominate its economy. But in the last twenty years the process has gone into reverse, with multinationals reducing
their activities or pulling out together. Only huge subsidies and external aid keep Northern Ireland afloat; without these the province could only survive on its own for a matter of a few weeks.

Central to the north's future is, in fact, then, the maintenance of the substantial amount of financial aid the area already gets from the EC and also the increasing amount it expects to get in the future under the new provisions of the Single European Act.

Ulster’s constitutional position is the product of turbulent history and intricate geography. Differing visions have hitherto prevented the two communities in Northern Ireland from sitting down together and working their destiny out. They have always looked over their shoulder instinctively to Dublin and London. For both sides, however, the political scene is changing irrevocably.

Because of the new European trends the original aims of nationalists and unionists are no longer valid. Everything is changing and to survive in the new European environment, so must the inhabitants of Ireland.

Irish Nationalists and Ulster Unionists have long lived by the theory that what is good for one must be disastrous for the other. Now, however, the problems of the north can be set in a stable context, without representing victory for one side over the other.

Both nationalists and unionists can look to the EC as a neutral or wider framework for examining Northern
Ireland's problems and can share the belief that Europe has the potential to contribute towards alleviating the troubles there. Both sides, if they choose, can draw on the wider resources the EC has made available to find more adequate answers to the problems. In the absence of viable domestic initiatives, the EC provides the opportunity to think afresh vis-a-vis Northern Ireland.

Yet if there is to be any adequate preparation for 1992 and if the promised financial and international support is to be properly utilized, then the sort of sectarian controversy witnessed continually throughout the whole area must be replaced by a more co-operative political dialogue. Otherwise, both communities in Northern Ireland risk being the losers in the new Europe that is being forged.

Perhaps only when the next generation takes over, operating within a post 1992 Europe and a single monetary system that forces the two traditions to work together, may new answers begin to appear.
The Republic of Ireland, though a member state and not a region, nevertheless shows some parallels with the regions of larger states. Hence the Commission considers the whole of the Republic an "assisted region".

There exists in the Republic a curious family resemblance to the north and a similar pre-occupation with the past. The obsessive concern with politics and nationality is also common to both sides of the Irish border, as is the frequent, flamboyant use of rhetoric and symbols drawn from the past eight hundred years of the whole island's particularly troublesome history.

In common with other peripheral areas of the Community, including the province of the north, the Republic of Ireland has suffered high unemployment, huge government deficits and slow growth. Southern Ireland remains one of the poorer countries in Western Europe. It owes an enormous debt to local and foreign bankers and at one stage in the mid eighties it had the fourth highest debt per capita in the world. A third of its population live below the poverty line and the country has for many centuries experienced a catastrophic pattern of emigration. Hence, the Republic of Ireland shares a common interest with Northern Ireland in
seeking more generous regional transfers within the Single European Act, particularly those directed to social and economic concerns.

However, for much of the twentieth century, Northern Ireland and the Republic cultivated what was essentially a political and economic non-relationship. Whereas the Republic remained politically and economically neutral during and after World War II, the north participated in the foreign policy of the central government in London and was integrated into the western system of alliance and co-operation. Indeed, the current neutrality of the Irish Republic still remains unique within the EC. Southern Ireland, as the only member within the twelve to exist outside NATO, is always reluctant to get involved in anything touching on defense and security.\textsuperscript{32}

So too have the commercial and economic problems of north and south had little in common. As an integral part of the UK, the north was primarily concerned with free trade, while the Republic pursued a policy of protectionism under which domestic agriculture and small industries were protected by import duties from foreign competition. Thus Northern Ireland and the Republic co-operated only occasionally on projects which seemed to promote the construction of the infrastructure common to both.

Then, in 1961, the Republic of Ireland applied to join the EEC simultaneously with Britain and primarily because of its dependence on Britain. The Irish government feared that
if Britain joined the common market and Ireland did not, Irish agricultural exports to the British market would suffer and its manufactured exports would face tariff barriers instead of the tariff-free access they had had since 1958.\textsuperscript{33}

In 1965, the Republic committed itself to a reduction of its own tariffs against British imports in a free trade agreement and in January 1973 it joined the EEC along with Britain and Denmark.

Membership brought significant financial benefits, as well as additional resources for regional development. Simultaneously, it transformed the traditional relationship between two countries of such unequal size and disparate resources as the Republic and Britain, placing Ireland on a new footing with Britain as part of a broader multicultural relationship.

Marking the culmination of Irish trade liberalization policy, membership of the EC in 1973 opened up the European market to Irish agriculture exports and enabled Ireland to also benefit from the Community's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and from its regional and social funds.\textsuperscript{34} Thus there was offered for Ireland, new market opportunities, new overseas investment, and also the promise of new sources of economic assistance in the form of financial transfers.

Under social fund guidelines, Ireland is currently considered a "super-priority" region of the type cast on the regional maps of the EC as one of Europe's "peripheral and
Endemic poverty exists in many areas, partly as the result of the country's rural subsistence economy and low productivity and the great excess of people employed in agriculture, and partly as the result of few industries, a low level of urbanization and a high sustained rate of emigration since the late eighteenth century. As regional policy is by definition targeted on the particularly disadvantaged regions, the Republic of Ireland has, as expected, done well from Community redistribution funds.

As a major beneficiary of Community spending programmes, the Republic presently exists as one of the biggest per capita recipients from the Economic Regional Development Fund (ERDF), in particular, and from the Community's structural funds, in general. The ERDF itself has received a great deal of publicity in Ireland with regular press reports announcing the award of a grant to a firm or a local authority for various projects. However, for the Republic, the Community's CAP represented from the outset the most recognizable aspect of the EC involvement and the most striking aspect of Community membership has been the rise in farm incomes.

For agriculture, membership of the EC was the key to breaking out of dependence on the low price UK market. To the advantages of improved market access were added the expected benefits of high guaranteed farm prices financed by the Community as a whole. Hence, entry to the EC eliminated
some of the country's main agricultural competitors on the
British market and simultaneously gave the Irish access to
the available agricultural subsidies.

Membership also resulted in a substantial rise in the
importance of trade with almost a doubling of exports in the
first fifteen years, accompanied by a considerable
diversification of export markets away from the UK and
towards the rest of the EC. The Community's share of the
total Irish exports increased from 5% in 1958 to 35% in
1985.36

At the same time as the Community has encouraged Irish
business and industry to expand into Europe, many Irish
businessmen and public servants have seen the EC as an
opportunity to develop their talents in a wider setting than
before.

So too has the EC done its best to attract a
tremendous amount of inward investment. Japanese electronic
companies and US computer companies such as IBM have been
persuaded of the advantages of re-locating in Ireland. Most
recently on the industrial front, Sharp, the manufacturer of
video recorders and microwave ovens and Brother, the
typewriter manufacturers, have made arrangements to set up
companies in Ireland, no doubt attracted by a European wide
market of 340 million consumers.37

Agriculturally speaking, the Republic of Ireland is,
at the present time, the principal beneficiary of the
Community's budget in terms of net receipts per head of
population because of the transfer it receives under the CAP, as the only food surplus country amongst the Community's three poorest members. Even with the present CAP reforms, Ireland will still continue to benefit. For despite the vote in the EP to cut agricultural spending, (from ECU 173,000 million to ECU 26,954 million), the Parliament agreed that there should, at the same time, be an increase in appropriations for other areas, particularly social policies, transport and improvements in infrastructure to give a new total of ECU 45,086 million, 10% of which has been allocated specifically to the Republic of Ireland.

The Commission, moreover, has just very recently announced a special programme of ECU 308 million for the rural communities and for the encouragement of small and medium size farms. Thus, in any post 1992 arrangement a major concern of the Irish Republic will, understandably, be to protect the preferential treatment it has, as a rule, received from community membership and also to take full advantage of any potential new gains.

The Single European Act, simultaneously offers the hope of a doubling of ERDF and other EC structural funds, as well as, an increased emphasis on concentrating resources in the poorest areas. Reforms introduced in 1985 have already brought into operation a more flexible procedure from the ERDF. The existing quota arrangement, with spending controlled until 1985 by national quotas setting out the exact proportions of the fund to be allocated to each member
state, was replaced at that time, by the system of "indicative ranges" which now defines the minimum and maximum allocations each member state receives from the fund. The minimum allocations total approximately 18% of the fund, leaving a margin of only 12% available to be spent at the discretion of the community in the countries and regions most in need. Hence there is broadly an unchanged proportion of community funds to each of the more well off nations, as well as an increased potential for concentrating spending on the least affluent countries.

The least prosperous regions will, between now and the end of 1993, receive a total of ECU 38,300 million in aid from the Community. The aid is intended to help them prepare for the single market, and complements the financial support provided by national and regional authorities. The Republic itself is to receive ECU 3,670 million of this and is currently fighting for a portion of an additional ECU 2,100 million devoted to the Community's own initiatives to be proposed by the Commission at the end of 1990.

Significantly, the Irish government also advances the view that there is an essential community of interests on the island of Ireland. Government officials draw attention to the importance of agriculture, as well as, to the serious problems of unemployment and emigration.

In relation to Community agriculture price negotiations, moreover, Irish ministers have argued that the attitude of the Irish representatives in Brussels more
clearly reflects the interests of northern farmers than that of their own British representatives. Michael O'Kennedy, MEP, believed the same was true in relation to regional policy and aspects of the Community's external trade policy, particularly textile imports. Earlier this year he claimed that the "Irish government believed that in the long term economic interests determined the action of states, so that while other interests might seem to be uppermost in Northern Ireland's mind, economic considerations would determine things south".

Then, as President of the European Council of Ministers, Charles Haughey, the Irish premier, came north to Belfast in April 1990, declaring that the small size of the firms in Ireland, both north and south made it "absolutely mandatory that they at least as a first step in this new situation, be encouraged to see the whole island as their operation base to enlarge the size of their enterprises."

He spoke of the great potential for increased trade between the two parts of the island and for much more joint tourism.

It was he said: "Simple common sense to face the economic realities of the future. As both parts of Ireland were to compete they had a clear mutual interest in strengthening EC policies for peripheral regions of which they were both categorized as 'objective one'." Talking of a wide range of cross border initiatives that could be undertaken he went on, "...it is more important still that we combine our efforts in having community policies and
programmes tailored to meet the economic circumstances which are common to both."

It was clear, he said, that the similarity in circumstances of Northern Ireland and of the Republic made it "economically sensible" that the two co-operate to the greatest extent possible and co-ordinate their efforts both at home and in Brussels.

"We must combine our efforts at the Community level to secure the special measures we need as peripheral regions... But who are we? Who in Dublin can combine with whom in Belfast to have EC policies and programmes tailored to suite us. Such tailoring is essentially an activity of government within the Community; how can a government of one member state combine with a very small region of another member state to influence decisions in Brussels."  

On a final note, Prime Minister Haughey also suggested that a re-united Ireland would mean a single administrative unit for the whole of Ireland, north and south combined. This would eliminate the wasteful duplication of government effort. It would facilitate a more balanced phased development of the island's economy and ensure its full integration as a whole. It would, at the same time, allow more co-ordinated policy towards multi-national firms.

Significantly, as President of the EC in the first half of 1990, Haughey ensured that the Community refers to the whole island as "Ireland", as compared to Northern Ireland and Southern Ireland, or when speaking about Ireland in a socially and economically integrated way, "the island of Ireland".
In relation to the future, referring to the whole island itself as Ireland, the EC has, in fact, declared that one of the aims of the European Structural Fund is specifically to promote economic and social advancement and encourage contact and dialogue between nationalists and unionists throughout Ireland. For these purposes alone, the EC has proposed ECU 65 million in contributions over the next three years.

Over and above this sum, a total of ECU 3,098 million (8.6% of total EC resources) has been promised to the border countries of Ireland for the stimulation of private investment and public programmes and the support of any voluntary efforts, including self-help schemes.

A further ECU 900 million has been set aside to aid the technological development of the island and the use of advanced telecommunication schemes in the most disadvantaged parts. In monetary terms, the Dublin-Belfast rail-link has likewise been made a priority.

Thus, the benefits of the EC membership strongly suggest that there has been a considerable balance of advantage to Ireland from the integration process to date and that further economic benefits can be expected as a result of the Single European Act.

In view of the political damage inflicted upon the island of Ireland by its partition, the drain on its resources, and the retarding of both Northern and Southern Ireland’s economic growth, the dismantling of trade barriers
and the injection of economic aid will undoubtedly be of immense benefit to all the people of Ireland.

However, in the event that significant economic advance can be made in the island while the conflict and rivalry between Northern Unionists and the all Ireland Nationalists continues, this does not eliminate the need to tackle Ireland's underlying political problems.

The domestic political consequences of improved economic co-ordination cannot be ignored. Yet, the completion of the internal market alone cannot eliminate the bigotry and resentment that have blackened Ireland's long history. Mere financial gain can never be enough in itself to resolve the north's dismemberment from the rest of the island. Simple economics can do little to narrow the political gulf between the island's two divided communities. The ethno-religious rivalry that exists on the island of Ireland, regardless of the role played by economic gain, is itself an independent variable in the problems of the divided country.

To be fully effective any measures intended to stimulate Ireland's economy must, therefore, be accompanied by political initiatives to end the conflict in the island of Ireland. Real political dialogue needs to take place between north and south, complementing that happening on the economic plane. There must ultimately be some attempt at successful reconciliation at the political and social level.
At a European level, the association agreement can provide the institutional framework for political dialogue. It enables views to be exchanged on bilateral and multi-lateral issues and also greatly facilitates information flow. Such exchanges become even more important when further new forms of integration and co-operation in Europe are put in place in any post 1992 arrangement.

Admittedly, though, the EC can only help the Irish help themselves. The EC can provide the new framework within which the two traditions in Ireland and their two surrogate governments can work together. But for new answers to appear, the Irish, themselves, must take the initiative.

For the most part there has been a greater willingness to do so, at least in the south. The Republic of Ireland has emphasized the importance of economic aid for its northern neighbor, and the need to accommodate wider considerations than before. It has demonstrated itself as being no longer economic partitionist and self-interested. Significantly, its Prime Minister has also warmly invited Ulster Unionists to meet for talks about Ireland’s future with no pre-conditions.

Thus, when one further thinks of such recent developments as political and economic unification of Germany, and some of the changes in Eastern Europe, it may be that the prospects for peaceful change in Ireland are greater than at any time in the past.
Seemingly, there are some Irish Nationalists attempting to break out of their usual narrow mould of looking backward, and looking forward instead to some sort of acceptable political change for all the people of Ireland.

For the first time in its history, the Republic of Ireland, especially, appears more tolerating and accommodating. There would seem to be a new spirit in the air and a certain novel sense of hope and goodwill among those south of the border.

Currently, the Republic of Ireland is the only member of the EC which claims sovereignty over part of another member state's territory. According to Article two of the Irish Constitution (1937): "The national territory consists of the whole island of Ireland, its land and its territorial seas." Thus the Irish government has claimed the "right to speak in relation to events that happen throughout the whole country," furthermore, Article Three states,

"Pending the re-integration of the national territory and without prejudice to the right of the parliament and government established by this constitution to exercise jurisdiction over the whole territory the laws enacted by that parliament shall have the like area and extent of application as the laws of Saorstat Eirean (the then "free state) and the like extra effect."
These have been articles which have denied the right of a substantial minority of Ireland’s inhabitants, namely the Ulster Unionists, to opt out of national unity, causing them great offense and, at the same time, to continue to behave as the old settlers surrounded by hostile natives.

Now, however, all national parties apparently accept the need for constitutional reform as the price of Irish unity. Even Fianna Fail, the most Catholic of southern parties agrees and; for the first time in fifty three years, Articles two and three of the Republic’s constitution have been debated in the Dail.

The Republic’s Fine Gael leader, John Bruton, called for people in the south to "...re-think our whole attitude to Northern Ireland; removing all territorial imperatives and historic channels that prevent the two from sitting down together and working their own destiny out together". 

Deputy leader of the Democratic Unionist Party of Northern Ireland, Peter Robinson, warmly welcomed the debate and said the removal of the articles could bring "substantially increased co-operation between the north and the south". To this, Christopher McGlimpsey, Honorary Secretary of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) added that "...it would open the door to political progress in Ireland".

Ultimately, the motion for constitutional reform was defeated in the Dail on a final count of seventy-four votes to sixty-six, in view of the fact that Ulster Unionists
already have a guarantee of no change without consent as contained in the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Yet, the fact that any debate at all took place over the issue is itself meaningful.

Strong support for Irish re-unification still exists among those in the Republic. But now it is perhaps not as the fulfillment of irredentist claims, but rather as the attempt at real conciliation within a pluralist context. Re-unification is, undoubtedly, still on the agenda though presently subordinated to the higher priority of peaceable mutual accommodation between the two traditions in Ireland.

This has been a new departure. Currently the Republic of Ireland can be seen to appreciate better all the serious obstacles to Irish unity, economic, political and also "religious-cultural". Southern Irishmen and women have, apparently, started to realize that the politics of Irish unity is more complex and multi-dimensional than they assumed in the past. Thus, while the idea of Irish unity is itself not dead, what is obviously dead is the old Catholic, gaelic republican consensus on Irish unity.

In view of the ill feeling the existence of Articles two and three in the Republic's Constitution has long caused unionists, any challenge to their purpose on the part of the Republic is a clear sign, then, of positive and genuinely helpful action. This sign, moreover, has been reinforced by
the election of Mary Robinson as the new President of Ireland in late 1990.

Being the first female President, she stands herself as a symbol of change there. By her own account, she is committed to change and determined to bring a different approach to her office.

She has had a long history of campaigning for the liberalization and modernization of the Southern Irish state, especially in the areas of sexual and religious discrimination and also personal morality. She is a long time campaigner on such issues as family planning and divorce and stood against the forces of clericalist reaction in the two referendums in the eighties (one on divorce, the other on abortion).

Mary Robinson has also been THE major figure in Irish politics to understand the often negative reaction of Ulster Unionists to any attempt at compromise between Northern and Southern states. Hence her active protest at the exclusion of Ulster views on the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985.

Her election undoubtedly signifies a more open, tolerant, pluralistic and exclusive society. By electing Mary Robinson (a forty-five year old liberal, woman and champion of progressive causes) as President of Ireland, the people of the Republic have made a statement about how they see themselves and how they wish to be seen. It is an admirable and hopeful statement.
For Mary Robinson’s record on reform is second to none and her sensitivity to unionist aspirations unparalleled. She has spoken of her concern for people living north of the border and how she hopes to maintain close ties with them as President.

Referring to Northern Ireland, she said:

"As the elected choice of the people of this part of island, I want to extend the hand of friendship and love to both communities in the other part. And I want to do this with no strings attached, no hidden agenda.... As the person chosen by you to mobilize this Republic and to project our self image to others, I will seek to encourage mutual understanding and tolerance between all the different communities sharing the island".

As she made it clear in her campaign, Mrs Robinson resists the simplistic, ideological labelling that bedevils Irish politics. Ulster Unionist and MEP, John Taylor said Mrs Robinson was "somebody who understood unionist feeling". To this, the Deputy leader of the Democratic Unionist Party added that "she was not green and belligerent".

Another feature of Mrs Robison’s campaign was its attempt to lift Ireland’s horizons and locate it in the new Europe, not only in terms of seizing new market opportunities but also to set in context the diminishing role of the Irish border in a barrier-free future EC.

Mrs Robinson’s victory is seen to represent real change, not just its appearance. Her victory she said, in her inspiring address, was because the people had "stepped out from the faded flags of the civil war and voted for a new Ireland".
The Irish Times summed up what Mary Robinson's "rainbow coalition" represented. It was the paper said: "a constitution for social justice, for republican values in a real sense of democracy in which every one has the right and means to participate, for equality between the sexes, for a move away from ambivalence about the North, and for openness and tolerance". Her victory, it was added, also symbolized a redefinition of nationalism, "less anti-British and more European".

The election of Mary Robinson changed the agenda of the Republic beyond recognition. Not so much in terms of economics or of social policy change, but certainly in terms of soul-searching and analysis. Her election sounded the death knell for civil war politics. Her success in mobilizing such a broad range of people behind the progressive principles she espoused, shattered the traditional pattern of political support. For every political party, the realization that a young woman with no strong ties to the political establishment, indeed, with a record very often at odds with the establishment, could be elected to the highest office in the country, was a shocking discovery.

Despite such developments however, undoubtedly there still exist those north of the border who would fall back on the old argument that Irish nationalism, in whatever form, is the monolithic ideology which produced as its inevitable embodiment the Southern Irish state. This nationalism is
seen as socially conservative, deeply imbued with Catholicism, and certain to produce a narrow and inwardly looking state which would inevitably contain and perpetuate these flaws.

Faced with the modern Irish state, it is easy to find in Irish nationalism all the elements which serve as its ideology. These elements are undoubtedly present in Irish nationalism, not just as at the level of ideology but also expressed in its people.

Undoubtedly there is a special kind of collaboration between church and state which is an evident mark of the Southern Irish state. Yet, even so, it is wrong to say that the church and its views dominate Irish society.

Contraception is now legal and available in the Republic. Abortions are banned both north and south of the border, and all Irish women, Protestant or Catholic, unionist or nationalist have to travel to mainland Britain for terminations. The issue of divorce alone remains the major area of apparent difference. (At the moment, divorce is prohibited under the Constitution of the Republic, whereas the province of the north’s divorce laws parallel Britain’s.) But even here the gulf should not be insurmountable.

It should be clear, therefore, that Protestant fears about unity with the Republic though often genuine, are equally often misplaced. In any event, they have been shamelessly exploited and whereas, in the past, there was
ample ammunition to bolster the contention that Irish independence meant "Rome Rule" and economic backwardness, this can be seen to be no longer the case.

The gap between Catholic and Protestant values is nowhere as large as is so often assured. It is, furthermore, not necessarily the barrier to Irish unity as is usually thought. In those areas where there may be cause for concern, Northern Protestants are entitled to and can be given explicit legal guarantees that can be ultimately protected inside the EC by the European Court of Human Rights.

The EC can ease any new development of non-sectarian politics that might arise between the two communities in Ireland. For Northern Protestants and unionists and Irish Catholics and nationalists can come together in an increasingly important European Assembly to discuss their own various interests and concerns and also those affecting the rest of their European neighbors.

It has always been impossible for all the people of Ireland to engage in normal, hopeful, non-sectarian party politics. In the first instance, there has never been the common forum there is now, whereas the fact that the people of the north are not governed democratically (they are governed by virtue of the workings of a political system in which they may not participate) has always ensured the perpetration and permanent politicization of the whole island's sectarian division. For them, though, there is now
a wider European Parliament that does not isolate them, and, at the same time, also takes notice of all their grievances and hardships.

"Sovereignty and independence", declared John Hume, Euro MP and leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party of Northern Ireland,

"the issues at the heart of the British-Irish quarrel have changed their meaning... The basic needs of all countries have led to shared sovereignty and independence as we move inevitably towards a united states of Europe, and as we in Ireland rid ourselves of the obsession with Britain and rebuild our links with the rest of Europe".

Mr Hume, who was addressing a debate on "A new Ireland and a new UK in a new Europe", at the Irish Association Annual Conference in the Republic in October 1990, went on to say that the new approach to British-Irish relationships since 1980, which led to the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, could not have happened "had the new European order not changed the roots and nature of the British-Irish quarrel".

In the same debate, Jim Nicholson, chairman of the Ulster Unionist Party and MEP, said there were harsh realities for Ireland to face up to after 1992 and the completion of the channel tunnel when the island, "would be the last border in Europe". He added that Ireland was being left behind in economic, political and cultural terms, and finished by saying that unionists "want positive and helpful
action so that the small island can know peace and begin to rebuild a spirit of hope for tomorrow".

The importance of exploring ways forward through partnership was a recurring theme in the conference and Mr Hume commented that if a successful agreement could be reached, it would transcend the current Anglo-Irish Agreement.

In a follow up to the conference, the British government, encouraged by the government of the Irish Republic, began pushing Ulster Unionist leaders to the negotiating table for talks with Ireland’s nationalist leaders. The result in the spring of 1991 has been that unionists and nationalists have sat down for landmark talks that could produce a power-sharing arrangement ending seventeen years of direct rule from London.

Speaking in his Westminster constituency, Peter Brooke, the British Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, insisted that the British government had no economic or strategic interest in the union of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Mr Brooke repeated that Britain would accept the re-unification of Ireland by consent and said a non-violent republicanism could take its place alongside the other parties in Northern Ireland.

Re-unification, however, seems unlikely. Yet, if Northern Ireland acquired a regional assembly that would itself be a progressive step to democratize direct rule. If the province acquired a regional assembly elected by
proportional representation and circumscribed by the European Convention on Human Rights that would both be the assuaging of unionist insecurities that devolution was merely a half-way house to a re-united Ireland, and the mollifying of nationalist insecurities that devolution was simply a code for "a Protestant Parliament for a Protestant people".  

For such an administration there could also be three channels of redress. There could be the Courts trying out those articles in the European convention. There could be the intercessory role for Dublin inscribed in the current Anglo-Irish agreement. And there could be the appeal to the superordinate European Parliament.

This type of an assembly would, at the same time, furnish the mechanism to develop the relationship between north and south in a kind of popular way. Negatively, it would also be invulnerable to the unionist charge that their democratic rights were being infringed by another Anglo-Irish agreement going over their heads.

If there were a northern assembly and administration the prospect for north-south committees and inter-departmental workings would be endless. It would appear no coincidence, therefore, that those in the south most anxious to promote constitutional reform and to develop relationships with the north, have not only been critical of Articles two and three, but also hopeful to see a devolved arrangement established on the other side of the border.
In any event, there are now people in Ireland appearing less obsessed with Britain, putting their efforts, instead, into building Irish links with the rest of Europe. For the island of Ireland has been in a state of perpetual crisis, financial crisis and institutional drift, lacking long term objectives. There are presently, however, recognizable efforts being made to bring order back into its affairs.

Historically and geographically, the island of Ireland is part of Europe. This is something all Irishmen and women can neither deny nor imagine a future outside it.

Events compel togetherness. Europe, it has been noted "will have to work more closely to avoid bloody battles over a diminishing supply of raw materials, energy and agricultural supplies". Each member state needs the Community to enable it to remain an important power in the world. If Europe is to have any future, it lies within the community of twelve. Thus, whether it is due to movements in financial markets, the transfer within multi-national corporations or changing patterns in world trade, virtually all Western European states have become increasingly affected by the international developments they have no control over.

The twentieth century is distinct in now having witnessed a concerted attempt at uniting peacefully the peoples of Europe in order to overcome mutual economic and social problems with the aim of political unification. The
EC represents the unique attempt on the part of the people of different nationalities with different historical experiences, (most of whom have clashed destructively over the centuries) to live and work together to find and pursue common objectives.

The wish expressed by Jacques Delors that each European should have a feeling of belonging to a community that would be his second country,\textsuperscript{62} is neither utopian or unrealistic. The idea of a state of Europe united in common purpose is fast becoming a reality. The shell of the edifice is in place, all the fittings just have to be installed to make it work.

Political and economic union is an essential institutional and political goal. Work on the single market has already set in motion changes both within the twelve nation Community and beyond. With less than two years to go to the December 1992 deadline, more than two-thirds of the proposals of the single market programme have been approved by the Council of the Ministers and the EP. Of the one hundred and seven texts that should have come into force, some seventy percent have been embodied in national legislation and work is proceeding on the remainder.

The balance sheet is positive overall. In the Europe of 1992 currently under construction, the desire to live and work together is to be found. Witness, for example, the large majorities by which resolutions of the EP are adopted, while increasing attention is also turning to the need to
ensure that these are all implemented effectively across the Community so that the single market indeed becomes a reality for the peoples of Western Europe.

At this time of dramatic change, the world is witnessing, more clearly than ever before, that a democratic, prosperous and peaceful Europe can be achieved by Europeans working together to build it. It is a new Europe that is based on the strong pillars of political legitimacy, respect for Human Rights and the Rule of Law. It is, simultaneously, based upon a solid framework of market principles, as well as upon the bedrock of security.

The new EC is different from the old EC and different from all the empires, regimes and orders that have risen and fallen before. There is, therefore, a challenge now to the whole of the island of Ireland to keep pace with the tremendous transformation that has changed the face of Europe. The time has long passed to strengthen Ireland politically, economically and institutionally. The EC ensures a fresh political direction, intending to foster the flow of ideas, people and information, creating, at the same time, opportunities for peaceful and further far reaching changes.

Community proposals are coherent and workable and represent a substantive programme for Ireland's development. They are agreed upon in principle and warmly embraced by many. By themselves, though, they cannot duplicate, but rather only complement, the work performed by northern and
southern leaders and those, who must together, develop themselves the best methods of work to be most effective in Europe's new political and economic environment.

Matters, in this respect, in fact, look promising. For ultimately, not only do many of the Irish, especially the Southern Irish, appear to want to help themselves, but under the circumstances, presently beyond their control, even the most stubborn of the Northern Irish must, in the end, realize that they too must do the same.

Peter Robinson, has for one, at least, said that he now looks forward to the "substantially increased cooperation" that the recent efforts of the Southern government and also membership of the EC look set to bring between Northern Ireland and the Republic.*

Jim Nicholson, a rival Ulster Unionist has also said, that people must appreciate that a better future is unlikely to emerge from "the sorry mess that currently passes for politics" in the island. The aims of the divided parties in Irish politics, moreover, he claims, are no longer valid.

The establishment of a new political framework in Western Europe heralds a great time of change. Because of the new European trends, both nationalists and unionists have to realize their original aims are no longer realistic. The traditional, sovereign, independent re-united Ireland sought by republicans, and the former semi-independent government with majority rule sought by unionists are no longer possible. Thus, Ulster Unionists need no more fear
the traditional re-united Ireland with which Irish Nationalists have threatened them and Irish Nationalists need no longer worry about a return to the old Stormont regime which Ulster Unionists have wanted. So Nicholson concludes, "one era is ending and another is beginning".

Notwithstanding the complexities of the Irish conflict, it remains an anachronism, an ancient tribal hangover in the "new Europe". Yet, if the deep bitterness which separates people like the French and Germans, a bitterness perhaps deeper than that which divides the people of Ireland, could be laid aside inside the EC, why cannot the Irish do likewise?

The people of Ireland should be looking forward in the future to entering into a new experience of Europe on the same basis as everyone else. They have been able to participate in Community policy-making on a relatively advantageous footing given the size of their numbers, and must realize that membership offers the island's war weary communities at last the hope that, to paraphrase the graffiti on the Falls Road of West Belfast, there can be life after death.
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INTRODUCTION:

3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.

CHAPTER ONE:


CHAPTER TWO:

12. Ibid., P.278.
13. Ibid.
15. L de Paer, P143.
16. Ibid. P150.
19. Ibid. 4. P.407

CHAPTER THREE:

24. With the Single Transferable vote System, used both in Northern Ireland and the Republic, candidates are listed in alphabetical order on the ballot paper. Each voter can cast his vote for one candidate and ,in addition, indicate, in order of preference, the candidates to whom his vote should be given if the candidate of his first choice has already received more than the number of votes necessary for election, or has obtained too few votes and has been eliminated.

By contrast representatives from England, Scotland and Wales are elected according to the traditional majority vote
system. In individual constituencies with the majority vote system the candidates, to win, must gain the highest number of votes.

27. Ibid.
28. P.Hainsworth, P.229.

CHAPTER FOUR:

32. Ibid., P.15.
33. Ibid., P.44.
34. K.A.Kennedy, Ireland in Transition, P.23.
35. G.N.Minshull (3rd ed), The New Europe, P.266.
39. Ibid.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid.
43. Fortnight, May 1990 P.12.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid.
47. Fortnight, May 1990 P.8.
49. Fortnight, April 1990 P.12.

CHAPTER FIVE:

50. Fortnight, April 1990 P.12.
52. C.Coulter, Ireland Between First and Third Worlds. P.7.
53. An Irish Times/MRBI poll indicated that 82% of the people in the south aspired to a re-united Ireland, but the same proportion in favour of postponing unity to achieve an internal settlement in the north. (fortnight June 1991, P.12.)
55. Ibid.
55. Ibid.
57. The people of Northern Ireland are excluded from the party political system which determines the government of the U.K. (the state of which Northern Ireland nominally forms a part). They have not chosen to exclude themselves but have been excluded by the actions of the major political
parties, and their continuing exclusion is today sustained by the deliberate decision of the leaders of those parties.

60. L.de Paor. P.94.
64. Ibid.
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