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Leading to Peace: Prisoner Resistance and Leadership Development in the IRA and Sinn Fein

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To the women in my family
Dorothy, Rollande, Émilie, Phoebe and Avril

Abstract

The Irish peace process is heralded as a success among insurgencies that attempt transitions toward peaceful resolution of conflict. After thirty years of armed struggle, pitting Irish republicans against their loyalist counterparts and the British State, the North of Ireland has a reconfigured political landscape with a consociational governing body where power is shared among several parties that hold divergent political objectives. The Irish Republican Movement, whose main components are the Provisional Irish Republican Army, a covert guerilla armed organization, and Sinn Fein, the political party of Irish republicans, initiated peace that led to all-inclusive talks in the 1990s and that culminated in the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in April 1998, setting out the parameters for a non-violent way forward.

Given the traditional intransigence of the IRA to consider any route other than armed conflict, how did the leadership of the Irish Republican Movement secure the support of a majority of republicans for a peace initiative that has held now for more than fifteen years? This dissertation explores the dynamics of leadership in this group, and in particular, focuses on the prisoner resistance waged by its incarcerated activists and volunteers. It is the contention here, that various prisoner resistance tactics enabled a wide-ranging group of captives to develop the skill set necessary to persuade their community to back the peace initiative, engage in electoral politics, mobilize their supporters to invest in attaining a united Ireland by peaceful negotiations, and put down their arms in a permanent and unequivocal manner. In this dissertation, the work of Paulo Freire is explored in order to capture the processes inherent the resistance-leadership continuum.

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> *It was a rare set of circumstances indeed which had brought the Irish peace process to this juncture: a republican leadership determined to follow a particular political course; a president of the United States strongly interested in bringing peace to Ireland; influential Irish-Americans willing to act as honest brokers; a taoiseach[1] with a close understanding of republicanism, and a willingness to take risks; and a remarkable priest, whose insight into the process was probably as deep as that of any of the principals.* (Anderson, 2002, 348)

In October 2011, Martin McGuinness ran for the Presidency of Ireland in what could only have been thought of, a mere decade ago, as unimaginable.[2] This is an historic turning point in Irish politics. Not so long ago, McGuinness was vilified as a terrorist and a murderer. Yet he is known around the world as one of the people responsible for the success of the Irish peace process,[3] having been at the helm of the peace initiative along with Gerry Adams, since its inception. His self-acknowledged membership in the IRA[4]--indeed, its Chief of Staff for many years (McDonald, 2011)--and the demonization by Irish media during the Presidential campaign, did not deter a substantial number of Irish voters from choosing him.[5] McGuinness was the only candidate who had a truly international reputation. He has been to the White House several times and met three US Presidents. He is well-known in South Africa, Iraq, and Palestine, and acknowledged the world over as a statesman (O'Dowd, 2011).

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[1] *Taoiseach* is the Irish term for Prime Minister. For definitions of acronyms and Irish terms, please see appendix D.

[2] Martin McGuinness is the Deputy Premier of the Belfast Assembly, and one of the key figures in negotiating the Good Friday Agreement (1998), resulting from a peace process that began in 1993. The President of Ireland is a figurehead, political power being vested in the *Taoiseach* (Prime Minister).

[3] Along with the end of Apartheid in South Africa, the Irish Peace Process is hailed as a success internationally.

[4] Irish Republican Army, a guerilla army that has fought the British since the early 1900s but most recently in a bitter conflict in the North of Ireland that began in 1969.

[5] McGuinness collected 13.7% of the first preference votes, putting him in third position out of six candidates.

The Irish peace process set in motion with all-party talks in the mid 1990s,[6] profoundly altered any notion that the thirty-year conflict in the Six Counties of the North of Ireland[7] was intractable. The peace initiative refers to the efforts undertaken by a host of actors to reach a peaceful settlement to the conflict, much of it taking place in secret during its embryonic phase. This surprising or even shocking change in strategy by the Republicans was welcomed by many and raised questions as to *how* this could take place given the depth of antagonism between the nationalist/republican[8] community, the British government and unionism. The Irish peace process, its tenuous character notwithstanding, is held up as a model for other conflicts as an example to follow (Roberts, 2010).

It would be unfair to speak of the success of the peace process[9] without giving due credit to a range of players who made it happen. On one hand, an initial discussion took place between

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[6] The peace initiative finds its genesis as far back as 1987, when Gerry Adams and John Hume began secret talks on a peace plan. This first document that speaks to this is "A Scenario for Peace" published by Sinn Fein in May 1987.

[7] The partitioned portion of Ireland, officially known as Northern Ireland, is considered an illegitimate entity by Irish republicans. Alternative appellations by republicans include "the Six Counties" or "the North of Ireland". It is these alternatives that are used throughout this work. Loyalists refer to it as Ulster, but the province of Ulster is larger than the region of 'Northern Ireland'. (See "Note on Terminology", Hennessy, 2001)

[8] Traditionally, nationalists were those who favoured the reunification of Ireland by constitutional means whereas Republicans favoured reunification by armed force. Since the peace process, these two categories are increasingly the same, though we still refer to republicans as those who come from the physical force tradition. Both nationalists and republicans are identified as Catholics, whereas unionists and loyalists emanate from the Protestant community which holds a slight majority over Catholics in the Six Counties of the North of Ireland. However, the conflict on the territory, though the protagonists are identified by religious denomination, is not a religious conflict. Moreover, since the Peace Process, it has been established that some members from the Protestant community are voting for Sinn Fein. (See "Note on Terminology", Hennessey, 2001)

[9] Success here is measured not only by the cessation of hostilities, but also by the fact that Sinn Fein is in a power-sharing situation with the Democratic Unionist Party. However, the ability of London to suspend the Assembly on four occasions signals the fragility of the New Assembly's autonomy. Notwithstanding this, the radical alteration of the political terrain of the Six Counties and the cessation of hostilities are factors that enable one to speak of "success". I also recognize that while Sinn Fein considers this state of affairs as a positive evolution in the conflict, others, namely dissident republican groups, see this as a sell-out.

Sinn Fein and the Social Democratic and Labour Party leaders,[10] with the help of a low-profile priest from the Clonard Monastery, Father Alec Reid (Feeney, 2002, 346; Anderson, 2002, 348); discussions also took place with the Irish government with Father Reid's assistance. On the other hand, the 'back channel'[11] between the republicans and the British government was re-established to explore the possibilities of accommodating a change of strategy that would allow for a cessation of hostilities (Adams, 1996; Anderson, 2002; Feeney, 2002). Another significant factor was the role played by then US Presidential candidate, Bill Clinton. During his campaign for the top White House post in early 1993, Clinton, in an effort to secure the Irish-American vote, promised to work toward peace in the North of Ireland, were he to be elected (O'Clery, 1996). When he became President, he set in motion a strategy for direct involvement in the peace process and named Senator George Mitchell as the top American to assist in the talks, which the latter chaired (ibid.). International collaboration was also enlisted with representatives from several countries including Canada[12], South Africa, Finland, and Australia. On the loyalist[13] side, the Ulster Volunteer Force's (UVF)[14] political wing, the Progressive Unionist Party, came on board under the leadership of Billy Hutchinson and the late David Ervine (both

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[10] Sinn Fein (pronounced *shin-fane*), founded in 1901, is the party representing republicans. The SDLP (Social Democratic and Labour Party) was founded in 1970 by John Hume, represented constitutionalist nationalists. Hume won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1998, along with David Trimble, then leader of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) that represented those in favour of maintaining constitutional ties with Great Britain.

[11] Feeney describes the 'back channel' as an elaborate arrangement whereby secret talks took place between an MI6 agent (British Military Intelligence Organization) and a Derry priest that began in 1990. However, this 'back channel' had been operating on and off since the 1970s (Feeney, 2002, 386).

[12] General De Chastelain chaired the Decommissioning Commission (IICD); Dr. Clifford Shearing participated in the Patten Commission on police reform; and Chief Justice Hoyt of New Brunswick was a member of the Saville Inquiry into Bloody Sunday.

[13] Loyalists are those who favour maintaining constitutional ties with Great Britain and who are prepared to engage in armed force in order to preserve that relation.

[14] The Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) is a loyalist paramilitary organization responsible for the killing of hundreds of Catholic civilians.

ex-prisoners). The UDA's political wing the UDP (Ulster Democratic Party) was also involved in the early stages.[15] These talks culminated in the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in April 1998.[16]

Given the longstanding commitment to the physical force tradition of the conflict's principal insurgent, the republican movement,[17] an exploration of its role in working toward peace is meritorious. State response to the armed conflict from 1969 until 1994 involved several exceptional measures, one of the results of which was the mass incarceration of Irish republicans and nationalists. Various security measures, tantamount to marshall law (Ní Aoláin, 2000), were instituted to attempt to halt the IRA's armed campaign. Among these was internment, where thousands were held captive for years (1971-1975). There was prolonged detention with accompanying interrogation techniques and a special criminalization policy (1976-2000). This included the use of highly contestable judicial practices such as jury-less courts and obtaining convictions based on uncorroborated statements and/or statements obtained as a result of the application of the "five techniques" of interrogation.[18] Legions of Irish republicans were imprisoned for extended periods (some lasting nearly twenty years). Set-piece killings of targeted republicans by security forces also took place (Ní Aoláin, 2000).

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[15] The Ulster Defense Association (UDA) is a loyalist paramilitary organization also responsible for the deaths of many Catholic civilians. The UDP is not to be confused with the more recalcitrant DUP (Democratic Unionist Party) of the Reverend Ian Paisley

[16] The official name is "The Agreement" and it is alternately called the Good Friday Agreement or the Belfast Agreement. I was in Belfast during its signing.

[17] The Republican Movement encompasses the Provisional IRA (the guerilla army) and Sinn Fein (the political party).

[18] The "five techniques" are wall-standing, hooding, subjection to noise, deprivation of sleep, and deprivation of food and drink (Lauterpacht and Greenwood, 1980, 198).

The long-term resistance within the walls of the prison had a profound influence on the community of republicans, and indeed sparked an Ireland-wide and international wave of support.[19] This dissertation explores, from the point of view of those engaged in the struggle, the dynamic between this resistance and the movement's leadership development. From the late 1970s onward, activists both inside prison and outside, were involved in rethinking republican strategy with a view to advancing the objective of ridding Ireland of the British presence on republican and egalitarian grounds. Eventually they changed their armed campaign strategy and persuaded their community to engage in a peace process on terms acceptable to most. They also persuaded their adversaries to look toward a peaceful future. In short, they re-engineered the struggle in a way that would be empowering to the republican community. Captive activists reconfigured the prison as a "University of Freedom" in spite of dehumanizing and brutal conditions under which they were held. This "university" provided the space and means to analyze the conflict and trade in the republican physical force ethos for a dynamic political framework largely responsible for reconfiguring politics in the North of Ireland.

This thesis is driven by questions regarding the evolution of leadership in the Republican Movement from 1969 until today. What type of leadership is exercised by these leaders? How has it changed over the course of the conflict? To what do they attribute the change? How has prisoner resistance impacted these leaders, their community, and the struggle? This study is a response to Buntman's (2003) call for exploring the bearing that political incarceration has on liberation movements and the actors within them (7). She argues that the prisoners of Robben

[19] For instance during the campaign for special status and its apogee, the second hunger strike during which Bobby Sands, Francie Hughes, Ray McCreesh, Patsy O'Hara, Joe McDonnell, Martin Hurson, Kevin Lynch, Kieran Doherty, Thomas McElwee and Mickey Devine died.

Island, in South Africa, "used resistance...for a more far-reaching project, namely fundamentally reshaping existing power relations within the prison and the society outside the prison" (6). In the same vein, this investigation assesses the extent to which the Irish peace process was influenced by incarcerated or formerly incarcerated leaders. It questions whether certain forms of prisoner resistance that were utilized, had a bearing on the development of skills necessary to lead the Republican Movement away from the armed struggle. The objective is to ascertain, on the one hand, how formerly incarcerated republicans who were either leaders, or who became leaders, understand the role of resistance to their imprisonment, in the struggle. But more to the point, it seeks to tease out the linkage between prisoner resistance, *per se*, and the development of (former) prisoners' leadership.

Accomplishing this task presented a certain number of challenges. Namely, there was an imperative to excavate a vast literature on Anglo-Irish relations to pick out texts which were apposite to the contextualization of republican thinking and action; finding cogent theoretical material that would serve as the pillars upon which the investigation rested; selecting a sample of leaders and persuading them to collaborate by accepting to be interviewed. Further, in order for my interpretations and those of the participants to make sense, it was necessary to provide sufficient historical and political context for understanding the reasons behind the IRA's armed campaign and the dynamics of the movement. Most crucially, and over-arching all the elements mentioned above, there was the need to make the connection between resistance and leadership. The configuration of the dissertation sets out to contend with these issues.

In the first instance, the literature review presented in Chapter 2 is a selection of works that I consider germane to understanding the many dimensions of the Anglo-Irish conflict,

predominantly as it concerns the republican struggle, be it during the armed campaign, the prison campaigns or the peace process. The *corpus* of literature on this conflict is extensive. To give an idea of the proportion, the Linen Hall Library in Belfast, self-proclaimed the "definitive archive of the recent troubles", has a catalogue of 250,000 entries including everything from political leaflets to books, periodicals and visual material (Linenhall Library, 2011). I focus on works that cover political analyses of the conflict in general, then in particular, the IRA, imprisonment and resistance, "insider" writings by republican ex-prisoners, and works pertaining to other conflicts. I also include texts that are of paramount importance to understanding political conflict, resistance, leadership, and governance.

Among other issues, it was compelling to address the contentious academic enterprise that is historical revisionism. This refers to the machinations of *revising* history so as to disavow the legitimate basis of grievance expressed by insurgent republican forces, especially after Irish independence and its egregious consequence, partition. Grasping the nuances and competing claims made by scholars and other analysts enabled me to have a more global understanding of the contentious issues involved. In so doing, it augmented my ability to focus on the underlying causes of the conflict, thereby allowing me to fasten theoretical notions of resistance and leadership onto a republican code, culture and set of beliefs, lending cogency to the ethnographic exercise. Lastly, I discuss Brazilian educationalist Paulo Freire's (1972, 1985) work on radical education and struggle, which provided the footing upon which to build essential connections between resistance and leadership. In fact, this thesis is imbued with Freire's thought, from the influence he had on the participants' thinking, to the basis that he provided for deriving a

theoretical understanding of the social movement under consideration, to the salience of his approach as a guide for the method of investigation.

In the second instance, Chapter 3 presents and explains the central theories used to understand the dynamics of conflict, resistance and leadership. It is here that I expand on the thought of Paulo Freire (1972, 1985) and how it serves as the basis for understanding the process of empowerment through the development of a critical consciousness. According to this author, this leads to resistance and the crafting of a vision of social change. For the purposes of this thesis, his work provides a clear insight into the resistance-leadership continuum. I also address Giorgio Agamben's (2005, 1998) concept of the state of exception which offers a framework for analyzing British security measures in the North. This chapter discusses Foucault's (1978) theory of power as a basis for understanding resistance, which offers the possibility of critiquing Agamben's theory. Resistance is explored by focusing on the works of Buntman (2003), McEvoy (2001) and O'Hearn (2006). The latter adds a significant dimension to the connections between republican prisoner resistance and leadership. Further, collective and social identity theories of leadership are assessed for their salience in illuminating the relational dynamics of the movement. The chapter concludes with the theoretical contributions of Buntman and Huang (2000) on the development on leadership skills in prison; of Shirlow and McEvoy (2009) on the effects of resistance-derived leadership skills among political prisoners in the North of Ireland; and lastly, of Bennis' (2003) notion of adversity and its effect on leadership development. In essence, power, resistance and leadership are the principal concepts at the heart of this investigation, and the works mentioned above illuminate the connections between these notions and form the theoretical pillars upon which the dissertation is based.

In the third instance, I had to access a number of leaders in Sinn Fein, the IRA, and in the community as well as former prison leaders, since it was their conceptualizations and understanding of their experiences that were most apt to reveal the connections between resistance and leadership. The complications deriving from the stature of some of the leaders with whom I sought to engage, combined with the sensitivity of discussing IRA and Sinn Fein strategy, meant that finding participants who were willing and/or able to discuss these issues would not necessarily be straightforward. In Chapter 4, I therefore address methodological considerations. I explore ethnography, that is, the description and interpretation of the interactions of a social group (Klenke, 2008, 200). I also make a case for critical research because, like Said (2004), I espouse the belief that disclosure, rather than confirm that which we already know, should present alternative views that may have all too often been marginalized (Said, 2004, in Roy, 2007, 57). As a critical researcher, I take a stand against injustice and am not shy to reveal my partisanship for emancipatory struggle (Kincheloe and McLaren, 1998, 264). Then I define insider and semi-insider research, and reveal the usefulness of the latter as a way to make sense of the particular participant-observation I engaged in over many years as a member of a support group allied to the Republican Movement. This chapter additionally explains my use of Paulo Freire's (1972) notion of collaborative learning as creative and transformational. Hence, I stress the dialogical nature of the relationship with research participants, who have been engaged in a long-term reflexive project, and who are steeped in the Freirian method of learning as "the practice of freedom" (Schaull, 1972, 9). Finally, this chapter presents the details of the research process and situates the researcher in the context of that which is researched. A key facet of the success of the investigation lies in my knowledge of the

movement and having established key contacts--both elements deriving from my semi-insider status in the group. This helped me to overcome the difficulty of access and I was able to secure interviews with a broad range of activists committed to assisting me in this investigation.

In the last instance, it was necessary to imbed the investigation in a contextual framework that had the greatest prospect of making sense of the complex historical and political circumstances which had a bearing on the thoughts and actions of this group. This dissertation relies on a deep reading of history and policy as a way to better penetrate and interpret the longstanding conflict between the Irish and the British. In so doing, it provides the necessary groundwork for understanding the repression of Irish nationalists by British conquerors over a multi-centurial period, the genesis of a guerilla army dedicated to fighting this repression, and the consequent long legacy of resistance to the British occupation, *in-* and *ex- carcere*. Such an examination prepares the terrain for an exploration of the nature of republican resistance, most particularly prisoner resistance, and leadership. Therefore, Chapter 5 analyzes state security policy in the North and Chapter 6 undertakes an historical exploration of republicanism.

In Chapter 5, I analyze British State security policy as a way to set the scene for, and provide an explanation of, the dialectical amplification cycle[20] of contention--that is to say--the escalation of republican violence in response to state repression. Giorgio Agamben (2005) maintains that the Sovereign[21] uses the 'exception' to put itself above the law, in order to 'ban' certain sections of the community, thereby circumscribing the rule of law:

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[20] See Lemert (1967) on stigma.

[21] The 'sovereign' refers to the Executive branch of government (Agamben, 2005, 1998).

> ...modern totalitarianism can be defined as the establishment, by means of the state of exception, of a legal civil war that allows for the physical elimination not only of political adversaries but of entire categories of citizens who for some reason cannot be integrated into the political system. (2)

He asserts that such 'states of exception' have a "...tendency to become a lasting practice of government" (7). I delve into the "Special Powers Act", the "Emergency Provisions Act" and the "Prevention of Terrorism Act" in order to illustrate the recourse to exceptional governance. Such a framework provides a useful analytical tool to demonstrate how the extended use of extraordinary laws is problematic for a constitutional democracy.[22] This analysis shows that exceptional measures, contrary to Agamben's thesis that they become permanent and cannot be undone, can and are lifted. The vehicle for such transformation, I contend along with others,[23] is resistance, or more aptly, collective resistance.

Concommitantly, Chapter 6 addresses the history of the Republican Movement, its tenets, traditions and outlook, in order to provide the necessary background to appreciate the difficult task of steering the movement away from the armed phase of the struggle and proposing a peace plan. The two organizations that make up the Republican Movement, the Irish Republican Army (IRA), and Sinn Fein are discussed. Military engagement played an important part in the republican trajectory. This chapter outlines the genesis of the IRA, its ideology, and explains the tensions that were its mainstay over the years (Pro and Anti-Treaty factions; Official and Provisional IRA; the relationship between the IRA and Sinn Fein). This provides an explanation of the importance of the broad consensus for the peace initiative, the reasons for dissidence as

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[22] While it is not the purpose here to present the North of Ireland as a democracy, it does juxtapose the workings of the constitutional monarchy (where power resides in an elected parliament and therefore considered a democracy) that is the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the problematic geo-political territory of Northern Ireland.

[23] See Laclau, 2007; Ziarek, 2008; and Larsen, 2008.

well as gives background that may better assist in understanding the mindset of a Volunteer.[24] Such an excavation into the history of the Movement informs the continuity in the forms of struggle undertaken by this group over time. It is a necessary grounding of the problematic in this investigation. To have bypassed this exercise would have left the project without a solid foundation, compromising the potency and cogency of the discussion and analysis.

Chapter 7 speaks to the origin of participants' involvement in the Republican Movement, looks at the concept of resistance, then focuses on prisoner resistance. It presents the views of the participants in respect of their collective and individual acts of prisoner resistance over a period of time and in different carceral establishments. Herein, using interview passages, I present tactics that were most salient for them. In light of this, five tactics are offered: organizing IRA structures within prisons, the organization and operationalization of escapes, the campaign for special status, the campaign for segregation, and the organization and operationalization of republican based and republican driven education. In line with Gaucher's (2002a) understanding of writing and artistic expression as resistance, this exploration focuses not only on the narrower aspect of "surviving the dislocations of prison life" (12) but on the ways in which political prisoners "...wish to give voice to the pain of their people and articulate the need for radical change to end this pain" (Ghunna, 2002, 71). I also explore O'Hearn's (2009) notion of "solidary cultures of resistance", wherein he suggests that it is within the dynamic of resistance and repression that solidarity, commitment, identity and action are founded (493). In the context of the campaign for special status,[25] such a culture of resistance involves "errant trajectories",

[24] The term 'Volunteer' signifies a member of the IRA.

[25] The campaign for special status (1976-1981) was a response to the British state's "criminalization" policy. Having lost their prisoner of war status, prisoners refused to wear the prison uniform, and used only a prison-issue blanket to cover their bodies. Thus began the "blanket protest". This escalated to the "no-wash" protest, then the first hunger strike, then the second hunger strike.

manipulating events into opportunities, which led republican prisoners to take control over their everyday activities while being on 24-hour lockdown in their cells (497).

Paulo Freire's book, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1972) made its appearance in Long Kesh Prison after the second hunger strike and had a major impact on republican prisoners' thinking as it related to the hierarchical structure of the IRA and to their concept of education. Freire's critical consciousness development is explored in Chapter 7 in relation to the *ensemble* of resistance tactics that feature in this section. Whether they were conscious of Freire or not (for instance during internment), republican prisoners nonetheless adopted a Freirian approach to assess and reassess the armed campaign, the IRA, the functioning of leadership and their relational dynamics in prison. This chapter demonstrates how critical consciousness was used and developed by these former prisoners.

In Chapter 8 on leadership, I make use of two theories emanating from social psychology. The first is based on collective leadership and the second is the social identity approach. Collective leadership (Friedrich, 2009) is helpful in investigating the group of activities involved in influence work. Rather than focus attention on one or two leaders, this attends to the fact that "...leadership is a complex and dynamic process in which the behavioral roles that often fall under the leadership umbrella may be taken up by multiple individuals..." (933). In other words, leadership is exercised by a number of individuals whose skill sets are put to use in different contexts, according to their abilities (ibid.). The social identity model comes from an understanding of the centrality of followers to the Irish republican project. Rather than accord all the attention to leaders, this model asks "...how leaders are able to transform people's thinking and behavior without denying the ability of people [followers] to think for themselves" (Reicher,

et al. 2005, 549). It not only speaks to the ability of leaders to recognize and promote followers' ability to become active agents in their social movement, but also understands that leaders are indeed reliant upon followers to guide them (Reicher et al., 2005, 551).[26] This chapter concerns the participants' conceptualization of leadership, the evolution of leadership in the Republican Movement, whether and how they see themselves as leaders, the relationship between leaders and the community, the role of solidarity and the application of leadership skills in the community during the peace process. The cogency of social identity and collective leadership theories come to the fore here, as these testimonies are integrated. Most crucially, it incorporates Freire's (1985) notion of revolutionary leadership and how critical consciousness development, *conscientização*, is the revolutionary leader's *modus operandi*. True leadership, for Freire, must not attempt to "domesticate" the people to a future that only the leader knows. Rather, leadership understands that the revolutionary project implies that each person is a subject in the process of collectively transforming and recreating the world (82). This brings in a new and more textured dimension to the processual trajectories that collective and social identity theories of leadership seek to formulate, especially as regards protest movements.

Chapter 9 draws the connections between participants' views of resistance and their ideas about what influenced their leadership development during the years leading up to, and since, the beginning of the peace process. Presenting the reflections of the interview participants situates prisoner resistance as a vehicle of considerable import, by which these men and women developed collective leadership abilities. With the help of the participants, I establish the key

[26] Extensive interviewing of followers is beyond the scope of this study however, some of the participants were followers who became leaders precisely by the application of such an understanding. An interesting future research endeavour would be to delve more deeply into the perceptions and analyses of grass roots followers.

links between the Campaign for Special Status and the evolution of the peace initiative. I draw out the development of management skills that emanated from campaigning for rights within the carceral establishment and the ongoing protests over their conditions. This chapter also illustrates the link between education and leadership development. In the last instance, I discuss how the adversity of being held captive can encourage an individual to dig deep within to find clarity and courage, two of the necessary prerequisites for effective leadership. This chapter also demonstrates Freire's link between resistance and leadership as interpreted by the participants. Such a positioning of prisoner resistance in the continuum of republican experience adds to already established case studies demonstrating the role such resistance played in leadership development elsewhere (Buntman and Huang, 2000). In this investigation, Paulo Freire's thought is squarely placed at the axis of this dynamic, which serves to better theorize these processes.

By way of a conclusion, Chapter 10 affirms the pivotal role that prisoner resistance played in the development of leadership skills. Here I suggest that resistance was key to reconfiguring republican politics, and as does Buntman (2003), establish that resistance used in captivity transcended the prison and helped alter the contours of the conflict. The centrality of Freire's thought in this dissertation provides it with a unique theory of protest movement leadership. In essence, to make sense of the relationship between resistance and leadership, it is essential that Freire's notion of critical consciousness development and strategies of education be brought to the fore. In this sense, the significance of my research, over and above establishing the linkage between resistance and leadership, is that it paves the way for further consideration of Freirian philosophy in the realm of protest movement leadership. Essentially, I contend it is the

means by which to further develop collective and social identity leadership theory. This is one of the dissertation's main contributions to scholarship as well as a platform from which to launch further investigation on this subject.

The dissertation is therefore configured so as to set out a broad understanding of the Anglo-Irish conflict in its historical, political and sociological dimensions. It is founded on the premise that achieving peace in Ireland is a positive development that has changed the sectarian landscape of the North and, not innocuously, increased the life chances and safety of its citizens. Because peaceful solutions to armed insurgencies elsewhere have often been unstable or have failed,[27] this case study warrants scrutiny. Therefore how the leaders conducted themselves in order to see the process through to a peaceful place is a viable, indeed necessary, facet to understanding the inner workings of an insurgent group, and how it can move past violence and achieve their goals by peaceful means.

[27] For instance the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, (Roberts, 2010)

> *The 'revisionist' account...is also a political exercise, one whose politics and ideology is unacknowledged in the same way that speakers of Received Pronunciation disclaim having an accent. Accent, like ideology and halitosis, is viewed as what the other fellow has.* (Murphy and Meehan 2008, 13)
>
> *It hath ever been the use of the conqueror to despise the language of the conquered, and to force him by all means to learn his...the speech being Irish, the heart must needs be Irish*. (Edmund Spenser, quoted in Kiberd,1989, 234-235)

The Anglo-Irish conflict has produced an abundance of writing--literary works are colored by it, certainly--and it has spawned all manner of historical and political material, over multiple centuries. In particular, since the signing of the Good Friday Agreement, there has been an explosion of works discussing the conflict and the peace, and Irish history in general, attributing merit and blame in different directions. The conflict among scholars and commentators mimics the pugnacity of Anglo-Irish relations.

To arrive at an appreciation of the Republican Movement's thought, strategies and campaigns requires a broad understanding of the Anglo-Irish relationship in its historical and political dimensions. For instance, Spenser's quote above is an apt characterization of English conquerors, as Kiberd (1989) shows in the following citation from the President of Munster, Sir George Carew at the turn of the 17th Century: "We must change their course of government, customs, manner of holding land, language and habit of life. It will otherwise be impossible to set up in them obedience..." (235). He also quotes Sir John Davies of the Ulster plantations who said such a policy worked well for it "reclaimed the Irish from their wildness...to conform themselves to the manner of England in all their behaviour and outward forms...so that we may...hope, that the next generation, will in tongue and heart and every way else become English..." (ibid.). How is it possible to grasp the republican dedication to freedom and

independence without being aware of the fundamental historical fact of the colonization of Ireland by the British, exemplified in the passages above? To dispense with this exercise cuts short the possibility of grounding republican thought in its historical context, the independence of the 26 Counties notwithstanding. The very fact of this independence, which left six Counties under the auspices of Great Britain, has led to bellicose debate on the interpretations of Britain's role on the island and republicans' response to it. Competing claims-making is the hallmark of Irish historiography and this is why it is essential to apprehend multiple strains of opinion on Irish history, the conflict, and British policy in order to develop a discernment between various interpretive tendencies and thus be able to cogently present Republican interpretations of *their* history.

This chapter therefore begins by addressing the notion of revisionism and provides examples of such competing accounts of historical events. Following this, it reviews several works that delve into the nature and reasons for the conflict, the IRA, imprisonment and resistance, and other conflicts. This chapter also discusses books and films undertaken by republican insiders. Such first-hand accounts render palpable the realities of imprisonment and resistance, and serve as a complementary documentary source to this investigation's interviews. Further, it explores the thought of Paulo Freire, Fran Buntman and Denis O'Hearn whose works are excavated in this dissertation for the theoretical acumen and penetration they bring to concepts of resistance, prisoner resistance and leadership. The object of this exercise is to situate this research within the broader body of work on Anglo-Irish relations, and resistance and leadership, and to present important secondary sources that informed my understanding of the place of republicanism within this context.

Irish History and Revisionism

There are at least two approaches to Irish history, the traditional and the revisionist approach. The traditional approach is based on the position that British interference in Ireland is at the root of many of the country's problems. The revisionist position emanated in the 1970s, and sought to mitigate the role of Britain in exacerbating conflict in that country. Kevin Whelan explains:

> Over the last three decades in Ireland, a vigorous, and at times vicious, historiographical debate has proceeded alongside the Northern Troubles. In a country where current political divides were based as much on the past as on contemporary social divisions, and where that past was claimed as a mandate for political action, the appeal to history was ever present in public discourse. The pressure on the past to explain and justify the present intensified the historiographical debate, propelling the anxious search for a history that would liberate Irish people from their history. (Whelan, 2004, 179)

Addressing some of the revisionist interpretations of historical events exposes the historiographical contradictions that lead Murphy and Meehan (2008) to state: "Modern Irish history, instead of engaging with the Irish Question, has become part of it" (28). Ellis (2004) says history is about the moral interpretation of facts (9), and reminds us of Paul Valéry's assertion in *De l'histoire*, that "history justifies whatever we want it to" (Valéry, in Ellis, ibid.). It is critical that one be cognizant of the centrality of the revisionism factor in the consideration of the literature on this contentious topic.

For instance, the historical interpretations of the 1798 rebellion and Wolfe Tone's United Irishmen, are abundant and contradictory. Scholars like Marianne Elliott (1979) and Roy Foster (1989), to name but two, paint a picture of manipulation of the Catholic population by the United Irishmen and the Defenders with whom they aligned themselves. Foster contends that there was

insufficient discontent to elicit an uprising without the manipulation of the populace by Defender and United Irishmen (UI) leadership (Foster, 1989, 271). The Irish, according to him, were not so much concerned with notions of independence but rather, wished to engage "more profitably in imperial trade" (241). And Elliott undermines the United Irishmen's quest for Catholic emancipation, and the dismantling of the Protestant state in favour of a secular, inclusive and reformed state arguing that sectarianism was at the root of the Defenders' preoccupations. She argues that the United Irishmen had not penetrated the popular culture of Ireland; that indeed, they needed to ally themselves with the sectarian-minded Defenders in order to do so, and that the masses did not have any revolutionary ideals but that the leadership imposed the "superficial structure of a national republican movement" on a discontented peasantry (Elliott, 1979, 406-411). Elliott discredits the United Irishmen by focusing on the Defender organization, whose profile is immersed in sectarianism and violence. This portrayal of the 1798 leadership contradicts other authors' claims that the UI held philosophical ideals of equality and justice (Whelan, 1993).

Indeed, Kevin Whelan (1993) pays homage to Wolfe Tone's United Irishmen by edifying the Enlightenment principles at the core of the rebellion. It was the UI's cross-denominational unity, according to Whelan, that enabled them to ally themselves with the Defenders. In spite of the fact that the basis of Defenderism lay in settling old grievances--dispossession, oppressive taxation, high rents and the like, they did have a common objective, which was to change Irish society by establishing a fairer system of representation (270-271).

As with interpretations of the 1798 rebellion, historians of the Easter Rising are also divided into traditionalist and revisionist camps. Peter Hart (2003) incants the storyline which,

according to him, is promulgated by nationalists: "Irish republicans invented modern revolutionary warfare, with its mass parties, popular fronts, guerrilla warfare, underground governments, and continuous propaganda campaigns" (3). He goes on: "...the continuous history of the republican Movement, its leadership and ideology, and of revolutionary violence, begins here (1916). This, and not 1912, is Ireland's 1798 or 1917, the Dublin GPO its Bastille, or Winter Palace" (12). He does this, only to put the reader straight later by claiming that the conflict was motivated by sectarian hatred (8-9). In their *Troubled History: A Tenth Anniversary Critique of Peter Hart's The IRA and its Enemies*, Brian Murphy and Niall Meehan, reflecting on the Irish historical revisionist enterprise, a growth industry in Ireland, put forth:

> Within the 'revisionist' perspective, British policy and action are frequently ignored, in preference to problematizing the Irish, who are required to disabuse themselves of the notion that their forebears were oppressed by Britain. (Murphy and Meehan, 2008, 13)

The claim is that Irish history is so political in large part because of the conflict over partition:

> ...politics is written all over a profession that ostensibly set out to avoid the taint of partisanship in the 1970s, during the height of the modern Irish Troubles. Modern Irish history, instead of engaging with the Irish Question, has become part of it. The Irish Troubles have produced a troubled history that is fractious, timid and cowed by an instructed historical conscience. It dominates the field of public history and the politics of Irish history. It needs to be challenged from within. (28)

This discussion on revisionism establishes that there are identifiable and competing versions of Irish history, and of the Anglo-Irish conflict. This opens up the possibility, indeed the need, to focus on one of these versions. This study of resistance and leadership among Irish republicans seeks to contribute specifically to such a challenge, thereby acting as a counter-balance to the plethora of research that ignores the internal logic, as well as the cognitive and

affective mindset of one of the conflict's principal protagonists, the Republican Movement.

Works on the Partitioned State

A plethora of writing is available probing different perspectives on the problem with, and possible solutions to "Northern Ireland". Whyte's (1991) *Interpreting Northern Ireland*, is a survey of the literature pertaining to the North in its geographical, educational, religious, economic and political manifestations. In the latter category, he looks at the traditional nationalist perspective, the unionist perspective, and Marxist interpretations of the North. Finding resolution to the problem of the North is complex given the demographic makeup of its Six Counties. As an example, he juxtaposes "defiantly nationalist" South Armagh with "happily unionist" County Down (243). The author favours a form of joint-authority (Britain, Ireland) over the North, but recognizes the difficulties with such a proposal for the reasons just mentioned (242). Indeed, prior to the signing of the Good Friday Agreement, any solution to end the conflict appeared prone to failure. The book, having been written prior to the peace initiative, exemplifies how doubtful a resolution to the conflict appeared for many analysts at the time.

On a similar theme, in *Explaining Northern Ireland*, McGarry and O'Leary (1995) explore a range of interpretations of the conflict, from the theological to the cultural, delve into classical pluralist explanations and analyze consociational theory.[28] They state that pluralist and consociational theories place too much emphasis on endogenous factors (326).[29] On the other

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[28] "Consociational theory, developed by Arend Lijphart and other scholars, is one of the most influential theories in comparative political science. Its key contention is that divided territories...are effectively, prudently, and sometimes optimally governed according to consociational principles." The principles are executive power sharing, autonomy of self-government, proportionality and veto rights (McGarry and O'Leary, 2006, 43-44).

[29] Endogenous factors are 'internalist' factors such as a change in demographics. McGarry and O'Leary state that conventional consociational theory has placed too much emphasis on this, treating divided societies as though they are immune from external factors (McGarry and O'Leary, 2006, 48).

hand, they say that external factors are also important considerations, be they paramilitary financing, or the perceived illegitimacy of Northern Ireland on the part of some in the international community, among others (326-327). While they may have originally been critical of consociationalism, these authors eventually focused more intently on this conflict resolution method in later works: *The Northern Ireland Conflict: Consociational Engagements* (2004) and an edited volume dedicated to their reflections on consociationalism, *Consociational Theory: McGarry/O'Leary and the Northern Ireland Conflict* (2008). They explain: "...we are obviously revisionist consociationalists, not anti-consociationalists...we have been robust, some would say controversial, consociationalists" (McGarry and O'Leary, 2006, 45). They have been prolific writers on ethnic conflict regulation, particularly with respect to the North, but have also done comparative studies, such as with the Israel/Palestine, South Africa and Northern Ireland conflicts.

These works provide multiple considerations that demand attention in trying to make sense of the tensions produced by partition. Such appreciations of the multi-faceted aspects of this divided society invite the observer to be more perspicacious in her appraisal of the geo-political dynamics thereof.

Works on British Policy vis-à-vis the Partitioned State

Finn (1991), Ní Aolaín (2000) and Cunningham (2001) all examine British government policy in the North of Ireland. Finn's *Constitutions in Crisis: Political Violence and the Rule of Law* examines the constitutional frameworks that govern Germany and Northern Ireland. Constitutional democracies are governed by the rule of law, he explains. Emergency provisions geared to deal with 'crises' are supposed to be temporary in nature, but on occasion, a suspension

of these special measures is long overdue. The problem with suspending the 'normal' rules is that it jeopardizes the rights and freedoms of the constituents. When extraordinary measures are taken out of 'necessity', there must be a mechanism that ensures that state power is used for the public good (38). The aim of constitutional democracies is to return to a state of constitutionalism once the crisis is resolved. When a part of the population rejects the constitutional rules in place, a stubborn return to those rules is ineffective. Rather, when a State's legitimacy is in question, it calls for constitutional reconstruction (40). The response to political upheaval in the North of Ireland from 1969 until the signature of the Good Friday Agreement is indicative of this point.

Cunningham's (2001) *British Government Policy in Northern Ireland, 1969-2000* looks at successive British governments' approaches to constitutional, economic, social and security policy with respect to the North. It explores the contradictions between the autonomy of Stormont (the Northern Parliament) and that of Westminster, and the tensions among the different actors and agencies of the British government, including the Prime Minister's Office, the Home Secretary, the Northern Ireland Office, the Foreign Office, and the security forces (157). In spite of these complexities, Cunningham argues, there has been a "broad strategic continuity" among successive governments, whether conservative or labour (157-158). Like Finn, he also points out the egregious problems with security policy such as the establishment of non-jury courts, extensive powers of arrest, and the by-passing of procedural rules in the event of an emergency by an 'Order in Council' (a constant in the conflict) (27).

Ní Aolaín's (2000) *The Politics of Force: Conflict Management and State Violence in Northern Ireland* catalogues the estimated 350 cases of lethal force deaths during the conflict.

She affirms that lethal force is a state practice that is not isolated but that "…operates through broader policy determinations designed to control conflict, having a sophisticated interplay with law and legal process that has been obscured in contemporary public discourse" (13-14). Looking at extra-judicial killings against the backdrop of special legislation sheds light on the contradictions inherent in British policy, which "…are rooted in the attempt to use ordinary, 'normal' legal procedures in tandem with, or modified by, extraordinary legal and extra-legal norms designed to cope with societal crisis" (14). Also on the topic of state killings, Bill Rolston's (2000) *Unfinished Business: State Killings and the Quest for Truth* presents stories of deaths at the hands of the State. The multiplicity of civilian state-sanctioned deaths, by conventional or plastic bullets, is alarming. He calls for a truth commission along the lines of those in South Africa and Guatemala.[30] Rolston believes that such a commission would mark a break with the past and he hopes that such a process would establish a new consensus about human rights (322).

These works were essential in formulating a coherent analysis of British security policy in the North and helped to establish the fact that exceptional measures produced results that were counter to those hoped for by the British State. More specifically, they shed light on the policies that helped establish the republican *modus operandi,* and set the scene and background for an appreciation of republican resistance.

[30] In 1994, the UN established the "Commission for Historical Clarification" into the human rights abuse and countless deaths of the Guatemalan people by the State during the decades of conflict in that country. http://shr.aaas.org/guatemala/ceh/report/english/prologue.html . The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established in South Africa in 1995 in order to help the South African people to come to terms with the violence that took place under Apartheid.

Works About the IRA

Books on the Irish Republican Army abound, and authors have different motivations for engaging the subject (Moloney, 2010, 2002; Alonso, 2007; English, 2003; Coogan, 2002; Toolis, 1996; Smith, 1995; Bishop and Mallie, 1987; Bell, 1979). For instance, some are bereft of conceptual frameworks for political violence or the exploration of a colonial legacy responsible for political conflict (e.g. Alonso, 2007). Referring to "terrorists", "terroristic acts", and "murder" to describe republicans and their activities, Alonso (2007), rather than explore the concept of "terrorism", simply states that "terrorist" and "freedom fighter" are not mutually exclusive categories (1; 2-4). Yet Silke (2004) in a book entitled *Research on Terrorism: Trends, Achievement and Failures* opens with a discussion of the long-running failure of "terrorism" researchers to reach an agreed definition of the term, saying that, on account of that, the rigour of scientific research is inherently questionable (4).

As for any analysis of British policy and its effects, Alonso states: "Confronting terrorism imposes restrictions on policy makers and representatives of the state who always must fulfill their duties respecting the law" (5). This position downplays the problems associated with the supra-legal aspect of British security policy and its repercussions. Having interviewed several formerly active Volunteers, Alonso uses their words to make the case that they were immature teenagers when they first were involved, were reacting emotionally and were therefore prone to the indoctrination that is the mainstay, according to him, of the IRA's recruitment to its ranks (4).

A Secret History of the IRA, by Ed Moloney (2002) provides an account of the relationship between Gerry Adams and the IRA, and the authority of the former over the latter. Moloney chose to interview disaffected republicans like Brendan Hughes and Anthony McIntyre,

resulting in a portrayal of Gerry Adams as ruthless and a master manipulator of those in his *entourage.*

Richard English (2003) undertook to provide a genuinely authoritative accessible 'full study' of the IRA, that systematically addresses the questions: "what has the IRA done, why and with what consequences?" (xxii). Using a wide contingent of republican sources including people directly involved like Gerry Adams, Danny Morrison and Tom Hartley, and written sources such as An Phoblacht/Republican News, he constructs an account of the Republican Movement, its tensions, its war and its ideology. He concedes the necessity of republicans defending their neighbourhoods: "The northern state had proved doubly undemocratic, being both unfair towards Catholics and illegitimate in its very existence" (350). He also claims that IRA violence increased the suffering of Catholics, rather than lessened it (351). He lays blame all around: "...Irish republicans and nationalists, north and south, each played some part in the emergence of the crisis and conflict that raged after 1969" (359). He also offers, "British, unionist, loyalist and international actors too, all played their various parts" (ibid.).

Kevin Toolis (1996), in *Rebel Hearts: Journeys within the IRA's Soul*, in contrast to English's narrative, is focused on violence rather than on strategy. At length he describes an IRA operation in which an off-duty UDR man was targeted by the IRA but who, though shot, survived and fatally wounded a young Volunteer, Jo McManus. He goes into detail about the grief of the family, their republican beliefs, the wasted life of a youth, his father Sean's involvement in the Movement and how this impacted on Jo's commitment to the armed struggle (341-365). This narrative suggests that Jo should not be celebrated as a republican martyr since he could only have been a disillusioned youngster. On the topic of Martin McGuinness and his

role as the safe-keeper of IRA doctrine, Toolis says he is "the most important republican leader" (328). While he takes him to task for leading such a violent campaign, he does concede that McGuinness' credentials as a republican are flawless: "...his faith in a United Ireland is profound, complete, unshaken and unshakeable...His belief cannot be subverted this side of his assassination" (332). He offers his personal position on the IRA's armed campaign: "I cannot say I am truly an Irish Republican; I lack the intensity for it, I would not kill for it" (371). He adds, "[b]ut I remain a Republican, albeit a constitutional Republican..." (ibid.).

Smith (1995), in *Fighting for Ireland: The Military Strategy of the Irish Republican Movement,* traces the military strategy of the IRA from the Easter Rising to the early 1990s. The goal of his study is to provide a detailed compendium of republican strategy. It situates the continuum of strategy on the absolutist convictions of republican ideology (219). It walks the reader through anti-colonial guerilla warfare, to the rural insurgent border campaign (1956-62), to the social revolutionary strategy of the 1960s and the urban guerilla war of the 1970s right up to the dual "armalite and ballot box" strategy[31] that eventually led to the peace initiative of the early 1990s (219). The low intensity campaign was aimed at wearing down the morale of the opponent (17). Has the Republican Movement fallen prey to Pearse's "cult of violence", as is shown in the following quote?

> We must accustom ourselves to the thought of arms, to the sight of arms, to the use of arms. We may make mistakes in the beginning and shoot the wrong people: but bloodshed is a cleansing thing, and the nation which regards it as the

[31] The process by which the balance between electoral politics and the armed campaign eventually tipped in favour of strictly political negotiations was a dual strategy called the "armalite and ballot box strategy", a phrase coined by Danny Morrison at the 1981 *Ard Fheis*, in which he asked delegates: "Who here really believes we can win the war through the ballot box? But will anyone object if, with a ballot paper in one hand and the Armalite in the other, we take power in Ireland?" (McAllister, 2004, 124). Until then, electoral politics were a hit and miss strategy and abstentionism (not taking one's seat in an elected house) was still Sinn Fein policy.

> final horror has lost its manhood. There are many things more horrible than bloodshed and slavery is one of them (Pearse, in Edwards (1977), 179)

Smith explains that Pearse was reacting to the arming of the UVF, which was considered a "...belligerent act of militarization in itself" (ibid.). Nonetheless, he cautions that ideological absolutism combined with a penchant for militarism is dangerous. He adds that the relationship between the political and the military has been the source of tension in the movement during most of the 20th Century (22-23). The distaste for political activity among republicans is rooted in "...the perception that the political process is the domain of the unprincipled where the purity of the ideology can be entrapped...in the murky world of compromise, careerism and expediency" (20). In answer to the charge of absolutism, well-known Sinn Fein veteran, Tom Hartley states:

> ...we've always been a party of change...We changed our attitude towards elections. We changed our attitude towards Leinster House... "No return to Stormont"--now we're in the building...Republicans don't have a static view of politics. This generation knows that you're in here, you're ducking and weaving, you're shaping. Some days you win, some days you lose, but all the time, you're in there shaping the agenda. (Tom Hartley[32], as cited by English (2003), 350)

As for the civil war between the pro- and anti-Treaty factions, Smith relates that the War was not about fighting for something, but rather about "...safeguarding a pre-existing entity" (41). Smith argues that the downfall of the movement has been the sanctity of the military instrument which led to an incapacity to adequately evaluate its strategies, at times squandering opportunities to readjust their plans. He claims the Republican Movement has a "tradition of poor strategic analysis which has caused the movement to overestimate the ability of its means to overcome far

[32] Noted Republican and elected Sinn Fein member who was part of the non-imprisoned leadership team strategizing for the Campaign for Special Status (1976-1981), and also former Lord Mayor of Belfast (2008-2009)

more powerful adversaries (220). This is a helpful book that carefully assesses the realities of the movement in key periods of history and it connects the deployment of the military arm with republican ideology in a cogent manner.

Integrating a broad spectrum of works on the IRA enabled me to grasp the nature of criticisms expressed by several authors. Of the books under consideration, those by English and Smith are assessed here as being reliable and mindful accounts of IRA strategic deployment. In reading Moloney, it becomes clear that an in-depth knowledge of the Movement is necessary in order to exercise discernment over how different points of view can color interpretations. A lack of understanding of the tensions within the IRA between different players might eclipse the fact that this work is a challenge to peace process republican actors, made in the service of disaffected republicans such as the late Brendan Hughes and Anthony McIntyre.

Literature on the Struggle and Imprisonment of Irish Republicans

Another focus of research on the conflict is the mass imprisonment of republicans and nationalists. O'Mahoney's (1987) *Frongoch: The University of Freedom* discusses the internment of surviving Easter Rising republicans. This historical work has the advantage of establishing, as the title suggests, the original spirit and system of resistance among republicans from as early as Easter 1916. McGuffin's (1973) *Internment*, also illustrates the historical continuity of the British policy of internment, from Michael Collins' time (1916-1922) to the mid 1970s. It also speaks to prison being a "hotbed of 'sedition', political centers and training grounds for resistance fighters" during Collins' days (27). Fathers Faul and Murray (1972) provide a catalogue of security force personnel brutality and torture meted out on members of the nationalist community during internment in *British Army and Special Branch RUC: Brutalities*

December 1971—February 1972.[33] The blanket and no-wash protests and the hunger strikes are the subject of Coogan's (2002) *On the Blanket: The Inside Story of the IRA Prisoners' "Dirty" Protest*, and Beresford's (1987) *Ten Men Dead: the Story of the 1981 Hunger Strike*. Together, these depict republican imprisonment and resistance up to 1981. The latest book dealing not only with the hunger strike itself but with the life and thought of its most famous prisoner, Bobby Sands, is O'Hearn's (2006) *Nothing but an Unfinished Song: Bobby Sands, the Irish Hunger Striker Who Ignited a Generation*. This work is an important addition to the corpus, not least because it presents Sands as an astute political thinker and strategist, but also depicts the relationship with, and influence of, Gerry Adams on Sands.

On the topic of women in the Republican Movement, Corcoran (2006) provides a comprehensive account of prison management and resistance to prison authorities of women in Armagh in a book entitled *Out of Order: The Political Imprisonment of Women in Northern Ireland, 1972-1998*. She delves into gendered resistance and the contradictions and layers of oppression suffered by prisoners as a result of their status not only as captives, but as women captives. A recent addition to the issue of women in the Republican Movement is *Sinn Fein Women: Footnoted Foot Soldiers and Women of No Importance*, by Keiley-Listermann (2010)

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[33] It is widely acknowledged that interrogation techniques used to extract information from those in detention qualifies as torture. A case was brought before the European Commission on Human Rights in 1976 , on behalf of some of the victims. The Commission stated that it

> considered the combined use of the five methods to amount to torture, on the grounds that (1) the intensity of the stress caused by techniques creating sensory deprivation "directly affects the personality physically and mentally"; and (2) "the systematic application of the techniques for the purpose of inducing a person to give information shows a clear resemblance to those methods of systematic torture which have been known over the ages..a modern system of torture falling into the same category as those systems applied in previous times as a means of obtaining information and confessions. (Ireland v. United Kingdom, 1976 Y.B. Eur. Conv. on Hum. Rts. 512, 748; 788-94 (European Commission on Human Rights)).

The ECHR became obsolete in 1998 when the European Court of Human Rights underwent restructuring (see United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR), "Council of Europe: European Commission on Human Rights", http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/publisher/COECOMMHR.html). Last retrieved August 16, 2011.

that addresses the important contribution of women, not only in support roles, but their centrality in armed and political struggle. Further, Felices-Luna's 2005 dissertation delves into the motivations and experiences of women who engaged in armed conflict, and who were imprisoned, from the Peruvian and Irish Republican perspectives. In particular, this work depicts a tension in the Movement between the organization and women, relating to the perceived lack of recognition and due respect for their role in republican politics, and the failure to ensure adequate gender representation at all levels of Sinn Fein elected posts.

While the corpus of literature on the conflict is extensive, academic works that theorize the Republican Movement are few. In *Paramilitary Imprisonment in Northern Ireland: Resistance, Management, Release*, McEvoy (2001) understands resistance as "… characterized by purpose" and "…manifesting itself in opposition to the application of power" (23). He explores four strategies of resistance: escape, dirty protest and hunger strike, violence, and attitudes toward the usage of law (23). He is concerned with "…the relationship between resistance and political struggle, resistance and power, the collective character of prisoner resistance, and the relationship among resistance and control over space within prison" (43). This book not only contends with republican prisoners, but also looks at loyalist prisoners and prison staff.

These works assist the researcher in establishing the nature of prison repression and prisoner resistance, and are references for the chronology of republican resistance that serve to ground it in a historical legacy of struggle.

Works by Republican "Insiders"

Along with Campbell, et al.'s (1994) *Nor Meekly Serve my Time: The H-Block Struggle, 1976-1981*, a comprehensive account of Long Kesh prison resistance is found in McKeown's *Out of Time: Irish Republican Prisoners, Long Kesh, 1972-2000* (2001).[34] As a former Long Kesh prisoner and hunger strike survivor, McKeown provides a first-hand account of the range of resistance that was used to upset the domination of the prison authorities as well as to re-construe the conflict, and serves as the definitive source for examining the inner workings of the blanket and no-wash protests, the hunger strikes, and just as importantly, the ensemble of political education strategies deployed by Long Kesh prisoners which served to enhance the Volunteer's capacity as an astute political analyst and spokesperson.[35]

Sinn Fein's President, Gerry Adams, has written over a dozen books ranging in genre from personal memoir, to political manifesto, to short story. *Before the Dawn: An Autobiography* (1996), *A Farther Shore: Ireland's Long Road to Peace* (2003) and *Hope and History: Making Peace in Ireland* (2003), trace the story of the conflict through to the peace process. His capacity for story-telling finds consensus with readers. Most importantly, these works offer not only an understanding of republican thinking and strategy, but also elucidate the manner in which the peace process was established, and his and his comrades' hand in it. Bobby Sands (2001, 1997, 1991, 1982) was also prolific, and his poems and other writings show the evolution of this volunteer, his politicization, and his capacity to lead and mobilize.

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[34] This book is based on his Ph.D. dissertation . See bibliography.

[35] This work is a good example of Freire's (1972) notion of praxis and a self-confessed motive of McKeown, that it contribute to the self-reflexive and the collective process of education (McKeown, 2001,9).

Other former prisoners have also written about the conflict and their imprisonment. In particular, former Sinn Fein publicity director and former *An Phoblacht/Republican News* editor, Danny Morrison, has written extensively both in and out of prison. His book, *Then the Walls Came Down* (1999), is a personal account of his years in prison in the 1990s. He has also written a number of other books, a play *The Wrong Man* (1997), and, most recently, edited a collected volume entitled *Hunger Strike* (2006). Similarly, James Monaghan (2007) writes of Niall Connolly, Martin McAuley and his experience in captivity in Columbia in his *Columbia Jail Journal*. Patrick Magee (2001), sentenced to eight life sentences for his part in the Brighton bombing in 1984, and released by the provisions of the GFA, is the author of *Gangsters or Guerillas: Representations of Irish Republicans in 'Troubles Fiction'*. He offers a critical assessment of this fiction which he says consistently portrays republicans as godfathers or psychopaths. He says that such portrayals have played a part in the British propaganda war waged on republicans. He covers 480 novels in this book, which was part of his doctoral research. He began a Ph.D. while incarcerated which he finished upon his release. Ella O'Dwyer (2003) also received a Ph.D. after her release, and her doctoral research was made into a book entitled *The Rising of the Moon: The Language of Power* which compares the works of Beckett, Conrad and Achebe to accounts of the conflict in the North. And finally, a rich source on republican thinking is the ten-year run of *An Glor Gafa/The Captive Voice*, written and edited exclusively by those in captivity. It contains news articles, political analyses, poetry, testimonials, and cartoons, both in English and Irish, covering a wide range of political and social topics (1989-1999).

More recently, Feargal Mac Ionnrachtaigh's (2008) thesis entitled *'An Ghaeilge faoi Ghlas': Republican Prisoners and the Irish Language in the North of Ireland--Power, Resistance and Revival* is, like this work, meant to answer Buntman's (2003) call for exploring prisoner resistance beyond Robben Island (2). He undertook to analyze the part that Irish language development in prison played in prisoner resistance and also in the revival of the Irish language beyond prison. While careful to avoid over- and mis- representations of the influence of prisoners' Irish language development on nationalist communities, he does state:

> In the six county context of the all-pervasive structural realities of British colonialism in Ireland, it was perhaps also predictable, considering previous historical precedent, in the post-Hunger Strike phase that a rejuventated [*sic*] republican movement would recognise the decolonising vehicle of the Irish language as a rational constituent element of the increased politicisation of the nationalist community in the North of Ireland. (228)

According to this author, the growth of the Irish language outside prison gave a new sense of self-respect to the Nationalist community and this alternative educational system, "a counter-hegemonic 'education for emancipation'" (234) assisted in creating an alternative sense of identity, and empowered the group because managing this alternative form of education meant that power lay with the community (ibid.).

Deaglán Ó Mocháin (2011), republican ex-prisoner and prison leader, completed a PhD dissertation, *Criminalization and the Post Hunger Strike Resistance of IRA Prisoners in the H-Blocks of Long Kesh*, in which he theorizes both the British criminalization of the republican struggle as well as the resistance of incarcerated republicans. He goes into detail about IRA structures and organization, education in the H-Blocks, escape attempts, the campaign for special status and its aftermath. Of pertinence to this particular thesis, Ó Mocháin uses Buntman's

(2003) notion of the continuum of power to juxtapose the penal regime and republican resistance. Based on Duff and Garland (1994), he states:

> It is therefore useful to view penal policy as a 'shifting patchwork' of compromises and arbitrary decisions where power relations are continually being constructed and contested, and where absolute compliance is rarely achieved... (243)

Moreover, he takes on McEvoy's (2001) notion that the managerialist strategy (read, "depoliticized") on the part of the prison authorities played a significant role in the power dynamic between the authorities and the IRA prisoners:

> The implication that a management initiative was reciprocated by republican prisoners, and his presentation of the official response to prisoner led initiatives as coherent, can be challenged in light of my earlier material that suggests that the republican structures in the H-Blocks took the initiative across a range of areas, and that the administration responded accordingly. This is not to say that the prison administration and the NIO were insignificant or irrelevant, but it is difficult to identify positive initiatives that emerged from a 'managerialist' perspective from the point of view of IRA prisoners, as opposed to the administration having to deal with the consequences of political imprisonment within a framework that denied its existence, and struggled to restrict its influence. (253)

His analysis of resistance is a key reference for this study. Moreover, his treatment of the insider researcher perspective is astutely addressed and provided guidance for methodological considerations. It is also noted that the Freirian concept of "dialogical exchange" is at its apogee in this text, undertaken very much in *collaboration* with the republican former prisoner participants he interviewed.

Another critical source for this investigation is O'Hearn's (2009) "Repression and Solidary Cultures of Resistance: Irish Political Prisoners on Protest" wherein he undertakes to "...examine prison culture...and the importance of leadership in the transformation" (491). In the

context of the republican imprisonment, and especially the campaign for special status (1976-1981), O'Hearn argues that identity (both self and collective) is forged out of risk-taking activities and the ensuing repression that results. Moreover, the development of a culture of resistance necessitated a form of leadership that "...instituted and encouraged practices that transcended mere resistance to authority, by building positive (prefigurative) forms of collective life" (493). O'Hearn has seized the crux of resistance in prison: the use of ordinary events (eating, walking, reading) to manufacture opportunities to challenge the carceral regime. The constant manipulation of such tactics into opportunities snowballs into "errant trajectories" that are channelled into "...an insurgent and collective campaign that directly challenges power..." (497). Bobby Sands was key to this exercise during the blanket protest because he combined organizational skills (the ability to get things done) with charismatic ability (maintaining morale, motivating) (520). O'Hearn suggests that Sands had an extraordinary sensitivity to his environment, and was able to perceive how and when to use various skills and have the judgement necessary to influence processes toward desired outcomes (503).

Films on the subject have also been made, including *H-3* (2001), produced by Brian Campbell and Laurence McKeown, who also produced *I gCillin An Bháis, 1980-1981* (1998). *H*-3*,* given that it was made by those who resisted and who survived the hunger strike, closely depicts the realities of the brutal episode of the campaign for special status. It portrays the blanket men as regular people confronted with the challenges of their prison conditions. The film was made in Long Kesh prison rendering more poignant the story of this episode of resistance. *I gCillin An Bháis, 1980-1981* (1998) is a documentary featuring the leaders of the campaign for special status, who share their memories of how the strategy was played out, in Irish. Through

this medium, they have offered poignant interpretations of republican thought and action, and have shown the psychological and affective side of the struggle.[36]

Whalen's (2007) *Contemporary Irish Republican Prison Writing: Writing and Resistance* is an essential work especially for anyone wishing to explore writing as a form of resistance, its modes and effects on the struggle, as well as the content of prisoners' writing itself. Prison writing is a singular phenomenon and its resistant quality, especially in regards of the Irish republican struggle, transcends the wall of the prison and subverts the disciplinary hegemony of the carceral. According to this author,

> In fact, precisely because they are produced within a special matrix—at once removed from the bounds of everyday society, yet also within the undiluted heart of that society as replicated in its disciplinary structure—prison texts are able to cast light upon subjects quite external to the physical prison cell, subjects that may in fact be invisible to those outside. Jail literature reverses the panopticon, fragmenting the state's attempts to appear unassailably unified. The carceral regime gazes into the cell, but in the case of the Republican POWs whose work this book examines, the cell gazes back, defiant. In effect, when prison writing exits the carceral space and is published outside, the cell becomes the observation tower in which the world outside scrutinizes the disciplinary regime. (6)

Insider and semi-insider works on the republican struggle are key documentary sources for this investigation. Whereas conversations that take place within the parameters of an interview are limited by time, the written word is more slowly developed and is bolstered by theoretical arguments shaped by, and credited to other thinkers as well as the participants and the author. This enables one to follow the journey of the writer, which prompts reflection about

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[36] The latest film on the hunger strike was shown at the 2008 Cannes and Toronto Film Festivals. Entitled *The Hunger* (2008) and directed by Steve McQueen (not an insider), it garnered accolades from many including republican ex-prisoners (See chapter 9, the passage by Hugh on p. 271-272).

issues from a theoretical perspective. Juxtaposing such texts with the experience of engaging in a conversation with participants lends texture and depth to the investigation.

Writings about the Peace Process

In *Beyond the Wire: Former Prisoners and Conflict Transformation in Northern Ireland,* Shirlow & McEvoy (2008) clearly establish that former prisoners have been, and are, instrumental in the peace process, and have exercised leadership in their communities to ensure such peaceful transition. They argue that they have not been given adequate recognition for their role in peace-building and that continued labeling and negative stereotyping are impediments to understanding the very positive role they are playing in their communities (1). They estimate that over the course of the conflict, 15,000 republicans have been imprisoned while they hazard that between 5,000 and 10,000 loyalists have been in captivity (2). They make the case that former prisoners have exercised true leadership in their communities, however their focus is not on skill acquisition during imprisonment, per se. They contend:

> It is precisely because of their violent past as having fought 'on behalf of' those communities that they have the credibility to engage in such *real* reconciliation work in the working-class areas in which it is most needed. It is also they who have arguably taken the greatest risks in the peacemaking process on the basis that they do not want future generations to share their experiences of violence, exclusion and demonisation. (152)

From their implications in restorative justice initiatives (127), to their role in managing marches in the streets (131), to their involvement in electoral campaigning (139), they establish that indeed, this phenomenon helped to shape the continuation of the peace process. They also draw links between their resistance in prison and such leadership (123-142). This relationship is under-developed however, and this project seeks to flesh out those tenuous connections.

Also on the subject of leadership, Gormley-Heenan's (2007) *Political Leadership and the Northern Ireland Peace Process* analyses the role, capacity and effectiveness of the leaders involved in the peace process. In part, she focuses on the 'chameleonic' nature of leadership in the North of Ireland between 1994 and 1998, and concludes that leadership in this site of conflict transformation remains inconstant and dependent upon the opinion of others and the political climate (3). This book unfortunately, does not excavate theories of leadership deeply enough and the result is that it presents a superficial account of leadership.

Brian Feeney's (2003) *Sinn Fein: a Hundred Turbulent Years* chronicles the development of Sinn Fein since its inception in 1901. Therein, he explores the complex relationship of Sinn Fein and the IRA, the former's spectacular ascendancy during the "Armalite and Ballot Box" period and culminating in the peace initiative elaborated by republicans which led to the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998. His investigation into the history of Sinn Fein is perspicacious and the result is a worthy reference book on this movement. Feeney is a noted Irish journalist and more notably, a former politician representing SDLP, which adds to, rather than detracts from, the book's tenability in portraying the "rise and fall--and rise again" of Sinn Fein (Inside front jacket) .

These texts have intrinsic value as they clearly establish the role of prisoners in the peace process, and while it is not their main thrust, have noted the prisoner-leadership phenomenon. This dissertation seeks to build on these premises and demonstrate more precisely how this connection is made.

Sources on Other Conflicts

Books on other conflicts provide an understanding of the similarities and differences with the republican struggle. For instance, Fran Buntman's (2003) *Robben Island Prisoners and the End of Apartheid* , analyzes the role that South African prisoners played in the transformation of their society from apartheid to democracy. Buntman's conceptual framework for prison resistance is a key tool for the present analysis of republicans' own transformation from armed struggle to peace negotiations. She also co-authored with Huang (2000) an article on leadership development among South African and Taiwanese political prisoners which clearly presents the relationship between resistance and the development of leadership skills that assisted in not only challenging the prison regimes, but was instrumental in influencing the transition toward democracy in those two countries. It is one of the few sources that makes such explicit links between prisoner resistance and leadership and is used to anchor the postulates of this study. Nelson Mandela's (1994) *A Long Walk to Freedom* (1994) traces the struggle against apartheid in South Africa, his years in prison, and the movement's success in transforming the conflict and taking power. His story of ANC leadership and struggle that spans decades resembles that of the Republican Movement. The comparability of these two struggles is singular (Buntman, 2003; Ó'Mochaín, 2011; Eamonn) particularly in the transition towards peace. Mario Mencia's (1993) *The Fertile Prison: Fidel Castro in Batista's Jails* depicts the prison as an academy of struggle, in which Cuban leaders prepared the revolution, a further reminder that political prisoners share much in common such as transforming their place of captivity into an opportunity to gain more knowledge and a better understanding of politics in order to pursue the struggle, thereby re-affirming their resistance in the face of repression. This book offers, among other things,

excerpts from Fidel Castro's prison correspondence. The latter's thinking on leadership, for instance, is instructive, and speaks to the notion of collective leadership. In response to one of his detractors, he states:

> ...leadership is fundamental...You cannot organize a movement if everyone thinks he has the right to issue public statements without consulting anybody else. Nothing is to be expected from a movement made up of anarchists who at the first disagreement will go off on their own, disrupting and destroying the organization. (127)

These works are but a sample that are a potent reminder that the Irish are not alone in their ability to wage struggles and bring results.

Theoretical Works on Power, Resistance and Leadership

The central elements under investigation are resistance and leadership, and the interplay between them. Throughout this dissertation, Paulo Freire's (1972) *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* emerges as a key source in several respects. In terms of the content of the research, Freire's book has played a key role in republican captives' understanding of the relationship between *conscientização* and the ability to create alternative trajectories of resistance. McKeown (2001) highlights Freire's notion of 'conscientisation' and describes the phenomenon as,

> Arousing a person's positive self-conception in relation to their environment and society through a 'liberating education' which treats learners as subjects (active agents) and not as objects (passive recipients). (131)

Dana and McMonagle (2002) also highlight the influence of Freire on captive republicans, and say, "…incarcerated Irish republicans developed an educational strategy to combat the pervasiveness of the English world view. Education, in fact, became the focal point in the battles against Britain that would be staged within prison walls" (416). This strategy was adopted in

order to counter elitist tendencies in teaching which show "…a lack of confidence in the people's ability to think, to want, and to know" (Freire, in ibid. 415).

In his analysis of post 1981 prison writing, Whalen (2007), mentioned above, also pays tribute to the importance of Freire on republican thinking. He credits the explosion of prison writing following the hunger strike to the importance republican prisoners paid to education. This is illustrated by the creation in 1985 of a vice-officer commanding of education (142). This new approach and emphasis on education, he argues, is "…traced directly and indirectly to early 1982 when Jackie McMullan—a POW who would be one of the driving forces in structuring the educational program—received Paolo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* from a supporter outside" (142) .

Freire (1972, 1985) is responsible for drawing the needed line from resistance to leadership and explaining how the development of critical consciousness enables one to resist and craft a vision for social change. In terms of leadership, he advances in *The Politics of Education* (1985), that leaders cannot possibly lead if they are not imbued with the humility necessary to see others as agents who are quite capable in reflecting, knowing and engaging. Moreover, it is in praxis and dialogical exchange that such knowing can take place. It is such a conceptualization of leadership that bolsters collective and social identity theories of leadership.

O'Hearn (2009, 2006) also informs this research because he addresses the relationship between resistance and leadership during the campaign for special status. O'Hearn's deep knowledge of the prison struggle, of Bobby Sands, and his personal connection with republican

ex-prisoners enables him to harness social movement theory to address the concept of solidarity, collective identity construction and leadership. He provides a trajectory of resistance that assists in an understanding of the relationship between individuals, their actions and perceptions, and leadership, that forms a crucial map of tactics and strategies of resistance and situates these in the context of a challenge to prison authority. He concentrates on intense shared emotion and intersubjective communication between the prisoners on protest and calls for using such constructs in furthering research on the dynamics of contention (519). O'Hearn contributes to social movement theory by filling an important gap in this area[37], that is, an analysis of the leadership role in building and sustaining insurgent campaigns of resistance.

Buntman (2003), and Buntman and Huang (2000) are equally important works that inform this exploration. First, Buntman (2003) using the South African ANC struggle's example, sets out the relational aspect of power and counters the notion that resistance and power should be viewed as binary opposites. She states: "Resistance, at least on Robben Island, is less a moment than a continuum, less a point than a process" (251) that leads to resignification, reconstrual and emancipation (ibid.) Such a notion of power "...imbues it with a transformative potential on the individual, the group and wider society itself" (Ó'Mochaín, 2011, 246). This notion of power is critical for this exploration and dovetails with Freire's notion of power as empowerment, which is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3. Further, Buntman and Huang's comparative study of South African and Taiwanese political prisoners and their leadership informs this study inasmuch as it draws the appropriate link between resistance and leadership development.

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[37] Numerous social movement theorists allude to this gap in regards leadership, in the literature. See for instance, Barker, Johnson and Lavalette, 2001; Nepstad and Bob, 2006; and Morris and Staggenborg, 2002.

All of the works discussed in this chapter have played their part in enabling me to gain an appreciation of the dynamics of the Anglo-Irish relationship and the Republican Movement's part in it. This has allowed me to put contours around my problematic and to consider multiple interpretations of Anglo-Irish relations, conflict, resistance and peace. Such an exercise has enhanced the effectiveness of the dissertation's thrust by permitting me to establish contextual cogency, along with the participants' interpretations of their trajectories. These interpretations and analyses provide the crucial historical and theoretical grounding necessary to the task at hand. They bring scope to the Anglo-Irish conflict and provide the breadth of conceptualizations that make up the literature on this subject. Combined with interview data, this literature promotes a deeper understanding of the resistance and leadership aspects of the republican struggle.

Investigating the relationship between prisoner resistance and leadership development in the Irish Republican Movement aims to produce knowledge that contributes to, and deepens our theoretical understanding of protest movements and insurgent groups. In particular, it can shed light on their roles in, and ability to fashion, democratic transitions. It crosses several disciplinary boundaries including criminology, sociology and political studies. More particularly, it offers insight for such areas as social movement theory, peace/conflict studies and leadership studies. This knowledge can serve not only theoretical concerns but can have practical applications for actors in other conflicts (See McEvoy and Shirlow (2010) on the Irish peace process as a model).[38]

This chapter sets out the theoretical underpinnings upon which the thesis is constructed. To begin with, it will briefly set out a social interactionist understanding of life-groups. From there, the chapter addresses Paulo Freire's (1972, 1985) teachings, and elaborates on his conceptualization of education, struggle, liberation, power and revolutionary leadership. Then this chapter focuses on three angles of the Anglo-Irish conflict: state security response, resistance, and leadership. In respect of the first of these, I set out how the works of Giorgio Agamben (2005, 1998) are used to explore state security apparatuses and their impact on the nationalist population in the North of Ireland. Then, I expand on the critical theory of Giorgio Agamben to situate the context of the conflict and reflect on the benefits and limitations of Agamben's philosophy in assessing the Anglo-Irish security dynamic. In the section on resistance, I focus on the notion of power which is central to the two conceptual elements of this

[38] It is worthy to note that the South African ANC played a role in advising the Irish Republican Movement in matters of leadership in transitions toward democracy (See Eamonn, chap 8, p. 254); it is just as salient that Sinn Fein has sent delegations to speak to Palestinians, Iraqis and other groups in conflict zones about the success of the peace process (O'Shea; Sean).

thesis, resistance and leadership, utilizing a Foucaultian understanding of the concept as pervasive and relational. Later in the chapter, I explore the notion of general, prisoner and political prisoner resistance in order to situate the actions of resistant republican captives in a spectrum of resistance. The section on leadership addresses Burns' (1978) and Philp's (2007) theory of leadership, Freire's (1985) understanding of revolutionary leadership, and then presents social identity (Reicher, et al., 2005) and collective (Friedrich, 2009) theories of leadership. These are retained for they present a view of leadership that is based on collective attributes, and on the interchange between actors in the exercise of fashioning a template for the application of Republican ideals in the transition from armed struggle to peace process. The chapter concludes with the theoretical notions emerging from Buntman and Huang (2000) on the development on leadership skills in prison, Shirlow and McEvoy (2008) on the effects of resistance-derived leadership skills among political prisoners in the North of Ireland, and O'Hearn's (2009) treatment of republican resistance and leadership. Bennis' (2003) notion of adversity and its effect on leadership development is also noted.

Social Interactionism

Learning and exercising leadership is seen, in this study, as an intersubjective activity, involving members who have agency. It takes into account leaders and followers, and sometimes these are interchangeable. The social interaction perspective posits that the self is intimately tied to the community from which it emanates. The process of learning, thinking and creating is contingent on acquiring a language and this is only possible within a community context. Once people develop conceptualizations of the world, they can reflect and have agency (Prus, 1996, 10).

Thus human action is intersubjective in that it depends on the development of shared symbols (Prus, 1996, 11). Shared linguistic or symbolic understanding is the basis of human interaction. It is derived from multiple perspectives and viewpoints meaning that there are different and sometimes conflicting ways of approaching reality (15). It also involves the capacity to see oneself as an object of one's own awareness. This self-reflexivity enables human agency as it allows to engage in activities while taking oneself into account. Human group life is activity-based. The recognition that people influence and resist each other enables us to establish that human activities such as cooperation and conflict are negotiable (16-17). Further, people engage in relationships with one another. "...[D]efinitions and negotiations of reality...depend centrally on people's involvement and embeddedness in particular groups within the broader community of others" (17). Lastly human interaction is processual. It is in constant flux as the movement of one impacts on others and vice versa (ibid.).

The Teachings of Paulo Freire

The teachings of Paulo Freire permeate this thesis in a number of intersecting ways. First, many of the participants in this research adopted a Freirian approach to confront the domination and injustice that has characterized their history. So the data that forms the basis of the findings herein is coloured by Freire's thought. Second, the dialogistic method by which the data was collected draws its inspiration from him. In addition, Freire's thought in respect of education, struggle, liberation, power and revolutionary leadership forms the theoretical framework of this thesis. Freire provides a cogent perspective on these subjects for understanding the workings of the Republican Movement, as it concerns the elaboration of the peace process, and one which gels with my understanding of the Republican Movement on the

one hand, and about my role as an activist/researcher, on the other. The study of Freire enabled me to construct a written work which I consider to be holistic and integrated.

Paulo Freire was a educationalist committed to teaching literacy to Brazilian peasants. He spent much of his life in exile in South America, Africa, Europe and the US. Giroux (1985) considers that Freire's intellectual journey was "forged within the trope of homelessness" (287) and this "border crossing" permitted a "discourse of invention and construction, rather than a discourse of recognition whose aim is reduced to revealing and transmitting universal truths" (286). Such a state of homelessness precluded "...the possibility of ideological and hegemonic closure..." and provided "...no relief from the tensions and contradictions that inform one's own identity, ideological struggles, and project of possibility" (288). Without such forays into Otherness, the intellectual risks replicating a colonial model, thereby "...erasing the complexity, complicity, diverse agents, and multiple situations that constitute the enclaves of colonial/hegemonic discourse and practice" (292). Giroux declares: "Freire's work represents a textual borderland where poetry slips into politics, and solidarity becomes a song for the present begun in the past while waiting to be heard in the future" (294).

The life-group at the heart of this analysis has been oppressed and is seeking to liberate itself from this oppression. This process must come from *conscientização* which Freire defines as "...learning to perceive social, political and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality" (Freire, 1972, 19, *n*1). The process of humanization is thwarted by injustice, exploitation, oppression and the violence of oppressors (28). The vocation of the oppressed is to reclaim humanity by engaging in a critical consciousness that can only take place through a dialogical activity among people who come to terms with such oppression and

liberate themselves. “Freedom is acquired by conquest, not by gift...Freedom is not an ideal located outside of man; nor is it an idea which becomes myth. It is rather the indispensable condition for the quest for human completion” (31) .

Whereas traditional education revolves around the “banking method”, that is, a teacher fills the students, who are “empty vessels”, with knowledge, the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* is based on the notion that “[l]iberating education consists in acts of cognition, not transferrals of information” (Freire, 1972, 67). A problem-posing method involves a dialogical relationship wherein vertical patterns of authority (teacher-students) are eliminated in favour of an approach whereby men and women teach each other (teacher-student and students-teachers). In this way, “[m]en teach each other, mediated by the world, by the cognizable objects which in banking education are ‘owned’ by the teacher” (ibid.). Unlike the banking method, the problem-posing method is geared toward “...the *emergence* of consciousness and *critical intervention* in reality” (68).

Freire (1972) says “[h]uman existence cannot be silent...” (76). Rather, “...men are built in word, work, action-reflection” (ibid.). This praxis, emanating from a dialogical relationship between people, enables them to authentically name the world and thus to transform it (ibid). This investigation is grounded in such an understanding of oppression, liberation and learning. Furthermore, Freire’s action plus reflection mechanism informs his understanding of theory. On this Giroux says about Freire:

> Theory is informed by an oppositional discourse that preserves its critical distance from the “facts” and experience of the given society. The tension, indeed the conflict with practice, belongs to the essence of theory and is grounded in its very structure. Theory does not dictate practice; rather, it serves to hold practice at arm’s length in order to mediate and critically comprehend the type of praxis needed within a specific setting at a particular time in history...theory emerges

> from specific contexts and forms of experience in order to examine such contexts critically and then to intervene on the basis of an informed praxis. (Giroux, 1985, xxiii)

From a critical research perspective, Freire's theory of education provides the central theoretical framework for undertaking this type of research. Education for Freire is about struggle: struggle for meaning, and struggle over power relations (Giroux, 1985, xiii). His concern with the politics of domination in Latin America led him to consider education as a vehicle for the transformation from oppression to liberation:

> Education is that terrain where power and politics are given a fundamental expression, since it is where meaning, desire, language, and values engage and respond to the deeper beliefs about the very nature of what it means to be human, to dream, and to name and struggle for a particular future and way of life. As a referent for change, education represents a form of action that emerges from a joining of the language of critique and possibility. It represents the need for a passionate commitment by educators to make the political more pedagogical, that is, to make critical reflection and action a fundamental part of a social project that not only engages forms of repression but also develops a deep and abiding faith in the struggle to humanize life itself. It is the particular nature of this social project that gives Freire's work its theoretical distinction. (Giroux, 1985, xvii)

<u>On State Security Response to the Conflict</u>

The framework used to analyze the conflict is taken from Giorgio Agamben (2005, 1998). The response of the British government to the conflict is a "crisis-response model" (Campbell and Connolly, 2006, 936) characterized by a tendency toward a marked departure from the rule of law:

> When faced with violent challenge, pressures for departure from the rule of law are likely to be especially strong, particularly in relation to the interrogation of prisoners and the use of lethal force. This departure may be indicated by the imposition of a formal or *de facto* 'state of exception'. (938)

During times of crisis which involve the establishment of special measures designed to contain conflict, certain factors limit the reach of domestic law. For instance, prosecutorial discretion may shield state operatives from the consequences of illegal action; deference on the part of the judiciary is heightened, the government's engagement in illegal covert activity may be difficult to prove, and emergency legislation has sweeping powers (938). These are all examples of the methods by which the Executive branch of government circumvents, coerces and manipulates the situation to ensure that regular judicial functioning and regulation are inhibited. Such exceptional governance is characterized by Agamben as the Sovereign using the law to put itself above the law (Agamben, 2005, 15). Using his concept of the state of exception, *homo sacer* and the camp,[39] I analyze the security approach of the British government and elicit parallels with Agamben's theory. However, whereas Agamben depicts the state of exception as something permanent (2005, 2; 7) and sacred man, that is man who is 'banned' from the polis, as powerless in the face of this (1998, 185), this study posits that the resistance of sacred man is the vehicle for usurping such states of exception.

On Resistance

Protest, dissent, emancipation, liberation, defiance, struggle are all terms found in a vast array of literature covering a host of insurrections, insurgencies, conflicts, rebellions and revolutions from South Africa to Europe, from South America to South East Asia. These terms refer to the activities common to protest movements that utilize a multitude of tactics and strategies to combat perceived oppression, ranging from political negotiation to organized violence. Resistance then includes, but is not limited to these activities. It connotes action

[39] The camp is the space where those who are interned with no charge are housed. One does not have to have committed a crime to be interned in a camp. A prison, on the other hand, is the site that houses those convicted of a crime by a court.

aimed at altering power relations, underpinned by a desire to change the status quo of an individual or group in response to the structural and/or armed violence of a government, or the perceived unfair practices of employers or social institutions, or individuals.

Many of the combatants, dissenters or revolutionaries engaged in liberation struggles have been imprisoned as a result of their actions or simply by virtue of their ideologies.[40] Captured by the State, they often bring their resistant attitude within the walls of the prison/camp and adapt their methods to their confined state. While prisoner resistance has a different quality about it, since its aim to counter sovereign power (vested in the prison authorities) is necessarily mediated by confinement, in the context of republican militancy, it inscribes itself in a broader regime of resistance. Republican ex-prisoners tend to not make a distinction between resistance on the street or in prison.[41] Nonetheless the arsenal of resistance tactics used by combatants held captive is necessarily different than those used outside prison. First, the prison imposes extreme limitations on space, movement, association and activities. Second, contact with prison authorities, the representatives of the State, is sustained, direct and often brutal. Third, "time" is an altogether different animal in the carceral setting. So while political prisoners may have a background in resisting political oppression, as captives, they need to hone their skills at resisting penal suppression, the criminal label, stigma and insanity. How they fight back becomes much more focused on the personal, and physical and psychological survival becomes their basic

[40] For an insightful presentation of conscientious objectors, see Peter Brock (2004).

[41] One republican ex-prisoner argued that for captive republicans, prison resistance inscribes itself in the overall resistance of republicans and is not different from the resistance that took place on the street, inasmuch as resistance is the response to oppression, no matter how or where that repression is exercised (Joe).This conception was borne out in other interviews with republican ex-prisoners (George, Harry, Gerard).

objective (Cohen & Taylor, 1972; Gaucher, 2002a). The reality of imprisonment hits home no matter who is captured:

> The dominance of the prison is sustained through controlled routines, numbing boredom, relative deprivation, and violence, primarily state-managed violence. Surviving the prison demands that you understand where you are and what is happening to you; that you resist the changes in self and self-identity forced upon you by carceral life, and avoid falling casualty to the impending and often predictable violence of prisoners and staff. (Gaucher, 2002a, 19)

The resistance utilized by republican prisoners was a textured and evolving dynamic. The political prisoner benefits from an analysis of state oppression that is developed to a greater or lesser degree. Resistance to her or his state of capture conflates her or his particular circumstance with the broader oppression suffered by the protest movement to which she or he adheres. This influences the ways in which she or he resists. Moreover, when political prisoners from the same movement are incarcerated in the same prison, or even in different ones, the level of isolation is lessened, and this in itself opens up a range of possibilities in terms of resisting. When the same movement has a history of imprisonment, a tradition of resistance is sometimes carried forth with each new wave of state criminalization or internment.

A discussion of resistance is predicated on an understanding of the nature of power, in itself a knotty concept to unravel. Buntman (2003) says there is a problematic tendency to regard resistance and power as binary opposites in the sense that "...power [is] that which is practiced over, and resistance [is] that which is practiced against (268). Foucault (1978) states: "Power is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategical [sic] situation in a particular society" (93). It is the stuff of force relations (92). Further, "[p]ower comes from below; that is,

there is no binary and all-encompassing opposition between rulers and ruled at the root of power relations…", and "[r]elations of power are not in a position of exteriority with respect to other types of relationships (economic processes, knowledge relationships, sexual relations)…"(94).

From this characterization of power as the stuff of force relations, Foucault (1978) declares, "Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power"[42] (95). He further emphasizes that power relationships have a "strictly relational character" (ibid.). Moreover, he stipulates that points of resistance are everywhere in the network of power, acting as "adversary, target, support or handle in power relations" (ibid.). It is this multiplicity in the sites from which resistance springs that enables him to then assert:

> …there is no locus of great Refusal, no soul of revolt, source of all rebellions, or pure law of the revolutionary. Instead there is a plurality of resistances, each of them a special case: resistances that are possible, necessary, improbable; others that are spontaneous, savage, solitary, concerted, rampant, or violent; still others that are quick to compromise, interested, or sacrificial; by definition, they can only exist in the strategic field of power relations. (96)

Buntman (2003) also advances that power and resistance, rather than be seen as binary opposites, should be conceptualized on a continuum. The insight lies herein: "The resistant ultimately seek to fight power not with resistance, but with the power that resistance and resignification has won them" (269). While there are certainly moments when struggles result in some great radical rupture, more often than not, points of resistance are "…mobile and transitory, producing cleavages in a society that shift about, fracturing unities and effecting regroupings…" (Foucault,

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[42] Foucault has elicited much controversy in his treatment of resistance. In the span of his works, the notion of resistance has evolved or changed. For a more in-depth discussion of Foucault and resistance, see Pickett (1996). See also McEvoy (2001) for an analysis of this debate using Sparks, Bottoms, Hay (1996). The scope of this chapter is limited and therefore, I draw on Foucault's notion of resistance in volume 1 of *The History of Sexuality* (1978).

1978, 96). At times this chaotic and disorganized mess gets some order infused in it, and this is what makes revolution possible (ibid.). In subsequent chapters, I will examine the nature of such ordering and see the effects it can produce for a group such as the Republican Movement.

Foucault (1983) establishes that "'power' designates relationships between partners" (217) and that such a relationship necessarily implies that the other is maintained and recognized as someone who acts (220). The opposite pole of power cannot be resistance, since the latter forms the essential element in the relationship. Rather, its opposing pole would have to be passivity (ibid.). Freedom must exist in this dynamic since "without the possibility of recalcitrance, power would be equivalent to a physical determination" (221). The intransigence of freedom as an "agonism" (combat) is a permanent feature of all social existence (222-223). His understanding of resistance is encapsulated thus:

> For, if it is true that at the heart of power relations and as a permanent condition of their existence there is an insubordination and a certain essential obstinacy on the part of the principles of freedom, then there is no relationship of power without the means of escape or possible flight. (225)

First and foremost, to resist means to refute a certain state of order. It can entail disagreeing, rejecting and denouncing. But what does it involve? Researchers have various ways of understanding it. Bruckert (2004) draws three main categories: individual/collective, passive/violent and everyday/exceptional (844-845). Further, Munn and Bruckert (2010) conceptualize a model called the "resistance pyramid" (140), which identifies objectives, purposes, strategies, tactics, skills/competencies and actions/inactions as the components of resistance.

In her exploration of imprisoned South African activists, Buntman (2003) develops ways of understanding resistance by focusing on "categorical" or "strategic" categories (6). The first of these involves acting on principle. It is uncompromising and requires vigilance. As Thami Mkhwanazi, an imprisoned African National Congress (ANC) activist says, "[we] were bound by the principle of telling the prison authorities where to get off" (Mkhwanazi, quoted in ibid., 127). This form of resistance often resulted in an open challenge to the prison authorities (277). On the other hand, "strategic" resistance involved first, ensuring conditions of mental and physical survival and second, "...[using] the prison to achieve far-reaching political change…" (128). Such a strategy at times involved keeping political prisoners in prison in order to further prepare them to assist their organization when they got out (128). It consisted in developing a number of activities such as political debates and educational pursuits in order to train prisoners for leadership roles in their political organizations. This type of resistance has a transformative quality (277) that seeks to engage power, not just in prison, but in the community. In essence, it was designed to overthrow the apartheid system. In other words, "categorical" forms of resistance can be considered a "refusal" which is the baseline along the continuum. "Strategic" forms are seen as "…resignification, reconstrual and emancipation…" (251). While she concedes that categorical actions may at times result in structural changes, "…[in] general, to be transformative, resistance must be organized and intentional and propose (or envision) alternatives, as well as oppose the status quo" (253).

Buntman suggests that such categories can be transferred to other case studies. Using the Irish republican case, she considers the blanket and no-wash protests as examples of

"categorical" resistance. The 1981 hunger strike, however, was at once a categorical form of protest as well as a strategic one:

> Although the hunger strike was also an example of an open challenge, the logic behind it was to transform the nature of the Republican struggle outside the prison walls; thus, it is analyzed as an instance of would-be transformation, or resistance through the attempted appropriation of power. In the strategic thinking behind its transformational goals, this hunger strike was also a classic exemplar of strategic resistance. (277)

McEvoy (2001) contextualizes the prison resistance of Irish Republicans in terms of four broad strategies: as a political struggle, as a struggle to curtail power, as a collective endeavour and as an attempt to gain control over space within prisons (31). Irish Republican prisoner resistance is underpinned by the "collective assertion of the political status of the prisoner, and by extension, the political character of the conflict" (44). He focuses on four separate forms of resistance, that being: escape, dirty protest and hunger strike[43], violence and the use of law (ibid.). He highlights these different "techniques" in order to draw attention to the "political motivation of resistant actors and to expose the realities of the state's explicitly political application of power" (35).

McEvoy's strategies do not convey the whole picture. Incarcerated republicans used more strategies than he depicts, many of them in the strategic category (Buntman, 2003). Among them are the preservation of IRA structures within the camp or the prison; the deliberate educational endeavour in which they participated, which included a restructuring of collective learning, but it also involved taking courses from the Open University; the incessant negotiations with the prison authorities with the objective of taking control of the prison and hence their lives

[43] The campaign for "special status" began with the "blanket protest", it escalated into the "no-wash protest" and culminated in two hunger strikes. The appellation "dirty protest" is alternatively used for "no-wash protest".

inside; and campaigns such as the segregation campaign and the Lifer's Review. (McKeown, 2001).

In his analysis of the "blanket protest", O'Hearn (2009) discusses how "solidary cultures of resistance" emerge in highly-repressive sites. In fact, these sites can intensify such cultures (492-493). Learning the Irish language, storytelling and education enabled 'free spaces' to emerge and these were meant to bolster the collective and "...ignore the authoritative 'other'" (496). This analysis of the "episode" (497) of the campaign for special status reveals the lengths to which republican captives went in order to reclaim "space" in the prison as their own, to the point of re-appropriating their bodies as spaces for smuggling contraband, using their bodily fluids to resist the prison regime, and starving them as a means of undermining the government's portrayal of them as criminals. Focusing on emotion, as per Barker (2001), O'Hearn says that "...emotions do not act independently of cognition, belief, and moral vision" (498). In Barker's study of Solidarity[44] at the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk, he posits that contentious political action does not emerge from "isolated psyches" but rather, in "communicative social agency" (Barker, 2001, 193). This leads O'Hearn to ask: "What, then, enables insurgents to engage in positive intersubjective communication?" (498). Leadership is introduced here as a critically important facet. While much of the literature dichotomizes task-oriented leaders from charismatic leaders, O'Hearn, using Bourdieu's (1973) notions of cultural, social and symbolic capital, asserts that over and above possessing such capital, is the ability to shift and combine various traits and qualities to suit a rapidly changing environment. For this a leader needs to be aware of the sentient beings around him (502-503). His analysis is key to this

[44] Solidarność: First non-communist controlled trade union that emerged in Poland in 1980. Its leader was Lech Walesa.

investigation because it places leadership at the centre of prison resistance, but more importantly, because he posits that multiple skill sets are involved in leading and that the ability to shift from one skill to the other is essential in mobilizing followers and being attentive to the intersubjective evolution of contentious action (ibid.).

On Leadership

The literature on leadership is extensive. While two broad categories stand out in the research, focusing on government and business elites, little is explored in terms of the leadership of social, revolutionary and/or protest movements. In the literature on social movement organizations (SMOs), many scholars readily admit that little attention has been devoted to the leadership of such groupings (Morris and Staggenborg, 2002; Aminzade, et al. 2001; Barker, et al., 2001). Furthermore, those that do engage in research of these types of groups devote little time to the educational aspects of leadership, or the *ensemble* of actions and practices that assists leaders in developing their skills. This section will discuss some general parameters of leadership, explore the concept in the context of social and revolutionary movements, then focus on the leadership of republicans in the North of Ireland.

Noted leadership researcher, James McGregor Burns (1978) asserts that leadership is intrinsically linked to power; however, one must be careful not to confuse power with leadership. For him, "leadership is a special form of power", power being a "*relationship* among persons" (11-12). Power in this sense involves the motives and resources of the power holder, those of the power recipient, and the relationship between them (13). He notes a clear

demarcation between leaders and power wielders.[45] The latter treat people like things, whereas the former do not (18). In other words,

> Leadership over human beings is exercised when persons with certain motives and purposes mobilize, in competition or conflict with others, institutional, political, psychological, and other resources so as to arouse, engage, and satisfy the motives of followers. (Ibid.)

Two essential forms of leadership, the transactional and the transforming types, are identified by Burns (4). The first of these functions as an exchange of one thing for another, for instance, jobs for votes (ibid.). Transforming leadership, on the other hand, "…looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs, and engages the full person of the follower" (4). Transforming leaders therefore are engaged in a relationship "…of mutual stimulation and elevation" (ibid.). They turn followers into leaders and may make moral agents out of leaders (ibid.). He is concerned with the second type of leadership, which he considers more compelling. Broadly speaking, he defines leadership thus:

> Leadership is a reciprocal process of mobilizing, by persons with certain motives and values, various economic, political and other resources, in a context of competition and conflict, in order to realize goals independently or mutually held by both leaders and followers. (425)

Transforming leadership encompasses a fundamental element of teaching, in which higher goals are presented to followers that may unify the leader and the follower (425-426). Whereas transactional leadership is concerned with modal values, such as honesty, fairness and honouring commitments, transforming leadership is concerned with end values such as liberty, justice and

[45] There seems to be some confusion in Burns' notion of power. On the one hand, in line with Foucault, he claims that it pertains to social relations, that it is relational. On the other hand, he refers to power holders, and power wielders, as though power were something one could possess, like a ball. He also states that "leadership is a special form of power". It is the contention here that leadership is the capacity to gather and utilize certain resources (e.g. social capital, influence, strategizing) to influence others and therefore, influence outcomes. In a "power relations" view, transformational leaders are those who are able to alter the power relations dynamic by succeeding in utilizing such resources.

equality. The test of a leader is his ability to effect change which is measured by the common purpose of the collective (427).

Among the characteristics of leadership elucidated by Burns are its collective element, meaning that one cannot lead alone; and there is a "…symbiotic relationship [that] develops that binds leader and follower together into a social and political collectivity" (Burns, 452). Moreover, it should be dissensual, meaning that it should encourage debate and conflict over popular aspirations as a way to promote democratization (453). Leadership is also causative since there is interaction among leaders and followers which produce an effect on social relations and political institutions (454). And for leadership to be transforming, it needs to be elevating, that is to say, that leaders must engage from a position of morality, a higher morality than the followers (455). In sum, Burns argues, "…the function of leadership is to *engage* followers, not merely to activate them, to commingle needs and aspirations and goals in a common enterprise, and in the process to make better citizens of both leaders and followers" (461).

Revolutionary leadership requires specific skills. According to Burns, such people must have a thorough dedication to a cause, be willing to suffer a great deal of hardship, including imprisonment, exile, persecution, and sometimes risking their lives (Burns, 202). They must respond to the needs and aspirations of their followers and mobilize them through propaganda and political action (202). They must also have "…a powerful sense of mission, of end-values, of transcending purpose" (203).

More can be said about the leadership necessary for protest movements. For elucidation, I turn to Mark Philp's *Political Conduct* (2007) in which resistance and protest are the subject of an entire chapter. Philp contends that the leaders of protest movements involved in contentious

political action bear a tremendous responsibility for those inside and outside the group. Their decisions have an impact on people's lives and sometimes tactical considerations place people at a higher risk of harm (182-183). Moreover, because such movements challenge the legitimacy of the state, their leaders may become an alternative political order (183). As such, they give orders, coordinate activity, make decisions, and "[set] the pattern of action for others in ways that will have profound consequences for members of the movement and those linked to it" (ibid.). In contrast to politicians who declare war with the benefit of professional military personnel for guidance, the leaders of protest movements "…rarely have the same awareness or professional training and experience in making decisions that can result in the killing or maiming of those who follow them. Yet such people lead, and make decisions, and are followed and obeyed. And sometimes people die" (ibid.).

Moreover, the leaders of protest movements are involved in considerable complex considerations about strategy and tactics which they deploy to test public support and state resistance (184). Philp points out that most of them are not schooled extensively in the practice of politics and are often recalcitrant to engage in negotiation and compromise (187). This begs the question therefore, of how leadership skills are developed. Burns asks the all-important question: "Can *leadership* can be taught?" (Burns, 1978, 448).

Like Freire (1972), Burns does not see education as merely the acquiring of facts or skills, but involves a shared interaction in the search for wholeness among teachers and students and among leaders and followers (Burns, 1978, 448). It requires a "…*full, sharing, feeling* relationship…" among these actors that can take place in "…homes, schools, gangs, temples, churches, garage, streets, armies, corporations, bars, and unions…" (448). To this list, one can

add prisons, particularly in the Irish republican case, since confinement with accompanying brutality, close proximity, and shared experience enhanced the "full" relationship among prisoners that Burns elicits (see O'Hearn, 2009).

Freire (1985) begins with the premise that revolutionary groups are utopian, for human beings must not merely denounce domination and oppression but find alternatives that are steeped in social justice. So to begin with, a revolutionary leadership must be equipped with a "preproject" (81). A revolutionary project must be utopian, not fatalistic, and revolutionary leadership cannot:

> (a) denounce reality without knowing reality;
> (b) proclaim a new reality without having a draft project that although it emerges in the denunciation, becomes a viable project in praxis;
> (c) know reality without relying on the people as well as on objective facts for the source of its knowledge;
> (d) denounce and proclaim by itself;
> (e) make new myths out of the denunciation and annunciation--denunciation and annunciation must be anti-ideological insofar as they result from a scientific knowledge of reality;
> (f) renounce communion with the people, not only during the time between the dialectic of denunciation and annunciation and the concretization of a viable project, but also in the very act of giving that project concrete reality. (82)

Furthermore, Freire argues that revolutionary utopia:

> ...tends to be dynamic rather than static; tends to life rather than death; to the future as a challenge to man's creativity rather than as a repetition of the present; to love as liberation of subjects rather than as pathological possessiveness; to the emotion of life rather than cold abstractions; to living together in harmony rather than gregariousness; to dialogue rather than mutism; to praxis rather than "law and order"; to men who organize themselves reflectively for action rather than men who are organized for passivity; to creative and communicative language rather than prescriptive signals; to reflective challenges rather than domesticating slogans; and to values that are lived rather than myths that are imposed. (ibid.)

These elements are illustrated in chapters seven to nine. Therein, research participants' experiences address such notions as living together harmoniously, dialogue and praxis. Moreover, they depict how they "organize[d] themselves reflectively for action rather than [be] organized for passivity", sought "reflective challenges" and adhered to "lived values" (ibid.)

From social psychology comes the collective leadership (Friedrich et al., 2009) and social identity (Reicher, et al., 2005;Haslam and Platow, 2001;Hogg, 2001) approaches to understanding the workings of leadership. Collective leadership (Friedrich et al., 2009) is an apt approach since this avenue starts from the premise that leadership is rarely embodied in one person, but in a team of people. The social identity theory is used for this study because of the centrality of the relationship among leaders and followers.

"Leadership is quintessentially a group process. It identifies a relationship in which some of the people are able to influence others to embrace, as their own, new values, attitudes and goals, and to exert effort on behalf of, and in pursuit of, those values, attitudes and goals" (Hogg, et al., 2003, 19-20). Moreover, "effective leadership is about supplying a vision, creating social power and directing that power so as to realize that vision" (Reicher, et al., 2005, 564). When it comes to groups, people can feel more or less attachment. Groups are either the type composed of individuals who do not feel a strong sense of identity with the group, or as in the case of Irish republicans, they are a compact self-perceived important group with which members identify strongly. In this case, it is important that leaders "...match members' cognitive representation of the defining features of the group" (Hogg, et al., 2003, 23). In such assemblages, "...self and others are not perceived as unique individuals, but rather are viewed through the lens of group

prototypicality. Prototypical members embody the essence of the group and are the target of consensual group membership-based positive regard or liking--consensual social attraction"(24).

Reicher et al. (2005) consider that identity is about creating a social order on the basis of a group's beliefs, values and understandings (564). They ask the very important question: "Can we explain how leaders are able to transform people's thinking and behavior without denying the ability of people to think for themselves?" (549). This leads to an explanation of leadership that recognizes the agency in both leaders and followers. Whereas research on leadership often opposes leaders and followers, this tack regards the relationship as a "...mutual identity-based relationship which both enables and constrains the practice of leadership and which provides the basis for overcoming the traditional opposition between the leader and the led" (549).

According to these authors, research into leadership spans three phases. The first phase was in line with Weber's 'Great Man' theory but over time there was simply no evidence that showed that specific personality traits led to effectiveness in leadership. Moreover, there was growing discomfort with the concept of "domineering figures" (Reicher, et al., 2005, 550). The second phase brought situational factors into the mix; however this led to "reducing the vitality of leadership to a mundane and mechanical matching process" (ibid.). The third phase of research attempts to reintroduce "some of the magic missing from recipe-like contingency models [the second phase]" and once again, Weber's concept of "charismatic leadership" gains credibility (ibid.). However in this context, charisma is the outcome of a group process rather than a personality trait (Haslam and Platow (2001).

Reicher et al.'s (2005) perspective revolves around two concepts. First, they maintain that charismatic leaders can and do influence groups. "They not only direct, but actively

transform, their followers' attitudes and behavior" (citing Burns, 1978 and Peters & Waterman 1995, 551). They also advance that such transformational approaches emphasize the role of followership and invite attention to the relationship between leaders and followers (ibid.). Whether followers adhere to a certain leader depends not only on intra- or interpersonal relations but on collective relations as well. Similarly to path-goal theory (House, 1971), it conceptualizes leaders as those who are able to "engage followers wills by reconciling their personal goals with those of the collective" (Reicher, et al., 2005, 551). So, leadership cannot be studied without due attention to followers, but primarily by focusing on the relational dynamic between the two. In essence such an approach examines "...how leaders and followers are defined with respect to a social category framework" (ibid.). One should look at the agency of leaders and "...how leaders both enable followers to become agents and how leaders are reliant upon the ability of followers to make identity definitions manifest in practice" (ibid.). This implies that people subject to a common influence are those who identify with a common social category. Ideas and proposals that are retained by followers will fit "criterial attributes of the social category" (ibid.). And, those people who are influential are those in position to supply information about the category definition" (551-552). This last implication follows from Turner and Oakes' (1986) hypothesis:

> That the direction of effective influence within the group (who successfully influences whom) is a function of the relative persuasiveness of the members, which is based on the degree to which their response (their arguments, position, attributes, experience, role, etc.) is perceived as prototypical of the initial distribution of responses of the group as a whole, i.e., the degree of relative consensual support for a member. (245)

That leaders and followers have a shared social identity goes without saying. However, what is crucial is the agreement as to "...what constitutes the consensual group position" (Reicher et al., 2005, 555). Haslam and Platow (2001) note that leadership is about "...the creation,

coordination and control of a shared sense of 'us'...What 'us' means is negotiable, and so too is the contribution that leaders and followers make to any particular definition of 'us-ness'" (85). Follower agency in this regard is paramount for leaders depend on followers to conceive a common 'us', and must accept their interpretation of what that implies (Reicher, et al., 2005, 564). And, followers depend on leaders "to translate a general understanding of self into a specific plan of action and thereby to generate the social power which can render such action effective" (Pfeffer, 1992; Turner, 2005).

For the purposes of this investigation, another salient approach is one that focuses on collective leadership. Whereas much of the literature places an emphasis on individuals, this approach maintains that "...leadership is a complex, dynamic process in which the behavioral roles that often fall under the leadership umbrella may be taken up by multiple individuals" (Friedrich et al. 2009, 933). These authors propose that in many cases, "...a defined leader, or set of leaders, selectively utilize skills and expertise within a network, effectively distributing elements of the leadership role as the situation or problem at hand requires" (ibid.). Viewing leadership in such terms resonates with my understanding of the Republican Movement because it takes in the very real phenomenon that there are not just one or two leaders in a group, but rather "tiers of leadership" (Paul). The Republican Movement has senior people who command a great deal of authority because of their years of service in the Movement, their reputation and their set of skills, yet many people are found in back rooms, exercising their expertise in matters of policy and strategy. More public or prominent leaders are advised by these people, and they then can speak to a crowd, negotiate politically, or interact with the media.

The notion of empowerment is addressed more fully in this investigation and it also introduces solidarity as an element that facilitates the development of a collective approach to leading.

For a more specific analysis of the life-group at hand, I turn to O'Hearn (2009), Shirlow and McEvoy (2008) and, to a lesser extent, Gormley-Heenan (2007). These studies point to the the intersection of prison resistance and leadership. O'Hearn says that the culture of resistance during the campaign for special status *necessitated* a form of leadership that "...instituted and encouraged practices that transcended mere resistance to authority, by building positive (prefigurative) forms of collective life" (emphasis mine, 493). Whereas this might suggest that leadership came prior to engaging in resistance, the fact that he suggests that manipulating tactics and turning them into opportunities *snowballed* into "errant trajectories" signals his recognition of the dialectical nature of resistance-leadership (497). Although he speaks at length of Sands' organizational and charismatic skills, he does show the collective nature of leadership by addressing the debate and organization that took place in the prison.

Shirlow and McEvoy (2008) state that many of those who negotiated the Good Friday Agreement (and not just republicans) were former prisoners. In fact, they report that these ex-prisoners-turned-leaders concede that they acquired negotiating and leadership skills while dealing with the prison regime (125). Moreover, former imprisoned combatants have played a key role in persuading paramilitary organizations to lay down arms (128). They have also been active in restorative justice initiatives in their communities (126). Mike Ritchie, the former director of *Coiste na n-Iarchimi*[46] considers former prisoners as the "middle managers" of the peace process. They are often on the front lines calming down riot situations in the interface

[46] Republican ex-prisoner committee

areas; they possess the same commitment and drive as during the armed struggle, and continue to be connected with their community's fears, concerns and aspirations (Interview with Ritchie, in ibid., 139). The elevated status of former prisoners in the community should not be underestimated. As these authors state:

> …the status of former prisoner is more likely to be seen as a 'badge of honour', denoting an activist who was imprisoned by the British state for their part in the war and who now continues the 'struggle' by other means. Indeed, there are high levels of community expectation upon former Republican prisoners that they will take on leadership roles at all levels. (139)

In her explanation of leadership, Gormley-Heenan (2007) highlights "political prisoner-oriented leadership" (53). She quotes a Northern Ireland Women's Coalition[47] member who has not served time but says: "You know what makes a leader…prison" (ibid.). A former loyalist ex-prisoner concurs with this statement and says though he did not want to be in prison, in hindsight, it afforded him a political education as well as training in leadership skills (54).

Captive republicans engaged in educational pursuits. Following the campaign for special status, they fought for and obtained a relaxation of prison rules that enabled prisoners to live in a more communal setting, and share chores, study, and food, which they did equally (Dana and McMonagle, 2002, 417). Inspired by Paulo Freire, they re-invented the way teaching, learning and leading should take place. Thenceforth, each prisoner would contribute to education on the wing by being responsible for readings which she/he would then share with others. In this sense, everyone was made a leader/teacher (418). *Rangs* (classes) would take place to learn Irish, to learn history and politics. Those interested in pursuing history and politics started a *Cumann*

[47] The Northern Ireland Women's Coalition is a small political party made up of women of Nationalist and Unionist persuasion. The NIWC participated in the peace talks.

(gathering) and engaged in a deeper study of issues such as "the IRA ceasefire, the Downing Street Declaration, issues of crime and punishment in the community, sectarianism, and the role of the Irish language and culture in the struggle" (419). Sinn Fein sought out their thoughts and ideas as a way to gather "…a representative selection of the feelings and ideas of the prisoners" (ibid.). Moreover, once released, "…many Cumann leaders [became] more actively involved in the political side of the movement, some even becoming Sinn Fein candidates in elections" (ibid.).

On the Notion of Power

The salient concepts at the root of this study are resistance and leadership and both are related to the concept of power. A Foucaultian understanding of the concept of power is used in this work. Foucault's understanding is that power is relational; in other words, that it "...designates relationships between partners" (Foucault, 1983, 217). Such an understanding of power is useful since it enables one to see resistance not as a binary opposite of power, but as a necessary element of power relations. In this sense, one does not fight power with resistance, but rather with the power that resistance procures (Buntman, 2003, 269). In terms of the concept of leadership, this understanding of power as relational is also useful and goes hand in glove with Burns' (1978) notion that leadership is intrinsically linked to power in that "leadership is a special form of power", power being a "*relationship* among persons" (11-12). The empowerment gained as a result of categorical and strategic resistance deployed in the field of power relations in opposition to prison and political authorities enabled republican prisoners to alter the dynamics of struggle and go some way toward up-ending the state of exception imposed on them by the British State. In so doing, they developed skills that enabled them to lead their

community through a profound change in strategy, and move away from the armed struggle, and toward a political way forward that altered the politics of the North.

> *Just as the educator may not elaborate a program to present* to *the people, neither may the investigator elaborate "itineraries" for researching the thematic universe, starting from points which* he *has predetermined. Both education and the investigation designed to support it must be "sympathetic" activities, in the etymological sense of the word. That is, they must consist of communication and of the common experience of a reality perceived in the complexity of its constant "becoming".*[48] (Freire, 1972, 99)

The Republican Movement evolved in a complex, dangerous and intricate set of circumstances: One one hand, the IRA was an underground secret army and the consequences of its armed campaign have been, in the main, dire for its membership in terms of being killed, imprisoned and the consequent suffering. On the other hand, the political organization, Sinn Fein, today, is a vibrant and successful political party that has seats in both the Belfast Assembly in the North and the *Daíl*[49] in the South. It is busy with the business of governance and attaining a united Ireland. Sinn Fein has also lost many members to violent deaths. Gaining a foothold in the workings of the Movement is enhanced by being able to develop trust and make contact with members of the group. Discovering some of the Movement's inner social structure, ethos, and practices is best achieved by using a qualitative method of inquiry, one that permits the research to be informed by its members' own appreciation of how the group functions, and by the intersubjective relationships that develops from dialogue. The successful access to the Movement's leaders and their willingness to share their views on its inner functioning stems from a personal involvement. The formulation and setting of the parameters for the current work emanates from my experience as an international supporter of the Republican Movement. Over

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[48] Sympathy, from the Greek "*syn*- together + *pathos* feeling" (Funk & Wagnalls Standard College Dictionary, 1989, (1357).

[49] *Dáil Éireann* is the principal chamber of the *Oireachtas* (Irish parliament)

the course of nearly twenty years, I have developed some understanding of its workings and also developed a camaraderie with some of its members. This chapter explains the approach taken to the research and the method used to gather and interpret information and report the findings that support this thesis.

This chapter is based on a symbolic interactionist perspective which leads the researcher to pay attention to the social interactions of the members of the life-group and to how they construct meaning in order to understand their social reality (Prus, 1996). The chapter sets out a critical research approach which is openly political and which aims to take on prevalent assumptions about consensus, the rule of law, and democracy (Scraton, 2007; Roy, 2007; Kincheloe and McLaren 1998). It stipulates an accession to theoretical development via a qualitative study of the life-group, that seeks to respect members' agency and critical consciousness in arriving at their *own* understanding of their interactions. The method utilized aimed to capture intersubjective knowledge about the group from which generalizations and theoretical understanding emerged. In tandem with the participants, in a dialogical perspective, it enabled me to adapt, and contribute new substantive material to what we know, thereby refining and developing our theoretical understanding of resistance, leadership, and the dynamic between the two. This chapter elucidates a number of things. It briefly addresses a number of qualitative approaches, in particular, ethnography and the notion of semi-insider research. It also presents critical research as an approach for this study. Then, I will situate my position as researcher and activist in relation to the life-group and to the research undertaking. In the following segment, this chapter sets out the process involved in accessing the participants, amassing the data, and describes the sample, the coding and the method of analysis.

Qualitative Approaches and Ethnography

Research in the social sciences aims to collect and analyze data in order to produce knowledge, and to formulate and deepen our theoretical understanding of social processes (Anderson, 2006, 387; Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994, 294). Karp (1996) suggests that "...the value and vitality of a piece of research depend on its providing *theoretical* illumination of the topic under investigation" (14). Qualitative approaches to the examination of social processes are numerous and a review of the literature indicates that they are fraught with controversy (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994; Anderson, 2006). For instance, debate over the definitional parameters of ethnography have raged in the social sciences since its beginnings in the early part of the 20th Century (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994). Ethnography is malleable. Definitions of ethnography range from "philosophical paradigm" to "method" (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994, 248). However it usually encompasses, to a greater or lesser degree, the following four features:

> A strong emphasis on exploring the nature of particular social phenomena, rather than setting out to test hypotheses about them; a tendency to work primarily with unstructured data, that is, data that have not been coded at the point of data collection in terms of a closed set of analytic categories; investigation of a small number of cases, perhaps just one case, in detail; analysis of data that involves explicit interpretation of the meanings and functions of human actions, the product of which mainly takes the form of verbal descriptions and explanations with quantification and statistical analysis playing a subordinate role at most. (ibid.)[50]

This investigation is based on a qualitative method of inquiry which has the hallmarks of an ethnographic enquiry without it being an ethnography *per se*. One of the challenges of undertaking rigorous social research concerns transparency and calls for the researcher to

[50] Some would argue that this is a description of qualitative enquiry, and not necessarily ethnography.

position herself and make explicit her values, attitudes, and ideological positions. According to Prus (1996), ethnography is made up of three distinct facets: observation, participant-observation, and interviewing. This particular research is based on the use of these. Observation encompasses all the senses and includes the examination of written works. Several trips to Ireland, extensive reading on Irish history, politics and republicanism have been the means by which I have engaged in observation. Semi-structured interviews of a range of republican leaders who were incarcerated took place in December 2009 and June 2010. I also have been personally involved in the Republican cause as an international supporter since the early 1990s, but rather than considering this a form of participant-observation, I consider my participation in the Movement as a semi-insider.[51]

The practice of ethnographic enquiry has been tangential especially in recent decades, now incorporating such diverse methods as analytic and evocative forms of autoethnography (Anderson, 2006). The use of autoethnography enables the complete member researcher (CMR) to combine her researcher and subject roles to produce written text about the topic under consideration in a self-reflexive manner (Anderson, 2006; Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). Critical communicative methodology (CCM) (Gómez et al., 2011) is another. This approach, developed by Jesus Gómez, draws its inspiration from his friend, Paulo Freire. It focuses on dialogism, essentially that communicative rationality is based on dialogue:

> ...social situations depend on meanings constructed through social interaction, and therefore reality does not exist independently from the subjects who experience it.

[51] It is my understanding that Ethics Review Boards see participant-observation as being legitimate when pre-established parameters of a study have been established by the researcher, and a time when participant-observation takes place has been pre-determined. The problems with this are that 1) I did not formally seek consent to engage in such participant-observation from the life-group under study over the last eighteen years; 2) I did not seek formal approval from an ethics board to take extensive notes on the life-group while in the field, over a prolonged period.

> From this perspective, "objectivity" is reached through "intersubjectivity" between researchers and the social actors involved in the reality studied. (236)

At least one value of this perspective is that it honours the capacities of non-academic actors to critically assess reality and develop alternatives that are relevant to them and that are based on social justice.

There is also another practice labeled insider research, used by researchers who are directly involved in the life-group under study. This practice, like autoethnography, elicits controversy because its detractors question the validity of research results given the proximity of the researcher to the research. However, scholars who promote its usefulness argue that it stands to better capture the thoughts of subjects as they may be apt to be more frank because the researcher is known to them (Tierney, 1994). Moreover, to the notion that insider researchers cannot be objective, they argue that no researcher can be. They maintain that situating the researcher in the research is important and speaks to transparency: "By making the research process transparent and honest, it is argued that readers can construct their own perspectives which 'are equally as valid as our own'" (Cohen et al., 2000, 106 in, Rooney, 2005). These more recent adaptations of the ethnographic endeavour speak to qualitative researchers' quests for innovation in method, and to their *penchant* for adapting methods and techniques in order to suit the specifics of their research endeavors and the context of the relationship between the researcher and the researched.

Critical Research

Roy (2007) argues that objectivity and its "stated antithesis, partisanship" is still a contentious issue in the academy especially for those, like her, involved in critical scholarship

such as on the Palestine-Israel issue (54-55). She holds that accuracy has as an important corollary, that of "the criticizing function of the intellectual" (56). By this she means :

> ...the critical sense of inquiry that seeks to break down stereotypes and reductive categories, which is the basis of his or her [*the intellectual's*] moral authority. This must always precede solidarity, or what Julien Benda[52] referred to as 'the organization of collective passions'—national, political, or ideological commitments. (ibid.)[53]

Drawing on Said (2004), she asks whether it is even possible, let alone desirable to take the political out of academic pursuits, "as if we were trying to clear up an infection" (ibid.). Said argued for a humanist approach based on disclosure. Such disclosure is not meant to confirm that which we already know, but to challenge our knowledge by "presenting alternatives too often marginalized and thereby contesting our comprehension of reality, so long protected and inviolate" (Said, 2004, in Roy, 2007, 57).

I approach this investigation as a critical researcher. The impetus for this research is two-pronged. On the one hand, I wanted to explore the workings of the Republican Movement and the ways leaders and followers interacted within it--in particular, how the Adams-McGuinness leadership managed to convince those involved in the IRA and their adherents to abandon the armed strategy in favour of political negotiations. Given the relative stability of the peace process (as compared to, for instance, the Palestine-Israel conflict), it is valuable to explore the inner workings of the Republican Movement as it is considered to have been at the forefront of

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[52] French philosopher (d. 1956), author of *The Treason of the Intellectuals* (2006).

[53] It is the thrust of this investigation to further dispel the facile stereotype of the RTP (Rough, Tough Provie) as a pathological criminal or a hardened terrorist. Much of the writing on the IRA focuses on its violent streak, from planting explosives to the recourse to punishment beatings and summary executions of informers (See for instance, Moloney 2002; Toolis, 1996). Films such as *50 Dead Men Walking* (2008) are also examples of the highlighting of violence. The fact that violence was the mainstay of the IRA internally, in the community and toward known "enemies", until the 2005 declaration of complete cessation of the armed campaign, I contend, should not be used as an excuse to abandon deeper investigations that can illuminate attributes such as understanding, intellectual capacity, and organizational skills. To avoid this task does not serve to illuminate the workings and the evolution of armed insurgents such as IRA members.

making the peace process viable (McEvoy and Shirlow, 2010). On the other hand, given my role as one of the Movement's international supporters and the challenges of promoting a Sinn Fein agenda, I sought to create a situation whereby I could promote discussion that included republicanism in an environment that I perceived as hostile to its tenets.[54] Pursuing graduate studies on republicanism allowed me to extend resistance work on this issue, by investing the academic territory and creating a disturbance: A discussion between people with divergent opinions, necessitates that, at the very least, the issue be on the table. As Scraton (2007) argues, "providing the 'raw material' that is the stock-in-trade of alternative accounts, and stimulating informed debate and active participation, recasts research as a form of resistance" (17).

The dilemma over values and neutrality in research is fallacious as there is no such thing as not having a point of view (Becker, 1970, 123). The challenge according to Becker is not that we take a point of view, but that our research be rigorous and that our sympathies do not render the results invalid (132). Such an open approach on the part of the researcher offers integrity for, as Scraton (2007) argues on behalf of critical research, "...rather than claiming some mythical 'value-neutrality', or sanitised, controlled environment, critical social researchers position their work, identify themselves and define 'relevance'" (11).

Critical research is founded on a commitment to fight injustice and take on prevalent assumptions about consensus, the rule of law, and democracy. As Kincheloe and McLaren (1998) point out:

> Critical research can best be understood in the context of the empowerment of individuals. Inquiry that aspires to the name *critical* must be connected to an

[54] While there is a solid base of support for Irish Republicanism in Canada, as can be seen by the successful work of Friends of Sinn Fein Canada, Inc., there are many, sympathetic to Irish nationalist ideals, that disavow the Republican movement's recent iteration of armed struggle, and thus present a challenge to international Republican activists who seek to increase support for Sinn Fein.

> attempt to confront the injustice of a particular society or sphere within the society. Research thus becomes a transformative endeavour unembarrassed by the label "political" and unafraid to consummate a relationship with an emancipatory consciousness. Whereas traditional researchers cling to the guard rail of neutrality, critical researchers frequently announce their partisanship in the struggle for a better world. (264)

It is within this framework that the current investigation is undertaken.

Semi-Insider Research

Insider research refers to research that is undertaken by someone who is, in one capacity or another, connected to that which she is studying either as a practitioner or member of a community (Robson, 2002). But while the question of validity is the subject of much debate in this context, it is suggested that the bias, agenda, or politics of the researcher should be taken into account in *all* research, no matter what position the researcher holds (Rooney, 2005, #5). This investigation situates itself among other studies in which the researcher has an 'insider' or 'semi-insider' perspective. Laurence McKeown's (2001) *Out of Time: Irish Republican Prisoners, Long Kesh 1972 - 2000* is based on his PhD dissertation, *Unrepentant Fenian Bastards: The Social Construction of an Irish Republican Prisoner Community* (1998). His modus operandi for these writings is to pursue the Freirian perspective of "encouraging the practical application of the concepts of action and reflection, personal development and consciousness-raising" (McKeown, 2001, xiii). Deaglán Ó'Mochaín (2011) analyzes the state processes of criminalization of Irish republicans and undertakes a study of Irish republican resistance strategies in Long Kesh in order to challenge "academic, official and media accounts" (8) of the power dynamics between prison authorities and republican prisoners in post 1981 Long Kesh. Both these authors were Long Kesh republican prisoners and are therefore "insider" researchers.

Feargal Mac Ionnrachtaigh's (2009) study of Irish language revival from within prisons "specifically focus[es] on the prison struggle's transformational impact on the wider 1980s language revival and its continuing legacy in shaping many regenerative cultural projects and bottom-up grassroots activist initiatives" (6). He was born in 1981 Belfast and schooled in Irish because of his parents' commitment to Irish language revival. His father was an internee in the 1970s and a participant in his research. Both his parents were actively involved in the anti H-Block protests (29). Melissa Munn (2009) focuses on the successful reintegration of life-sentence prisoners in the Canadian context.[55] Whereas recidivism is a prominent feature of the literature on the reintegration of former prisoners in the community, her study addresses this by demonstrating that former long-term prisoners have resisted stigma, surveillance and heightened regulation, and have succeeded in having productive lives in the community, thereby countering the notion of the "dangerous ex-convict" (9, 3). Munn worked with life-sentence prisoners in a volunteer capacity for twenty years and knew some of the informants, and their trajectories toward release, personally. She explicitly situates herself as a "semi-insider", that is, having been intimately tied to the trajectories of her participants without ever having been a prisoner herself (96). While Mac Ionnrachtaigh is not explicit about his semi-insider status, it can be presumed since he had at least one parent who was incarcerated and his family belonged to the community of Irish speakers from a young age.

In these two examples of semi-insider research, there is a degree of impact that association with the life-world under study has produced for the researcher. In the case of

[55] In Canada, most life-sentenced prisoners are eligible for parole after they serve 20 or 25 years.

Mac Ionnrachtaigh, having been raised by a parent who is a member of the group he has studied, implies that his understanding of that group is significantly deeper and different than had he not had that background. In the case of Munn, her role as a longstanding volunteer with some of the members of the group under investigation suggests that, in one form or another, she has played a role in influencing the life trajectory of some of the participants in her study.

In this particular study, there is a more distant association between the researcher and the participants. I have never been imprisoned nor have I lived through the conflict in the North of Ireland. I did not know any of the research participants at the height of the armed conflict nor during their incarceration. My participation in international Irish republican support groups (considered part of the larger republican family) began with the peace initiative (1993). For nearly twenty years, I have adhered to and promoted Sinn Fein's peace agenda in Canada. As an ally, I am not a stranger to the workings of the Republican Movement, especially in the transition phase from armed conflict to the peace initiative. Moreover, I have developed ties with some individuals who have leadership roles in the Movement. As such, while some of the participants may not have known me personally prior to the interview, I am known to a sufficient number of people that I was able to access participants either by 'word-of-mouth' (snowball sample) or by going through political structures (notably Sinn Fein's Communications Department or Coiste na n-Iarchimí) without undue delay or difficulty.[56] My understanding of the republican agenda and my espousal of republican principles, I believe, have helped to foster a dynamic of openness and dialogical exchange with the participants in this study.

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[56] This is salient: In a methods seminar at the University of Ottawa, another researcher with no previous connection to the Movement described the difficulties, roadblocks, and length of time it took to access participants for her doctoral studies on the IRA.

Praxis and Dialogical Interaction

Freire's (1972) approach to learning is also instrumental for this investigation. In the first place, it is informed by his notion of praxis. He emphasizes that the word is made up of action and reflection and that "there is no true word that is not at the same time a praxis" (75). These two elements are essential for dialogue. To sacrifice action leads to mere verbalism and to sacrifice reflection leads to activism without understanding. Neither scenario is authentic and consequently neither can transform the world (75-76). In my case, there is a dialectical relationship between learning and action. The two mutually inform each other.

In the second place, I borrow Freire's notion of collaborative learning that is creative and transformational and I thus emphasize the importance of engaging in a dialogical relationship with the participants. On the one hand, the participants in this research have been engaged in a long-term reflexive project, and are steeped in the Freirian method of learning as "the practice of freedom" (Schaull, 1972, 9). On the other hand, I am personally involved in the Republican Movement, albeit situated at a distance with relation to the events and experiences of the participants. I therefore enter the field site from a position of humility, knowing that the dialogical interchange among the participants, the community, and me, forms the critical basis for learning.

Method of Inquiry and Steps

The aim of this research is not the production of "fulsome data" (Christians, 2005, 151) but rather, interpretive sufficiency, making a space for the voices of those with and about whom one is writing.[57] "Interpretive sufficiency means taking seriously lives that are loaded with

[57] The extensive use of participant citations in this investigation leads me to acknowledge that they have played an intrinsic part in the production of this work.

multiple interpretations and grounded in cultural complexity" (145). This model is based on the principles of multivocal and cross-cultural representation, moral discernment, resistance and empowerment (146-148). In the context of the latter, "…the basic norm for interpretive research is enabling the humane transformation of the multiple spheres of community life…" (148).

Freire (1972) discourages research investigators from presenting an agenda *to* the people concerned, by elaborating "'itineraries' for researching the thematic universe, starting from points which *he* has predetermined...The investigation of thematics involves the investigation of the people's thinking--thinking which occurs only in and among men together seeking out reality. I cannot think *for others* or *without others*, nor can others think *for me*" (99-100). Freire also reformulates the notion of power, and much like the feminist communitarian model, gives preference to a definition of power as empowerment as opposed to the dominant view of power which is grounded in non-mutuality, intervention, and control (Christians, 2005, 148). Power, in this sense, is gained from the intimate and vulnerable relationship between two subjects and by developing a critical consciousness in which the oppressed can find their own voice and participate in transforming the world (ibid.). From this perspective, research can act as a catalyst for such critical consciousness (ibid.). From the perspective of power as relational, therefore, this suggests an empowered person is better equipped to engage in the dynamics of power relations for the purpose of altering them and making them more equitable.

Lincoln and Denzin (2000) argue for a qualitative enquiry that embraces an epistemology grounded in a "universal human ethic emphasizing the sacredness of life, human dignity, truth telling and nonviolence. Such interpretive scholarship refuses to retreat to abstractions and high theory" (1052). Rather, it focuses on the "local, the sacred, the act of constructing

meaning" (ibid.). The researcher in this context is concerned with "…those moments when humans resist these structures of oppression and representation and attempt, in the process, to take control over their lives and the stories about them" (1053). Given that the participants were already engaged in a self-reflexive exercise, this project promoted an approach whereby they be given the opportunity to conceptualize leadership and discuss their own trajectories toward it. It necessitated providing the time and space to consider issues that they may not be thinking about consciously, or on an ongoing basis. Broaching the subject of leadership contributes to this ongoing reflexive exercise. Observation and interaction over several years enabled me to gain a deeper understanding of the group. This preparatory phase enabled me to fashion a discussion space (interview) in which an informal, interactive dialogue could take place, one that provided the necessary latitude for participants to critically reflect on their lives as leaders. It also increased the efficiency of the discussion, since the usual contextualization regarding historical benchmarks and events could be, in many cases, abbreviated, given my grasp of these. Hence, much of the data has been acquired through observation and semi-structured interviews.

Observation

Observation entails not only visual and auditory senses, but encompasses the use of various written sources (Prus, 1996, 19). My initial participation in international support groups began in 1993 and my first encounter with someone from the Republican Movement was in 1994, when I met Gerry Adams in Montreal. At the time, I was an elected representative of the Conseil Central de Montréal (CSN) and the dossier of international solidarity with the Irish republican movement was within my remit.[58] Adams met with a small group of international and

[58] The Conseil central had been an active supporter of the Republican Movement since the hunger strike. It is the regional body of the CSN, the largest independent trade union in Quebec.

trade union activists to discuss the peace initiative and to keep us abreast of the developments, especially in relation to his first visit to the United States. My knowledge of the conflict was limited at the time, and this meeting compelled me to further my understanding of the movement. I embarked on a long-term reading project that is still ongoing, and includes a wide range of material, from political analyses of the conflict, to personal memoirs, including films, news coverage and political pamphlets. Observation and participation in the Movement has taken place on two continents. In 1993, I joined the Montreal-based Quebec-Ireland Committee and the Coalition for Peace in Ireland. Both groups were led by a few supporters who had extensive knowledge of the movement and had been to the North on numerous occasions.[59] They were in a position to provide a wealth of information about the community, their mores, and ways. They had been regular visitors to Belfast and Derry from the time of the 1981 hunger strike.[60] As a member of these groups, I took part in organizing tours for Sinn Fein representatives visiting Montreal. Group get-togethers with other activists and Sinn Fein speakers involved the exchange of stories, discussion about various members, issues, and political strategy. These interactions furnished crucial background knowledge, including the specificities of language and accent, and the general attitudes of this group. Since relocating to Ottawa in 2006, I have participated in a coalition of Ottawa supporters who have organized events featuring visits by elected Republican leaders. I have travelled to the North on several occasions where I met leaders and members of the community. I stayed among them, went to pubs and gatherings, met families and friends. Engaging in meetings with several elected Sinn Fein members on tour in Canada, meeting them in Ireland and doing extensive background

[59] These two groups were led primarily by Georges Beriault, Kevin Callaghan and *feu* Joyce Carson.

[60] Joyce Carson was originally from the unionist community in Belfast.

reading on the conflict, the IRA and Irish history form the basis of my observation of this movement.

Ethical Considerations

Prior to commencing this research, I gained approval from the Office of Research Ethics and Integrity at the University of Ottawa, having submitted a detailed explanation of the project. This specified the use of semi-structured interviews, the population sample, confidentiality measures, consent obtention, risk mitigation and an interview guide (See Appendix A). The Office is concerned that researchers mitigate the potentially harmful effects of researching a population. Ethics Boards have a tendency to view research participants as vulnerable. They wanted to ensure that I would be vigilant in this matter and expressed concern about the safety of participants depending on the locale chosen for the interview. Since the participants in this study have faced grave danger and have survived it over a long period, and since the location of the interview was left up to them, I did not feel that they were at any greater risk being in my company, than during the course of their regular lives. I was mindful of evoking painful memories of difficult periods in their lives, and to mitigate this, I specified that they were at liberty to end the interview at any point if they felt discomfort. All the topics covered in the interviews are issues that they have spoken about, many publicly, over a period of years. In this sense, I surmised that I was not worsening their psychological states by discussing these subjects. Confidentiality was ensured by assigning pseudonyms to each participant. To further ensure anonymity each of the participants was presented with a consent form which they were asked to read and provide verbal consent only (See Appendix B).

An essential ethical consideration that remains a top priority for me is to adequately, correctly and with discernment write a dissertation that best represented the realities of their movement, their life trajectories, and their involvement in armed struggle, prison struggle and politics. In order to contend with this, I have had regular contact with two individuals who were participants in the study, in order to check the accuracy of facts, and get feedback on some analytical questions. Having said this, any errors of fact or reasoning, are entirely my responsibility.

The Semi-Structured Interview

The semi-structured interview offers the possibility of accessing the subject's "intepretations [*sic*] of theirs and others' representations of what the world is like" (Smith, 2001, 29). Such a method incorporates several strategies. It is multifactorial, inductive, dialogic, and holistic; and it requires long-term commitment (Angrosino, 2007, 15). It usually comprises an interactional exchange of dialogue, is fairly informal, utilizes a thematic topic-centered approach and is founded on the understanding that knowledge is situated and contextual (Mason, 2002, 62). The purpose of the interview therefore was to elicit relevant contexts and bring them to the fore (ibid.). To accomplish this, the interview guide was constructed of themes rather than pointed questions.

The Interview Guide

The interviews that took place in December 2009, and June 2010 were semi-structured. The object was three-fold: to ascertain the trajectory of the participants in their membership to the Republican Movement and to identify the major markers that, according to them, helped fashion the type of people they are today. In the second instance, it was important to garner their

views of leadership generally, the leadership of the Movement, and their own role as leaders. In the third instance and over-arching the other two segments, I was interested in the influences (people, books, experiences and events) in their lives that they considered paramount to their continued engagement in the struggle.

The interview guide was configured in such as way as to facilitate a dialogical exchange between the participants and me. To ensure relative homogeneity in the 20 interviews, the same trajectory was employed.[61] This began with a discussion of the origin of their involvement in the Republican struggle. Such a beginning was a natural precursor to the second segment of the interview, their imprisonment. Then, the participants were asked to discuss their time in prison and were asked what memories were the most salient for them in terms of resistance campaigns or tactics. We then had a discussion on the conceptualization of leadership. The following segment had to do with their own trajectory as leaders and a discussion ensued about their own leadership, and the evolution of leadership in the Movement more generally. They were asked to discuss the people, events and experiences they felt helped to shape their thinking and their development. This section of the interview was key, as it was in this part of the discussion that they would make connections between their experiences in prison and their development as leaders. It was also salient to gain an understanding of the influence that fellow comrades had on them.

[61] This differed slightly with Bob, who was not imprisoned nor was he an adherent to the Republican cause. He was interviewed because of his knowledge of their experience and his proximity with Republican former captives. This interview was organized at the behest of some of the former captives who considered him an important source of information on their behalf.

The Sample

Green and Thorogood (2009, c2004) suggest that in qualitative research practice, once the researcher has reached "twenty or so" interviews, little new data will be found, indicating that twenty is sufficient to reach saturation (Mason, 2010). Ritchie et al. (2004) elaborate seven criteria for determining sample size:

> The heterogeneity of the population; the number of selection criteria; the extent to which "nesting" criteria are needed[62]; groups of special interest that require intensive study; multiple samples within one study; types of data collection methods used; and the budget and resources available. (84)

As Sandelowski (1995) points out, "determining adequate sample size in qualitative research is ultimately a matter of judgement and experience" and researchers need to evaluate the quality of the information collected in light of the uses to which it will be put, and the research method, sampling and analytical strategy employed (183). This is the study of a relatively small number of people. In the 2011 Northern Ireland Assembly election, Sinn Féin won 178,224 votes. Combined with the results of the 2011 Irish general election, there are just under 400,000 people who voted for Sinn Fein (Sinn Fein, 2011). There are 29 Sinn Fein representatives in the Belfast Assembly and 14 TDs[63] in the *Daíl*. The study concerns leaders of the Republican Movement. This is not only elected representatives of Sinn Fein, but also party staff, and other leaders (community, prison, IRA). Further a "nesting" criteria was applied that stipulated only those leaders who had been imprisoned during the conflict were of concern to this study. So 20 participants is a relatively large sample size, given the population under consideration.

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[62] "Nesting" criteria refers to the stratification of a sample, in other words a sample within a sample. This is used when a key dimension such as geographical location is used. "Nesting" can lend credibility to a research project (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, "Qualitative Research Guidelines Project", http://www.qualres.org/HomeStra-3813.html. Last retrieved September 1, 2011.

[63] TD stands for *Teachta Dála*, the Irish term for an elected representative of the *Daíl*.

The assumption with which I entered the field was that the prison experience had an impact on leaders. Several indicators led me to take this as a starting point. In the first place, in informal discussions with republicans who came to Canada, I was struck by the multiplicity of prison stories that were told. Secondly, some writing confirmed that prison played a role in leadership. Because so many activists were jailed, there is a community of ex-prisoners that have strong bonds, and many of them are at the helm of the Movement (Feeney, 2001; McKeown, 2001; Shirlow and McEvoy, 2008). I wanted to interview these people. So the sample solely concerned former prisoners. However, I knew that the experience of Long Kesh, which is the prison that is most written about, told a singular story. It had the largest concentration of republican captives. I wanted to explore the differences with other prison experiences. So I chose to interview an array of former prisoners, men and women, who had been incarcerated not only in the North, but in the South, in England and further afield. My sample is therefore composed of twelve former Long Kesh captives, two former women prisoners from Maghaberry and one woman who was also in Armagh, two people who were held outside Ireland and the UK, two people who were held captive in the South and four in England. Some of them have been in more than one prison. The reason for doing this was to ascertain whether prisoner resistance, when done in a more isolated setting, differed substantially from the Long Kesh and Armagh experiences.

The Interview Participants

In December 2009 and June 2010, I was in Ireland (North and South) to interview a range of Sinn Fein, IRA, community and former prison leaders. There were twenty interviews in all, ranging from one to two hours. Of those interviewed, I had previous contact with ten people,

some by extended email conversations, some I had met in Canada, and some I had met in the North. Fourteen interviews were secured before my arrival. The balance was provided to me by interview participants making phone calls to others they knew and asking them to speak to me. I spoke to elected Sinn Fein officials who played a prominent role in the peace process negotiations, some who occupy positions in the Belfast Assembly, in the *Daíl,* some who occupied advisory and strategic positions in the party, some who were influential members of the IRA, others who were active community leaders. And among these, some were former prison leaders. Of those interviewed, only one person had not been to prison. Of the remainder, the shortest time spent in prison was three years, and half spent at least sixteen years in prison.

Most of the participants are in their mid to late fifties, with the exception of three who were around 40, and another who was 50 at the time of the interview. Of the 20 participants, at least 12 are confirmed parents. Most of the children were born after the participant's incarceration. The subject of children did not come up during the interviews and so these are estimates based on those who spoke of having children. It is assumed, though not expressly stated, that all of the participants come from a Roman Catholic background. Had someone had a Protestant background, this would have most likely been mentioned.

All but two of the participants from Belfast were arrested, held and brutalized on numerous occasions. Six were involved in the campaign for special status (1976-1981). Of these, four were directly involved in the hunger strikes, one was involved but not in the prison, and two went on hunger strikes at other times, in other prisons.

In terms of prison leadership, at least seven people occupied positions in the IRA command structure at some point while they were serving time. Three were already leaders on

the outside prior to being jailed. Eight of the participants have at one time or another, been elected representatives of Sinn Fein, either at the municipal level, the Belfast Assembly or in the *Daíl*, and four others work for Sinn Fein in an advisory capacity. Some work for other organizations that are loosely part of the Republican family, but not a direct outshoot of Sinn Fein. Still others work in organizations independent from the Movement. Sixteen of the twenty participants openly said they were volunteers in the IRA. One participant is part of the 'disaffected' group of Republicans who does not support the peace process, as it has been elaborated by Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness.[64]

Access

As mentioned above, my long-term engagement as an international supporter was helpful in gaining access to an otherwise guarded community. It is not that they do not grant interviews to researchers and journalists. One person told me "we are the most interviewed species on the planet."[65] However, they are wary of such requests because they have found that the written work that emanates from their interviews does not always provide adequate context, and sometimes their words are used against them. Getting vetted through informal comrade channels diminishes this concern (see above the section on being a semi-insider).

I was able to secure most of the interviews prior to my departure. However, I had some difficulty in accessing women.[66] Most of the republicans I met in Canada were men, except for one. Therefore, I had more male contacts. When I arrived in the North, I found it difficult to gain

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[64] For an in-depth review of the disagreement among imprisoned Republicans, see McKeown (2001), pp. 160-171.

[65] This conversation took place in March 2008 in Belfast as I was laying out the groundwork for conducting interviews. The person who was speaking was in a position to provide assistance for recruitment.

[66] Two women participated in this interview. I had previous contact with one and the other was referred to me by Coiste. It is beyond the scope of this project to do a gendered analysis. For women and IRA political imprisonment, see Cochrane (2006). For women and Sinn Fein, see Keily-Listerman (2010) and Maillot (2005).

access to women either because they held important positions and were not available, or because they advised me to go through party structures for permission, and by then, the time frame was too short.

Most of the people I asked for interviews graciously accepted, without any consideration, to my knowledge, of going through party structures.[67] So I was left with the impression that going through party structures was not a concern. Only once was I referred to the party structure but I was under the impression that it was due to the tight schedule of the person I was trying to interview. However, after asking one party contact if it would be possible to interview woman X and woman Y, I was informed that I was going about it the wrong way and that I had left it too late. This contact informed me that the other participants were doing it as a personal favour, but that, under normal conditions, I should go through Sinn Fein's Communications Department in order to get permission to interview people, or for them to get advice on whether to grant me an interview. It left me with the notion that women had to go through party structures, while men did not. Yet, I did interview women and was never aware of them having previously gone through party structures to engage with me. Rather, I assumed that the process of establishing my credibility and trustworthiness passed through informal channels. For instance, when I approached some people for an interview, they would ask me who else I was speaking to. The confidential nature of the fieldwork prohibited me from disclosing such information. However, among themselves, they were fairly open about others knowing of their involvement in my research. So I would tell them that I was not at liberty to disclose such information, but that if they spoke to "the usual suspects", they would know.

[67] Going through party structures refers to contacting the Communications Department of Sinn Fein in order to get clearance for interviews.

In a discussion of this issue, a senior Sinn Fein representative said that some women may have felt uncomfortable about being interviewed and would refer me to party structures for that reason. He did say there was no formal vetting process in place, but that an interviewer or a member of Sinn Fein might inquire with the Communications Department for guidance.

During my stays in Ireland, and later while transcribing the interviews, it became clear to me that my knowledge of the movement and my capacity to understand the accent and expressions used by republicans, as well as their values and mores, made it possible to represent their views more faithfully.

The Interview Process

The interview process took place as follows: I contacted thirty ex-prisoner/leaders from a list that I devised with the help of *Coiste*, the Republican ex-prisoner committee in Belfast, to ask them to participate in this research. I provided them with some basic themes which I wanted to explore, such as resistance and leadership. I got positive responses from sixteen people. A snow ball sample was used for the remaining four. I obtained oral consent from all of them for this participation, and ensured confidentiality (See consent form in Appendix B). *Coiste na nIarchimí* and Alan McConnell of Toronto[68] supported this endeavour, which helped to facilitate a positive response.

The interviews took place in Belfast, Dublin, Monaghan and Derry, either in work offices, or in homes. In the case of two individuals, the interview took place in a hotel lounge. The interviews were in-depth, lasting between one to two hours except in the case of two which lasted 45 minutes due to time constraints dictated by the participant's agenda. They were semi-

[68] Alan McConnell is the Chair of Friends of Sinn Fein Canada Inc. However, it should be specified that Mr. McConnell supported this endeavour on a personal basis, and was not mandated to do so by FOSF Canada.

structured meaning that I had themes flagged as topics that I wanted to focus on, and these were open enough to allow the participants to tell their story, or reflect on some themes. Such an approach allowed for a sharing of life experience and enabled them to identify key themes dealing with identity, time in prison, and resistance. The participants have engaged in a reflexive exercise to understand who they are and how to struggle for change in their community's circumstances. This approach captured some of this journey by allowing them to think and speak freely without too much structured guidance from the interviewer. The objective was to let the stories emerge from the participants in their own way. As a result, the stories of resistance surfaced organically through these interviews. This type of interview provides the space for reflection and avoids the danger of imposing certain ideas by asking leading questions such as, "did your prison resistance impact your leadership development?"

In this endeavour, I was concerned to ensure that the participants felt secure. I told them about the steps I would take to protect their anonymity and that I would submit the transcribed interview to them so they could make changes if necessary. I let participants know that at any time the interview or the digital recording could be stopped. I assigned aliases to each as a way to remove identifying information. I gave the participants access to the transcript, in order to allow them to verify it for accuracy in all but two cases. It should be noted that most of the participants did not seem particularly concerned about the confidentiality aspect, and indeed some spoke openly to others about the interview, or had people come into their office during the interview.

Coding

Once the transcription process was completed, coding software (nVivo) was utilized in order to capture themes that emerged across the interview sample. There are similarities in stories and themes across the sample but there are also some disparities (depending on geographical location, time period and place of imprisonment, for instance).

From a first coding process, three general categories were established: Getting Involved, Prison Resistance, and Leadership. A fourth general category of Other was also established. Within each of these, sub-categories emerged allowing for a refinement of codes. I conceptualized resistance as acting in a manner that counters the deliberate attempt of the prison regime to control every facet of one's life and being. Faced with the absolute withdrawal of a person's control over any decision-taking in regards of her or his person, to succeed in regaining agency by engaging in acts that counter her or his negation as an individual human being is to assert one's agency--to resist. Resistance was also characterized by the participants as 'struggle' and was denoted by an array of collective actions undertaken by Republican prisoners such as hunger striking and escaping.

Leadership was conceptualized based on Philp's (2007) notion that it is a form of political conduct that is key to securing the realization of certain values which a group holds as fundamentally important (1). Participants were asked to discuss their meaning of the term 'leadership'. This was operationalized by a series of actions taken at the Sinn Fein level including such things as the decision to support District Policing Partnerships (DPP) and their actions in the community (for instance, explaining the importance of the peace process, or seeing to it that necessary infrastructure such as lighting and sewers were fixed).

Getting Involved	Prison Resistance	Leadership	Other
Emotions	General	General	Arrests General
General	Campaign Special Status	Conceptualization	Arrests brutality
Motivation	Irish Language	Personal journey	Arrests interrogation
Personal details	Sit-Ins	And prison resistance	Arrests statements
Influences general	Physical resistance	Influences	Arrests torture
Influences family	Campaigning	Skills and attributes	Assassinations
Influences school	Escaping	Development	Books
	Education	SF general	Civil rights
	IRA structures	SF and community	Community
	Hunger strike	SF governance	Dissidence
	Blanket Protest	SF and policing	Empowerment
	No-wash Protest	SF and Irish language	Extradition
	Campaign for Segregation	SF and unification	Feelings
	Passing as Mad	Gerry Adams	Republican Movement
		Martin McGuinness	Prison -General
		Others	Violence in streets
			On-the-run

Table 1 Coding Categories

Such coding provided some order in the texts that enabled me to see where and how prisoner resistance influenced leadership development. Coding served to elicit participants' conceptualization of leadership in general and point to factors that influenced their development as leaders.

Analysis

The method of analysis for this investigation is inductive, that is to say that it allows for themes and patterns to emerge and inform the research. In this sense, it pays attention to the stories told by the participants. It enables the researcher to be guided by the observations and adapt the theoretical considerations to the findings. A point of saturation was reached early on and while there is a multiplicity of lengths of incarceration, geographical locations, degrees of isolation or collectivity and particular backgrounds and experiences, by and large, similar conceptualizations of resistance and leadership emerged.

The approach and methods adopted enabled a theme to develop, one that established the centrality of republican prison experience and resistance among the numerous factors that contributed to developing leadership skills. Going into the research, I had some ideas in respect of a possible relationship between imprisonment and leadership. From various conversations with Sinn Fein leaders, I surmised a connection between the two notions. This hunch was further validated when I read about the South African and Taiwanese political conflicts (Buntman and Huang, 2000; Buntman, 2003). Having an inkling about the research subject is an elementary part of any research and is what often enables the researcher to formulate the research question. It does not counter the inductive approach and does not alter the fact that the researcher is guided by the participants' stories and is therefore careful to represent these as faithfully as is possible.

Constraints of this Investigation

There are a certain set of constraints when undertaking research, that have to do with knowledge, time and resources. The mere act of establishing parameters for the research project limits its scope. Outlining the limitations of this particular investigation shows all the future

possibilities of deepening this research. There were the usual roadblocks to getting access to people that would have provided interesting material given their seniority and stature in the Movement. Achieving a more representative sample of women would have been preferable though it is difficult to say if interviewing more women would have altered the findings to a significant extent. Lastly, it would have been preferable to have access to the participants for a second interview in order to explore more deeply some of the assertions in their first transcript.

Given this investigation's use of Paulo Freire's ideas, a limitation of the approach and method described herein is that it precluded greater dialogical interaction between the researcher and the participants. If Gomez' (2011) approach had been used, then presumably the findings would have been presented differently, and may have been more textured given a more interactive collaboration.[69] However, it is questionable whether, for the requirements of a doctoral dissertation, an Ethics Board would consent to such an approach.

Critical research demands that one take a stand and fight for social justice. If I were neutral about, or negatively perceived the Irish Republican Movement, it is questionable that I would have formulated the research questions found herein. In this sense, my position *vis-à-vis* the research participants, and indeed the broader community emanates from a desire to connect with republicans and confront their injustice with whatever means at my disposal (Kincheloe and McLaren, 1998, 264). Notwithstanding, my knowledge of the prison experience of the participants made me assume that we had the same meaning of resistance, and whereas participants were asked to conceptualize 'leadership', they were not asked to do the same for

[69] See pp. 76-77. Gómez et al. developed a methodology that engages participants more thoroughly. Participants thus become co-authors with the researcher in developing new knowledge by taking the researcher's theoretical knowledge and considering it in light of their reality in order to transform that reality (Gómez et al., 2011, 238).

'resistance'. It should also be noted that there is the possibility that what I heard in the interview is coloured by my circumstances, namely, a non-combatant Canadian woman.

Allowing the Method to Lead to Theoretical Understanding

This chapter begins by stating that the goal of research is to collect and analyze data in order to produce knowledge, and to formulate and deepen our theoretical understanding of social processes (Anderson, 2006, 387; Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994, 294). This chapter also referred to Edward Said (2004), who argued that research and the disclosure of research participants aims not to confirm that which we already know, but to challenge our knowledge by "presenting alternatives too often marginalized and thereby contesting our comprehension of reality, so long protected and inviolate" (Said, 2004, 57). Moreover, it highlights Freire's (1972) notion that research investigators should not present research agendas *to* the people, but rather, investigate people's thinking (99-100). The first four chapters of this dissertation set out the parameters of the study, showcased the existing literature on the subject, laid out a theoretical framework that served as a basis for this research and outlined the approach and method used to obtain and analyze the data. The remainder of this thesis will set out the context of the conflict, and the findings obtained.

> *Having been arrested under special laws, been questioned in special interrogation centres, been tried in special courts with special rules of evidence, the prisoners were told when they arrived at the specially built H-Blocks that there was nothing "special" about them.* (Morrison, 2006, 15)

The present chapter demonstrates that the North of Ireland was governed by exception, from its inception until well into the peace process.[70] To elucidate the British State's role in the Anglo-Irish conflict and the Republican Movement's response to it, this chapter and the next provide contextual *exposés* from different angles.[71] After a brief discussion of democracy, the rule of law and the notion of crisis, this chapter traces the beginning of the partitioned state and explores extraordinary legislation and extra-judicial measures used to contend with the dissenting minority nationalist population. Three acts are featured for particular attention: the Special Powers Act (1922), the Emergency Provisions Act (1973) (and its subsequent versions) and the Prevention of Terrorism Act (1974), all laws that had harsh consequences for nationalists/ republicans. In this section there is also an exploration of the use of extra-judicial killings by state forces. The subsequent section lays out Giorgio Agamben's (2005, 1998) philosophy of the 'state of exception', that is, the assemblage of tactics and strategies to which the executive branch of a government resorts in an effort to control civil unrest. Such an aggregation of methods is used to undermine due process, deny procedures to ensure government accountability, and generally engage martial law in an attempt to quell dissent (Finn, 1991; Cunningham, 2001; Ní Aoláin, 2000; and Campbell and Conolly, 2006). Following this section, there is a discussion of the applicability of Agamben's 'state of exception' to the Anglo-Irish conflict. The chapter

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[70] Despite the establishment of a consociational form of government in the new Belfast Assembly in 1999, the British government suspended the Assembly on several occasions. See ft. 28, p. 22 on consociation and ft. 77, p.106 on suspension.

[71] Chapter 6 explores the history, tradition and legacy of the IRA and its relationship with Sinn Fein.

concludes with the contention that although Agamben's theory offers a cogent framework for analyzing the use of "special" laws, he offers little to suggest that such government manoeuvering is escapable. However, in the Anglo-Irish context, resistant Irish republicans have succeeded in thwarting the upper hand of the British government and enabled a shift in power relations to take place.

Democracy, the Rule of Law, and Political Crisis

Constitutional democracies are governed by the rule of law. A host of institutions, magistrates and legislation is in place ostensibly to ensure the respect of constitutional principles that enshrine citizens' rights and protect them from arbitrary and unfair government action. These principles are based on consent obtained by reason, and respect for human dignity (Finn 1991, 36). When a 'crisis' erupts that threatens the lives of the citizens or the nation as a whole, governments can suspend parts or all of a constitution in order to broaden their powers in an effort to contain the problem (7).

A host of events can be called a 'crisis', such as environmental or natural disasters, but more often than not, such emergencies refer to outbreaks of political violence (Finn, 1991, 6). Emergency provisions geared to deal with 'crises' are supposed to be temporary in nature, but at times, a suspension of, or end to these special measures is a long time coming (ibid.). The problem with suspending the 'normal' rules is that it jeopardizes the rights and freedoms of the constituents. It is difficult to maintain a balance between the latter and security, but a systematic usurping of these rights poses grievous problems for democracy.

When extraordinary measures are taken out of necessity, there must be a mechanism to ensure state power is used for the public good. These measures must first be properly

inaugurated, and subject to a review by someone independent of reigning political power (Finn, 1991, 38). The aim of constitutional democracies is to return to a state of constitutionalism once the crisis is resolved. When a part of the population rejects the constitutional rules in place, a stubborn return to those rules is ineffective. Rather, when a state's legitimacy is in question, it calls for constitutional reconstruction (40). Until the signing of the Good Friday Agreement, the British government systematically failed in attempts to revise the constitutional framework for the jurisdiction.[72] Refusing to contend with the republican community's grievances, or including them in constitutional talks, and maintaining questionable security policies aimed at crushing the IRA campaign are some aspects of this failure.

This exploration situates the Anglo-Irish conflict within the broader framework of British imperialism.[73] Whereas traditionally the media and sections of the academy have focused on IRA violence during the conflict (e.g. BBC World News, 1980-1981; Alonso, 2007; Toolis, 1996; Moloney, 2002), I join others (Finn, 1999; Cunningham, 2001; Ní Aoláin, 2000) in examining the British government's recourse to special legislation and extra-legal security measures used to maintain the inequitable status quo that prevented the minority population from benefitting from the same chances in terms of jobs, housing, the right to vote, and protection from arbitrary police

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[72] There were two previous attempts at constitutional reconstruction. The first resulted in the Sunningdale Agreement of 1973. The second led to the Anglo-Irish Agreement which was signed in 1985. Republicans were not represented at either set of talks.

[73] I approach the conflict in the North of Ireland with the view that imperialism, British imperialism in this case, and structural violence are at the root of the upheaval on the part of the minority community in the North of Ireland. According to Cornelia Beyer (2008), imperialism is seen in "economic, political, military, [communicative] and cultural" dimensions (8). It is marked by an inequality "…in which the periphery [the North of Ireland in this context] is at a disadvantage and the centre profits from the arrangement" (ibid.). By structural violence, she means, "…the gaps in life chances (resources) between two different groups of people who are interconnected as centre and periphery, with the 'centre' willingly exploiting the imbalance" (9). This results in direct violence on the part of the oppressed group who responds to social injustice (ibid.). For other discussions on state violence, see Klein 2007; Parenti, 2000; Fishman, 1978.

interference. Such an exploration of security measures sheds light on the issue of legitimacy of the partitioned North.

"Northern Ireland": A "Special" Place

The British conquest of Ireland[74] resulted in a conflict that has been ongoing for many centuries but the latest chapter finds its genesis in the partitioning of the Six Counties of the North in 1920. Violent collisions between the nationalist and unionist populations were regular features of the landscape since that time but the longest and most brutal period came about with the onset of the Northern Irish civil rights movement in 1968. The very basis upon which the statelet[75] was founded in 1920 was problematic. The disenfranchisement of the nationalist community which made up roughly 40 per cent of the population was bound to result in conflict (Coogan 2002b, 36-37). The ambiguous question of governance and authority over the territory would prove to be equally problematic for the unionist majority. After thirty years of armed struggle, the conflict has been reconfigured from an armed insurrection/counter-insurgency framework to a political path which, for the last decade, has taken the form of the Irish peace process.[76]

Following the war of independence between Ireland and Great Britain, a Treaty was signed partitioning the six counties of the North from the rest of Ireland.[77] Northern Ireland is thus, by its very existence, an exception. While the Government of Ireland Act of 1920 provided

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[74] This is traced back to Norman invasion in the early part of the 12th century. Pope Adrian IV, an Englishman, gave Ireland to the King of England (See Coogan, 2002b, 2-4).

[75] Northern Ireland is neither a state nor merely a province. Its unusual status have led some to refer to it as "statelet".

[76] This has meant a new form of power-sharing between unionists and nationalists that is consociational. Consociational arrangements are used in deeply divided societies and guarantee representation of different groups. (See McGarry and O'Leary, 2009)

[77] The War of Independence took place from 1919 to 1921. The Anglo-Irish Treaty was signed in July 1921.

for parliaments in both the 26 Counties of the South and the Six Counties of the North, authority in the North remained under the auspices of Great Britain, who, while conferring on the Parliament of Northern Ireland governance over the territory, remained in a position to exercise power over it. The prorogation of its Assembly in 1972, for example, testifies to the ability of Westminster to withdraw the "autonomy" conferred upon it, and to govern directly from London. During the peace process, devolutionary powers were again withheld on four occasions.[78] The conflict that erupted in the wake of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association's campaign in 1968 led to a series of political manoeuvres that serve as a poignant illustration of this ambiguous governance (Finn, 1991; Cunningham, 2001; Ní Aoláin, 2000).

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is a unitary state and despite a degree of autonomy for the regions of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, supreme authority for these territories lies with Westminster (Coxall & Robin,1998, 214). The status of the Six Counties is ambiguous: it forms neither an integral part of the United Kingdom, nor does it stand on its own.[79] In this sense, it is argued that Northern Ireland has an exceptional status. The Government of Ireland Act (1920) served as its constitution, yet it was bound by Great Britain, whose unwritten constitution was often set aside in favour of 'special' legislation to contend with dissent over the existence of the entity "Northern Ireland".

British rule of law has often been subverted by exceptional security measures directed toward those who oppose the constitutional basis of Northern Ireland. These were often enacted by an 'order in council', that is, a method that allows for bypassing the traditional procedure of

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[78] The first suspension took place from February 11, 2000 until May 29, 2000. Two 24-hour suspensions for tactical reasons occurred in 2001. A fourth suspension began October 14, 2002 and lasted until May 2007 (See CAIN Conflict Archive on the Net; Belfast Telegraph, May 8, 2007).

[79] Some refer to it as a sub-state. See Ni Aoláin (2000, 18).

parliamentary debate. Broad powers were granted to the Home Secretary as well as to those to whom he delegated his authority.[80] These extraordinary measures, meant to be temporary, have lasted way beyond any understanding of the term. Furthermore, such exceptional legislation has, for the most part, targeted members of the minority community, notably but not exclusively, Irish republicans. In this sense, part of the population is not treated equitably with respect to its co-citizens of the unionist majority.

Extraordinary Legislation and Extra-Judicial Measures

From its inception, as has been noted above, Northern Ireland represents an exceptional region in the United Kingdom. From this vantage point, a brief foray into the Government of Ireland Act (1920) and the Civil Authorities (Special Powers) Act (1922) sets the stage for the type of unusual measures found in the Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Act (1973) and the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act (1974).[81] Drawing to the fore various extra-judicial strategies employed by the British government allows for an exploration of how constitutional principles have been suspended for one section of the population that is governed by Westminster.

The GIA and the SPA were still in force when conflict resurfaced again in the 1960s. As violence took on major proportions, the British government sent in the Armed Forces to contain it. So, from 1969 until 1973, the strategy deployed was a military one, and this replaced the reliance on these pieces of legislation. Following the Falls Road Curfew, internment, and

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[80] For instance, see the Civil Authorities (Special Powers) Act, Northern Ireland (1922). http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/hmso/spa1922.htm. Last retrieved May 8, 2008.

[81] Henceforth these legislative pieces will be referred to as follows:
The Government of Ireland Act, 1920: GIA
The Civil Authorities (Special Powers) Act, 1922: SPA
The Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Act, 1973: EPA
The Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act, 1974: PTA

BloodySunday[82], the Diplock committee made recommendations which were then integrated into a new bill, that became the EPA, 1972 (Finn, 1991, 85). The following year, after two bombs exploded in Birmingham, killing nineteen people, Westminster brought in the PTA (27).[83] By the end of 1975, internment[84] was phased out and a new criminalization policy was put in place to undermine the political status of captive republicans (Ní Aoláin, 2000, 44; Coogan, 2002b; McKeown, 2001). This policy is alternately referred to as 'normalization' or 'Ulsterization' (Coogan, 262).[85] Its main feature was the withdrawal of special category status for prisoners,[86] in favour of a criminal label. This effort was employed as a public relations effort to subvert perceptions that the conflict was "political" in nature (Cunningham, 2001, 21). Its purpose served to suppress any understanding of the political position of anti-state activists. In analyzing the use of the term 'terrorist', for instance, Kapitan (2004) says:

> Because of its negative connotation, the terrorist label automatically discredits any individuals or groups to which it is affixed...erases any incentive an audience might have to understand their point of view...; deflects attention away from one's own policies that might have contributed to their grievances...; repudiates any calls to negotiate with them...; paves the way for the use of force and violence in dealing with them...; obliterates the distinction between national liberation movements and fringe fanatics...(Kapitan (2004), 27)

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[82] Bloody Sunday refers to the massacre on January 30, 1972, when the 1st Battalion of the British Army's Paratroop Regiment (1 Para) opened fire on demonstrators in Derry, who were protesting internment. In all 14 civilians were killed. All were from the nationalist/republican community.

[83] These bombs were wrongly attributed to the IRA. The "Birmingham Six" were wrongfully convicted of the offense and served 96 years of prison between them. See http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/march/14/newsid_2543000/2543613.stm. The IRA denied responsibility and a small group called Red Flag 74 took responsibility for the attack. See "Bombings Trigger Backlash" in *Reading Eagle*, November 24, 1974.

[84] In August 1971 the British Army proceeded with mass arrests and detention of nationalists and republicans without charging them of any crime. This policy was in force from 1971 until 1975.

[85] These terms refer to increasing the proportion of security forces drawn locally, that is from the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) and the Ulster Defense Regiment. See McGarry and O'Leary (1995), 86.

[86] Special category status is political prisoner status without using the term.

Section 5 of the GIA was the *de facto* constitution of the North of Ireland (Finn, 1991, 51), and prohibited discrimination on the basis of religion. Furthermore, section 8(6) prohibited the executive from discriminating on the same grounds (ibid.). In spite of these dictates, the sizeable minority of nationalists on the territory were systematically discriminated against in matters of employment, housing, and voting rights, (Finn, 1991; Coogan, 2002b; Farrell, 1976). There was also systematic harassment and brutality meted out on them by the police and the 44,000-strong Special Constabulary (Finn, 1991, 53-54) overwhelmingly made up of Protestants. "A Protestant State for a Protestant people",[87] the dictum of its first Prime Minister (52), finds its application, not here, but in another piece of legislation, the SPA.

The SPA raises specific questions regarding the powers of the police. For instance, section two of the Act states:

> (2) … the civil authority shall be the Minister of Home Affairs for Northern Ireland, but that Minister may delegate…all or any of his powers to any officer of police, and any such officer of police shall…be the civil authority as respects any part of Northern Ireland… (SPA,1922, section 2)

This article confers extensive power to officers of the police, in fact, to the point of embodying the civil authority *in toto*. As for the power to make or unmake regulations concerning offences, these have a remarkable elasticity as seen in Section (3) of the same Act:

> (3) The Minister of Home Affairs shall have power to make regulations—(a) for making further provision for the preservation of the peace and maintenance of order and, (b) for varying or revoking any provision of the regulations; and any regulations made shall be enforced in like manner as regulations contained in the Schedule to this Act. (SPA,1922, section 2)

[87] Coogan (2002b) states that this declaration was understood as meaning "…that the Protestants got and would continue to get the jobs and the houses at the expense of their Catholic neighbours" (27).

A further noteworthy disposition in Section 6 "authorized the death penalty for attempting to cause or causing an explosion endangering human life *or* property" (SPA, as cited by Finn, 1991, 54).

Internment was a strategy used throughout the century. In 1922, by the provisions of the SPA, 500 Sinn Feiners and their sympathizers were interned; in 1938 it was responsible for detaining 827 men. In 1942, eighteen-year old IRA volunteer Tom Williams was hanged, while commuting 5 other prisoners' death sentence to penal servitude, including Joe Cahill's (McVeigh, 1999).[88] It was also used from 1945 to 1956 and again during the border campaign of 1956-62 (Ní Aoláin (2000), 27). This law is but one example in a long list of legislative acts that have superseded each other over the course of the 20th Century, which aimed at subjugating the nationalist population.

Over the course of the conflict, Britain instigated various means to deal with political violence. Ní Aoláin (2000) identifies three phases: militarization (1969-1974), normalization (1975-1981) and counter-insurgency (1981-1994) (15). The first phase, militarization, is an exceptional mechanism. The violence resulting from the Civil Rights campaign and the police and loyalist response to it led Britain to send in its armed forces. This period included such measures as the Falls Road curfew and internment. Protests against these procedures also resulted in Bloody Sunday, when 14 unarmed civilians were gunned down by the army's Parachute Regiment (Finn,1991; Ní Aoláin, 2000; Coogan, 2002b; Report of the Bloody Sunday Inquiry, 2010).

[88] Joe Cahill (1920-2004) was a prominent IRA leader who was considered to have had a key hand in re-establishing the IRA (the birth of the Provisionals) after the initial violent events of 1969. (See Anderson, 2002)

Martial law is invoked when armed forces are sent in to deal with an emergency, in order to impose restrictions upon civilians in their own country (Ní Aoláin, 2000, 39-40). While it has never been publicly declared, such public avowal is not necessary for it to be said to take place: "…there is strong evidence in Northern Ireland that in the early militarisation phase the army was operating on the ground as if, in fact, a state of martial law were in existence" (40). Part of the arsenal of military measures to suppress the nationalist/republican community included internment, which is the

> …prolonged administrative detention, during which persons taken into custody are not charged with any offence, generally denied access to legal counsel and other fundamental due process rights. (41)

Internment lasted from 1971 until 1975 and in all, nearly 2000 people were detained, the majority of whom were nationalist (CAIN Web Service). To compound the already troubling recourse to such draconian measures, internment was frequently accompanied by the use of interrogation techniques during the initial detention, practices that are arguably characterized as torture (Faul and Murray, 1972).[89] The combination of the Falls Road curfew, internment, and Bloody Sunday resulted in a substantial increase in the ranks of the IRA (Feeney, 2003, 270-271). The government recognized that engaging in combat tactics had severe drawbacks. It would be difficult to include nationalists in a potential constitutional settlement so long as a military engagement continued; its international reputation was suffering as a result and it clearly emphasized the questionability of the sub-state's legitimacy (Cunningham, 2001, 20).

[89] See p. 114 on the decisions by the European Commission on Human Rights and the European Court of Human Rights regarding whether the interrogation techniques were indeed torture.

The remedy to the political problems caused by this strategy, which reinforced the republican claim that the IRA response had a political foundation, was to be found in the report published by the committee chaired by Lord Diplock.[90] In essence, it recommended a change in government strategy to subvert the notion that the conflict had a political basis. It proposed to use the court system to contend with scheduled offences.[91] By doing so, it would enable the State to replace executive detention in an attempt to bury the distinction between political violence and 'normal crime' (Cunningham, 2001, 21). Most of the recommendations emanating from the Diplock committee formed the crux of the EPA and laid the basis for legislation which remained in force for 30 years.

The main features of the Act were the establishment of non-jury trials, the admissibility or otherwise suspect or coerced confessions[92] (EPA, 1972, Section 5) and reverse onus in cases of possession[93] (Section 7; Cunningham, 2001, 22-23). Police powers were extensive, enabling officers to arrest merely on suspicion with no 'reasonable cause' qualification (EPA, 1972, Section 11). Suspects could be held without being charged for up to seventy-two hours (Section 10 (3)) and the armed forces could hold detainees for up to four hours (Section 12 (1)). Police and army were granted the power to stop and search for weapons (Section 14 (1)) and to question

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[90] Great Britain. Parliament (1972). "Report of the Commission to consider legal procedures to deal with terrorist activities in Northern Ireland, [Diplock Report]", (Cmnd. 5185), (20 December 1972). London: HMSO.

[91] Scheduled offences include "… murder, attempted murder, grievous bodily harm, explosives charges, possession of arms , each of which was from then on to be dealt with in no-jury courts with one judge presiding". (McKeown, 2001, 14; see also, "Emergency Provisions" in, *International & Comparative Law Quarterly* (1973), 22, 765-766. This was similar to South Africa's use of common law during the apartheid era (See Buntman, 2003).

[92] Confessions were often obtained under torture, and were considered necessary in order to secure convictions. (Finn, 1991; Ní Aoláin, 2000; Adams, 1996; O'Hearn, 2006). See also "Emergency Provisions", (ibid.).

[93] Normally, this would refer to weapons possession, however the law extends it to any article that may be deemed to be used for the purposes of terrorism. For a discussion of the circumstances of being in possession of proscribed articles, see "Emergency Provisions", (op. cit., 765-66).

a person in order to ascertain her/his identity and movements or knowledge concerning shooting incidents or explosions (Section 16 (1); Cunningham, 2001, 23). It revealed the ease with which long-established judicial procedure was disregarded when expedient (Cunningham, 2001, 21). It replaced the SPA, the Detention of Terrorists (NI) Order 1972 and the Criminal Justice (Temporary Provisions) Act (NI), 1970 (27). Adding to the problematic aspects of non-jury courts, and extensive powers of arrest, it is worth noting that, while it attempted to legislate the necessity for changes to be passed in Parliament, it also allowed for by-passing such procedural rules in the event of an emergency, by an 'Order in Council' (Cunningham, 1991, 27).

In 1974, following two bomb attacks on a Birmingham pub,[94] the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) was hastily adopted. It contained provisions that included that proscription of the IRA would be extended to all of the UK (PTA, 1974, Sections 1(3) and 3(1)); the Secretary of State was empowered to prevent entry into Britain (Section 3); police powers of arrest and detention were extended (Section 7(2); and more rigorous checks on those travelling between Ireland and Britain were instituted (Section 8). The police had to have 'reasonable' suspicion that someone was involved in terrorism though it was not necessary to cite a specific offence (Section 7). Furthermore, detention was extended to five days (Section 7(2)) for the purpose of obtaining information and subject to the approval of the Home Secretary (Cunningham, 2001, 27). A remarkable range of actors was endowed with the power to conduct searches, including immigration officers, customs and excise officers, and army personnel. Furthermore, it included "any other person" who an examining officer authorized to perform such duties (PTA, 1974, Schedule 3 (1)). In addition,

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[94] See footnote 14, p. 94.

> the exclusion provisions were wholly executive in nature and not subject to judicial review. Those threatened with exclusion had the right to have their case referred to an advisor to the Home Secretary established under the Act, but this appeared to be of limited significance as, for security reasons, the advisers were not privy to the information on which exclusion was based. (Cunningham, 2001, 27)

The PTA provided the legal means to extend detention in the north during the 'normalization' phase. It not only lengthened the arrest period to five days, but once arrested, the suspect was also subject to the EPA in regards of the section governing access to solicitors and notification of arrest. A telling sign of the abuse of these acts is that the majority of those arrested and detained were released without charge (Ní Aoláin, 48).

A by-product of special legislation and martial rule has been the recourse to torture. During internment, Army and Special Branch personnel practiced what became known as the "five techniques" of interrogation on detainees. These were hooding, sleep deprivation, white noise, a starvation diet and standing for hours spread-eagled against a wall leaning on fingertips (Coogan 2002, McGuffin 1973, Faul & Murray 1972, Adams 1996). However, these were accompanied by other methods including the squeezing of testicles, inserting instruments in the anal passage and urinating on detainees (Faul & Murray, 1972, 9). After a number of complaints were filed, the Irish government got involved and referred the matter to the European Commission of Human Rights who found that the interrogation techniques used consisted of torture (Coogan, 2002b, 153; Faligot, 1977, 188-189). The European Court of Human Rights, however, rejected the verdict considering it as 'inhuman and degrading treatment', rather than torture (Coogan, 2002b, 153). The ECHR decision notwithstanding, there is considerable agreement that brutality and torture were meted out on members of the Nationalist population

(noted in interviews with Digger, Ted, Liam). Even the narrow ECHR's standards, did identify the treatment as 'inhumane and degrading'.

A further troubling aspect of enforcing 'security' in the North has been the recourse to lethal-force killing by security personnel (Armed Forces, SAS, RUC, 14th Intel., UDR). Lethal force replaced the common security force strategy of arrest or incapacitation. It is estimated that 350 such deaths occurred and Ní Aoláin (2000) identifies lethal force as a state practice that "… operates through broader policy determinations designed to control conflict, having a sophisticated interplay with law and legal process that has been obscured in contemporary public discourse" (13-14). Looking at extra-judicial killings against the backdrop of special legislation sheds light on the contradictions inherent in British policy, which "…are rooted in the attempt to use ordinary, 'normal' legal procedures in tandem with, or modified by, extraordinary legal and extra-legal norms designed to cope with societal crisis" (14) .

Several characteristics of these deaths warrant examination: first, 64 per cent of the lethal force killings between 1969 and 1974 were perpetrated on civilians; mostly by the regular army (90 per cent) with the RUC coming in second (9 per cent). During the normalization phase (1976-1980), 65 per cent of deaths were perpetrated by the Army and 20 per cent by the SAS.[95] During the counter-insurgency phase, 40 per cent of the deaths were the result of set-piece killing meaning that they were pre-planned (61). Criminal prosecutions and convictions against members of the security forces were rare. Ní Aoláin says "…it seems that suspicion or actual membership of [*sic*] a proscribed organization in Northern Ireland substantially weakens the right to life of those suspected" (64).

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[95] Special Air Service, an elite unit of the Army trained to kill.

Giorgio Agamben and the 'State of Exception'

In the wake of the attacks on the World Trade Center, a burgeoning literature emerged offering a critique of US world domination and its ravages and/or, the "War on terror" (Beyer, 2008; Denzin and Giardina, 2007; Ericson, 2006; Giroux, 2006; Agamben, 2005; Butler, 2004; Roy, 2004). This new context lent itself to a comparison of the George W. Bush administration's response to Al-Qaeda, to the British response to the IRA. With respect to the post September 11, 2001 response, Denzin and Giardina (2007) refer to the US as an "imperial democracy" which is "totalitarian fascism masquerading as democracy; it is state-sponsored violence and terrorism masquerading as peaceful means to (un)just ends" (3). Such state-sponsored violence also took place in the Anglo-Irish context and is addressed herein.

Giorgio Agamben is concerned with power, the state, and life. Using Carl Schmitt's notion of sovereign power,[96] he reflects on the Aristotelian notion of life (zēn) and the good life (eu zēn) (Agamben, 1998, 7), and posits that the political subsumes life. His 1998 work, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, asserts that the structure of the exception is consubstantial with Western politics (ibid.). Western political thought and action, rather than succeed, through democracy, to liberate man, has in fact reduced him to *bare life* through the exception. Implicit within the concept of sovereignty (whether the king or the state) is the notion that the sovereign has power over "life". He explains how the idea of sacrality (that which is *bare life*) is inseparable from sovereignty. In his 2005 work, *State of Exception*,[97] he posits that

[96] Sovereign power refers to a state government, or more aptly, its executive branch.

[97] This work gained traction in the post September 11, 2001 landscape and scholars interested in critical security studies used Agamben to critique US policy in the 'War on Terror'. Slovenian author, Slavoj Žižek says:

> When a conservative member of the U.S. Congress recently designated the Guantanamo prisoners as 'those who were missed by the bombs' and thus forfeited their right to live, he almost literally evoked Agamben's notion of *homo sacer*....(Žižek, in Agamben, 2005, back cover)

the state of exception in the twentieth century has become a paradigm of government. Of exceptional measures, he states:

> If exceptional measures are the result of periods of political crisis and, as such, must be understood on political and not juridico-constitutional grounds, then they find themselves in the paradoxical position of being juridical measures that cannot be understood in legal terms, and the state of exception appears as the legal form of what cannot have legal form. On the other hand, if the law employs the exception--that is the suspension of law itself--as its original means of referring to and encompassing life, then a theory of the state of exception is the preliminary condition for any definition of the relation that binds and, at the same time, abandons the living being to law. (Agamben, 2005, 1)

The 'state of exception' has three characteristics: it has a paradoxical relationship to law, it tends to become permanent, and it usurps democratic principles by lifting the application of constitutional rules. Agamben (1998) submits that "crises" incite a government (sovereign power) to put itself beyond the law and institute a 'state of exception' to deal with the so-called emergency. It is this exclusion that maintains its relationship to the law. In other words, "…I, the sovereign, who am outside the law, declare that there is nothing outside the law" (15). As this suggests, the paradox of sovereignty is that it is included in the juridical order by its exclusion.

The way in which these extraordinary procedures are rendered functional is by blurring the legislative, executive and judicial exercise of power (Agamben, 2005, 7). Thus, there is no opportunity to exercise independent oversight since the autonomy of legislative and judicial branches of the government is subsumed within the power of the Sovereign. The tendency, he claims, is to render permanent such states of exception (ibid.). These measures have far-reaching effects that can completely exclude portions of a population deemed to be unsuitable for citizenship: it "allows for the physical elimination not only of political adversaries but of entire

categories of citizens who for some reason cannot be integrated in the political system" (2). States of emergency, having acquired some sort of permanent status, are part and parcel of modern states, including democratic ones (Ibid.). Such systematic recourse to exceptional measures is tantamount to the 'liquidation' of democracy (Tingsten, 1934, 333 in Agamben, 7).

The very action of imposing a 'state of exception' infers a profound change regarding the concept of the person/citizen. Constitutional rule functions on the principle of consent and is exercised through representation by an elected legislative body, and protected by a judiciary independent of political power. Consent is what gives a person his *bios*, that is, the political status allowing for his participation in the politics of the State. The 'state of exception' forgoes this principle and the respect and human dignity that are traditionally reserved for membership in the 'polis'. In its application, the Sovereign has immutable powers to decide who is *homo sacer*, or 'sacred man'. The 'sacred man' is the one who can be killed but not sacrificed (Agamben 1998, 82). In other words, *homo sacer*, or *bare life* (*zoé*), is that which can be killed without it being homicide. His relation to sovereign power is characterized thus:

> *The sovereign sphere is the sphere in which it is permitted to kill without committing homicide and without celebrating a sacrifice, and sacred life—that is, life that may be killed but not sacrificed—is the life that has been captured in this sphere* [italics in original]. (83)

Hence, whereas the member of the polis (*bios*) is protected from arbitrary violence against him, by the legal rights which ensure his personal security and which are guaranteed by representation and oversight,[98] *bare life* (*zoé*) is at the mercy of the sovereign's decision to ban him from the community.

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[98] Such rights, it should be noted, are often over-estimated.

> His entire existence is reduced to a bare life stripped of every right by virtue of the fact that anyone can kill him without committing homicide; he can save himself only in perpetual flight or a foreign land. And yet he is in a continuous relationship with the power that banished him precisely insofar as he is at every instant exposed to an unconditioned threat of death. He is pure *zoé*, but his *zoé* is as such caught in the sovereign ban and must reckon with it at every moment finding the best way to elude or deceive it. (183)

The 'state of exception' finds its apotheosis in a space reserved for the capture and confinement of *bare life*, the 'camp'.[99] The 'camp' is distinguished from prison in that it represents the space *par excellence* in which the 'ban' is materialized. Whereas the prison is governed by "ordinary" law[100], the 'camp' is beyond normal law and is in fact, the result of internment instituted by martial law or the state of siege, in other words, by the exception. To intern is to imprison entire sections of the populace, regardless of whether any crime has been committed (167). The 'camp' represents the spatialization of the exception and alters its original 'temporariness' to become permanent (169).

The infinite dislocation which characterizes the camp (Agamben, 1998, 20), "actually delimits a space in which the normal order is *de facto* suspended and in which whether or not atrocities are committed depends not on law but on the civility and ethical sense of the police who temporarily act as sovereign" (174). 'Camps' are how entire categories of persons are eliminated from the 'polis'. Stripped of *bios*, they are but *bare life*, life that does not deserve to live. 'Camps' give the exception its permanent and physical qualities.

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[99] The camp is inspired by the Nazi concentration camp, which Agamben considers to be the fundamental paradigm of modern politics (Agamben, 1998, 167).

[100] Agamben (1998) refers to "ordinary" law, that is, common law, which he distinguishes from martial law. He notes, "…that the juridical basis for internment was not common law but *Schutzhaft* (literally, protective custody) …" a measure that "…allowed individuals to be "taken into custody" independently of any criminal behaviour" (167).

The Resistance of Irish Republicans

The effects of the military-security framework imposed in the North of Ireland were harassment, prolonged periods of incarceration, and death for Irish nationalists/republicans.[101] During internment, men were caged in the camps of Long Kesh[102] while women were sent to Armagh prison. During their confinement, republicans fought for, and gained, the status of "political prisoners" or, as the government labeled it, "special category status". A hunger strike was organized by the prisoners in Crumlin Road Gaol, Long Kesh and Armagh for recognition of their political status, which was eventually granted because then Secretary of State, William Whitelaw was attempting to negotiate a meeting with the IRA to discuss a ceasefire in 1972. Obtaining the status provided certain 'privileges' to the captives, including no work, no prison uniform, extra parcels, visits, and free association. More importantly, it gave recognition that the conflict had a political basis (Adams, 1996; McKeown, 2001; Coogan, 2002).

The 'normalization' phase put an end to 'special category status', new cellular facilities were built on the grounds of Long Kesh, and from March 1976, all incoming prisoners were made to wear a prison uniform and do prison work. This reversal in policy incited republican prisoners to resist their new conditions. They undertook the 'campaign for special status' by

[101] While loyalists were also imprisoned, and some killed, their numbers remained relatively low in comparison. Loyalist paramilitaries who were killed represent 5 per cent of the total number of deaths between 1969 and 1994 (Ní Aoláin , 2000, 63).

[102] Long Kesh was an old airforce base outside Belfast. When the H-Blocks were built, it was renamed "HMH Prison, the Maze" though republicans always called it "Long Kesh" or "The Kesh".

engaging in the blanket and no-wash protests,[103] which eventually escalated into two hunger strikes.[104] Bobby Sands and his nine comrades who died in the second hunger strike turned international attention on their plight, and made them martyrs for the cause. Within two years of their deaths, the prisoners had gained their five demands.[105] Further, the electoral victories of H-Block prisoners in Westminster and Dail elections[106] propelled the Republican Movement into an electoral strategy that would eventually usurp the 'state of exception' model instituted by Westminster and enable them to initiate a peace process on their terms, terms that promoted a reconstruction of the constitutional framework of Northern Ireland, that upheld democratic structures and inclusivity, with the long-term objective of attaining the reunification of the North and South of Ireland through democratic means.

Analysis

Great Britain's riposte is a fitting example of 'state of exception' governance (Campbell and Connolly, 2006). Reviewing several components in their arsenal of responses provides

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[103] The campaign for "special status" began in 1976 and ended with the end of the second hunger strike. The "blanket" protest began when Kieran Nugent was sentenced to the H-Blocks and refused to wear a prison uniform, thus covering himself with a prison-issue blanket. Several hundred prisoners followed his examples. This protest escalated eighteen months later when the prison staff refused to let the prisoners use the facilities without donning a uniform, which they refused to do. They no longer could gain access to the facilities without the uniform and so were confined to their cells where they evacuated their waste. This form of protest is referred to as the "dirty" protest by the prison authorities and the "no-wash" protest by the prisoners. (See McKeown, 2001; Coogan, 2002e).

[104] The first hunger strike began October 27, 1980 and ended on December 18. It began with six men from Long Kesh. On December 1, three women from Armagh prison joined the strike. By the middle of December, 30 more prisoners joined the strike. It ended in failure when, under pressure because one of the men was dying, the Republicans were outmanoeuvred by the British (See, Delisle, 2004, 44-45; McKeown, 2001).
The second hunger strike began March 1, 1981. Bobby Sands led the strike and organized for a staggering of the strikers, as a measure to exert maximum pressure on the government. The strike ended October 3, 1981, when some of the strikers' families began to take their children off the strike when they lapsed into a coma (See McKeown, 2001; Campbell et al. 1994; Beresford,1987).

[105] The five demands were no work, no prison uniform, weekly parcels and visits, the right to organize educational and recreational activities, and free association.

[106] Bobby Sands was elected to Westminster on April 10, 1981. Kieran Doherty and Paddy Agnew, also H-Block candidates won their elections to the Daíl (Parliament in the 26 counties). (See Coogan 2002b,; McKeown, 2001).

much material to back up the point in a number ways. The first obvious reason has to do with the 'temporary', 'emergency' and 'special' aspects of the Acts under review, that signaled their exceptionality from regular governance. Six-month or yearly reviews of these Acts renewed them, in some cases, for thirty years, despite the concern of parliamentarians about a "drift toward permanence" (Cunningham,2001, 28). Moreover the recourse to "Orders in Council", the procedure to bypass parliamentary debate and voting, stands out as an anomaly. This is compounded by elements in these laws that allowed the Secretary of State to decide on a number of matters and to even go against the word of the Act itself if he felt the need to because of some perceived urgency. This is an example of how sovereign power remains in a relationship to the law while also being above the law. The third very important reason is that the contents of these Acts go against many constitutional principles that ensure the protection of citizens' fundamental civil rights. The suspension of *habeas corpus* during internment and the recourse to torture from 1971 to 1979 are all indicators that this constitutional democracy failed to uphold the principles of constitutionalism. Furthermore, the recourse to mass incarceration and lethal force deaths exemplify how sovereign power "allows for the physical elimination not only of political adversaries but of entire categories of citizens who for some reason cannot be integrated in the political system" (Agamben, 2005, 2).

Individual rights had been systematically abrogated for one portion of the population exemplified in the Irish nationalist/republican figure (*zoé*), who held an exceptional status and was treated differently than those for whom constitutional rules apply, in this instance, unionists/ loyalists (*bios*). The reason that the Irish nationalist of the north could not belong to the 'polis' in this instance, is because the 'polis' was created to protect the unionist majority and ensure their

electoral hegemony. The Irish nationalist/republican is *homo sacer*. Denied parity of esteem[107] in their own community, their human rights, including the right to shelter, sustenance via employment and the franchise, was usurped by the majority in power, with an army of police officers to keep them contained (Finn, 1991, 52). Irish nationalists/republicans were *sacred*, relegated to the 'camp' to become living dead persons. Moreover, during the conflict the significant number of lethal-force deaths by security personnel, whose victims were as often as not innocent of wrongdoing (Ní Aoláin, 2000, 61, 64), further testifies to their status as *homo sacer*. The large contingents of Irish nationalists interned and confined without due process further exemplifies this status. Internment without trial was not new when it was instituted in 1971. Administrative internment or internment without trial dates back to the 1920s (Granger, 2001, 19). Moreover, republican captives on blanket and no-wash protest, and the sacrifice of ten prisoners by hunger strike illustrate this *bare life* quality.

Agamben's work focuses on the normalization of such states of exception, and the impossibility of overturning the situation. The literature on 'states of exceptions' has been, in the main, concerned with a conceptual framework that explains how the rule of law is trumped by sovereign power.[108] However, more recently, a critique of Agamben around the categorical despair, and the lack of emancipatory potential of *bare life*, has invited a reconsideration of the permanence alluded to by Agamben. The immediate problem with *bare life* is that it provides no potential for overcoming such status. 'Sacred man' is therefore stuck in the 'ban' without any

[107] Parity of esteem is a term derived from English law that refers to being treated equally either in a contract or in the law. (See Deutsch, 1998, 95-96, 103).

[108] Agamben's work is a deep exploration of politics and philosophy in which he engages Foucault, Schmitt, Arendt, and Benjamin, and traces the roots of politics to Ancient Greece. It is not the purview of this work to excavate these in depth.

way out. Agamben allows no room for emancipation from such a 'ban'. In other words, it leaves little room for resistance (Larsen, 2008; Ziarek, 2008; Laclau, 2007; Arnold, 2006; Enns, 2004).

Laclau's (2007) appraisal of Agamben's theory raises some important questions as to the limits of the categories 'inside/outside' in his (Agamben's) notion of sovereignty and *bare life*. He asks whether, "…the articulation of dimensions through which Agamben thinks the structure of the ban exhaust[s] the system of possibilities that such a structure opens" (14). According to him, Agamben's thesis has more than one problem. Firstly, the presentation of *bare life* as a "… naked individuality, dispossessed of any kind of collective identity" is an issue. Secondly, he portrays the one who is banned as being in a position of "…radical indefension, wholly exposed to the violence of those inside the city" (14). Laclau posits, on the contrary, that though one may be banned, and as such be outside the law, this position can be the beginning of a collective identity with others in a similar position (14). Rather than viewing those outside the law as "lawless", his claim is that they create their own law (15). He argues that there is "…a variety of situations in which social movements constitute particularistic political spaces and give themselves their own 'law'…"(17). Therefore the law of the city is not in opposition to *bare life*, but to another law, that of a given social movement or revolutionary group (19). This configuration is useful since it preserves a political relation for, as he aptly notes, "When a supreme will within the community is not confronted by anything, politics necessarily disappears"(16). Agamben's view of the power of the sovereign to reduce the social bond to *bare life* "…amounts to a radical elimination of the political" (16). This resonates with the case study at hand for in fact, Irish republican internees and prisoners pursued the development of

their collective identity while in captivity and utilized resistance to affirm their own agenda (for example, that they were not criminals but political activists).

In a similar vein, Ziarek (2008) posits that Agamben's categories preclude the possibility of entertaining "revolutionary praxis" within the framework of *bare life* (97). In Agamben's defense, she submits that his preoccupation with "sovereign violence vis-à-vis the political order" may be at the root of the problem. She, on the other hand, introduces the notion of contested terrain within the category of *bare life* and cites the British suffragettes' use of hunger strike as an example of the transformative power that such action can have on the 'banned' (98-99). Juxtaposing their hunger strike with *bare life*, Ziarek illustrates the contrast between the latter and the suffragettes: "…the frightened isolated animal, powerless to protest its abuse, and the "army" of women forming a revolutionary movement in order to fight for access to the political" (101). Their hunger strike was a means to counter sovereign power over *homo sacer* (101). It "…reverses the guilty verdict imposed on the militant suffragettes into a public condemnation of the government" (Landzelius, as cited by Ziarek ,102). Such action, says Ziarek,

> … seized hold of their bare life, wrested it away from sovereign decision, and transformed it into a site of the constitution of a new form of life…. The suffragettes' public redefinition of the female body so that it no longer bore the repressed signification of bare life and acquired instead a political form not only challenged the sovereign decision over bare life, but in so doing called for a new mediation of life and form outside the parameters of that decision. (102)

She calls for a reconfiguration of bare life, not exclusively as the referent of the sovereign decision, but as a "…more complex, contested terrain in which new forms of domination, dependence, and emancipatory struggles can emerge" (103). Similarly, the hunger strike waged

by Sands and his comrades reaffirmed their agency and re-engineered the situation through symbolic action in a way that thwarted the State's attempt to depict them as criminals and murderers.

In "Bare Life and the Occupied Body", Enns (2004) calls for the need to examine power not only in its repressive mode (the Sovereign decision) but also in its resistant manifestations (#3). *Homo Sacer* "…while once relegated to the margins…now [enters] politics to an unprecedented degree thanks to the State of Exception…(#25). Moreover, "[*Homo sacer*] trembling on the threshold between the human and inhuman becomes both subject and object of the conflict of the political order, the one place for both the organization of state power and the emancipation from it" (#25). 'Bare life' for Enns is "…the State-occupied body, the inhabitant of nowhere, stripped of political identity, nationhood, basic human rights by virtue of the fact of birth, a body whose very biological rhythms are regulated and controlled by a sovereign power" (#26). Using the "human explosive" (suicide bomber) (#31) as an example, such 'bare life' she argues, faces despair on the threshold between living and dying and this is the force that propels resistance. His action "has nothing to do with a terrorist essence but with dignity, the need to avenge the abuse of dignity" (#30). The "human explosive" is both, according to Enns, "…the site of subjection to control [*and*] its resistance. It is both a weapon of retaliation and the sacrificial lamb" (#31). She calls for "…the need to listen to those who bear witness to the conditions of life under an occupying force, to those whose sacrifice amount only to the momentary empowerment of a people" (#43). Whether it is this type of desperation which "drives resistance" is the subject of debate. Some would argue, quite convincingly, that resistance is more likely when one has more space, thus relative privilege. However, one can

draw parallels in the context of the campaign for special status, since very clearly, the bodies of resistant republican prisoners were at once the site of subjection and of resistance to that subjection.

In a different context, Larsen (2008) uses an Agambenian framework to analyze the rendition of Maher Arar to Syria. [109] In this case, confronting the sovereign ban by an organized resistance spearheaded by his partner led to his release from captivity and his reintegration into the community. While the Sovereign plays a central role in targeting an individual for exclusion, Larsen notes,

> … if we recognize that the sovereign and sovereign power are responsible for swinging the metaphorical gate of the camp in one direction, we need also to recognize that the decision to swing the gate in the other direction, and to release an individual from the space of the camp is not exclusively the province of the sovereign. A network of actors can be involved in the negotiation of legitimacy surrounding individual exceptional cases, groups of cases, or indeed, entire counter-legal processes. And make no mistake, even the most overtly exceptional exercise of sovereign power must be grounded in a discourse that gives it legitimacy. (9)

The suffragette movement in Great Britain, the suicide bomber in the Middle East, or the Arab-Canadian suspected of terrorist activity, have certainly all been the target of sovereign violence, and have had their status reduced to *bare life.* However, as these authors illustrate, such a status does not preclude them fighting back. While Agamben makes a valid point about the Sovereign's subjection of unwanted individuals or groups of individuals to the camp, it is clear that the Sovereign does not possess an impenetrable force to maintain "the gate shut" (Larsen, 2008, 9). Agamben suggests that the exception which is embodied in the camp,

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[109] US Immigration and Security forces in collusion with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) deported Maher Arar, a Canadian suspected of "terrorism", to Syria where he was tortured for 11 months. The struggle undertaken by his partner resulted in his release, the revocation of his status as a terror suspect, and gained him the largest compensation settlement in Canadian history (Larsen 2008).

inspired by the Nazi concentration camp, is the fundamental paradigm of modern politics (Agamben, 1998, 167). There is merit to the notion that modern politics is characterized by the exception. But his representation of 'bare life' seriously undermines agency, and in doing so, erases an entire historical dimension of revolutionary struggle and resistance. The above examples are illustrative of this point.

According to Agamben (1998), 'bare life' is the bandit who need not necessarily have committed any wrongdoing to be banned from the community. The large numbers of Irish republicans confined for years in the camp without being charged, the large numbers of Irish released without charge after arrest by virtue of the PTA are indicators of the 'bare life' quality of this group. They are "caught in the sovereign ban" (183). But this 'bare life', by the very relation it has with the sovereign, retrieves his *bios*. For the Irish republican, resistance both inside and outside the camp worked toward recovering his *bios*.

In the case of the 'campaign for special status', this was done in two parts: First, the republican prisoner became a limit figure, excavating his *zoé* through nakedness, urination, defecation and starvation. The very action of doing this consciously re-affirmed his *bios*. During the no-wash protest, he took control of his body, daring the sovereign, the perpetrator in this 'bare life' scheme, yet who pretended to uphold constitutional principle, to allow them to be treated as animals (Cardinal O'Fiaich, as cited by Adams, 1996, 73). The hunger striker pushes the sovereign up against a wall by his extreme actions, politicizing beyond all measure the very fact of his *zoé*. The election of Bobby Sands to Westminster, and the international attention garnered by the hunger strike re-inserts *bios* into *zoé*. Agamben aptly notes, "[i]n this sense, no life, as exiles and bandits know well, is more 'political' than this" (Agamben, 1998, 183-184).

It is now well understood that the hunger strike unleashed a political force based on resistance to the 'state of exception'. It accelerated Sinn Fein's entry into electoral politics[110] and this gave the party the opportunity to demonstrate that they had support. Sinn Fein eventually became the largest nationalist party in the North and the only All-Ireland party. The support they managed to maintain and increase provided the impetus for the peace initiative. Their continued collective resistance to British government policy eventually enabled them to fashion a peace initiative that led to all-party talks which culminated in the signing of the Good Friday Agreement.[111] The institution of the Belfast Assembly in the north still reveals the fragility of the partial removal of 'state of exception' governance. The British Government suspended the Assembly on several occasions, the latest lasting four years.[112] The response of the Democratic Unionist Party to the resistance of the IRA to fully decommission their weapons in an effort to pressure the parties to adopt the Patten recommendations on police reform, further tested the transition toward democratic governance. However, the Assembly is re-instituted since 2007 and policing and justice powers were devolved in April 2010. While the future will tell whether this democratic transition will be a success, there is a strong feeling among all but the most recalcitrant republicans and loyalists that a purely political path is beyond wishful thinking. In the South, where Sinn Fein had difficulty getting a foothold in the *Daíl*, the recent disintegration

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[110] While Sands' election is characterized as the tipping factor toward electoral politics, it should be understood that this strategy was already being considered by Sinn Fein prior to the decision to run H-block candidates.

[111] This is crucial given that republicans were theretofore ignored in constitutional talks during both the run-up to the Sunningdale Agreement (1973) and to the Anglo-Irish Agreement (1985). The failure to include republicans led in large part to the failure of these accords.

[112] See footnote77, p.106.

of the ruling coalition led by *Fianna Faíl* over the European Union and International Monetary Fund bail-out, has enabled Sinn Fein to return 14 TDs in the February 25, 2011 election.[113]

In analyzing certain special measures used by the British government in the conflict, it is important to note the limits of this particular study. Special legislation extends far beyond the period under review. Systematic renewal of special legislation has extended well into the new century. Repeal of these measures has not meant a return to "normal" governance. While the North of Ireland is experiencing an attempt at a new form of inclusive power-sharing, an important caveat needs to be addressed. The post September 11 context has meant new and robust anti-terrorism measures, this time not aimed at Irish nationalists *per se*, but targeting the perceived threat of the Arab/Muslim 'terrorist'. Questionable detention measures, heightened surveillance of special groups, the invasion of CCTV cameras in British cities, recourse to 'othering' by government-initiated discussions on what it means to be British, and extra-judicial executions such as that of Brazilian national, Jean-Charles de Menezes in 2005 all serve to remind us that the 'state of exception' is still the order of the day.[114]

An examination of some of the security measures put in place by the British government confirms its recourse to 'exceptional' governance strategies in the 20th Century especially, but not exclusively, as it relates to the north of Ireland. This chapter shows that it is possible for *homo sacer* to challenge this form of governance by engaging in sustained collective resistance, thereby retrieving his status in the 'polis'. Moreover, this resistance took place not only on the ground, but in prison, a place where one might expect neutralization. As Buntman (2003) notes,

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[113] TD is Irish for *Teachta Dála* meaning a Deputy of *Daíl Eireann*. The latter is the lower House of the Irish *Oireachtas* or Parliament.

[114] These issues were the subject of extensive discussion and analysis by the National Security Working Group of the University of Ottawa, of which I was a member (2007-2008).

"resistance is the necessary first step in creating space to rearticulate key relationships of power. As such, resistance is the beginning of a process and continuum that aims at more far-reaching resignification and emancipation in the polity" (6-7). The current form of governance in the North is the result of such resistance. The Irish republican struggle should serve as a potent reminder that, in the face of exceptional surveillance, harassment, detention, torture and execution, the only equipment at hand to combat the 'ban' is the arsenal of resistance tactics that a targeted population has at its disposal. Such resistance is based on collective action, solidarity and collaboration between different nodes of struggle. Such interplay between nodes of struggle is explained thus: "[Republican prisoners] were sustained by a view of imprisonment as a continuance of the struggle, the epicentre of which was resistance" (Shirlow, McEvoy, et.al, (2005), p.44). A more extensive articulation of this resistance in the words of the research participants, is set-out in Chapter 7. Now we turn to another contextual component, the Irish Republican Movement, its evolution, the tensions between the political and armed incarnations of republicanism, its traditions and legacy. This provides the necessary background for an appreciation of their resistance in prison (chapter 7), their leadership development (chapter 8) and the relationship between the two (chapter 9).

> *The people who are in the IRA, are also in the community, they have families, they have mothers and fathers, they have brothers and sisters, they have sons and daughters, they have wives, husbands, partners. They haven't come in from Mars somewhere...*(Padraig)

This investigation is not an analysis of the various interpretations of the politics of conflict in Ireland. Rather it is about the people that make up the insurgent movement. This chapter explores the Republican movement, in particular the relationship between its physical force incarnation, the IRA, and its political formation, Sinn Fein. The first part of the chapter traces some historical benchmarks as a way to contextualize the movement's development. Then, it delves into the nature of Republican resistance, both inside the prison as well as outside. It discusses the mindset of a volunteer in the Irish Republican Army since many who are at the helm of the movement have their roots therein. Getting at the heart of Republicanism is best achieved by going directly to the source. In this sense, by prospecting *The Green Book*, versions 1 and 2,[115] I can best capture the axiomatic aspects of republican conduct, discipline and attitude.

The current peace process in Ireland throws into sharp focus the crux of the Republican Movement's ideological foundation. This question is, simply put, how to free Ireland of the British presence. The "fissiparous" nature of the Movement (Feeney, 2003, 11) emanates from a couple of dichotomies. One is the strategic debate that centers around beating the British out of Ireland by physical force versus rooting them out on the strength of electoral support and by negotiating British withdrawal from Irish affairs. The other dichotomy pits relatively

[115] The *Green Book* is the IRA training manual for volunteers. It is cited extensively in Coogan (2002a) and O'Brien (1999) but is not referenced. Bibliographic searching for it has not been successful. This is understandable since it is a secret publication for IRA Volunteers. A second version was issued that provides anti-interrogation techniques, following the treatment of Irish Republicans at the hands of authorities during internment.

conservative republican elements committed to a free and independent united Ireland against a strata that desires the same ends but along socialist principles.

The result has been sporadic internecine violence. The establishment of the Provisional IRA in 1970 was the result of such a conflict. Criticism was levelled at the Official IRA[116] for three reasons: first, there was no military action in sight after the failure of the border campaign (1956-62); but more importantly, Cathal Goulding (IRA Chief of Staff) and Tomás MacGiolla (President of Sinn Fein) were on a trajectory to abandon abstentionism[117] and their discourse had decidedly Marxist overtones, which did not go over well in some sectors (Feeney, 241). This socialist agenda and flirting with ending abstentionism, combined with an inability, or an unwillingness, to 'come to the rescue' of nationalist neighbourhoods under attack from Loyalists and police at the outset of the conflict, led directly to the birth of the Provisionals. Having said this, the quest for a socialist state remains a fundamental aspect of the Republican ideal. *The Green Book* speaks of embracing a social and economic policy that,

> ...aim[s] at eradicating the Social Imperialism of today, by returning the ownership of the wealth of Ireland to the people of Ireland through a system of cooperativism, worker ownership, and control of Industry, Agriculture and the Fisheries. (*Green Book* 1, in Coogan, 2002a 550)

The "insubordination" and "essential obstinacy on the part of the principles of freedom" (Foucault, 1983, 225) is resistance. When it comes to the Irish Republican Movement, they have based their *raison d'être* and *modus operandi* on it. One can say that the main tension

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116 The term "Official" was added to this IRA organization to distinguish it from the "Provisional" IRA which split from the Officials in 1969 over their lack of movement to protect nationalist neighbourhoods under attack. For a detailed account of the split, see Anderson (2002).

117 Abstentionism is a policy favoured by Irish republicans whereby they run for office, get elected but do not take their seats in a deliberative assembly, because their refuse to recognize the legitimacy of the governing body, be it the British Parliament, the Assembly in the north of Ireland, or the *Oireachtas* (Irish legislature).

within the Movement has been between categorical and strategic (Buntman, 2003) forms of resistance. But the IRA has, at its core, a categorical imperative:

> The position of the Irish Republican Army since its foundation in 1916 has been one of sustained resistance and implacable hostility to the forces of imperialism, always keeping in the forefront of the most advanced revolutionary thinking and the latest guerrilla warfare techniques in the world. (*Green Book* 1, in Coogan, 2002a, 550)

Many factors conspired to facilitate a departure from physical force. Among these, successful participation in electoral politics that began with H-block prisoners running in elections North and South during the campaign for special status, evolved into the "armalite and ballot box strategy".[118] This set the course for an increase in popular support for Sinn Fein in the North. In 1987, a shipment of 150 tons of Libyan arms aboard the *Eksund*, destined for the IRA's arsenal was intercepted by French customs officials, and some consider this to be a significant issue in the winding down of the armed campaign (Moloney, 2002, 18-23). During the same year, the IRA detonated a bomb in Enniskellen on Remembrance Day, that killed 11 people and injured another 63, provoking outrage. The end of apartheid in South Africa and the 1993 Palestine-Israel peace process in the Middle East[119] also seemed to provide an impetus for a peace initiative in Ireland. In Clinton's first election campaign for the Presidency of the US, the Irish-American lobby pledged their vote in exchange for a promise to get involved in the North and facilitate a peace process. Clinton did precisely that upon being elected (O'Clery, 1996).

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[118] It should be noted that participation in electoral politics was a tactic that was being considered prior to the H-Block protest, but was accelerated once prisoners ran for election and won. See also the "Armalite and Ballot Box Strategy", Chapter 2, footnote 31, p. 28.

[119] This refers to the 1993 Oslo Accords also conducted with the assistance of President Clinton.

It is within the preponderance of the physical force tradition and the perceived historical failure of political negotiations with the British (such as during the 1921 Treaty talks) that the relevance of focusing on the movement's leadership becomes apparent. How did the Adams-McGuinness leadership succeed in persuading the Army Council and indeed most of the IRA volunteers, as well as the larger republican community to back a peace initiative? After all, 'going political' had harsh consequences for their predecessors.[120] Since military engagement played an important part in their trajectory as committed republican activists, it is opportune to outline the genesis, ideology, as well as the various tensions that were the mainstay of the Republican movement over the years (Pro and Anti-Treaty factions; Official and Provisional IRA). It also demonstrates the legacy of imprisonment of Republicans that provides a template for the type of resistance in which republican captives took part. From blanket protest to hunger strike; from reproducing army (IRA) structures within the prison and taking over the discipline of its members inside the walls, to engaging in escape attempts and education; all these methods of pursuing the struggle while in captivity show the continuum of resistance within prison walls. Understanding the mindset of those in the IRA sheds light on the importance of the broad consensus for the peace initiative, the reasons for dissidence as well as the nature of prison resistance.

The Republican Movement is made up primarily of Sinn Fein and the Irish Republican Army, although there have been other smaller groups such as the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA) and its political wing, the Irish Republican Socialist Party (IRSP). Historically, the IRA

[120] To wit, Michael Collins' assassination, the undoing of the Official IRA.

dominated Sinn Fein, and the leadership of the IRA Army Council more or less dictated Sinn Fein policy.

> In the beginning Sinn Féin was not actually a political party at all and did not run candidates for office. It has always been only one part of a double-sided movement for Irish self-determination, in which the political and military strands jockeyed for control. (Feeney, 2003, 11)

While Sinn Fein could always count on the protest vote, it could not develop so long as it remained an abstentionist party. Abstentionism grew out of dyed-in-the wool republicans' refusal to recognize the partitioned governments North and South, much less Westminster. Of all the tensions within its ranks, this one issue is the genesis of much of the debate (223). Only on rare occasions has Sinn Fein garnered mass support from the populace, let alone without an active IRA. Yet this was the situation that emanated in the 1990s as the fledgling peace initiative took hold, and the IRA committed to a non-violent strategy. It is exactly this situation which provokes questions about the type and style of leadership that enabled such a situation to emerge.

Historical Benchmarks

Ireland's problem originates in the centuries old conquest of Ireland by England. Thanks to the only English Pope, Adrian IV, Ireland was "granted and donated" to Henry II in 1169 spurring what Republicans call "eight hundred years of British oppression" and the call for "the Full National Demand", meaning that the British presence on Irish soil be removed (Coogan, 2002b, 3-4). The Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century led to the plantation of English colonists and Scottish Presbyterians and Episcopalians in the northern counties of the island, essentially confiscating land from the native Irish (6). Religious wars of the 1640s culminated in victory for Protestant King William of Orange at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690. At the time, and with the support of the papacy, he was vying for Catholic King James the

Second's throne as part of a European campaign against Louis XIV (6). In the decades that followed, penal laws were enacted to circumscribe the rights of Catholics and Dissenters [121] that included barring them from teaching, voting, owning land, serving in the military, customs, municipal services or the legal profession, and possessing firearms. The Irish language was eradicated and those caught with Irish law books were severely punished (6-7; see also Ellis, 2004, 5).

> By the last generation of the eighteenth century, a situation similar to that with which we are now familiar in Rhodesia prevailed in Ireland. There was a parliament of planters largely independent of England and equally largely indifferent to the sufferings of the Catholic peasantry whom they ruled and exploited. (Coogan, 2002b, 5)

The 1798 Rebellion

In the 1790s, against the backdrop of the American and French revolutions, several elements conspired to foster radicalism among the Irish, based on Enlightenment ideals of equality and democracy. At the same time, England was at war with France, and thus adopted a more lenient attitude towards Catholics in order to preserve unity in the Kingdom. This led different groups in Irish society to agitate for government reform which in turn threatened the privileged position of the Protestant Ascendancy.[122] Irish government officials, representing the Ascendancy, highly insecure in their minority position in a conquered land, were pressing for more independence from England in an effort to protect their tenuous position in the face of sweeping attitudinal changes in major sections of society. In the end, the British resorted to

[121] Dissenters are those who challenged the dictates of the Church of England in the 16th to18th centuries.

[122] Refers to minority Protestant ruling class of Ireland largely made up of wealthy landowners and absentee landlords.

policies formulated by panic to quash any advances in Catholic rights, under pressure from the Ascendancy (Delisle, 2000).

It was in this context that the United Irishmen organization was created by Theobald Wolfe Tone, considered the father of Irish republicanism (Elliott, 1989, 1). Tone, himself a Dissenter, called for the unity of Catholic, Protestant and Dissenter to fight for a "more equal representation of the People in Parliament" (125). In his *Autobiography*, he states:

> To subvert the tyranny of our execrable government, to break the connection with England, the never-failing source of all our political evils, and to assert the independence of my country--these were my objects. To unite the whole people of Ireland, to abolish the memory of all past dissensions, and to substitute the common name of Irishman, in place of the denominations of Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter--these were my means. (Tone, in Elliott, 1989, 126)

The United Irishmen was a radical organization influenced by Enlightenment principles and the French and American Revolutions. Celebrated trials for seditious activity of some of its members led to the suppression of the Society in 1794 by the Government (Foster, 1988, 274). It reconfigured itself as a radicalized oath-bound secret society, and joined forces with the Defenders.[123] By June 1797, the United Irishmen counted 121,000 members (ibid.) and were mounting an armed insurrection known as the 1798 rebellion. While the rebellion broke out in Dublin in May 1798, the fiercest battles took place in Wexford and Wicklow. The rising itself was a brief and bloody failure for the rebels. General Lake[124] and his troops brutally crushed the uprising. The death toll reached 30,000. Tone had gone to France to enlist their help in fighting the British. The French expedition, which arrived too late with Tone on board, was intercepted

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[123] "The Defenders" was an organization (made up of Catholics) who used violence and intimidation to confront the Protestant "Peep o'Day Boys", the precursors of the Orange Order.

[124] General Gerard Lake, 1st Viscount Lake, was the commander of the British Armed Forces in the 1798 rebellion and was known for his brutality towards Irish rebels.

and Tone was captured. He committed suicide while awaiting execution (280). The events of 1798 and the fate of Tone "established United Irish martyrology and invoked an historical continuum of resistance..." (ibid.). Irish republicans consider their movement as directly descending from Wolfe Tone and the United Irishmen. The latter's 1797 constitution stated:

> We have no National Government; we are ruled by Englishmen and the Servants of Englishmen, whose Object is the Interest of another country, whose Instrument is corruption and whose Strength is the Weakness of Ireland. (United Irishmen Constitution, in, Carlton, 1977, 46, as cited in Smith, 1995, 7)

The rebellion and its suppression led to the 1800 Act of Union, which "generated a current in Irish affairs dedicated to the destruction of the act by armed force" (Coogan, 2002a, 6). To this day, Irish republicans commemorate Tone's birthday yearly at Bodenstown where he is buried.

In the 19th Century

The 1798 uprising is understood to be the propelling force behind Robert Emmet's 1803 rebellion and the Young Irelanders rebellion in 1848, both of which were the precursors of the Fenians and/or the Irish Republican Brotherhood, which led the 1916 Easter Rising.

A cataclysmic event of the 19th Century was the Famine of the late 1840s. It took the lives of roughly one million Irish inhabitants and was responsible for the emigration of a further million souls. Between 1846 -1911, the population of Ireland dwindled to four million from eight million (Foster, 1988, 323). Many who emigrate would not survive the harrowing journey to America aboard "famine ships" (Foster, 1988, 350-51).[125] Those who did survive brought with them their discontent of the British occupation back home. The Fenian movement was also active in America and in fact, in 1866 they invaded Canada, as a means to pressure England to leave

[125] At Grosse Île near Quebec City, thousands of unmarked graves dot the valley. The Ancient Order of Hibernians recorded: "Thousands of the children of the Gael were lost on this island while fleeing from foreign tyrannical laws and an artificial famine in the years 1847-48. God bless them. God save Ireland" (Foster, 1988, 351).

Ireland. These unsuccessful skirmishes were a factor in the subsequent Confederation of Canada in 1867. The Fenian movement developed into the Irish Republican Brotherhood, described as:

> ...display[ing] all the characteristics of Irishmen throughout the ages. The Fenians had colossal energy, daring, flair, suspicion, illogicality, a tendency to disunity and splits, lack of organization, courage, naivety and sometimes a high degree of shrewd commonsense coupled with an extraordinary tenacity that did occasionally bring spectacular consequences. (Coogan, 2002a, 14)

The Easter Rising of 1916

The Irish Republican Brotherhood (the Fenians), established in 1858, was a revolutionary movement. "It recognized itself as the provisional governing body of a free and independent Ireland. Later reorganized by Michael Collins...it, in effect, became the leadership cadre of the Volunteers (IRA) (Coogan, 2002b, 781). It joined forces with James Connolly's [126] Citizen Army and staged the Easter Rising of 1916. Padraig Pearse, Joseph Plunkett, Sean MacDiarmade, Thomas MacDonagh, Eamonn Ceannt, Thomas J. Clarke, and James Connolly crafted the Proclamation of *Poblacht na h-Eireann*, the Provisional government of the Irish Republic. Therein is a call to all Irishmen and Irishwomen to support and fight for "the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland and to the unfettered control of Irish destinies, to be sovereign and indefeasible". It vowed to guarantee "...religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens..." (Irish Proclamation, as cited in Coogan 2002a, 19-20). It continued:

> Until our arms have brought the opportune moment for the establishing of a permanent Government, representative of the whole people of Ireland, and elected by the suffrages of all her men and women, the Provisional Government, hereby

[126] Connolly was a trade unionist, well-known writer, and the founder of the Irish Socialist Republican Party in 1896 and later in 1903 co-founded the International Workers League. He is a signatory of the Irish Proclamation and was executed along with the other leaders of the Easter Rising.

> constituted, will administer the civil and military affairs of the Republic in trust of the people. (Ibid.)

The Easter Rising of 1916 was led by a force of roughly 1600 IRB members along with around 300 Citizen Army members. They took Dublin city centre, and the leaders were headquartered in the General Post Office. It was crushed by the British a few days later. They did not have much support from the populace, however, the execution of all its leaders by the British two weeks later[127] mobilized tremendous anti-British feeling and support for the Volunteers. As McGuffin (1973) points out: "With the crassness born of indolent arrogance the British turned the rebels into martyrs" (26-27). This fact notwithstanding, there were other factors that exacerbated anti-British sentiment at the time: the failure of Home Rule, and the anger about potential conscription to fight in World War I were additional sources of discontent (Smith, 1995, 31). This translated into victory for Sinn Fein in 1919, when they set up *Daíl Eireann* (the Assembly) and declared independence (32). The British also imprisoned 3500 people, nearly half of whom were released shortly after. Most of the remainder were sent to Frongoch, a prison camp in Wales, "another bad mistake", according to McGuffin (27). The supporters of the Easter Rising, having been interned, did what Irish republicans have done ever since, when in His or Her Majesty's custody. That is, they organized and educated: "The camps became hotbeds of 'sedition', political education centres and training grounds for resistance fighters, the foremost of all being Michael Collins"(27).

It was prior to 1916, when Irish nationalists were demanding the "Home Rule Bill" that Protestants of the northern counties, fearful of its passing, started to arm themselves massively

[127] There were 97 executed in all (See Smith 1995, 31).

and signed a covenant committed to "...using all means which may be found necessary to defeat the present conspiracy to set up a home rule parliament in Ireland...and mutually pledge ourselves to refuse to recognize its authority" (Coogan, 2002b,18). In all, 470,000 signed the Covenant and a further 100,000 joined the Ulster Volunteer Force (ibid.). A cargo of 300 tons of weapons and ammunition were delivered from Germany, giving the Covenant its teeth (19), and spelling out the scenario for a subsequent chapter of conflict in Ireland.

The War of Independence, the Civil War, and Partition

The Easter Rising of 1916 led to the Irish War of Independence in 1920-21. Public reaction to the execution of the Rising's leaders, and to the internment of insurgents in Frongoch prison camp led to massive opposition to British rule.[128] Sinn Fein, founded in 1901 by Arthur Griffith, benefitted from such opposition and in 1918, won 73 of the 105 seats in Westminster (Smith, 1995, 31-32). Such overwhelming support for Sinn Fein suggests that most of the Irish population wanted independence from Britain (32). Reorganized and re-empowered, the IRA under Collins' leadership, waged war against the police and the Auxiliaries (also known as the Black and Tans). By the time of the truce, in July 1921, the IRA had killed 160 soldiers and 400 police. The reason more police were killed was that, for some time, the authorities were uncertain about sending in troops for fear it would serve as a propaganda coup for Sinn Fein (Foster, 1988, 498). When they did send in the Tans, the situation escalated: "...draconian powers of search and arrest, occasional berserk sackings of villages and towns, and an unrelieved demonstration of hard-line colonial attitudes on the part of the military" were the order of the day (ibid.). The apex of the conflict is said to have taken place November 21st, 1920 when the IRA

[128] Smith points out that other factors such as the failure to implement Home Rule, World War I and the fear of conscription helped to consolidate opposition (Smith, 1995, 31).

killed 11 British officers, and the Black and Tans, later the same day, retaliated by firing into a crowd of football spectators causing 12 deaths (ibid.). This event is known as the first "Bloody Sunday". Martial law was declared and thousands were interned in Mountjoy, Kilmainham, Kilkenny, Derry, Spike Island (Cork), Belfast, Dundalk and Sligo, and also in military camps at the Curragh (the main internment camp where 1300 were housed), Kilworth, Boyle and Ballykinlar (McGuffin, 33-34).

Between the spring and summer of 1920, Britain was reassessing its position in the war. Among the elements that contributed to a change of British policy was the failure of Britain's policy of coercion to stop the IRA; the lack of support for the imposition of martial law in Ireland by the British population; a recognition that the Dublin administration was completely incapable of asserting policy and control over its institutions let alone over the populace; the recognition that even softer elements of the Irish populace could not be counted on for support; and not least, Sinn Fein's willingness to discuss the terms of a peace. This led to the decision by Westminster to negotiate a truce (See Hopkinson, 2002, 60-61; Coogan, 2002d, 186). The Treaty, signed by Michael Collins, freed 26 of the 32 counties of Ireland, reserving under British rule, the Protestant-dominated six northern counties.

Thereafter the IRA split between pro- and anti- treaty factions and a civil war ensued which lasted less than a year, but in which many former comrades fought and killed each other. The Government of Ireland Act, passed in 1920, provided for the establishment of a new parliament that would govern the six northeast counties, Fermanagh, Armagh, Tyronne, Derry, Antrim and Down. From the point of view of anti-Treaty Republicans, the partition of Ireland

stands as an egregious faux-pas on the part of those negotiating the Treaty and served as a painful reminder that negotiating with Britain should never be considered an option.

The physical force tradition finds its sanctity in such an analysis. The IRA continued to operate off and on over the course of the 20th century, mainly in the North. The new state had a sectarian basis. Jobs and housing were reserved for members of the Protestant denomination. Protestants governed in a permanent majority from Stormont, thanks in large part to the gerrymandering of borders (See Coogan, 2002b; Farrell, 1976).[129] In line with the original intent of the Irish Proclamation of 1916, Irish republicans today have the objective of reunifying both parts of Ireland and ridding the whole island of the British presence.

Prison and Resistance

Prison resistance is not, by any means, limited to the political imprisonment of the Irish. An extensive literature exists that highlights the various ways and means that captives have of countering the brutal limitations imposed on their liberty and their person (See Carlton (2007), on Australian prisoners; Rodriguez (2006), on imprisoned radical intellectuals in the US; Brock (2004), on conscientious objectors; Buntman (2003), on South African political prisoners; Gaucher (2002a) on the *Journal of Prisoners on Prison*; Gaucher(2002b), on Prison Justice Day in Canada; Bosworth (1999), on the resistance of incarcerated women; Mencia (1993), on Cuban revolutionaries; Davies (1990), on writers in prison; Cohen and Taylor (1972), on UK high-security prisoners in Durham prison. In all times and places, incarcerated persons have resisted their disenfranchisement, and their processing by legal systems, whether their own or those of foreign occupiers. Confinement and physical domination, and "the deference and demeanour

[129] Gerrymandering refers to the artificial demarcation of constituency borders ensuring a Protestant majority. Moreover, the right to vote was tied to property ownership, disenfranchising the largely poor Catholic population (See Farrell, 1976, 81-86).

relationship of 'convict and screw'" (Gaucher, 2004, xi) are universal traits of the carceral. Resistance as a pre-eminent element of prison(er) culture has been and is, its response. Being caged transcends one's ideological bent. The limitations on freedom and movement are difficult to contend with, regardless of political consciousness. The experiences of isolation, mental fatigue, fear, and powerlessness are universal. So the urge to resist and the solidarity that arises between fellow captives are often shared by victims of carceral domination.

We turn now to the legacy of prison resistance systematically undertaken by captive republicans over many years. Internment has been instituted by both the British and the Free State government on numerous occasions. It is within a tradition of violent conflict and subsequent repression that the Republican Movement honed its resistance and its leadership. Resistance while in captivity therefore has a long historical tradition. The thrust of prison resistance for Irish republicans has been mostly about the recognition of their status as political prisoners, though at times, they use resistance strategies for the improvement of prison conditions. Almost none of the tactics used by republicans either in Ireland or elsewhere was new to the generation under study (1971-2000). These include organizing IRA structures within the gaol, through which dealings with the prison administration are conducted. This is the elemental way in which they insist on their identity as political captives. They also have a two-pronged strategy that involves escapes and education. Other forms of resistance include strip striking, hunger striking, and physical violence.

In Frongoch

It is recorded that 1,656 insurgents participated in the 1916 Easter Rising (O'Mahoney, 1987, 17). Over and above creating martyrs of the cause of Irish independence by killing the

leaders, the British government rounded up 3,149 participants in the Rebellion, and deported 2,519 men to England, dispatched in a number of facilities (19), the balance having been released. Within weeks, a further 650 were sent home and the remaining 1,863 men were served with internment orders under the "Defense of the Realm Act" of 1914 or DORA (21), and most were transferred to a prison camp for Germans, in the North of Wales, called Frongoch, a former whiskey distillery (23-24). The camp authorities ceded control of the prisoners to the IRA since the guarantee of discipline over such a vast number of prisoners seemed implausible without the IRA's assistance (59). "Thus the I.R.A. won out and were determined to maximize the opportunity provided by the British Government in hand-picking the cream of the volunteers and placing them all together" (59).

> Captivity was just another chapter in a continuous struggle for freedom. In this manner at Frongoch were laid the foundations for the policy of organization and resistance in jails and internment camps which formed the basis of all subsequent prison activity in the years to follow and indeed right up to the present day in the Six Counties. This manifests itself in the continuous struggle for political status, right to wear their own clothes, dealing with prison administration through an elected officer in command, refusal to do prison work, segregation from criminal elements, etc.(59)

In Frongoch, "...the principle of non-recognition of British authority was forged into an orthodoxy, logical rigid and complete, and was obeyed with a consistency which called down the whole cycle of prison punishments on its exponents" (60).

In Other Prisons

Under DORA, and prior to independence and partition, thousands of people were jailed in Ireland and many shipped off to jails in England (McGuffin, 1972, 137). Most of the time, such prisoners fought for political status and refused to wear a convict's uniform or do prison

work. They went on hunger strikes for their recognition as POWs and some renowned hunger strikers include the Lord Mayor of Cork, Terence McSwiney who died in Brixton prison in 1920 and Kerry man, Thomas Ashe , the founder of the IRB, who died at the Mater hospital in Dublin from the consequences of force-feeding in 1917 (137). Hunger-striking was more successful in the South as it caused embarrassment to the government (137).

In all prisons in which there are a number of republican captives, the organization of IRA structures was fundamental. Often nominated by the IRA outside, a tier of leadership was installed in the prison, through which prisoners dealt with the prison administration:

> These roles and activities have remained remarkably consistent over a period of almost 100 years of intermittent republican imprisonment and primarily relate to the structure and methodology employed to undermine political and practical restrictions imposed by prison regimes. (Ó'Mochaín, 2011, 63)

In Long Kesh

Thousands of individuals, mostly republican, have been incarcerated in Long Kesh either during the internment period of 1971-1976, or as convicted prisoners between 1976 and the late 1990s. There was a marked difference in the ways in which they resisted while in prison during different phases. To begin with, during internment, they won the recognition of their status as "special category" prisoners, or POWs, after Billy McKee went on hunger strike in Crumlin Road Prison. Their status was granted as part of a negotiation between the IRA and the British to hold talks with then Secretary of State William Whitelaw. The other concession granted was the release of Gerry Adams, who at the time was only 23 years of age, to take part in the Whitelaw talks aimed at securing a ceasefire. A young Martin McGuinness (though not a prisoner at the time) was also part of the delegation.

The about-face by the British in 1976 to take away the "special category" status led to the campaign for special status. This campaign lasted 5 years, and involved the blanket protest, the no-wash protest, the first hunger strike and the second hunger strike (where ten men died including Bobby Sands).

After the end of the second hunger strike, and up until their release in 2000, the Long Kesh prisoners changed their strategy of resistance within the prison. It is at this time that the IRA structures within the gaol were revamped; that Paulo Freire's book *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* made its appearance and made a significant impact on the camp staff; and that the approach to education underwent a significant change (McKeown, 2001).

While much attention has been devoted to the prisoners in Long Kesh, due to their massive numbers and because they wrote about it more extensively, it is important to emphasize that the women prisoners at Armagh and prisoners captured and imprisoned in other countries also undertook forms of resistance that are based on the legacy of Republican prison resistance. For instance, the women in Armagh prison also went on the blanket and no-wash protests, and participated in the first hunger strike; they mounted a campaign against the use of strip-searching by the authorities; and they also engaged in educational resistance while behind the wall (Corcoran, 2006). In England, prisoners there who were much more isolated than in the North given their small numbers, also undertook resistance measures. Most notable among these acts of resistance were the hunger strikes of the Price sisters, Michael Gaughan who died on the fast in June 1974, and Gerry Kelly, who were all fighting to be transferred to the Six Counties. Gaughan's death was attributed to force-feeding and the practice was abandoned after his death. Kelly was on hunger strike for 205 days and was actually force-fed 170 times. But others also

engaged in acts of resistance. Some learned Irish and read history, some attempted escapes, used legal means to fight against their incarceration, and for or against extradition depending on where they were incarcerated (McKeown, 2001).

The Mindset of a Volunteer

Taking the decision to become involved in the IRA is not something that is taken lightly, nor does it appeal to a majority of community members. The IRA is a voluntary secret army. When one signals a desire to enlist, one is told he or she will end up either dead or in gaol. It therefore explains in part the type of person and the extent of resistance undertaken both on the streets and within the prisons.

> ...you're not in a standing army where you're getting paid, and you're giving orders, and you've the whole state behind you. This is a voluntary organization therefore people enter into it, show leadership by actually entering into it because, they set themselves out from their community in the sense of "I'll do the fighting for youse", because it's always a minority of people do it. So, in a way, if you join an organization like that, even if you join a protest movement which is not necessarily militarized or anything like that, to join the Civil Rights [...] is showing leadership. (George)

The determining aspect of a volunteer in the IRA is first and foremost that he or she has a sound political framework within which they operate. Whereas the literature often focuses on their capacity for violence, IRA volunteers are also political activists. The discipline that accompanies membership combined with a knowledge of the politics of the conflict set them apart from their Loyalist counterparts. The means by which they arrive at creating such a political activist is by a focus on education. The *Green Book* says:

> A new recruit's immediate obstacle is the removal of his (her) ignorance about how to handle weapons, military tactics, security, interrogations, etc....and for all members of the movement regardless of which branch we belong to, to enhance our commitment to and participation in the struggle through gaining as

> comprehensive an understanding as possible for our present society and the proposed Republican alternative through self and group education (*Green Book*, in, Coogan, 2002a, 551).

It stresses the importance of being well prepared on several fronts, by taking the necessary measures to ensure good results, and by demonstrating that all non-violent recourses have been exhausted prior to the use of revolutionary violence (551). In terms of conduct in the community, the *Green Book* is instructive. It stipulates the type of conduct that is necessary of an IRA volunteer so as not to create unnecessary enemies.

> The enemy through our own fault or default is the one we create ourselves through our personal conduct and through our collective conduct of the struggle: the wee woman whose gate or back door gets pulled off its hinges by a volunteer evading arrest and who doesn't get an apology as soon as possible afterwards or more preferably has the damage repaired by one of our supporters; the family friends and neighbours of a criminal or informer who has been punished without their being informed why. In brief our personal conduct as well as our conduct of our Republican activities must be aimed at if not enhancing support, at least at not creating enemies unnecessarily (554).

More importantly, the *Green Book* clearly draws the linkages between the movement's resistance, education and the community.

> Resistance must be channelled into active and passive support with an on-going process through our actions, our education programmes, our policies, of attempting to turn the passive supporter into a dump holder, a member of the movement, a paper-seller, etc...The alternative to plotting such a course is obvious. IF, for example, we have an area with a unit of IRA volunteers and nothing else: no Sinn Fein Cumann, no Green Cross committee, no local involvement etc., after a period, regardless of how successful they have been against the Brits, they end up in jail leaving no structures behind: no potential for resistance, recruits, education or general enhancing of support (557-558).

The *Green Book* also sets out a chart for obtaining support and for a guerilla strategy. The support aspect is divided between active and passive support. It stipulates that "all support lost to us is potential support for the enemy". The way to gain support is by either "exploit[ing] a

situation" or by "creat[ing] a situation and exploit[ing] it". The main goal is to "isolate the enemy". The guerilla strategy is to create resistance and channel it into active or passive support and to stem any isolation of the IRA, which is done by fostering connections with the community and "all anti-imperialist groupings" (559).

The *Green Book* reveals the systematic consideration of several aspects of the armed struggle. The most obvious elements are weapons training, but one cannot dismiss the explanations of historical factors that led to physical force republicanism, the emphasis on political education that is contained therein, the attention devoted to gaining and retaining support in nationalist neighbourhoods, nor the all important techniques for dealing with the interrogation methods utilized by state forces on arrested IRA men and women.

Alonso (2007) suggests that the IRA campaign is the doing of cynical forces bent on indoctrinating young men and women too young to capably analyze their participation in the armed struggle. Yet, this omits consideration of historical realities and the legacy of physical force republicanism. The next chapter will show that, contrary to Alonso's (2007) interpretation, the participants in this study did not join the armed struggle by a hot-headed, rash decision but rather, thought it over carefully, and in some instances, were influenced by family and entourage, as well as a knowledge of Irish history. It presents the research participants' own considerations of their journeys of resistance, what it has meant for them, and the continuity and legacy of Republican resistance.

> *...Far from being bad men and women, they were important assets in their communities...Over 10 per cent, nearly 11 per cent of the adult population had been in gaol. So that's one in ten of the adult population had been in gaol, in some of the heartland areas. So it's more a people's movement rather than a secret conspiracy or a criminal conspiracy.* (Bob)

> *27 years as a Volunteer. In prison and outside prison because in prison, you were still at war with the British State. It was just another front in that struggle.* (Gerard)

Incarceration is a pervasive socio-political phenomenon that traverses spatial and temporal contexts. It is used to cleanse society of deviants, surplus labour and political dissidents, in short, 'the dangerous classes' (Taylor,1995, 99). In characterizing himself, US radical 1960s black activist, George Jackson (1990) captures this in part:

> Born to a premature death, a menial, subsistence-wage worker, an odd-job man, the cleaner, the caught, the man under hatches, without bail--that's me, the colonial victim. (7)

The domination and repression of prison regimes have been written about extensively (Clemmer, 1940; Sykes, 1958, 2007; Mathiesen, 1970; Foucault, 1979; Parenti, 1999; Wacquant, 2001; Scraton and McCullough, 2009). After interviewing prisoners in different circumstances, Scraton reports:

> ...first arrival at prison, regardless of strength of body or resilience of mind, was always a moment of trepidation, fear and alienation. Trepidation regarding the unknown, fear of physical and emotional violence, alienation from institutionalised processes designed to sever the individual from personal and social context...The experience of being cuffed, whether to a prison guard or in body chains, is the physical manifestation of the loss of freedom. It demonstrates that the authority of the prison, powerful and determining, is not consensual. It pays no regard to the politics of representation and accountability supposedly central to legitimacy within democratic societies. (Scraton, 2009, 60)

Resistance to such crushing power has been theorized and analyzed (Cohen & Taylor, 1972; Bosworth, 1999; Gaucher, 2002; Rodriguez, 2006; Scraton and McCullough, 2009; Munn &

Bruckert, 2010). The resistance undertaken by conscientious objectors and other politically-motivated dissidents has also been the focus of writings (Brock, 2004 ; Buntman, 2003, 2000; McEvoy, 2001; Mencia, 1993, Gready, 1993). The pains of imprisonment are common features of all types of prisons, and these include "...routinized humiliations...loss of autonomy, the mortifying invasion of privacy (strip searches, showers, lavatory), poor diet and lack of medical attention, the cell, and the transformation of social identity into that of convict..." (Gaucher, 2004, xi). Resistance to the carceral is undertaken by many whose liberty is removed. As Gaucher explains, "[s]urviving carceral brutalities and resisting the conformities of the total institution are universal needs shared by all prisoners" (Gaucher, 2002a, 12). Further, "...the prisoners' culture and interpretive scheme is a system constructed to handle the kinds of problems that arise in prison, and to act as an exigency for certain deprivations" (Gaucher, 1974, 223-224). This culture and interpretive scheme is what assists in resisting. To resist is to act in a manner that counters the deliberate attempt of the prison regime to control every facet of one's life and being. Faced with the absolute withdrawal of a person's control over any decision-taking in regards of her or his person, to succeed in regaining agency by engaging in acts that counter her or his negation as an individual human being is to assert one's agency--to resist. When deprivation and brutality are at their worst, resistance is, at times, the only reprieve:

> Anyone who can pass the civil service exam today can kill me tomorrow. Anyone who passed the civil service exam yesterday can kill me today with complete impunity. I've lived with repression every moment of my life, a repression so formidable that any movement on my part can only bring relief, the respite of a small victory or the release of death. (Jackson, 1990,7)

The latest chapter of the conflict in Ireland took place in a context of world-wide struggle, the 1960s era of social upheaval and revolutionary thrusts from Africa to Latin

America, North America and Europe. For instance, in the US, the state murder of imprisoned black activist George Jackson in August 1971, unleashed a wave of prison rebellion starting with the Attica rebellion in September of 1971-- not that prison rebellion was anything new in that country (Zinn 1990, 510). Zinn recounts "a wave of [prison riots] in the 1920s", San Quentin in 1967, Queens House of Detention in New York and Folsom Prison in 1970, to name a few (ibid., 505-510). It is here that Zinn draws the connection between "political" imprisonment, and becoming "politicized" because of the repressive prison:

> There had always been political prisoners--people sent to jail for belonging to radical movements, for opposing war. But now a new kind of political prisoner appeared--the man, or woman, convicted of an ordinary crime, who, in prison, became awakened politically. Some prisoners began making connections between their personal ordeal and the social system. They then turned not to individual rebellion but to collective action. They became concerned--amid an environment whose brutality demanded concentration on one's own safety, an atmosphere of cruel rivalry--for the rights, the safety of others. (508-509)

Imprisoned Irish republicans were not much different from imprisoned Black Panthers, South African ANC activists, or South American rebels. All have resisted the brutalities of imprisonment, and sought to up-end the state imposed sanctions against them. Buntman (2003) asserts that political imprisonment has long been a factor in shaping resistance movements and in influencing state policy in regard of such movements (2). It is this notion that leads her to make the distinction between categorical and strategic forms of resistance, the latter being the key to such influence in the wider society. Likewise, Mac Ionnrachtaígh (2009) reminds us that "...imprisoned revolutionaries have utilized and exploited numerous opportunities to politicize and intensify liberation struggles on the outside" (148). The organized and collective resistance of captive republicans is an example of this and their imprisonment plays a prominent role in the Irish psyche (ibid.; McKeown, 2001, 10). McKeown (2001) and Mac Ionnrachtaígh (2009) trace

the imprisonment of Irish political dissidents from the 19th century to the end of the 20th century to illustrate the continuity in British state policy to repress dissidents[130] and their resistance to that subjugation (148-151). The historical continuity of their resistance is characterized by their willingness to endure sacrifice, and their assiduity and creativeness in finding tactics to thwart British resolve to quell their movement by criminalizing their struggle. Bolstered by this legacy, captive Irish republicans were able to contribute to the movement's peace strategy in key ways,[131] and indeed took on leadership roles to promote peace.

This chapter examines the prison resistance of republican captives in two sections. The first will consider the genesis of involvement of the research participants in the latest chapter of the struggle (1969 - present) and the historical continuity of resistance within which it is located. The second section will focus on the forms of resistance that most resonated with the research participants. This section addresses five methods of resistance, based on what interviewees most focused on: Organizing IRA structures within prisons, organizing and operationalizing escapes, the campaign for special status, the campaign for segregation, and the organization and operationalization of republican based and republican driven education. As the chapter unfolds, it reveals how historical continuity, community, collective resistance and especially education as resistance molded what for the most part, were very young men and women. Their prison resistance was formative for these young activists who, having been thrust into action at a young

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[130] McKeown, using the writings of Thomas Clarke (1970) and O'Donovan Rossa (1967) also makes the point that the treatment of political prisoners was often harsher than for the general population, including the use of solitary confinement and a regime of silence (McKeown, 2001, 11).

[131] These ways include the impact of the campaign for special status on the electoral policy of Sinn Fein and on the republican community; the prison debates on the future of the Movement; the written contributions of prisoners in publications like *An Glor Gafa* and *Iris Bheag*, and the promotion of the peace process in the community.

age by contextual elements,[132] continued their revolutionary education in the adversity that the prison regime presented. The emphasis on an historically based Irish republican identity and their capacity for *movement*, the role that youth played in their formative development and their transformative experience of imprisonment are all elements that contributed to building a leadership that was able to negotiate the change of strategy from the armed struggle to the peace process.

Section 1: The Genesis of Involvement

Historical Continuity

Countless daily acts of resistance were employed by republican prisoners throughout their history of incarceration, since at least the Easter Rising of 1916 (O'Mahoney, 1987; McKeown, 2001; Ó Mocháin, 2011). These included replicating IRA structures of command within the prison, letter-writing, physical resistance, education, escape, naked and no-wash protests, hunger strikes, campaigning, smuggling communications out of prison, and smuggling communications and supplies including radios, inside prison. They also included the establishment of a republican-driven and captive-led educational system and the production of cultural artifacts, writings, and other media such as recorded music and plays. Resistance tactics employed during one era were passed on, through oral history, as well as through trans-generational relations between prisoners of one era to those of a subsequent era:[133]

> There were people there who were in their third stint of internment over three decades in a row. Some people that I was interned with had been interned in four

[132] These elements include the legacy of rebellion against British occupation and state sanctioned violence against the nationalist community that was the mainstay of the Six Counties of the North since partition.

[133] Tactics used during one bout of internment (the British have interned republicans in every decade since independence) would be handed down through generations of republicans. Moreover, some who were interned, for instance during the Border Campaign (1956-1962), were re-interned in the 1970s, following Operation Demetrius (August 1971), the beginning of internment.

> consecutive decades of prison without trial. So these people would have been parents, maybe grandparents in some cases. So you were struck by them and in one sense, for me, they gave you good grounding because they had been there and done it themselves. And even in earlier decades, had been under much, probably even more, harsh circumstances, and certainly would not have ever dreamt of having the type of community support that our period of imprisonment was able to enjoy.
>
> And they were the type of people who had gone through that in their earlier years, who were able to pace themselves in terms of "well, we're here at the moment" and you know, obviously you're in gaol and you want to get out the next day, and that's not going to happen so you can either cope with that or come to terms with that, and then, use your time in prison. A lot of older people, I mean I look back, and they weren't that much older. They were older than us as 18, 19 year-olds, but nevertheless these people would have been in their forties I suppose, very often, a rare person would have been in their fifties but they seemed a lot older in those days. But they had the stability of having gone through that before, so they would have started everything from Irish classes, lectures, discussions of all types, handicrafts...(Sean)
>
> And that's what happens, it's kind of word-of-mouth as well as experience. Because the people that would have been interned in the first instance, in 1971, they would have used their experience of being interned in the '56 to '62 campaign, brought with them in internment in 1971. And they would have applied their experience of the '56 to '62 period, would have used their experience of the '40s, to have a prison regime in 56-62 that would have suited them. And the same with people in the '20s would have brought their experience in the '40s. So it's like this type of continuity of experience brought to bear. (Paul)

A concrete example of how such continuity is transmitted can be found in the blanket protest that began in 1976, when the first prisoner, Ciaran Nugent, was subjected to the criminalization policy. He refused to wear a prison uniform and uttered the now famous words "you'll have to nail it to my back", and donned the prison blanket he was issued for cover. But in fact, refusing to wear the prison uniform was not the first time that such a tactic was utilized. Paul explains how memory contributes to resistance:

> It's connected. I remember Kieran Nugent who was the first prisoner on the blanket protest, he started it in fact. I remember whenever I was in the Crum, in

> September ’76, and walking around C-wing, and people were saying “what are we going to do if they try and force us to wear a prison uniform?”
>
> So the stories at the time, then, were about Portlaoise and what happened to people like Sean McCaughey, who was on the blanket protest for five years and died on hunger strike. And so people were saying “Oh yeah, well in Portlaoise, this is what they did.” And Portlaoise was in the forties, in the Second World War. And that was their reference point for that conversation. Now, it would have had an influence , there’s no doubt about that. That...blanket protest came out of somebody somewhere saying “oh, right, what did they do before?” “Well, listen, what they done was they wore blankets”, “Ah, right...” (Paul)

The Impetus to Get Involved

The historical legacy of violent insurrection is where many of the participants in this study get a foothold that launched them into participation in the armed struggle. Most had a knowledge of republican Irish history, which they got from family, community influence, friends or teachers. The reasons a person chooses to resist oppression are many, and some deeply personal. However, the similarities in response to interview questions suggests that certain realities catapulted people toward a trajectory of resistance. Some were spurred on by a familial or community tradition of insurrectionary republicanism. For instance, some had grandparents who were involved in the War of Independence:

> ...I grew up in a Republican family and we were very conscious of history--my grandfather had been involved in the war of independence, had been imprisoned--so we grew up quite conscious, even though he died not long after I was born...So when the Troubles kicked off, in the late ‘60s, you know, we were quite political, we would have the dialogue... (Eamonn)

Kieran, from the South, also had a family history of Republicanism:

> ...I came to it partially because of my family history, and partially because of Irish history. I always had an interest in Irish history but I suppose that’s because my grandfather on my mother’s side and his brother were involved in 1916, they were involved in the war of liberation...So that whole Irish resistance thing was part of what I would have grown up with (Kieran).

Denis relays a similar story of a familial legacy of insurrection:

> A number of factors come together to convince me, persuade me to join the IRA. Partly, it was because of history, my history, my family's history and the history of the locality in which I lived at the time. The IRA and armed insurrection is an historical fact in Ireland so it's not at all uncommon to come across people and families that can trace the relatives that have been involved in armed insurrection. In my case, both my grandparents, grandfathers , both my grandfathers were involved in the IRA in the 1920s. So, there was a family tradition of involvement in Irish insurrectionary movements and politics. Then, the area I was reared in has traditionally been an area supportive of armed insurrectionary republicanism. When I went to secondary school, for example, I would have, each morning, passed the childhood home of one of the signatories of the 1916 Proclamation and I was very well aware of that and most of us would have been... (Denis).

Others were responding to street violence they witnessed first hand, and to the systematic abuse from state authorities to which they were subjected as young people. The context of the conflict, which was discussed in chapter 5, is perhaps best described by O'Shea. He sums up the reality and mood on the streets of Belfast just prior to his decision to take up arms:

> On the one side you have the Shankill, then the Peace Wall, then Clonard. Well it used to be Macky's which was a big engineering foundry was on the other side of Clonard. But it had like 95 per cent Protestant employees, and they would come from the Shankill, walk through Clonard to get to their place of employment, when, at the time, there was maybe 50 or 60 per cent unemployment among the mill workforce in the Clonard area. So come the 12th of July and the Marching Season, they would have the whole of the factory bedecked with Union Jacks, and bunting and stuff like that. And then, a lot of the time, when they were going off on their holidays, they would come out with nuts and bolts and put them through the windows in the houses in Clonard.
>
> So you had all of that stuff going on and I mean, in the early '70s, it was a war zone. I mean I was speaking to a crowd of English students there recently, and I was telling them that, in Southern Iraq, there are 4000 British troops deployed. In Afghanistan, there are 8000. At the height of the conflict here, there were 28,000 British troops deployed here. And on top of that, you had the RUC and the UDR and all of that, so you're talking about an armed force of maybe 40,000 frontline troops. So that was the situation I was growing up in. There were gun battles going on daily around here. And I mean, I became a victim of the British Army

> harassment and general ill-treatment and brutality and stuff like that. It was commonplace for young people to be arrested. The British Army had the power to arrest people and hold them for four hours for what was called screening. (O'Shea)

Participants who were from the South had different experiences that led to their involvement. Siobhan recounts how the multiple hunger strike protests that took place across Ireland and around the world (1980-1981)[134] propelled her to become actively involved:

> My involvement with the Republican Movement began at the time of the hunger strike in 1980 and '81...so one of the outcomes of the hunger strike was that it kind of opened the door of the Republican Movement to more people. It sort of allowed the Movement to reach out to other groups outside of itself. So gradually, ordinary people, students, ordinary number of the community here in Dublin and all over the country sort of automatically fell into a role, just going on marches, or going on token hunger strikes...So what actually happened in that big historical moment of the hunger strikes was that the movement opened its doors to people. Otherwise I would never have foreseen having anything to do with em...well politics, yes, but certainly not armed struggle, or that aspect of things. (Siobhan)

All but three participants openly identified as IRA volunteers.[135] Alonso (2007) considers that those who got involved were misguided and not mature enough to make the decision to participate in the armed struggle. The testimony set out below speaks to this and shows how circumstances such as historical continuity, family values and the fear of being attacked by loyalists played a part in their decision:

> As a 14-year old, you're living in a small community, terraced houses, and people were just living on their nerves because of the fear. There was a lot of fear around, in those areas at the time. And the fear was based on folklore and rumour and

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[134] "Screaming pro-Irish demonstrators disrupted a gala performance of the British Royal Ballet last night at which Prince Charles was the guest of honor during his first visit to New York City." This is quoted from the "Prince Taunted at the Met" in, San Francisco Chronicle, 18 June 1981, 21-1-P. See http://www.nyu.edu/library/bobst/research/aia/exhibits/0501_hunger/support/dembrit.htm
Likewise, in Montreal, there were protests at the British High Commission during the hunger strikes. This has been reported by members of the Comité Québec-Irlande, a Republican support group based in Montreal.

[135] One participant was not personally involved in the Movement during the conflict, therefore was not imprisoned, and is not a Republican activist. The other two did not discuss whether or not they had been involved in armed activities.

> stories about the ’20s. People old enough who were in the district at the time remember the pogrom of the ’20s. There’s always this interplay between the past and the present in those circumstances because of the nature of politics . There’s a perennial conflict here, goes back for centuries. So we just basically had to protect our neighbourhoods, against attacks by Loyalists. So I was a vigilante at 14 with other 14-year olds. And our parents, our grandparents, uncles and aunts were there. It was a big thing like that. (Paul)

> So that begins then my interest in the Republican struggle and Republican politics. Now, it begins as a defensive reaction to fear, and the threat of it, and then, there’s just a whole big series of events that come out of it. And the Northern state starts to, at the time I’m only 15 so I haven’t got a clue about the northern state or any of that, don’t know what’s going on in terms of you know, you have to go out and be a vigilante every night at the corner of your street, to protect your Mom and Dad, and your family and home...because people were being burned out. (Paul)

In regards to making sense of the violence on the streets, Sean had this to say, which more specifically contrasts Alonso’s (2007) assertion:

> I saw it as more of a national problem as opposed to just something that was going on here, on the streets of Belfast. And, my view of it then, was that this was not just about discrimination, there’s a cause for the discrimination. There’s a reason for this happening. Trying to get a better understanding of that and I became, I suppose, a Republican in thinking, insofar as I viewed the problems here as part of colonialism, part of the Empire, part of the great ugly Empire, and as I said, [...] discrimination was a result, partition was the result of the political conflict that had been going on for so long. So I made that understanding in my own mind just looking around me and looking all around the world at the same time. And, for me it was really a no-brainer.
>
> So that’s what would have basically set my analysis in my mind. You know, that this was not just a problem around Catholics and Protestants; it wasn’t just a problem of bits and pieces of discrimination albeit they were very serious forms of discrimination, I just thought there was a much deeper reason for it, and reached that conclusion and decided to do something about that. (Sean)

Here is how one participant made sense of the impact of the conflict on a youth:

> I’m a child of the sixties or a child of the era then. I was 11 years of age when it kicked off in August ’69. So I was actually living here, in the Clonard. And that was it. We were right in, at the start. The first Republican who was murdered

> was a friend of mine. So Geraldo McAuley was the first Fianna, first Republican to die in this phase of the conflict...So this is like 1969 August. You began to see as a child, there's something seriously wrong with the State, when there's pogroms and people had moved out and stuff like that (Ted).

Injustices such as the Bombay Street pogrom[136] forced a reckoning on those who witnessed the violence. One participant had this to say:

> So I left St. Gall's in June 1969 and a couple of months after that, Bombay Street was burned to the ground. Well, it was attacked by Loyalists who had been led in by the RUC and the B-Specials. So I think that was my real introduction to the conflict and the first time I was directly affected, insofar as the street I went to school in--my younger brother was still at that school--that the street of houses was literally burnt to the ground. (O'Shea)

While this may have had a significant impact on his involvement in the IRA, another incident also affected O'Shea. He lived in a primarily Protestant neighbourhood with his parents. He recalls this incident:

> And, one night I went out with my mother somewhere and when we came back, our house was surrounded by police and British Army and armoured cars. So it transpired that there had been a shooting incident at the house. Someone had called to the house and asked--my father answered the door--and the person asked for me by name. He said "Is O'Shea in?" And my father, automatically suspicious, said "what do you want him for?" and he said "I just want to talk to him." And my father said "well, what do you want to talk to him about?" and he says, "well, it's not me, it's this guy over here." A guy sitting out on the street on a motorbike. My father said "well, what does he want to talk to him about?" and at that, the guy pulled out a handgun and started firing in. And, my father was able to get the door shut and dive inside. No one was injured but the upshot was that we upped and left the house the very next morning (O'Shea).

Those who were interned in the early seventies were most likely to have a combination of factors that influenced their eventual allegiance to the IRA. As Gerry Adams states,

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[136] "In 1969, the loyalist pogrom across Belfast was the Orange states response to our just demands for basic human and civil rights, for housing and the right to vote. Eight died, 750 were injured and 133 were treated for gunshot wounds", veteran Clonard Republican Sean 'Spike' Murray, who was involved in the defence of the area in 1969, is quoted as saying in the speech he delivered at the 40th anniversary of the Bombay Street pogroms in August 2009. Bombay Street is a small street of row houses, in the Clonard area, in the Lower Falls of West Belfast.

> The knew why they were there, they were there for instinctive patriotic reasons or for broadly nationalist reasons or for a sense of national consciousness or because they were confronted with British aggression and responded to it in an instinctive way. They knew they were Irish and they knew they wanted a United Ireland. But they were not politically or ideologically schooled or perhaps *even aware of their own awareness*. (Adams, in, O'Hearn, 2006, 80)

"*So Then I Joined the IRA*"

The initial involvement for those under the age of 17 at the time would have been through *Fianna na hEireann*, the youth wing of the IRA. For some finding out how to join the *Fianna* was not easy:

> So that was the situation in which I was growing up and I made a decision that I would join the *Fianna*. And at the time, I didn't know anybody who was in the *Fianna*. So I didn't know how to go about joining it. And, I obviously had suspicions about a number of people, particularly people who were the same age as me, who had been in my class at school. So I approached a couple of them, and said
> "How do you go about joining the *Fianna*"
> and they said, "dunno"
> "Well, do you know anybody I could approach?"
> "No, don't know."
> So I approached maybe 3 or 4 different people and all of them gave me the same response. But then, after a few days, someone then approached me and said:
> "So I hear you're interested in joining the *Fianna*?"
> I says, "yeah." And told me to come to a certain house at a certain time. And when I went in, all the people who I had initially approached, were all there. (O'Shea)

The main job as a member of *Fianna* was to assist the IRA with intelligence gathering or weapons disposal.

> But the way it operated was, we would have been the scouts, so we would have been on the outside of the operation...We would have been responsible for taking the weapons and making sure the weapons were dumped properly. So that's it [....] you needed to know where they were, about the use of weapons and how to handle weapons, and again it would be the same with explosives, but being the people that we were, we knew where all the dumps were...(Ted).

It quickly overtook one's life:

> So you led a double life. You went to school with your wee black uniform on, okay, and your school tie, and your school jumper, and your school blazer; and then you come home, and you took that all off, and you put on your jeans, your wranglers and your Doc Martens and your tee-shirt, and that was you down with the local IRA, who were active on the streets, with weapons and stuff. So you were friendly with them, and then when they would go on operations, you went on operations with them. You may have just been 14 or 15 years of age, in ’72 , ’73. (Ted)

However, for some, joining the IRA happened quickly as more and more arrests and deaths took place among Active Service Unit[137] members:

> ...by the time we were ’74 going into ’75, you had this thing, a lot of local army people had been killed, a lot had been arrested, especially with internment where you didn’t need to have any trials and stuff, and then the rest would have been on the run. So, there’s almost like a void created within the area. So by the time you were 16 or 17, going into’74, going into ’75, we were coming into the Army then, ourselves. There was always something. We were all young people, 17 or 18 years of age. But it’s as if the older ones were either dead, or were in prison, or were on the run. And all of a sudden...we’re now in charge! ... So that was us then. The next thing we had all these weapons and all these explosives, and that’s when we became active ourselves, and developing our own operations, developing our own way of doing things. And that was then, from ’74 up until I was arrested then, in November of ’76 (Ted).

Alonso (2007), based on interviews largely conducted with disaffected former IRA personnel,[138] makes the argument that young IRA activists were too young and impressionable to make a rational decision with respect to joining the IRA, and this immaturity influenced their ideological convictions (17). Hence, their joining the armed struggle was not only an immature decision, but the product of IRA pressure. Yet, when citing volunteer Kevin, who had joined the British Army, Alonso does not question the maturity level of youngsters who join the armed forces, and whether they have the necessary maturity to assimilate the ideological tenets behind

[137] An Active Service Unit (ASU) is the basic organization of IRA members into a cell structure.

[138] He also interviewed Republicans who are active in the peace process but uses their words to discredit them.See interviews with Danny Morrison (22), Jim Gibney (28) and Robert McCleneghan (28-29).

fighting for the State (21). Furthermore, he posits that recruitment was "essentially a youth phenomenon", precisely because of the immaturity level of recruits, and also because they were less likely to be married and have children, or jobs, which lessen the chances of becoming involved (20). However, for O'Shea, rather than being recruited by the IRA's youth wing, *Fianna*, he had to take proactive steps to find *Fianna* leaders.[139] Moreover, though Alonso acknowledges the impact of street violence in getting involved, he nonetheless dismisses its importance. But George affirms that "it is always a young person's war". Moreover both he and Ted speak to the loss of adult personnel through arrests, being OTR (on the run) and being killed, and the necessity for the young people to step in and take over (George, Ted).

While no one would argue that people mature with age, to dismiss the logic of the armed struggle because those who were involved were too young, seems, at the very least, ageist, and does not take into account that the IRA had personnel of all ages, and a tradition that went back a long time in fighting to rid Ireland of the British presence.

Section 2 Taking Resistance Inside the Walls

This section concentrates on five forms of resistance undertaken by Irish republicans while in captivity.[140] There are many more forms of resistance that were used as well as areas that overlap. For instance, in the section "Education", the use of writing in order to get their voices beyond the prison wall, is also discussed. Another example is the campaign for special status (1976-1981) which comprised many forms of resistance such as the blanket protest, the

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[139] This does not mean that the IRA did not have influence in nationalist communities. However, as we have seen from some of the participants' statements, this was just as likely to emanate from familial ties, and not by some cynical recruitment practice.

[140] These are not necessarily presented in chronological order, and some parts overlap as in the case of education, where there is a return to the campaign for special status in order to explore further the educational aspect of that form of resistance.

no-wash protest, hunger striking, using visits to smuggle supplies, campaigning, physically resisting prison guards, writing and education. The five elements that are the subject of this chapter were chosen for the significance they held for different prisoners. In other words, the interviews were more focused on these forms of resistance than on others.

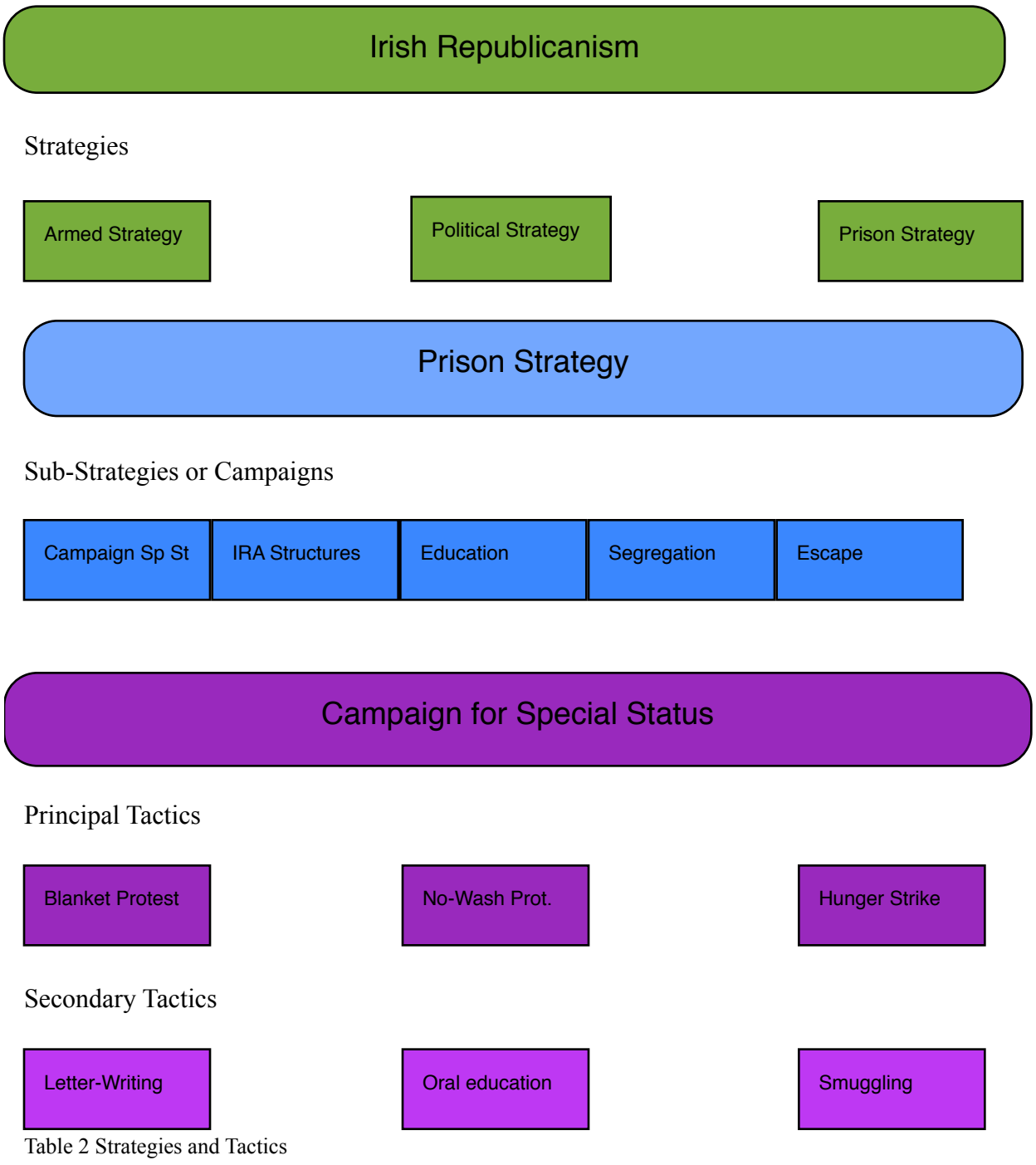

Table 2 Strategies and Tactics

Incarceration and Prisoner Resistance

As Gaucher (2002a) reminds us, resistance is first about survival. It is necessary to become much more focused on the personal, and physical and psychological survival becomes the basic objective (19). The following passages capture the understanding of the urgent need to

survive the prison, and show the common themes of youth and the impetus to gain more knowledge through educating one's self. For George, his youth and his isolation from his comrades stand out as the main challenges of being in an English prison:

> ...I was 19 when I went in, so, I may have thought I was grown up but, looking back at the age, I suppose I wasn't much more than a kid. And you have to stand on your two feet. And one of the things that worked for you was that--and I discovered this fairly quickly cause I was like a beanpole with glasses--was that people thought you were nuts. They actually believed the propaganda. They thought you were a mad bomber, whatever. And, you learned not to contradict it...let them think that, because then it gives you some protection. You knew you were doing life, so as a lifer you had nothing to lose, but it didn't stop the alienated atmosphere. There was a lot of Irish over there who weren't political but they were Irish. But most, of course, were British. And there were bombs going off in their streets, so you can imagine that they had a very sour view of you. (George)

Whether IRA members were imprisoned in the North or elsewhere, they took their resistant demeanors with them. Before delving into the resistance that took place in prisons in the North, here is how those who were incarcerated in prisons elsewhere understood their role as a republican political prisoner.

> The problem in England was isolation whereas it wasn't really isolation in Ireland. And in certain ways, you had to fight your own battles, even though you had solidarity outside and all of that. And of course, there were bombs going on, you were in an alien environment, you were in what you might call, where Long Kesh was a political gaol, it had loads of political prisoners in it, you were in a situation where you were really a political prisoner amongst lots of other prisoners, and every type of prisoner. (George)

> You go into gaol because your liberty's taken off you. You can go in two ways: the one thing you will not do is stay static, you know? 'Cause you don't deal with life that way. So you either get worse, or you get better. And the choice is only yours so turning a very negative situation into a very positive experience, and I decided to do that and I think that was common with republicans. (George)

The basic survival impulse to "do one's time" rather than have one's "time do you" is clearly expressed in George's statement. Paul also focused on this aspect, which, as both George and Paul assert, is an understanding that is shared among many republicans:

> Well, it's a very personal thing, you know. Everybody does gaol differently. I didn't like gaol at all. I think gaol has no redeeming features whatsoever in my view. But I'm only speaking in a personal capacity. Friends of mine who were there twice as long as I, twenty years, would talk about it in quite nostalgic terms. I wouldn't. I just think it is a place where your liberty is restricted, it's a pressure cooker, even the best of places, imprisonment, wouldn't matter why you were imprisoned in the Europa Hotel. You're in prison. So you use as best you can. And Republicans when they're in prison, use it to educate themselves. Spend time reading and, you know...understanding the politics of the island, the history of our country. Some people learned Irish, and others kept themselves fit and...you know...you just get through it. (Paul)

Whereas the armed struggle characterizes "resistance" in the minds of these participants, the importance of resistance in prison is also acknowledged. Being removed from the hectic and dangerous pace of the armed campaign affords the activist a breathing space in which she can focus on learning.[141] To the question of what part of belonging to the struggle had the biggest impact on her leadership acquisition skills, Deirdre had this to say :

> Probably the period that I spent in prison. That was a very formative time. Prison is a very useful experience because it gives you time--*it gives you time*--number one, time to reflect you know, and you have all the time in the world to read and talk to people at length, where you don't get the same opportunities in the outside life because it's so fast. (Deirdre)

Likewise for Eamonn, who like most, was a very young person when he was arrested, incarceration was the beginning of a journey that deepened his republicanism. On being imprisoned, he says:

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[141] This should not be interpreted as a positive byproduct of being incarcerated, but as making the best of a bad situation, in other words, facing "time" in prison with purpose and conviction as a political prisoner.

> So prison had a huge impact on me, because it confirmed my republicanism, deepened my understanding--obviously it was a space where you could...having just got involved in the excitement of active republicanism as a teenager--you actually got some space where you could sit down and read, and you know, discuss politics and develop your political thinking. (Eamonn)

> Prison was one of the most formative experiences ever. I was only 17 when I went to gaol. So I learned a great deal. It cemented my involvement in the republican struggle, through being in gaol, through meeting people, through politically educating myself. You know, again, it was just after the hunger strike, so it was really a heightened and sensitive time, and you were very much caught in the centre of the storm. (Eamonn)

In the context of the armed struggle, being "taken out" by being arrested, meant that so long as one was held captive, one could not pursue the campaign. It was therefore important not to waste time in prison. If fighting on the ground was no longer an option, then the least one could do was to become armed with knowledge. Below, Harry exemplifies how he used prison consciously as an opportunity to further resistance, and speaks of the necessity to learn Irish. Among other things, learning the Irish language is crucial to the Irish liberation struggle since it was disallowed by British conquerors in previous centuries to the point where it was all but lost as a spoken language on the Island.[142] Re-learning it was part and parcel of asserting one's identity as Irish.

> Because I was so heavily involved in the Republican struggle, I used the prison to try and better myself, but part of my thinking was to use that to progress and I think one of the things I always wanted to do was to learn Irish, I always felt there was something missing and I found, I studied Irish and other languages just because I felt those things were important to me and important to the struggle (Harry).

The above passages illustrate how republican captives utilized their time in prison to advance themselves by gaining knowledge to improve their capacities as activists. These were formative

[142] See Mac Ionnrachtaigh (2009).

years for most participants, who were teenagers or young adults at the time of their incarceration. Political consciousness and honing their identity as Irish republicans were considered essential elements of their activism, and this activism extended to their captivity. In the context of those incarcerated in English gaols, their individual resistance was necessary for their survival, especially given the hostility of the English toward them. For those imprisoned in gaols where there were many republicans (Long Kesh, Mountjoy, Armagh, Maghaberry), their resistance was collective. In both instances, the republican approach to being held captive is to utilize one's "time" to develop their abilities, primarily through education. This formative time provided a space which they used to acquire the Irish language, a deeper understanding of their own history, of politics, and of struggles that were taking place elsewhere, from which they could learn.

Organizing IRA Structures in Prison

Imprisonment and processes of criminalization aim to isolate a person from society and from each other, and stigmatize them with the label 'criminal'. Replicating IRA structures within the prison or the camp[143] overturned the regime's efforts at such isolation and individualization. In short, it succeeded in repossessing and asserting a collective identity as republicans, and extending from that, as political prisoners.

At least as far back as Frongoch, republican prisoners established their own chain of command in prison, in part to keep unity among the troops, in part to try and impose the IRA on the prison administration, thereby asserting their guerilla army standing and refusing to be treated as anything other than political prisoners. Outside prison, the IRA functioned in a very hierarchical structure with orders dictated from the top down, though in the late 1970s with the

[143] The term camp refers to carceral sites that housed internees. Consequently the term Prison refers to carceral sites that house convicted felons. Gaol is a term that is used coterminously with prison among former republican prisoners. It should be noted IRA leadership in prison is always referred to as "camp staff".

development of a cell structure and the advent of Active Service Units,[144] there was more autonomy in the lower tiers. Nonetheless the Army Council[145] always dictated policy and also named leaders inside prison. In the 1970s, the Officer Commanding (OC) at the camp level was imposed by the outside. From there, a camp staff was named by the OC. One was named on the basis of the outside assessment of their abilities and their standing with the Army Council. Holding a position on the camp staff was not the result of lobbying for such a title. For instance Joe reports:

> People would be OC because they'd been asked to do it. If you lobbied to be OC, you would never get it. And I know people who lobbied for positions because they thought it carried a certain amount of prestige, to be involved in the escape side of things. People went for it, and they could have been very good at it, but because they went for it, they were never allowed near it...because it wasn't seen as appropriate...You had to go into it because you had an application for it. But also you had to be right. You had to have the right mentality. Seen any other way, your motives were suspect. (Joe)

On at least two occasions the IRA command structure in prison was re-evaluated. The first was during internment (1971-1975), and emanated from Cage 11.[146] Camp staff in the Cages of Long Kesh in the early 1970s had compulsory lectures on weapons training and Irish history. But there was dissent over the militaristic discipline that was meted out by the camp staff at that time. It was in Cage 11, where such notables as Gerry Adams were housed along with Bobby Sands, Gerry Kelly, Bik McFarlane, Brendan (The Dark) Hughes and others, that disagreement with the approach of the camp staff was the greatest (O'Hearn, 2006, 74-78). The dispute was between the younger more radical volunteers and the older "more Catholic and conservative veterans"

[144] The IRA introduced Active Service Units (ASUs) in 1977 to replace the old brigade structure due to security breaches. ASUs were composed of five to eight members, had more autonomy, and were not known about as widely.

[145] Governing executive body of the IRA.

[146] Cages were the Nissen huts, semi-circular garages on the old RAF base, Long Kesh, just outside Belfast. There were roughly 80-100 men per cage and roughly 20 cages.

who were in charge. But there was also disagreement on other issues, the first being on Britain's intention to withdraw, which was a line of reasoning promoted by the IRA at the time. Adams and Hughes, on the other hand, believed that a British withdrawal was far from evident, and rather, promoted the idea that the republican struggle was headed for a protracted campaign. Moreover, they strongly disagreed with the IRA's tit-for-tat campaign of violence against loyalists. They believed that this went against republican values, and only played into Britain's hand. In Long Kesh, "they opposed the undemocratic, authoritarian, non-transparent, overly militaristic, and anti-Marxist leadership of Davey Morley and his camp staff" (76). Adams encouraged the young radicals in his cage to question the leadership and their strategies. The type of leadership in place is borne out by Paul's statement in which he explains the basis for the militaristic nature of leadership in the Long Kesh internment camp:

> Well, there's certainly a different command structure...I mean in the early days of imprisonment, you had a very rigid command structure for republican prisoners, there's no doubt about that... So the prison life reflected the fact that the struggle was at its height. And there was a tendency toward militarization, and this impacted on the prison as well...It was AN ARMY! The IRA, on the outside, fighting and the IRA on the inside, preparing to go back to war when they got out. (Paul)

In the post hunger strike era in Long Kesh, and after the mass escape of 1983,[147] there was also a push to reconsider the way in which IRA leadership worked. There was a desire to establish a form of leadership that would be less hierarchical in order to accomplish two things. The first was to give prisoners an opportunity to express their feelings and their thoughts about everything to do with the Movement, given the huge emotional baggage they retained around the

[147] A propaganda coup for the IRA, this refers to an event where 38 prisoners drove out of Long Kesh in 1983. After an inquiry, blame for the escape was lodged with the prison staff.

campaign for special status and the disunity created by the protest for special status.[148] The second was to enable prisoners to embark on a collective, pragmatic agenda for education for the benefit of the prisoners themselves and the struggle. As Jackie McMullan relates: "...[W]e believed that there was need for a radical overhaul of our structures of command and that the imposition of out-dated and morally wrong militaristic lines of command should be scrapped" (McKeown, 2001, 131).

The prison leadership also felt that by being more inclusive and making room for everyone to express themselves, ultimately, this would have a beneficial impact on the struggle. As Murray relates: "The process within both the IRA and Sinn Fein of changing and adapting to new political realities helped form the backdrop to developments within the prison" (137).[149] The reform of IRA command structures in the prison can therefore be seen as a strategic form of resistance. This undertaking was the result of the application of the principles of Paulo Freire.[150] It came about as the result of an awareness that prisoners who empowered themselves through critical analysis would be better able to question the IRA's structures, philosophy and armed campaign. By enabling more prisoners to take on leadership roles in education, or the management of their daily lives on the wing, a communal system was established that encouraged solidarity and unity.

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[148] The disunity referred to here has to do with the tension between those on protest, and those who either did not participate or who left the protest. Moreover, as Ted explains below, there were prisoners who were on the "outs" with the Movement for their failure to withstand interrogation methods meted out on them by the police and the army. This led some to sign statements implicating other prisoners. In extreme cases, some were compelled to become informants for the authorities (Ted).

[149] These "new political realities" which Murray speaks of refer to the investment of Sinn Fein in electoral politics.

[150] As O'Hearn (2006) points out, it is unclear whether Paulo Freire's book was read in the cages of Long Kesh in the 1970s. See below under "Education".

The establishment of the 'pragmatic education programme'[151] included creating the IRA camp staff position of Vice OC of Political Education and each wing had an Education Officer (Ó'Mochaín, 2011, 129; Ted). The systematization of reading, writing and debating provided protesting prisoners with the tools to reconsider the armed campaign in its entirety, without the fear of speaking out against the traditional prevailing dogma of physical force as the necessary means to combat Britain's interference in Irish affairs. As Ted explains, something needed to be done in order to regain unity in Long Kesh where there were protesting and non-protesting prisoners and the existing IRA command structure was not adequate to deal with it. There was a degree of ostracization of non-protesting prisoners especially if they had signed statements exposing others to conviction and prison sentences. He refers to the conforming prisoners as squeaky-booters because they wore prison garb.

> There was a lot of dissension about the place. There were squeaky-booters, they were called, because they had brand-new boots, walking on a nicely polished floor. So you had people who'd signed statements, people who didn't sign statements, people who worked for the British, I mean, informers, you had people who had given evidence in court against other people. And then you had people on the protest, and the people who weren't. So you had all this mish-mash. So then when you had the likes of Paulo Freire, it was the first attempt at dealing with all that. 'Cause first of all you had to establish 'here this is how our structure isn't working". Well because you had 4 wings in each block. So you had 4 OCs and then a Block OC. And then, you had a camp OC so had a camp staff, and then a Block staff, and then a wing staff. Do you understand? So there was all this hierarchy. And some of it worked, but most of it didn't. So for me, the thing about that Paulo Freire stuff was that idea of treating everyone as equal, as part of a community, as part of a collective. And that, if you like, liberated the wings. (Ted)

> ...it had flattened out. We had become more of a commune. Because the wings actually did become as much of a commune as you could make it. In other words, you had to share the entire responsibilities, of cleaning, of education, of sports,

[151] The pragmatic approach was "characterized by attempts to be inclusive and relevant to the practical circumstances of IRA wings" (Ó Mocháin, 2011, 128).

> anything to do with life in the wing. And all the food was put, again, as part of the commune as well. (Ted)

The prison regime's policy to grant 'privileges' to prisoners so long as they were not resisting, and by the same token, to withdraw almost everything from protesting prisoners is a standard strategy of most carceral institutions in their bid to maintain order and control. It provides incentive to stay quiet and submit, and creates tension between protesting and non-protesting prisoners, as can be understood by the above passage. The republican camp leadership's successful bid to restore unity among both types of republican prisoners upended the regime's strategy, and delivered a measure of control to the captives. Education with an emphasis on Freire's philosophy of learning, meant that the command structure reflected this new priority by having an education officer. The historical continuity of education as resistance is evident here, and it is especially key that republican captives were concerned to transmit the gaol history to incoming prisoners:

> So, you had to put people in charge of any or all of that. And I was in charge of the education first hand. It was me who organized the classes in the wing now. Made sure...there were different levels of education. You had the Irish language education, you know, for people who were coming in. You had the gaol history... Someone coming into the gaol hadn't a clue about what happened in the prison in 1975. So you had to bring him forward in terms of the gaol history. Then some people couldn't even write. So you had to organize classes to facilitate [that]... So you done almost like an analysis of new prisoners coming in. What is it you want to do for a start. And how much are you prepared to contribute to the wing. And then, what is it you want to do in education.
>
> So that was the three levels, or the three stages then. So you start off very easy with Walter Macken's *Seek the Fair Land*, *The Scorching Wind*, you know that type of easy...a wee bit of history telling. At the end you started Tom Barry, you know, *My Fight for Irish Freedom*, by that time, you get a wee bit more structure to it. And then, you began to get them to, "well, why don't you go read that chapter, and we'll come back and talk about it". (Ted)

The insistence on reproducing IRA structures in prisons has historically been a form of resistance which aimed to "reduc[e] state power or defeat[ ] the oppressor's end" (Buntman, 2003, 361). It has been done to show the State that the struggle is political by insisting that the authorities go through the IRA chain of command for communication with IRA prisoners. This was accomplished not only in the H-Blocks of Long Kesh, but in Armagh, Crumlin Road Prison and in English prisons as well (Siobhan, Gerard). In spite of the authorities' refusal to formally recognize the IRA leadership in Long Kesh, Armagh and the "Crum", the prison administration acquiesced to communicating with prisoners by going through the IRA leadership. Moreover, the change in leadership structure that took place in the H-Blocks after the 1983 escape helped pave the way for the 'pragmatic education programme', discussed later in this chapter. This form of resistance was quintessentially strategic as it was an exercise in which prisoners engaged that enabled them to re-think the way forward for the struggle, participate in the debate about the peace process, and eventually gave them the means to attend Sinn Fein *Ard Fheiseanna* at which they submitted motions for debate (Ó Mocháin, 2011).

Organizing and Operationalizing Escapes

Numerous escapes have been undertaken by imprisoned Irish republicans, some more audacious than others. For instance, in 1973, three men escaped by helicopter from Mountjoy gaol in the South (MacEoin, Nov. 1, 2001, in *An Poblacht/Republican News*). As is common among prisoners of war, one of the goals while in prison is to escape in order to get back to the front. Education and escape seem to be the dual strategy of any incarcerated Republican. As George and Paul state:

> I had a two-fold aim in gaol: one was to educate, one was to escape. And in terms of importance, escaping was first. Now, when I was escaping, when I was

> involved in trying to escape, my intent was not to escape and go to America, my intent was to escape and rejoin the struggle. (George)

> You know, life in prison is universal, well, particularly in conflict situations, wars or whatever, because people in prison see themselves as prisoners of war, political prisoners, and they have the duty to escape and all this kind of thing. And so, there's a highly organized system which is handed down through generations of Republicans going to prison. (Paul)

Escaping is a form of resistance that is an open challenge to the regime (Buntman, 2003, 260). It can be a source of embarrassment to the authorities which then becomes a public relations *coup* for prisoners. It "...reduce[s] state power" and succeeds, at least in a temporary and limited way, in "defeating the oppressor's end" (261). During internment (1971-1975) in the cages of Long Kesh, escapes were constantly being planned and executed. Mostly, they involved digging tunnels. Digger explains the routine of tunnel digging:

> ....In a hut, you'd lift 4 tiles. That became the entrance to the shaft of your tunnel. After 10 o'clock when the hut was locked up, you'd put the televisions and the radio up high, and with whatever bits of metal you had, you dug your way through the concrete. You dug it out. The four tiles then were put onto a piece of wood, that would fit back over again. You dug through the night. The screws came in to the huts at 7 o'clock the next morning to do a count so what you had to do was to dig for four or five hours, get up, clean the hut from top to bottom, polish it, put everything back to normal, and when they came in, they knew no different. (Digger)

> The prison staff came to an agreement [with the IRA camp staff] that they could come in, in the morning, to do a count and there would be a parade when they could count people. They would walk round the wire, to make sure nobody had cut the wire. And they would go back in, and that would happen twice a day. But when they were out, what we had done, with some old corrugated iron, was build our own wee compound structure and that's where we dumped all the dirt. It's amazing how much dirt comes out of a tunnel. (Digger)

The organization and routine of tunnel digging illustrates the ability of prisoners to outwit their captors. The regular shift work done by many over a long period speaks to the disciplined and

collective response to their captivity. In this sense, that teams of men are able to dig up large quantities of dirt while ensuring the stability of the tunnel under the noses of prison authorities shows that the domination of the prison is far from complete, and that given some thought and planning, captives can utilize the weaknesses of the prison regime to their benefit. It is also relevant to note the role of material circumstances: because they were treated as POWs, the captives had greater freedom of movement within the camp.

Nonetheless, the consequences of being caught escaping were at the very least brutal, and sometimes lethal which shows the risk that prisoners were willing to take in order to flee:

> So what we done there is we constantly, 24 hours a day, dug, dug, dug. And I think it was about...the 4th of November 1974, 30 escaped out of the tunnel. I was in the second squad that went out through the tunnel. And we had got right out of the camp and crawled about two hundred yards and just by fluke, a jeep was going around and spotted the feet of somebody lying at the side of the road. And there was 7 or 8 of us landed, just a small farmer's fence, and there was two shots, and the guy lying beside me was shot dead. I was just caught. We were very badly beaten after that. I had between 20 and 27 dog bites. They threw us into a van and threw dogs in the back of the van with us. British Intelligence, I take it it was, because they were wearing civilian clothes. They tried to interrogate us to find out where the tunnel had come from. We refused to answer it. So they started beating us. So we were charged with what they call "attempted escape from legal custody". (Digger)

One of the most prestigious escapes was in 1983 when 38 Republican prisoners planned an escape out of the main gate of Long Kesh. This was a huge propaganda coup for the Republicans. HMH The Maze (the formal name of Long Kesh prison, once the H-blocks were built) was a maximum-security prison that had been touted as the most escape-proof prison in Europe at the time (McKeown, 2001, 108). While escapes were always on the minds of republican POWs, part of the impetus for organizing the "Big Effort" (Kelly, in ibid.) was that life-sentenced prisoners had no "review process" and little hope that they would ever get out of

prison. The plan and execution of the escape was a long process. For it to succeed, they needed a "...complete relaxation and breakdown in security precautions on the part of the guards" (109). It involved taking a decision to do prison work, as this would enable movement of the prisoners for the gathering of intelligence. The mobility that going into the workshops produced meant that prisoners could more astutely ascertain the security measures in place. Moreover, there were instruments and tools in the workshop that would be useful. It involved a multifarious strategy that included a charm campaign with the prison guards. Prisoners took on prison work that enabled them to get closer to the circle where guards were stationed. They became amenable to them, offering to make them tea, and thus ensured that the staff was off its guard (110-111). This was an operation that took place over a period of months, and that involved many prisoners. On September 25, 1983, those chosen for the escape overtook one of the H-Blocks, gagged and tied the guards. When the food lorry arrived, they took the driver hostage and detailed him to drive out the front gate. There was a melee between guards who were just coming on duty, and in the end, 19 prisoners made it out (112). One guard was killed. The benefits of the escape, in the words of Gerry Kelly, were that:

> It showed that the IRA could mount operations on a major scale in the middle of the tightest security complex in the north of Ireland and catch the authorities totally unaware. Once again prisoners soared in the estimation of the republican community on the outside just as they had done during the blanket protest and hunger strikes. The prisoners were seen not just as IRA volunteers who they could hold in high regard, but as the best, most ingenious, trustworthy volunteers the IRA had within its ranks. (Interview with Kelly, 113)

The "Great Escape" was a formidable *coup* for it forced the prison administration to come face to face with the fact that they had been "had". It also had some serious consequences for those left behind:

> And I was OC up until, certainly in and around 1983 when the escape took place. And again, it was in the aftermath of the escape that the prison work stopped completely. Because what they realized was that they had been, you know, facilitating the gathering of intelligence, by making us walk down to the workshops. I mean, they used to march out, walk outside every day, you know, all around the camp to different workshops, or take us out on buses or whatever. And you know, you got to know the layout of the camp, you got to know where all the security was, you were able to spot any weaknesses there were. So, after the escape, all prison work was stopped...And, what happened after the escape was that a number of people were put on what were called "red books", and that was high security. It was mainly those who had been involved in the escape and had been recaptured after the escape. And people who they believed may have been involved in planning the escape or an escape committee in general. (O'Shea)

As Ó Mocháin (2011) reports, the clampdown following the escape "created a context where all prisoners were equally affected by the restricted condition, and where everybody had an equal incentive to resist" (220). So in the minds of republicans, once again, the domination of the carceral offered an increased impetus to resist, which illustrates the faulty logic of the prison system: that the more repression there is, the less impetus there is to resist. Moreover, the link between the IRA on the outside and captive resistors was demonstrated when one of the key prison authorities who imposed the restricted regime following the escape was assassinated by the IRA on the outside (ibid.).

Between the 1983 escape and the release of politically-motivated prisoners in the amnesty provided by the GFA, other escape attempts were also undertaken. In March 1997, a 30-metre tunnel was uncovered. Even this failed attempt had an advantage, for it demonstrated the organization and discipline of resistant republican captives once again, and it also "reinforced the self-image of republicans as POWs in deliberately alluding to the tradition of tunneling out of POW camps during World War Two, and from the cages in the 1970s" (Ó'Mocháin, 2011, 226).

The Steele Inquiry [152] was established to investigate the failed escape. It made a series of recommendations that included many managerial proscriptions such as head counts, CCTV cameras and the like. But it also recommended that republican and loyalist leadership structures be recognized by the administration and hold regular meetings with them (234), a formal capitulation of British policy.

Following that failed escape attempt, later in 1997, a republican captive walked out of the prison with a group of visitors. This escape succeeded because of a lack of diligence on the part of prison guards to properly conduct head counts. Prison guards were so careless that they never noticed the missing prisoner. In fact, they had to be informed by the IRA camp leadership, once the captive was safely beyond the wire, that a prisoner was missing (Ó'Mochaín, 2011, 237).

Escaping was an open challenge to the State, and in the battle for hearts and minds, led to greater status for the Movement in the community. It stands out as the most radical form of categorical and strategic resistance. Whereas other forms of resistance aimed at gaining control *within* the gaol, escaping was a complete and total negation of the state's ability to cage them. For one thing, within the prison, "successful escapes provided the IRA camp staff with capital and credibility" (Ó Mocháin, 2011, 222). It is the most basic undoing of incarceration, and as such it is an empowering exercise for the escapees as well as for those left behind. Moreover, escaping in the republican context serves as a public relations feat. It makes public the weaknesses of the State's punitive complex. It also demonstrates that IRA volunteers are capable of outwitting the State and reinforces their standing in the community as heroes.

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[152] "Direct Ruler Patrick Mayhew has ordered an inquiry into the escape attempt. The internal inquiry is to be carried out by John Steele who is Director of Policing and Security at the NIO but was formerly the NIO's Director of Prisons' ("Repression Follows Tunnel Discovery: Reports from Jail of Collective Punishment" in, *An Phoblacht/ Republican News*, March 27 1997).

The Campaign for Special Status (1976-1981)

Five years is a long time for a prison resistance campaign. One of the reasons that prisoners were able to continue resisting for so long was that they all thought that regaining their status as political prisoners was just a matter of time (McKeown, 2001, 52). Importantly, throughout the Anglo-Irish conflict, the British government has gone back and forth between granting and taking away political status. And republicans have learned, on the basis of history, that fighting for their status usually wins it for them, eventually, whether by hunger strike or other means.

The campaign for special status (1976-1981) was undertaken in response to the British government ending internment, and replacing it with a 'conveyor belt' process of convicting political dissidents,[153] as well as the opening of the newly-built cellular facility HMH The Maze, better known as the H-Blocks. On the recommendation of the Diplock Report,[154] the British government did away with the "special category" status of politically-motivated captives and instituted a policy of treating politically-motivated prisoners as common criminals. The campaign began with the blanket protest (1976-1980), degenerated into the no-wash protest (1978-1980), and culminated in the first (1980) and second (1981) hunger strikes. This campaign, characterized as an "episode of high-risk activism by Irish political prisoners" (O'Hearn, 2009, 492), was the most difficult, comprehensive, violent, resistant tactic used by republican prisoners. First, it involved going naked four years, living in the midst of

[153] The 'conveyor belt' refers to the judicial system introduced by the Diplock report, that enabled the conviction of republicans on the basis on uncorroborated statements allowed in a juryless court.

[154] Lord Diplock chaired the Commission to consider legal procedures to deal with terrorist activities in Northern Ireland. http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/hmso/diplock.htm

one's fecal matter for two years, enduring countless beatings, and sexual assaults[155] by the prison staff, organizing a first hunger strike that ended without death, but without the desired results, and another hunger strike that led to the death of ten comrades. But there was another layer of resistance that accompanied these tactics: prisoners taught each other Irish and became fluent speakers of the language. Speaking Irish was in itself was a form of resistance because it enabled them to use a form of communication across the prison that was not understood by the guards, and it also asserted their Irish identity. They engaged in debates about the campaign and they shared their knowledge of Irish history and information about republican politics. Prostesting prisoners engaged in a massive letter-writing campaign about their plight. As O'Rawe says of H6, it was "a production factory for comms"[156] (O'Rawe, in O'Hearn, 2006, 244).

The role that Bobby Sands played in the campaign was vital for he spearheaded most of these tactics. But more than this, he drew up a strategy to broaden the campaign in order to build up support for the H-Block and Armagh[157] prisoners on protest outside in the general population. O'Hearn cites a communication from Sands to the outside leadership that dictated how to go about gaining support for the protesting prisoners:

> *The idea to reach people is to pass a simple message to them. Our simple message to everyone will be "smash H-Block"...We want to get this message to everyone, we want to make it impossible for people to forget it...backing this will be material on H-Block to stir people's emotions and to arouse them and activate them...Now to tackle this broad spectrum of people in which we'll be plunging we must create our own mass media...passing the message or means can be through painting a*

[155] Prison guards assiduously undertook the practice of rectal examinations of protesting republican prisoners to look for contraband material which prisoners were famous at secreting. "Bangling" was a system of carrying in and out of the prison, communications, pen refills, tobacco, writing material and even a radio.

[156] Communications written on cigarette rolling papers that were smuggled in and out of the prison.

[157] In Armagh Prison, women also took part in the campaign for special status (See below pp. 187).

> *Smash H-Block on a road or wall or sticking a poster on the side of a bus or lorry that is stopped at traffic lights or whatever...I'll be giving you ideas on this later, but consider these two wee things I mentioned--a Paint and Poster campaign. A massive effort on a national basis, through organised workers on the ground.* (237-238)

In short Sands summarized what he considered was necessary for those on the outside to do:

> 1. *Organise the people that we have already got.*
> 2. *Attack through mass media propaganda, through an army of propagandists, you out there and we in here...*
> 3. *Make our message simple--"Smash H-Block," some details, a call for action, plenty of emotion.*
> 4. *Broaden our battlefield, locally, nationally and internationally, the field is limitless...* (239)

The most significant part of his strategy that he imparted to the leadership outside the prison, was a plan to run blanketmen in local council elections (230). According to O'Hearn "[i]t was an extension of Gerry Adams' argument about setting up parallel (anti)-state institutions at the community level" (ibid.).[158] It was not the first time that incarcerated republicans ran for election. O'Donovan Rossa was elected while imprisoned in Tipperary in 1869 (Mac Ionnrachtaígh, 2009, 149). Liam Kelly had run and was elected while in gaol in 1953 (Dillon, 1998, 134). In 1957, John Joe McGirl was also elected TD in 1957 while in prison in Mountjoy following his role in the border campaign (1956-1962) (Bowyer Bell, 2008, c1997, 303-304). This is an example of republican prisoners mining their history for guidance on a way forward.

The Blanket Protest

The larger and most publicized site of the campaign for special status took place in Long Kesh. But prisoners who were in other prisons also took part. In Crumlin Road Prison, for

[158] Gerry Adams, writing under the pen name Brownie, wrote and smuggled out articles from Long Kesh internment camps in the early 1970s to be published in Republican News. One such article, entitled "Active Abstentionism" discussed the need to organize politically in order to advance the republican struggle.

instance, a small number of prisoners undertook the blanket protest, in an atmosphere of relative isolation compared to that of Long Kesh. Here Digger recounts the decision he took to go on the blanket. Had it not been for the knowledge that he was not alone, but resisting in solidarity with a larger number of blanketmen, and the understanding that their resistance was part of a larger campaign, their sanity would have perhaps been compromised. This attests to the importance of collectivity and solidarity and that these two principles can help people survive their experience intact:

> So in early May [1977], I was sentenced to three years for IRA membership...I was brought to Crumlin Road Gaol and put in the basement. They came in and asked me what size clothes I was wearing, upon which I said I was refusing to wear the uniform. And they went away and came back again. They brought a prison governor and he was saying, "you're doing three years, you're already six months served..., if you put the clothes on, you'll be out in 14 months. If you don't, you're going to have to do the full three years." I says "I'm not wearing the clothes." ...This went on for an hour so. I hadn't realized it must have been serious. So they brought me around to a part of the common where they hold people overnight. I was in the cell and the first experience of the blanket protest at that stage was down in the basement, I had my own clothes on at the time, going out to get something to eat. The screw says "if you're not going to wear the clothes, you're going out without anything." And you had to go stand naked among may be 20-odd people with no clothes. And I have to say it was the shock of my life. (Digger)

> Probably the deepest impact, initially [...] that had me was, the next day they were taking me from the basement to B-wing, and the bottom part of B-wing there was the punishment block. It run the length of the wing, like, hard-board partition for about three foot and then chicken-wire the whole way up to the ceiling, and behind this here was the punishment block. I was getting taken to the punishment block, getting what they call "put behind the wire"...

> So that was a difficult, really really difficult period mentally for myself. [...] After seven months [...] they would come maybe on a Saturday night [...] and open the cell doors and said "right"--everywhere you went outside the cell, you had to go naked. And they took you down and you were ten minutes in the shower and back again. And that for me was the most difficult, [...]probably mentally, the most intense period was in Crumlin Road Prison because you had done that

> solitary thing. And to make matters worse, the two orderlies that we had, that were two cells down from me, were the Shankill Butchers, Billy Moore and Basher Bates,[159] and they had to clean our cells out, because we refused to clean the cells and they would come in and clean your cells. So they were in protective custody in the punishment block.
>
> I think the ones of us that were in the Crum have always said, had we done our full time, we'd have probably come out mental wrecks, you know? We'd have probably ended up in mental institutions. And it's actually amazing because I think one of the things that always held you in good stead was that you knew what the protest was about. You knew what the consequences of the rules you were breaking. You knew what they were trying to do.
>
> So, by August 1978, [...] we had gotten word that the protest had been stepped up in the blocks. The no-wash protest had started. That any food left, rather than put it back in the plate--the food that you got was not much anyway--but you threw it in the corner. And once we started that, within 24 hours, we were in the blocks. So I was put in H-4 for about two weeks. They tried again to keep us separate. And after ten days or so, they knew that we weren't going to... (Digger)

In Armagh prison, women went on a non-cooperation strike to protest the criminal label. Whilst prison issue clothing was not a factor in the women's prison regime because they were already permitted to wear their own clothes, they did refuse to work and engage with the staff as part of the campaign to resist criminalization. Moreover, they "were refusing to interact with staff or follow orders that were not transmitted through their OC" (Corcoran, 2006, 34). By February 1980, women were engaged in the no-wash protest and this lasted until December, when three republican women prisoners joined the first hunger strike. The outside IRA leadership did not favour the involvement of women in the hunger strike, but from the women's perspective, they concluded that the moral and symbolic dimension of letting women die on hunger strike was an added pressure on the authorities (40). They did not, however, participate in the second hunger strike, not for lack of wanting to, but because it was vetoed by the IRA (41).

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[159] The Shankill Butchers were a gang led by Lenny Murphy, whose members were part of the UVF. This gang is infamous for killing Catholic civilians (often by slashing their throats) after torturing them. See Dillon, 1999.

The blanket protest was an exemplar of categorical resistance. It was an outright refusal to wear the prison uniform which carried grave consequences for the protesting captives. They lost remission, the right to receive parcels from outside, association and mobility. They were on a 24-hour lockdown. Furthermore, because of this refusal, most who were on the protest did not take visits as this would require donning prison garb.

The No-Wash Protest

This next phase of the protest was not a strategy that was thought out in advance, but rather, a series of actions and retaliations between prisoners and guards that degenerated. There was a measure of control of the events though, as the prisoners escalated the protest every Monday, leaving the guards destabilized and forced to react to events without any strategy (Padraig).

The blanket protest was a passive way of resisting. But by March 1978, there seemed to be no movement toward finding resolution to the protest. It was at this time that Brendan (The Dark) Hughes arrived on the Blocks, having just been convicted of a charge levied against him while in Cage 11. The Dark suggested putting on the uniform, going into the system, and wrecking it. This idea did not pass muster with protesting prisoners who had endured beatings and had endured their naked conditions for two years. The thought of putting on the prison uniform was, for them, a form of capitulation (McKeown, 2001, 57). But Hughes and Sands did manage to make a few changes that made it appear to the resistors that there was movement. In part they thought it would give the prisoners more publicity. They suggested that men begin to take visits, as it would enable the prisoners to better communicate with the outside, by receiving supplies from visitors, and passing small communications written on cigarette papers wrapped in

cling film and smuggled in and out during visits. This change improved the morale of the prisoners as they now felt they were being more proactive rather than just being passive resistors (ibid.). 'Bangling' became a fairly widespread activity that led to substantial aggression on the part of the prison guards, and led to mirror searches.[160] They then refused to clean out their cells. The guards then refused to let them use the toilets. Chamber pots overflowed and eventually prisoners flung their contents under the doors of the cells and through the windows. This was thrown back into their cells by the guards. Eventually, they began to smear their feces on the walls of the cells. These conditions were horrendous, yet the morale of the prisoners was high as they felt they were being proactive and also because they were getting wider media attention. Cardinal O'Fiaich visited them and reported in the press that their conditions were worse than those living in the slums of Calcutta (57-58).

The prisoners began to see the importance of publicity. The retaliation meted out on them by prison guards also created immense fear and led some to abandon the protest. By January 1979, the prison administration moved the camp leaders to another block in an effort to "cut off the head" of the protest (McKeown, op. cit., 63). However this failed as the repression already meted out to the protesters increased their solidarity and commitment to continue:

> If such was the thinking behind the policy then it came much too late. The protest had been going on since September 1976 and during that period a very strong culture and sense of identity had been formed amongst all the blanket-men. They all knew just why exactly they were on protest and what they were demanding, if unsure of just how those demands would be met. (Ibid.)

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[160] 'Bangling' refers to inserting material in one's anus for the purpose of smuggling back into the Blocks, or from the Blocks to visitors who would bring them back to the outside IRA leadership. Mirror searches refers to the forced squatting of prisoners over a mirror in order to detect hidden material. This was accompanied by physical examinations of the prisoners' anuses and mouths to detect contraband. This practice was considered sexual assault by the prisoners.

This signals that protesting prisoners were not dependent upon IRA leaders to continue their protests. The collective spirit and engagement of all protesters in debate on how to move the situation forward ensured that they could continue even when their leaders were removed. It also shows that the way leadership unfolded, by involving all of them in discussions, provided the necessary empowerment to continue the struggle.

The First Hunger Strike (October - December 1980)

Hunger striking is one of the most severe forms of resistance in which prisoners can engage. It requires monumental strength and commitment to see it through to the death, and the ramifications of starving on the body are horrendous:

> Now, towards the end--that hunger strike lasted 53 days and on about the 45th or 46th day, my health deteriorated rapidly and dramatically and in practice I was confined to bed, my eyesight, one eye had went blind, the other eye was rapid stigmatosis and I was rapidly progressing towards the end. But I was also only occasionally lucid. I was going into--what do you call those things--fantasies or hallucinations. The poison that was coursing...The body breaks down: enzymes and the natural poisons in the body were, at that stage, going through the...blood that was going through the brain so I was sometimes conscious, sometimes not, lots of times hallucinating. In practice, I'm not even sure how the whole thing ended because it ended without me having any part in it. (Denis)

The first hunger strike came about as a result of the despair felt by protesting prisoners in Long Kesh after having been on the blanket since '76 with no results and having it escalate to a no-wash protest from 1978. Discussions on how to move the protest forward intensified among the prisoners:

> The nightly debates out the door were more serious and could be quite intense. The lectures on Republican ideology, Irish history, community politics, and political theory all generated intensive debate. There were practical debates about moving the protest forward. The Dark [Brendan Hughes] used these to create consensus. Bobby [Sands] moderated the debates, taking them in directions that he had already discussed with the Dark, while Hughes sat back and listened,

> taking in what was said and thinking about how it affected their strategy. (O'Hearn, 2006, 225)

In 1980, prisoners concluded that the only course of action was to resort to a hunger strike to end the protest. The OC of the prison at the time was Brendan Hughes. The strike began October 27. There were seven strikers from Long Kesh, all from different counties of the North in order to maximize support within the nationalist population. On December 1, Mairéad Farrell, Mary Doyle and Mairéad Nugent joined the strike from Armagh prison, where they had also engaged in the no-wash protest. Then, on December 15 and 16, 30 more Long Kesh prisoners embarked. Although it had broader strategic reasons behind it, the first hunger strike had a categorical dimension of resistance in that finding resolution to the protest was the priority. As Denis explains:

> Brendan was, in my opinion, a very very sensible and pragmatic leader. Brendan viewed the situation as one where he simply wanted a resolution within the prison to get an acceptable settlement. And he had no, in my opinion, no other agenda apart from ending the prison protest on terms that we could accept. It wasn't a political agenda. He may well have desired--as most of us did--to see the Republican cause progress, but he says, this is a distinct issue, and we'll keep it distinct, we have one objective here, but to successfully resolve this prison protest. [...] The no-wash had come about accidentally but once we moved in there, we didn't move back from it. It was a very intense protest. It was a very brutal protest but in fairness to Brendan Hughes, he tried everything he could before he resorted to hunger strike. (Denis)

Denis recounts the thinking that was behind the first hunger strike and sets out the political considerations that influenced that decision:

> But I suppose what convinced us that we had no other option was that we had the papal visit in August '79. The Polish Pope effectively sided with Margaret Thatcher in terms of Northern Ireland and he came up with this "murder is murder is murder", a term repeated by Thatcher. We had [...] entertained the hope for a while that maybe the Catholic Church, for its own reasons, might have brokered a settlement but once we saw that happening, we said we really don't have any

> ridge left here. [...] So we opted for the hunger strike and I was one of the seven selected to go on that first hunger strike. Now, we were picked out for a number of reasons. One basic one was the geography. We picked people from around the Six Counties to maximize support. And to maximize identification, I was obviously much better known in my area than outside of it and that was the same with the other seven or six.There was seven in total.

The level of commitment of the hunger strikers was unshakeable. They would not come off the strike until they had spoken to their leader, demonstrating an unimaginable level of solidarity, faith and trust.

> What I do remember was Brendan Hughes coming into the cell. The hunger strike had officially ended maybe an hour before I knew. The prison medics were offering me medicine and I was refusing to take it and that's when they said, well, we're going to have to go and get Brendan. And Brendan come in, and there had been among the hunger strikers who were still on their feet and *compos mentis*, they were discussing the end of the hunger strike and they called it off. But I wasn't party to that discussion because I was confined to bed and I just wasn't fully *compos mentis*. But I do remember Brendan coming into the prison hospital cell and telling me...he said "it's over, we've called it off, you're to take whatever they're offering, whatever medicine they're offering you, it's over". Obviously when I heard that from him, I said "that's it. If he's calling it off, it's over." But, I suppose I was 27 or 28, so probably it's down to health or age and strength. Actually my recovery was reasonably rapid. (Denis)

The first hunger strike ended when Sean McKenna's condition deteriorated unexpectedly. The British had made an offer that seemed at the outset to satisfy the prisoners' demand to wear their own clothes. It turned out that what was on offer was a concession to wear "prison issue" clothing that resembled civilian clothing (Beresford, 1987, 27). Under the pressure of the dying McKenna, the deal was accepted and the original celebratory mood was quickly replaced by devastation upon realizing that they had been outmaneuvered by the British. A second strike was quickly organized. This time, OC Bobby Sands put his name down as the first hunger striker and many others signed up as well. Bic McFarlane replaced Sands as the Commanding Officer in

charge of the strike. In an effort to exert maximum pressure on the British, the strike was staggered, with new prisoners joining every couple of weeks.

The Second Hunger Strike (March - October 1981)

The second hunger strike has been discussed and written about profusely. Accounts by prisoners themselves (Campbell, McKeown et al. (1994), *Nor Meekly Serve My Time*; McKeown (2001), *Out of Time*), by Beresford (1987) *Ten Men Dead*, by O'Hearn (2006) *Nothing But an Unfinished Song* by other republicans (*Hunger Strike,* edited by Danny Morisson (2006)), as well as countless chapters in books, have described events, analyzed their meaning and discussed its legacy. In *Before the Dawn*, Adams (1996) writes that the Movement outside strenuously opposed another hunger strike. He wrote to Bobby Sands that "...we are tactically, strategically, physically and morally opposed to a hunger strike" (288). He further stated that there was concern about the impact on the "entire nationalist population of the Six Counties"; and that "...principally...we opposed the second hunger strike because we did not believe that it would succeed in moving the British government"; moreover, he states "...we were just beginning our attempts to remedy the political underdevelopment of our struggle and, in particular, we were working out our strategy in relation to elections. We were well aware that a hunger strike such as was proposed would demand our exclusive attention" (288).

More recently an alternate account of what transpired during the negotiations with the British government, entitled *Afterlives: The Hunger Strike and the Secret Offer that Changed Irish History,* was published by a disaffected republican former prisoner, Richard O'Rawe (2010), presenting the counter-claim that the outside leadership had let men die when there was an acceptable deal on the table from the British. He contends that there was a deal from the

British that would have saved lives but for a ploy undertaken by the outside republican leadership to continue the hunger strike in order to garner support for the election of Owen Carron, Sands' agent. Padraig speaks to this:

> ...to me it's bullocks...because there's always offers, there's never a deal, it's very simple...If the Brits had wanted to end it, they would have ended it. Because they would have said, 'well here's what you have and take it or lump it'. Whatever else, they would have had the Catholic Church, the SDLP, the whole government behind them because they gave us our clothes which we got at the end of it anyway, which we knew was available. Anytime they could have tweaked the prison work a bit, basically, that's all they had to do because things like a visit and a parcel, you were going to get them anyway if you weren't on the protest, so it was very easy to do. The idea that there was an offer in there, and we knocked it back, then it becomes well they knocked it back because there was an election involving Owen Carron, it was Sinn Fein's action strategy. Looking back, because Bobby stood in an election then Owen Carron got elected (he was Bobby's agent), then Sinn Fein developed an actual strategy, it's as if they knew all this in '81 and this is how we're going to do this, which was bullocks. Even when Bobby was put up for election, we had massive concerns like what happens if he gets a couple of thousand votes? And nobody knew what kind of vote you would get because there was no comparison...And there was nothing to say Owen Carron was going to win, because Owen Carron, he's not in gaol, he's not on hunger strike, so maybe it was that everybody voted for Bobby because he's in gaol, and to save his life. So they ended up voting for Owen Carron too, so there'd been a vote there from people, and there was a rally against Owen Carron. (Padraig)

Disputed memory of the details of the hunger strike is but one example of the contested terrain that is the hunger strike. Representations of the meaning of the sacrifice of Bobby Sands, Francie Hughes, Ray McCreesh, Patsy O'Hara, Joe McDonnell, Marty Hurson, Kevin Lynch, Kieran Doherty, Tom McIlwee, and Mickey Devine are used at cross-purposes. For republicans who support the peace process, the current unarmed strategy puts meaning to Sands' words: "Our revenge will be the laughter of our children". Dissident republicans, on the other hand, see the current peace strategy as a complete betrayal of the ten dead heros because the goal of a united

Ireland has not yet been achieved, and they claim won't ever be won without a continuation of the armed campaign. Despite this ongoing conflict, one thing is certain from any republican perspective: the hunger strike was almost as important to the republican legacy as the Easter Rising.

> ...the hunger strike was, I don't like using the term but, sacrosanct, it was up there with 1916, it was clear, it was straightforward, the Brits let ten people die when they should have been recognized as political prisoners. You know, it's just very clear-cut. Now saying that there was a possibility of a deal and the IRA knocked it back...so it's like sick cynicism and then he [O'Rawe] gets into silly stuff like people writing and these are people who now, thirty years later, have left the Movement, or a cynical about it, or they're looking back and thinking what they lost, or whatever it is. One of the letters written was, "I'm now realizing that [from Richard O'Rawe's book] people outside the Movement were exploiting what was going on in the gaol and the hunger strike". And I wrote a response and said "where were you?" I'd like to think that someone on the protest was exploiting it, I think we were exploiting it to the hilt! That's the reason we were on hunger strike! Ok, it was to get our five demands but it was because we're Republicans, where this isn't a criminal conspiracy, this is a political struggle. So I'd like to think that everybody outside was busting their balls to get weapons, to get votes, to get everything, you know, exploit it to the hilt, I mean, that's why we're doing it! So to turn around thirty years later and say, " I discovered that people were exploiting it". It's like rewriting the past, rewriting history. (Padraig)

Another participant, who was considerably younger than Padraig, and was therefore not imprisoned until the mid-1980s, also had this to say:

> The sacrifice of the hunger strikers inspired people then, because the '80s were a very difficult period. You were really into a long hard difficult struggle, a lot of people were dying, and I suppose that inspiration from the hunger strikers, people who not only fought, [...] but fought using their bodies when they were in prison, determined not to be criminalized, or determined to prove the integrity of the struggle. And I think that has always been...an inspirational thing for people. Whenever you are at low ebb or facing into more and more struggle or challenge, you can always draw on that, to give you some sense of strength (Eamonn).

> I think that people sort of say, it's almost a cliche, "our 1916". But I think it was, for this generation...it was a very defining moment when people really, firstly consolidated their belief that the struggle we were involved in was correct. You

> know we had been battered--the 1970s was a turbulent period, because people got involved in the conflict...so it would be over in two years and then...from the mid 1970s from then on, you really saw the government divide to take over--taking a very strong determined long-term policy of trying to deal with this conflict. I think it dawned on a lot of people that this was going to be a long-term game to struggle through that. And I suppose the hunger strikes cemented all of that and we were really in a long-term life or death battle which was going to be very difficult. It wasn't just going to be like the War of Independence, over in two years, lose some people, but make some significant gain. This was going to be a long hard struggle and we needed to be organized and educated for it and determined. So I suppose in that sense, it confirmed the sort of nature of the struggle...and I suppose in some ways, it sorted out the wheat from the chaff. And people who were determined to go on with it stayed with it, and those who weren't, perhaps left. (Eamonn)

The second hunger strike is perhaps one of the single most difficult memories for many people in the Republican Movement. The level of emotion that it engenders in discussions and commemorations is intense and shared by leaders, followers, families of the strikers, surviving hunger strikers, and other fellow prisoners who were on protest. Those involved in the strike or closest to the strike have participated in countless commemorations, speeches, and discussions about its legacy:

> ...one minute talking and being totally clinical about it, and everybody else is in tears as you're talking, because of what you're saying...You'd be saying, "and then he died" you know, and then, and it'll be something minor, but it triggers something, and you just go to pieces on it. (Padraig)

For those who survived it, the fatigue was monumental:

> I regained consciousness in the Royal Victoria Hospital in the Intensive Care Unit. I realized what must have happened, then I was told. I wasn't happy to be alive. I wasn't sad to be alive. Just a state of knowing I exist and that was, what happens is tomorrow, next week, when I was on hunger strike, it's like you're just exhausted, just trying to hang on in there as long as possible, so like, mentally, physically, psychologically, you're just ...I say to people think of a time when you're really tired and exhausted, and multiply it by about 100. You're just totally wore out. All you can do is know that you exist. (Padraig)

At the same time, it was an experience like none other, and for some, it had a deep impact on their sense of self, and their sense of personal strength:

> Well, I mean, probably there's rarely a day goes past that I don't think about the hunger strike, and about what happened and all of that. And in the immediate aftermath of the hunger strike, you know, my emotions at the time were I was relieved to be alive; I mean, that would have been the primary emotion, although I have absolutely no doubt that had the hunger strike continued, I would have died. There's no doubt in my mind about that. But I also felt guilty that, you know, ten men had died and I had survived, but, I mean, I'm familiar with the whole survivor syndrome stuff, you know, so I mean, I don't feel, I certainly don't feel that way now. But, I would say that the hunger strike certainly made me a stronger person. I don't think there's anything in life that I couldn't face up to. I don't think that there's anything that would make me crumble, you know.
>
> What the hunger strike probably taught me, more than anything, was that, you know, the human spirit just has enormous depths, and most people don't realize it, until they're in a situation like that. And then they understand how strong they are. (O'Shea)

There were also people in the prison who originally put their name down for the first hunger strike and then took it off again for the second hunger strike. The act of withdrawing one's name from the hunger strikers list also has an impact:

> So I put my name forward, and then obviously, I was speaking to the family. So between one thing and another, I was named out for the first hunger strike, but didn't get involved until the latter stages. So by the second hunger strike of '81, Bobby's hunger strike, that's when you sat down with the family. And that's when...I wrote back and I said no, take my name back off it again. So I didn't take part in the second hunger strike. And there's that's it, for me, the crucial, really really significant event for me, was the hunger strikers dying. And it has still stayed with me. It has still stayed with a lot of us. Because what they did, was they died for all of us. But all we're being asked to do now, is to carry on. You get up in the morning, basically come up the road, and come in here, or go into the Residents' Association, or get involved in some of the justice campaigns and all the rest. So that's the major event in my life, is the whole hunger strike period. (Ted)

In Long Kesh, the hunger strike left a legacy and spurred the prisoners on to continue to resist on numerous other fronts. In this passage from Hugh, we can see the logical unfolding of resistance measures from hunger strike to resignification of the conflict:

> When we were still on a semi sort of protest thing, there was also the fight internally in the prison to secure total segregation for all prisoners. So we would be in political blocks, to develop your structures, to develop your education system, to develop your politics, so there was a lot of facets attached to the whole hunger strike period. [...] I suppose in a sense people's resolve was steeled by the fact that ten people had gone to death for a project here. Now obviously, the project was far wider than simple internal gaol related...the political ramifications for the success or failure of the hunger strike were huge both for the Brits and for us. It was a matter then of building internally, developing your education system, developing your politics, command structures, AND...on top of all this, for a huge amount of people, how de we get out of here, because there wasn't a review process. If you were doing 30 years, you were doing 30 years. If you were doing life, you know, that was it.
>
> So there was a huge number of people trying to escape. And then, we put our minds to it, and two years later 38 of us at the front gate so...there was a huge amount of effort put into that. That escape--the consequences of it--brought ramifications in terms of the gaol...I'd say the brutality, there was a clamp down--no traveling to education, no traveling to football, no traveling here, bom, bom, bom...But again, it's all part and parcel of struggle and the development of using different facets of struggle. And the lads fought their way through that, come out the other side of it, better again, and continued apace and so by the time I came back in December '86, there was an ongoing protest about the improvement of conditions and better quality of life and a better education system, better facilities, et cetera. And that went apace, right up through when the Hume-Adams talks started in the '88-'89 period, and we were internally involved in all that, discussions, debate and protests and right into the '90s and the level of debate and discussion inside the prison was far more extensive than Sinn Fein people in local structures, for instance, out here, or IRA people. We had discussions 5 and 6 hours at a time, repeatedly--analysis of where's this conflict going, where are we now, where is it going, where are we coming from, what do we hope to get, what do we hope to do, what aspects do we want to use, you know, what's good, what's bad, what do we need to get rid of. (Hugh)

The above passage is a clear indication that from the prisoners' perspective, there is a continuity in prison resistance that culminates in rethinking republican strategy from an armed campaign to

a peace initiative. The first hunger strike was a categorical form of resistance, strictly initiated to find resolution to the brutal conditions of the campaign for special status, especially the no-wash protest and the ongoing violence meted out on the prisoners by the guards, whether it be unprovoked beatings, or those that resulted from their resisting the invasive searching of their body cavities. However, the first hunger strike solidified and increased the support of the community. The second hunger strike can be considered a strategic form of resistance due to the increased politicization in the communities and, eventually, further afield, the entry into electoral politics of Bobby Sands, Kieran Doherty and Paddy Agnew. While the categorical facet of the campaign for special status was to find a resolution to the conditions in which the protesting prisoners had put themselves to fight the 'criminal' label, it nonetheless had a strong strategic component because it was a fight against the criminalization of the entire struggle, and not just of those in prison. To abandon the campaign was seen as a capitulation that would have had a negative impact on the *whole* community of republicans.

The proof that they had broad-based community support came when three prisoners were elected to office. This radically altered the contours of the struggle, and paved the way for an eventual winding down of the armed campaign. It was strategic to put up H-Block candidates for election, giving publicity to the cause worldwide. When that decision was being made, however, they could not foresee the impact it would have on Sinn Fein. The significance of the campaign for special status cannot be underestimated. It succeeded in generating good publicity for the plight of the prisoners, and highlighting the British policy of intransigence in regards of the prisoners and the IRA. In the battle for hearts and minds, considerable sympathy was garnered around the world, especially around the deaths of hunger strikers. In the US, several

actions were taken in support of striking republicans. In France and Iran, streets were renamed in honour of Bobby Sands.

Campaign for Segregation[161]

Although it was not prison policy to segregate republican and loyalist prisoners, as this would give credence to the republican contention that the conflict was political, there was a *de facto* segregation between protesting prisoners and others in Long Kesh prison. During the campaign for special status (1976-1981) in Long Kesh, there was a forced segregation, not on the basis of dividing republicans from loyalists, but on the basis of separating conforming from non-conforming prisoners. This institutionally driven gambit aimed to isolate the agitators (the non-conforming prisoners, or those on protest) from the rest. This tactic is a typical response by a prison regime aimed at breaking resistance. However, protesting republicans devised a plan to invest the conforming wings where loyalist prisoners were in charge, in an attempt to wrestle control from them, and counter the prison regime's policy of 'divide and conquer' in order to unite protesting and non-protesting republicans/nationalists.

After the hunger strikes, republicans who remained on protest were still separated from loyalists and non-protesting republicans. There were therefore conforming and non-conforming Blocks. In the aftermath of the campaign for special status, Long Kesh prisoners began to change the way republican prison politics was undertaken. The mood was somber. It was not obvious how to go forward from the hunger strike. In the first place, battle-weary protesting prisoners were leaving the protest to go on conforming wings. In the second place, the IRA prison leadership considered it paramount to restore unity between republicans who had been on

[161] In Long Kesh, the campaign for segregation took place in 1982. In Crumlin Road Gaol, the campaign for segregation discussed in this chapter took place in the late 1980s, although other endeavours were made without result earlier.

protest and those who had refrained from engaging in it (Walsh, in McKeown 2001, 88). It was prison policy to house prisoners in the same quarters, but given the intense animosity between loyalists and republicans, this had never worked. Even when these two groups were not officially housed apart, there was a form of *de facto* segregation. Time and space was always divided between the groups so as to ensure that there was no mingling either in the yard or the canteen. The situation was much too volatile to allow both groups to mix.

Following the hunger strikes, a strategy was elaborated for protesting republicans to invest the conforming blocks and begin organizing among the conforming republicans. The campaign for segregation was thus elaborated. From a republican perspective, this strategy had as much to do with gaining greater freedom to organize in prison, as with their own security. As McKeown explains:

> The issue of segregation I believed was crucial to our security and organisation within the camp. I could envisage a fall-back position whereby we could organise small active service units on a cell structure to carry out education and if necessary operations while on mixed wings. I did not believe, though, that this set-up would be in anyway stable or conducive to long-term imprisonment. If we wished to regain control of our own security, education, even daily organisation of our lives, we could only do so in the context of wings and Blocks segregated from Loyalists. (McKeown, 2001, 89)

Having taken on all of the protests for conditions in the prisons, Republicans decided it was time loyalists played their part. As O'Shea explains:

> So what we decided we needed to do was to create a situation where the loyalists and the British were face to face, and that we were effectively out of the equation. So what we decided to do was filter men down into the conforming blocks from the protest. It was simple, all you did was say that you wanted to become a conforming prisoner. And we would go into the conforming blocks, reorganize the republicans who were there who had left the protest, or didn't come onto the protest, agitate within those blocks, create tension, you know, there were things like firebombs were put into some loyalist cells. We wrecked the ablutions, the

> toilets, the sinks, the showers, stuff like that. And we just generally created tension within the wings. (O'Shea)

Republican prison leaders used the fact that a sex offender was housed with loyalist prisoners in order to make gains in terms of controlling the wings. O'Shea explains how:

> There was a sex offender on one of the wings. And he come under control of the UVF. He was a guy called Billy McGrath who was involved...I don't know if you know about the Kincora...sex scandal here in the early '70s. Well Kincora was a boys home in East Belfast. And it emerged in the mid '70s that there had been a paedophile ring operating within that boys home. But Billy McGrath was a Loyalist who was the leader of a very shadowy loyalist paramilitary organization called Tara but he also worked for MI5.[162] And MI5 were aware of the sex abuse that was going on with the home. But because Billy McGrath was working with them, they let the thing run, and it was only when it was all made public that the authorities had to act on it.
>
> But in any event, Billy McGrath came under the protection of the UVF. So one of the things we did was I went to a guy called Frankie Curry who was in charge of the UVF in that block and I said "Frankie,--we had some arrangements with the Loyalists, you know, there was some communication--listen, we can't tolerate sex offenders on the wings. You're gonna have to get them off." And he says "well, no, Billy McGrath comes under our protection and he's going to stay here with us". And I said "well, no, that's not going to happen. He's going to have to get off the wings". So this wasn't so much an issue about sex offenders as about control in the wings.
>
> Because up until that point, the loyalists controlled the conforming blocks. So we were coming down and we were challenging that control. So to cut a long story short, a couple of lads went in the cell, when the doors were opened one morning, threw a blanket over his head, and gave him a few whacks in the head with a lump of 4 by 2 mahogany. Now, he was injured, he wasn't injured badly and the intention wasn't to kill him or to injure him badly, but it was to make a point. And that was basically the end of Billy McGrath in our wings and we had made the point to the UVF. You know, "your control is over. We're here, and we're going to be dictating the pace." (O'Shea)

[162] MI5 stands for Military Intelligence, Section 5. It is the British Security Service engaged in counter-terrorism and counter-espionage in the UK.

Long Kesh was the first to obtain segregation, in 1982. In Crumlin Road prison, the task was made more difficult in that the "Crum" was a remand centre so the turnover was much greater than at the Kesh, and such a situation renders a long campaign more difficult:

> Most people in Crumlin Road at that time were losing a lot of remission, there was a lot of conflict with loyalists...And in the next year or two, through the conflict in there, we were looking to get segregation from the loyalists and it had been ongoing from the mid '70s but it had never been achieved because it was a transient population, very difficult to obtain momentum, the screws, the prison system, you just had to sit it out and the prison leadership would turn over so quickly, you never had time really to mount a good campaign. (Joe)

This is how republicans and loyalists functioned in Crumlin Road prison in terms of an agreed self-imposed segregation:

> So it was a bit of a lockdown situation when we come in. So that's all we really knew for the next year and a half, two years, constant tension. I suppose the thinking was "we're on lockdown anyway, so we may as well resurrect the campaign for segregation." Prior to the escape I would assume things would have been a little bit quiet, trying to keep as much movement as possible in the gaol. So the screws were very much on top of things in the Crum at that time. We were locked up for most of the day. You got out, we had an alternate day on and off, arranged with the loyalists, so that at least we got a few hours out one day. So we were out one day. You'd get up at 8:00, go for your breakfast in a dining hall, and the loyalists would have their breakfast in their cells. Then we would get our dinner out in the dining hall, and they would have their dinner in their cells, then they would have the evening period for a couple of hours, and then we'd be in our cells, and then we'd reverse the next day. That was our arrangement. That had been working on and off for a long time. (Joe)

The campaign for segregation in the "Crum" began in 1989 and, just as in Long Kesh, there was an attempt to get the loyalist prisoners to spearhead it. The thinking behind this was that loyalists would have more sway not only with the prison guards (their co-religionists) but also with the Northern Ireland Office (NIO):

> So a decision was taken to try to kick off a campaign similar to what had happened in the H-Blocks after the hunger strikes. The thinking was we had to

> make the loyalists do the heavy lifting because we would never...after the big escape attempt [1983]...I don't think if you ask anything of the NIO [Northern Ireland Office], the prison admin. from a republican perspective, they're immediately on their guard. And they certainly weren't going to concede segregation easily anyway. But loyalists were in a better position than we were...to do some of the pushing for it because they would have had more access to the screws for example, they come from loyalist areas. They would have been able to put pressure on them. And put pressure on unionist politicians, instead of them criticizing an IRA campaign for segregation, they would have supported what they would have seen as a loyalist campaign. This is what happens. Unionist political leadership, by and large, would be reasonably sympathetic to the idea of segregation...for different reasons...I mean, we obviously wanted it so we could better organize ourselves, doing it, what we were doing in gaol, including escape, but you could position it as...we lived in segregated conditions outside, whilst you might not have wanted that, in the longer term, that was the reality. There was something a little bit unusual about being expected to share prison space with people who you were trying to assassinate and vice versa. (Joe)

Campaigning, of course, was something with which republicans were very familiar, prior to prison. The *Green Book* describes in detail the structure of a campaign (see chapter 6). This was a skill that was brought into prison and the passage below exemplifies the way republicans organized such battles:

> It was a typical Republican campaign: we started off quite light, writing letters to people and...built the campaign slowly; groups outside got involved; and then, as the demands or the requests were being refused, the situation got a little bit more serious; there were explosives involved at an early stage that didn't go off but it did later on. Two loyalists were killed in the Crum in an explosion in November '89.
>
> So if you take that...that wasn't the end point, that was supposed to be the end point 'cause I think we thought, everybody would have thought that a bomb going off killing loyalists in a gaol probably would have tipped it over the edge. It tipped the loyalists over the edge. And everything in between. It was a classic republican campaign. Building it up slowly, mobilizing people, writing to political leaders who wouldn't agree with republicans, with the republican analysis, but could appreciate the logic of the situation and would say "we don't agree with the IRA but we do agree with what the prisoners are after here." So, the Irish News, and different newspapers would have reported it. "This is what the Republican

> demands were and there is a certain logic to them, and maybe...” You know, the Unionist people were more hostile to it. (Joe)

As with the campaign for segregation in Long Kesh, republicans used the tactic of getting loyalists to do the ‘heavy lifting’ in order to gain traction. As PRO (Public Relations Officer, IRA) in the wing, Joe wrote a letter to the loyalist prison leadership telling them that republicans expected them to assist in the campaign saying it was equally to their advantage to obtain such a demand. The letter went something like this:

> “We’re going to start a campaign for segregation. It is to your advantage as well as ours that we achieve conditions similar to the H-Blocks. We will expect that you would do some of the political work that is required and it would be relatively easily achieved if loyalists did some work rather than us pushing and loyalists resisting.” And then it finished by saying “...if youse don’t do it, we’ll make you do it. We’ll do it anyway, so we’ll either force you to do it, or you do it voluntarily, for your interests and ours.” (Joe, paraphrasing the contents of the letter)

They did not get the help they had hoped for. Republican prisoners therefore went out to show that non-segregation from loyalists was futile. Whereas they split their time in the yard, between loyalists and republicans, republican prisoners wanted to show the authorities the “false logic” in having the two groups associate (Joe). So they called for mixing in the yard, and immediately began fighting with the loyalists. Eventually, the loyalists refused to go out, knowing the violence that would befall them:

> So it ended up the loyalists lost their period but the bigger point was proven that you can’t expect republicans and loyalists to mix together. (Joe)

The endgame of the Crumlin Road campaign was a bomb in the prison. Joe concludes the story:

> You know, it’s not that you hate them, or...it’s just different perspectives, different politics, different organizations. There was a particular point in the campaign where that argument could never be used again, but [...] deliberately withholding

> access to resources, and then it was building up to something quite serious like a bomb going off. And when that happened, there was a big shut down of the gaol. And there was a period of waiting. There was an inquiry and recommendations. As it happened, the recommendation was not to give segregation , but they did change the system to make it a bit more...feasible, you know? Visits weren't mixed anymore. We went at that stage, that happened just as we left. And then the system eventually collapsed. Loyalists eventually did destroy the prison from within. They wrecked all of their wings, under a constant sort of provocation. And everybody moved to the H-Blocks and that was the end of the Crumlin Road Gaol. (Joe)

The campaigns for segregation, both in Long Kesh and in Crumlin Road show the categorical nature of this form of resistance. The impetus to segregate from loyalists is an example of resistance as survival since republicans were concerned with their own security. As Joe explains, "[t]here was always a sense that they [loyalists] were working hand in glove with the security apparatus" (Joe). However, it also had to do with their desire to re-organize the republican struggle within the gaols. The success of the campaign in Long Kesh is partly responsible for the eventual success of the "Great Escape" in 1983. But more importantly, it was conducive to the elaboration of the *pragmatic education programme*, a form of resistance that was strategic as it was all about redefining priorities and needs, and taking a critical look at the republican movement, its leadership, and the armed struggle.

A Republican-Driven Agenda for Education

> *I remember the dynamic for learning and the hunger for information on struggle, national and international, ie the ingredients for a better understanding of our path to freedom. This political education ensured and continues to ensure that our enemies do not out-manoeuvre us or lead us into cul-de-sacs. I wondered would this culture of collectivism and political self-development be the same. I hoped so...*
>
> *...If we are to be revolutionary in our efforts we must use our time to arm ourselves with the skills to become even more politically aware than when we entered these Blocks. Ten men died to allow us that opportunity.* (McDonnell, 1996, in *An Glor Gafa,* 20-21)

The focus on education in prison was not a novelty that emerged in the latest round of conflict. As far back as the Easter Rising, Irish republicans have used their time in prison in order to further themselves and to further the cause through education. Getting focused on education was nothing new from the time of internment until the amnesty provided by the GFA. Republican captives engaged in classes on everything from weapons training, Irish and other language acquisition, history and political studies, and the creative arts, learning and training others. The IRA prison leadership was intent on building an awareness of Irish identity and the role of the prison in the struggle. They were also concerned to continuously create space in the prison regime to intellectually break out of the confines of captivity, and to assert their agency. They took adversity and used it to build strength. They were embattled with the prison authorities on a constant basis, to wear them down and to test their wits against them.

During internment in the camps of Long Kesh (1971-1975), there were regular republican lectures dealing with weapons training, Irish history and politics, led by the IRA camp leadership which at the time was traditional and militaristic. During Adams' tenure in the prison camp, he re-structured education in Cage 11 and provided tools (readings, discussion) that radicalized his fellow captives. It is there and then that Bobby Sands developed as a radical leader (O'Hearn, 2006). During the campaign for special status, while protesting prisoners were on permanent lockdown, with no books or other amenities, they shouted from cell to cell to each other, teaching each other Irish, French and history (O'Hearn, 2006; McKeown, 2001; Marty). Bobby Sands led this campaign and emerged as a creative, radical and daring leader. The post hunger strike period saw a flourishing of educational goals and the emergence of a thorough re-assessment of the way leadership and republican education was undertaken in Long Kesh, to the

point where eventually, each wing had replicated identical libraries in order to ensure the continuity of the educational curriculum in spite of prisoners being transferred from wing to wing (Ted, Marty). Prisoners incarcerated in English and other foreign prisons made a point of furthering their knowledge while behind bars (Harry, George, Siobhan). It is clear that the impetus for education began with Gerry Adams during internment. He influenced his fellow prisoners, most especially Bobby Sands:

> Adams incorporated the main points of these discussions in a series of articles under the pseudonym "Brownie" in the *Republican News*. In time, this would be his most lasting influence on Bobby Sands, not just in terms of what he wrote but also by demonstrating that the written word could be an effective tool of struggle. If, in time, Bobby Sands became the leading Republican propagandist through his own writings--prose, essays, songs, and poetry--he was following the example of Adams. In Adams, Sands found a role model to help him complete his personal journey toward becoming a politicized militant. (O'Hearn, 2006, 85)

Internment (1971-1975)

The notion that the Republican Movement had to develop a political approach to the conflict came about as early as internment. Long Kesh was a former RAF airfield just outside Belfast that was turned into a prison camp after the enforcement of Operation Demetrius (the beginning of internment--1971). It consisted of a number of metal nissen huts known as cages. Most were interned without charge. Those who were charged, convicted and sentenced were housed in another group of cages among which was Cage 11. In time it would be the better known of the Cages as it housed some then and now prominent republicans.[163] By the time Adams arrived in Cage 11, there was considerable opposition to the IRA leadership in the camp (O'Hearn, 75). The younger radical volunteers were opposed to the more conservative leadership, who insisted on military drills and attendance at mass (77). The charismatic and

[163] Cage 11 was also made known by Adams' (1997) book by the same name.

intelligent Adams and his close friend, the intense and astute Hughes soon became their leaders (77). Then, he devised an educational program for the cage that focused on deconstructing Republican ideology (79-80):

> Gerry Adams encouraged all of the young prisoners to participate in an intensified program of political education that promoted debate and political self-awareness. He gave them new confidence to develop their radical political ideology and protected them from the camp officers as they did so. Adams and Hughes also won their loyalty by demonstrating solidarity with them rather than demanding obedience. Personality conflicts dissolved. Soon, Cage Eleven had a more collective leadership and collective responsibility...Cage staff did menial tasks alongside ordinary volunteers...He introduced new classes that critically deconstructed Republican ideology and policy. (O'Hearn, 2006, 79)

For this, Adams had contacts outside who supplied him with the necessary books and writing material. There is a question at this point whether Freire's *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* had made its way into their hands (82). Certainly they functioned as though they had, for they participated and debated and did not receive learning through "lectures and the handing down of 'truth' by a 'teacher' of superior intellect" (81). All the while, Adams was also, under the pen name Brownie, smuggling out articles that were published in *Republican News*, in which he hammered home the necessity of seeking political solutions to the conflict. In some of these, he clearly stated the need for political analysis and political structures. In his article entitled "Active Abstentionism", he called for an alternative to *just* the armed struggle. He stated the need for 'government structure' to fill the void left by the regime in place: "And what of '69?...Who housed the people then?...Didn't governments exist behind the barricades? (Brownie, 1975, 6) The article goes on:

> I'm not advocating a diversion from the war effort. Far from it. I'm advocating an extension of it plus an implementation of policy...Whether or not the Truce continues, an alternative will be needed. An alternative which can be spearheaded by the IRA into whatever phase of the war comes next. (6)

Hugh was all too aware of Adams' reading and writing regime. Having discovered his ability to type, Adams recruited him as his personal secretary. He states:

> Ah...well, there's a number of books that we went through ah...both cages. See this sort of reading and process didn't just happen directly in the aftermath of the hunger strikes. The hunger strikes provided us with the foundation stone and the building and the expansion and development of Republican politics, but in the Cages, we were into radical education. People were reading Marx in the Cages, but also Connolly--you see--the whole development of bringing it into your own struggle. We have our own socialists, our own radicals and we had them historically so Lalor, Connolly, reading people like that, people like Paeder O'Donnell, as well as radicals and the trade union people. A lot of that was crucial in terms of "study your own history" "find out where you're coming from". I mean you're going back to study Tone from the inception of the United Irishmen and the radicalism that existed then in conjunction with the French Revolution, and reading a lot of stuff about that. It's hard for me to single a particular book to say "that's the one" but what we did was we also looked at revolutionary struggle abroad. So for instance, books that were proscribed by the administration you weren't allowed to get in, for instance *The War of the Flea*, you know it deals with conflict in ah...Algeria, Cuba, Vietnam. That was banned. You couldn't get that in. We actually read British military counter-insurgency stuff and studied it, like Kitson,[164] and stuff. And Adams was doing stuff. I remember working with Adams on a variety of projects that he was doing. He discovered that I could type. And once anybody in there, at that stage because typing was not a male-orientated thing at all, you know, for young guys in the mid 1970s. And someone discovered I could type. Now, not that fast, but I could type. Whereas everybody else was "doink" "doink" [bangs finger on desk]. At least I could use two fingers on each hand, but when he discovered I could type, I got seconded, and I ended up, say for a lot of months, which was a great education for me in the Cages, working on stuff that he was doing about looking into counter-insurgency, examining it, doing pamphlets, and doing articles.
>
> So I ended up with a 9 to 5 job, Monday to Friday in gaol, with time off to play football and lunch breaks...
>
> I made jokes about it with him. Here's how the conversation would go:
> *Hugh:* "Aye, I've got a visit today."

[164] Frank Kitson, a British military General wrote *Low Intensity Operations*, in 1971 on counter-insurgency. He had been engaged in counter-insurgency operations in the Six Counties.

> [lowers voice to imitate Gerry] *Gerry Adams:* "Oh, what time is it at? What time would you be back?"
> *Hugh:* "You know, I have football tonight."
> *Gerry Adams*: "Did you not play football yesterday?"
> *Hugh:* "Yeah but this is celtic today, it was soccer yesterday."
> *Gerry Adams*: "Oh, ok."
>
> But it ended up such an education because you had to read up on all this counter-insurgency stuff and it was fascinating, you know, about the undercover stuff they were doing, and then Adams would be doing pamphlets and booklets and looking at the development of politics, you know. And so you're part and parcel of this vision that people like him had and the foresight. He wasn't on his own--people like Kelly were about at the time and different people. You were reading all this and it was pfff! fascinating and I learned more in the first six months in the Cages about politics than I had done in the previous 22 years of my life. (Hugh)

Hugh explains the evolution that led to the recognition that a methodology for the systematic analysis of the conflict was necessary with a view to developing a political alternative to the armed struggle:

> Once we come out of the 1960s and into the 1970s, as far as we were concerned on the streets, the struggle was "blow up as many as you can, kill as many Brits, do as much physical damage, wreck the State, undermine it, do whatever you can." But we had no mechanisms put in place as to "well, what do you replace this with?" (Hugh)
>
> Now...so this process took place. And inside the prison, there was this yearning for knowledge...First in a personal sense, to acquire more knowledge gives you a greater understanding of life, not just of conflict...
>
> ...how are we going to apply some sort of methodology for bringing about an end to conflict or to be successful and you need to acquire the necessary tools. The necessary tools weren't simply you know, AK47s and Semtex and rockets and tanks on their own. The crucial aspect of it was the political development and bedding that down in your communities where they could see some sort of qualitative change within the communities that you represented. (Hugh)

The Campaign for Special Status (1976-1981)

Education on the Blanket was characterized by immense resourcefulness and was spearheaded by Bobby Sands, who never seemed to run out of energy, ideas, or a positive

outlook (O'Hearn, 2006). He was already a fluent Irish speaker, having participated in the *Gaeltacht* hut in the internment camp.[165] In the H-Blocks, Bobby Sands was responsible for "four hundred blanketmen [...speaking] Irish. The language was taught constantly and spoken constantly" (O'Hearn, 1996, 178). A singular entertainer, Bobby Sands was famous for his story-telling. From memory, he was able to recite such epics as *Trinity* by Leon Uris, and Boris Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago*. Most of these epitomized struggle, and according to O'Hearn, "other prisoners began to learn political lessons from the stories" (218). Along with Brendan Hughes, they also led discussions and debates about how to move the prison struggle forward (225). While others certainly played a central role in the evolution of the campaign for special status, including Brendan Hughes and Bik McFarlane, Bobby Sands remains undoubtedly a key organizer and mobilizer:

> Then, again in jail, he met new conditions of extreme deprivation as a teacher, writer, organizer and, ultimately, leader of the Irish prison struggle. Everyone adapts to new situations but the remarkable thing about Bobby Sands was *how* he met new circumstance and used new knowledge to raise his awareness and his practice in the subsequent periods of his life. In doing so, he shaped events; he made history. (380)

There is no doubt about the fact that Sands was a luminary in the prison struggle. His leadership is uncontested, and his capacity to make of the dire circumstance that was the 24-hour lockdown during the campaign for special status, a place of learning, inspired those on the blanket towards an even greater desire to pursue education.

[165] The *Gaeltacht* hut was where aspiring Irish language learners gathered. The term *gaeltacht* refers to a region where Irish is spoken.

Post-Hunger Strike Period (1982-2000)

By 1982, reading material was still quite scant inside Long Kesh. They mostly relied on the *Green Book*:

> We didn't really have any material to work off, in fact we had smuggled in a miniaturised version of the 'Green Book' and we used that because there was various chapters in it dealing with history, with politics, there was an introduction to socialism, the [IRA] army orders, the army constitution, the code of conduct for volunteers and things like that (Interview with ex-prisoner, M, in, Ó Mocháin, 2011, 126).[166]

The changes that took place following the hunger strike and the mass escape are detailed above (see "Organizing IRA structures in Prison" pp.157-162). The 'pragmatic education programme' that was instituted by a leadership devoted to opening up debate and leadership came about as a result of reading books that discussed new ways to conceptualize education and leadership. The first of these to get into the prison was Paulo Freire's (1972) *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, but this was also accompanied by another set of books that applied Freirian principles, called *Training for Transformation* (Hope, 1984). Also addressed here are the "Frelimo Documents"[167] as they attest to the level of resourcefulness and debate that was undertaken by Long Kesh prisoners. Lastly, there was the *Iris Bheag*, a small journal of prisoner contributions and a ten-year run of *An Glor Gafa/The Captive Voice*, which was entirely produced and edited by

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166 "The 'Green Book' set out the IRA's constitution, rules and regulations, code of conduct and basic political premise. It was used to "give recruits the ability both to withstand outside pressures and to constantly keep political goals in mind" (Coogan, 1993:583, in, Ó Mocháin, 2011,126). Note in "army orders" and "army constitution", "army" refers to the IRA.

167 These were documents written up as a result of study groups (1985-86) whose task was to focus on revolutionary theory (Ó Mocháin, 2011, 130).

captives. This internationally read magazine[168] attests to the level of mobilization of captive republicans who were adamant to share their views about the struggle and its future.

Freire's (1972) *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* promoted an approach by which a teacher-student and student-teacher both learn from each other (Freire, 1972; McKeown, 2001). This prompted a reconsideration of the way the IRA command was structured in the prison. Freire's thinking helped to alter the attitude of the prison leadership and the prisoner community. Education was taken on in a much more systematic and all-encompassing fashion, with praxis (action + reflection) as their *modus operandi*. As McMullan explains:

> The pedagogical theories of Paulo Freire impacted greatly upon me. Freire argues that education in its true sense should be a revolutionary force and through what he calls a process of conscientisation learners are treated as subjects, active agents, and not as objects, passive recipients. They engage in discussion of their lives and community and together examine the forces, economic, political, social and cultural, which impact upon their lives and through such discussion develop strategies to deal with those forces. I felt exhilarated on first reading Freire. (McMullan, in McKeown, 2001, 130)

Flattening the hierarchical structures of the IRA, it was felt, would encourage prisoners to be able to freely express their feelings about the movement and the prison protests, given the strife caused by the protest and the emotional upheaval related to it. A series of discussions took place in order to establish what became known as the 'pragmatic education programme' (ibid.). The goal from the leadership perspective was the following:

> We wanted to look in a critical fashion at how the republican struggle had developed over the years, what were the main influences upon it, what mistakes had been made and so on. We also wanted to introduce a class analysis into our study and look at the role of the working class and capitalist economics in shaping Irish history. Constitutional nationalism versus revolutionary republicanism was another important element of such a study, as was the role played by the Catholic

[168] This magazine had subscribed readers in all places where Irish republican support organized, primarily in the US, but also in Canada and England.

> Church in Ireland and the influence of Catholicism upon republican philosophy. (McMullan, in ibid., 137)

Freire's educational philosophy made a real impact on many prisoners, and contributed to the communal organization of the Blocks. As Marty explains:

> Well, it was absolutely formative for us. But once again, hello! what's new eh? But it's nice to read that other people think it's the right way too. So, I mean, there are classes being advertised, I got emails promoting not too long ago this cascade training program, where one person gets educated in something and the cascade effect down, and then they take three, and each of those people take...WHAT? Paulo Freire had that sussed in the sixties. You know, what's new? And that's what we adopted in Long Kesh. I mean, if I had a property in the Kesh, it was everybody's. It could be intellectual property, intelligence, or awareness of stuff, or goods. Well, it should be everybody's. And that's what...call it primitive socialist approach, but that was a major fact; we operated a cooperative shop system, where people got according to their needs; the guy with five kids coming up on a visit, he needed five bags of chocolate. I didn't. I needed two. But there was only a finite amount of goods that you could take from. I could have been going "it's not fair" but it is fair, if you take a concept like of equity, as opposed to equality. Or, his need is greater than mine, and he'll not exploit me, so why should I withhold from him. They are all the things that came through in there and I think they do come through in there to life outside, where we can. There was a certain amount of falseness, because we were living in a false world and gaol was a very male, singular type of environment, we didn't bother with bills to pay and stuff like that but, as best we could, we did that. (Marty)

Embracing Freire's approach thus made an impact on prisoners. The difficult period of resistance and the constraints imposed by the prison regime during the campaign for special status, then having to deal with the repression following the 1983 escape, made organizing education more difficult. Marty continues:

> I would definitely be looking to people who supported, promoted a new way of education in Long Kesh, particularly in the Blocks. See that was all lost during the late '70s 'cause in the H-Blocks, we had guys coming from the cages, but because of the blanket and the lack of facilities, and they were involved in fucking gaol struggle and...it wasn't until we got through that year, after the escape, after about '84, we were then able to totally re-found the education. There were particular people and I don't know if you've been told who they are, they were

> very strong, they're the people who started encouraging us to do the University programs, and boom boom, and then, and then we had Frelimo documents, has anybody talked about that? (Marty)

Redemptorist priests from the Clonard Monastery, who had experience in doing mission work in Nicaragua and El Salvador, helped prisoners gain access to material such as the *Training for Transformation* guides (Hope and Timmel, 1984):

> They had the whole liberation theology. So this becomes massive. Because, hang on a minute, we can challenge our own hierarchy, but at the same time, build communities at base or ground level. If you're into that whole liberation theology stuff. So we began to say well, what texts do youse use? If you're a missionary what is it you bring with you to involve the people who you work with? So they sent us in three volumes, and the three volumes were *Training for Transformation...*
>
> So the *Training for Transformation* books became standard texts, you know, on how to deal with issues, how to...in terms of asking questions as opposed to giving dogma. (Ted)

'Frelimo Documents' was a euphemism for a series of briefs produced by prisoners that focused on the analysis of the Republican Movement, the struggle, the leadership and republican strategy more generally:

> Some of us were involved in a course in the Open University (Course U204). 'Third World Studies". As part of that course they did a study of the situation in Mozambique. Frelimo was the revolutionary group fighting in Mozambique at the time. We used that as a pretext, the Frelimo documents, as obviously we wanted the documents to circulate around the Blocks and if we had written them as clearly republican literature the screws would have confiscated them. So everything was written in the context of Frelimo documents. It was a good example of how we could use the prison education system to facilitate our own politicisation process. (Interview with Murray, in McKeown, 2001, 142)

Such documents were written and analyzed by prisoners and circulated for wider distribution in other wings. One such document written up by prisoners, "The Role of the Cadre", had the aim

of sending prisoners back out to the struggle with a revolutionary approach that could influence the Republican Movement outside prison. Referring to the document, Murray states:

> The ultimate objective of such a program of study was to prepare people for when they were released from prison and became re-involved in the struggle...It was hoped that by sending out people from prison equipped with a fundamental understanding of such concepts this would greatly enhance their input into the development of the Movement in whatever field they should become involved in. (ibid.)

From this passage, the link is clearly drawn between the educational resistance undertaken by prisoners and the development of leadership in the Movement outside. Education was the means, in prison, to participate in the analysis of the conflict. The objective was to re-think the manner in which the struggle was seen and try and find successful alternatives to the armed campaign.

> You cannot successfully wage a conflict if you do not have a political analysis of the conflict and the only way to get that is if you educate yourself in a political manner that will bring you through some sort of revolutionary process. (Hugh)

George characterized his political education as resistance by noting his self-education while incarcerated in England and in Long Kesh. In terms of political education as resistance, here is how George characterized it:

> I ended up in charge of political education, so once I sort of became self-educated, both in England and in the Kesh, I mean we then started writing up lectures and then we started pulling in other people in Irish history, so we studied Connolly, we studied Finton Lalor, we studied Pearse and what have you and bring forward what was relevant from them. [...] We started preparing people then who had already come into gaol, for when they would go out and join the struggle again. Of course, the majority of people didn't actually join that core part of the struggle. A lot of them went home and had their own life [...] but there's others who specifically went out to rejoin, and you'll find people who have been in gaol two, three and four times because they kept going back to the struggle... (George)

However, George cautions that it is important to keep things in perspective. The outside leadership was also key in moving things forward:

> And then there were people outside. Because you can exaggerate --I've always been very wary of this, you know people--gaol was very important to the development of the struggle. But, it didn't lead the struggle. There were people outside gaol who actually had to fight the struggle and who had to think it out. And it was a combination between people inside gaol and outside gaol which made the difference and it was true also of places like South Africa and others. You'll find many of the leaders developed a core leadership in gaol, and then that transferred outside (George).

Likewise in the women's prison, republican captives engaged in education as resistance. They undertook "prison debates" and "...the dual task [of] internal politicization [and] external mass mobilization" ('Morrigan', in Corcoran, 2006, 218). Eventually, the prison leadership of the men's and women's prison were permitted to meet:

> Then, they started to bring in visits with the OCs of the prison. So once every three months, the OCs could meet. So I was OC for a while, so I met with the OC of the male prison. (Deirdre)

But obtaining education for women prisoners involved an uphill battle. The gender-based discrimination in the British treatment of male and female prisoners is exemplified in Deirdre's recounting of fighting to get educational facilities and access:

> So everything was housed in separate buildings. So the education department was in a building that you had to walk to, and you needed to be escorted to go there...and the gym, and the library, and everything, the chapel, was in that building, whereas in the male prison in Long Kesh, their educational resources were on the wing. So they didn't get classes cancelled because of a shortage of staff. But, once there was a shortage of staff, our classes would be cancelled. There used to be night classes, and they were just cancelled all the time because there was no staff. So eventually we did campaigns and protests and we campaigned for access to the yard and they used, again, the same excuse "because we need to provide officers to go and escort you to the yard, and watch you in the yard." We said "well, it's not our fault." We actually took a discrimination case but they actually settled off the different issues that we raised. Same with visiting

> conditions, you know, we just didn't have the same quality of visiting conditions. [...] And I suppose eventually you do get to...you have to go through the courts, and you have to use the law, and discrimination is what we used. So they improved the yard, they had to bring in a whole new system. And then they allowed us to have our education on the wing, so that our night classes took place on the wing. And then, we got better visiting facilities. So it was quite successful, but it took a number of years for that to be achieved. (Deirdre)

Like male prisoners, women prisoners enrolled in degree programs.

> Then we had Open University which was available for anybody who wanted to do it. I think you had to have a certain length of a sentence to be able to do Open University...So I did my degree while I was in prison. (Deirdre)

Women in other prisons also took part in education. Siobhan explains how the issues of power and control in prison propelled her toward research and this was her way of coping with her incarceration:

> Back in the 1800s prisoners were not allowed to talk to each other. So everything was about power and control. I think that was my way of crawling out of where I was in that prison in the sense of feeling disempowered. And...that was my turning point personally. Another comrade started with [...] A-levels, straight As, ended up getting a first-class Honours Degree...This is really our turning point. But for me then, at that point, between education and physical training, everything was swinging because it was almost...it was vital for me to be able to see, that whole notion of responsive-criticism, it was vital for me to understand the power struggles involved. Binary oppositions. I started to look at ourselves as a Movement. How to ensure the oppressed person doesn't become the oppressor at some point. All these relations of deconstructionism, and then Gorbachev and Perestroika started to come, so on the political context that became very interesting as well because you could see it was like a pillar. There is a building and if you move one pillar, obviously everything's going to change. So then, the East Germans got released because the wall came down. Next thing, Nelson Mandela has come back. So it's a hell of a lot of stuff to be thinking about. And then, the peace process started to dawn in at some point, I think, the late '80s, and somebody came over with a document called "Towards a Lasting Peace" and he said, "Have some scrutiny with that, have a look at it, look at it and pick holes in it", and stuff. (Siobhan)

This passage illustrates the ongoing dialogue between the outside leadership and the prisoners. Not only did the prisoners see themselves, and insist of being, a constituency in the Movement that had positions to share, but the leadership outside also kept up the dialogue and sought their opinion.

Magazines such as *Iris Bheag* (Little Journal) *An Glor Gafa/The Captive Voice* allowed for the "articulation of wide-ranging analyses and strategies for breaking down 'the self-imposed isolation' and 'deep-seated fear of reformism' in the Republican Movement (*Iris Bheag,* 1986, 3:6, in Corcoran, 2006, 219). More specifically for women prisoners, they used these to tackle some of the issues of women's oppression within the Movement (ibid.). Globally, it provided prisoners access to a readership outside the prisons, and enabled them to connect their prison resistance to the wider struggle:

> We view our organizational set-up as more than a simple 'closing of ranks' against the [prison] administration. Principally, it equips us with a frame of mind which allows us to develop a better understanding of, and commitment to, the struggle for a new society and to put forward ideas on how this new society should be shaped. The primary task of all Republicans is the continuance and improvement of this construction. (*An Glor Gafa*, Winter 1990, p. 4)

Summary

The prisoner resistance of Irish republicans has a rich history. This chapter has shown the depth and historical continuity of republican resistance while incarcerated. It shows the ongoing commitment to the fight to have their struggle be recognised as a political struggle. These captives engaged in multifarious acts of resistance ranging from physical resistance, campaigning, refusal to be treated as common criminals by the refusal to wear the prison uniform and do prison work, hunger striking, escaping and education. This last form of resistance, that included the systematic acquisition of the Irish language, creative writing, political analyses and

using the prison's educational privileges to take university courses, is considered a strategic form of resistance. As the participants have discussed in the passages above, the main goal of such resistance was to develop the tools and resources necessary to confront issues about the IRA's armed campaign and have the necessary intellectual ability to see beyond it. Prisoners were not the only ones engaged in such a process. The outside leadership with Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness at the helm, had been working on this since the 1980s. 'A Scenario for Peace' was written in 1987. However, the prisoner constituency was an important group since it was able to discuss and debate the proposed transition toward peace. It is recognized that their support of the peace initiative was important in securing the backing for the peace initiative among the republican community (See Feeney, 2003, 402; Shirlow and McEvoy, 2008). The primacy of Freire's thinking on republican captives stands out as a paramount factor in enabling them to confront the strategic concerns related to the armed campaign. Moreover, as Hugh signals below, many prisoners, when released, became leaders in the Movement during the peace process.

> We have a leadership there and one of them is the Deputy First Minister in government, and another one is the junior Minister and you know we have a number of ministerial positions, some of whom are ex-prisoners. You know, Martin McGuinness, Gerry Kelly, Conor Murphy, Caral Ni Chuilin these are all ex-prisoners, there's a load of ex-prisoners up there [Belfast Assembly]. So you have all these people at a leadership level who have an absolute phenomenal amount of respect within their own communities and one of the underpinning reasons from Adams and McGuinness, Kelly and Pat Doc, all, you can go through every one of them. Now it's because there's a gel in there and there has been a bedrock of NOT stepping out to do their own thing. (Hugh)

Such investment in leadership by former republican captives is the subject of the next chapter. The subsequent chapter will analyse the relationship between the resistance undertaken

by republican prisoners and their leadership, in order to assess if, and to what extent, prison resistance was formative in the development of their leadership skills.

> *...a revolution requires* conflict*, as does all leadership. But revolutionary conflict is more extreme; it is dramatized in the characters of saints and devils, heroes and villains.* (Burns, 1978, 202)

> *Like historians and social scientists, I think we all like to look back on history and see it as being almost very linear...A led to B, then on to C, because of how it was planned. But actually when you live through it, it's not as neat as that at all, it's messy. It's totally messy. And in some places, struggles totally collapsed because of conditions not being right. But the other point is the role that a certain individual played, and if you had just the right mix come together at that time, things were possible where elsewhere they weren't.* (Padraig)

Leadership is a form of political conduct that is key to securing the realization of certain values which a group holds as fundamentally important (Philp, 2007, 1). People's notion of what is fair and just is influenced by political action and commitment and the dynamics of political struggle (1-2). At best, politics is a "complex, human and grubby" business. Political conduct has to do with character, virtues, agency, integrity, and ability (4-5). Great players are rare in any game, but in politics, mediocrity can have disastrous effects. Such characteristics as commitment and integrity are necessary. Other traits such as conviction, vision, flair and charisma are also key, some of which are often "hardwired" into those who are successful at leading (12).

Some names stand out more than others among members of the Republican Movement. Gerry Adams, Martin McGuinness and Bobby Sands top the list of principals. They are seen as luminaries, and achieved prominence in the early 1970s when they were still in their mid twenties. For instance, Adams and McGuinness were both on the IRA delegation that was flown in for talks with then British Home Secretary William Whitelaw, that aimed at a resolution to the conflict in 1972.[169] Even at that age, they were leadership contenders. Adams is from Belfast,

[169] The IRA negotiated for Adams' release from Long Kesh internment camp to attend the talks, which illustrates his stature in the Movement while he was in his twenties.

and McGuinness from Derry. Both were elected to the Executive of Sinn Fein in 1983, and both have held sway over the IRA's Army Council. Together, they personify today's Republican Movement. Bobby Sands undertook a fast that led to his death thirty years ago when he was 27 years of age. This left a legacy that has spurred countless activists on to continue the struggle.

This chapter will examine the extensive layers of leadership and the army of committed activists that have enabled the monumental change that is the peace initiative to take place in the north. Because Adams and McGuinness have exceptional capital to persuade and mobilize, they have been able to surround themselves with friends and fellow activists that have assisted in, and promoted a strategy to advance the peaceful objectives of the Movement, and who are leaders in their own right. The participants in this study are drawn from this group. By highlighting their conceptualization and trajectories to leadership, this chapter aims to reveal the depth of the Republican bench.

Revolutionary leaders are different from other types of leaders, such as those in the realms of conventional politics, business or education. Burns (1978) says they "must be absolutely dedicated to the cause and able to demonstrate that commitment by giving time and effort to it, risking their lives, undergoing imprisonment, exile, persecution, and continual hardship" (202). In the thrust to overthrow the system with which a group is at odds, revolutionary leaders must be able to connect with the needs and aspirations of the people for whom they are fighting and mobilize them through propaganda and political action. As the conflict with the establishment becomes heightened, so does doctrine and purpose. In order to propel the struggle toward victory, leaders must be endowed with a strong "sense of mission, of end-values, of transcending purpose" (203). Burns argues that revolutionary leadership "requires

a prophet but it needs institutional support and collective leadership to survive" (239). It comes about when it "sparks the dry tinder of human wants and needs", when it is "frustrated by oppression, wide popular discontent, and the failure of reformism" (ibid.). "Its success rests on a powerful value system, on responsiveness to popular need, and on systematic suppression of dissent" (ibid.). This chapter aims to illustrate how Burns' characterization of leadership is captured in the Republican Movement.

Leadership in the Republican Movement is best characterized as collective (Freidrich et al., 2009) and solidly steeped in the social identity (Reicher et al., 2005; Hogg, 2001; Haslam and Platow, 2001) of Irish republicanism. It is grounded in the community from which it emanates. It has undergone many permutations, combinations, tensions and changes over the course of the conflict. Many who are at the helm today have been leading, in some capacity,[170] since the 1970s. Their leaders are esteemed by a majority of republicans and the fact that they have been able to steer the movement away from the armed struggle without causing an important rift in the ranks[171] is the key element that makes their study so compelling. Participants in this study were asked to expand on their conceptualization of leadership, some of the people, and events that influenced them, and the workings of leadership in the Republican Movement more generally. They discuss their ties with, and respect for, the community; the notion of taking responsibility for the success of the peace process; and the challenges of governance versus protest.

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[170] These leaders have exercised responsibility in and out of prison, in community organizations, in the IRA and in Sinn Fein. At times they have done this concurrently in multiple spheres.

[171] There are armed dissident republican groups that oppose the peace strategy. They do not constitute an important constituency though as time passes, they have gained some prominence.

After a brief discussion on the particularities of a covert guerilla army, the IRA, and the rise of its political cousin, Sinn Fein, this chapter focuses on participants' conceptualization of leadership and how they perceive other leaders in the Movement. Significantly, Adams and McGuinness were key figures whose names were raised without prompting. This seems to represent the continuing exception to the collective aspect of leadership. This chapter also delves into participants' personal trajectories toward leadership, analyzing how their conceptualization of leadership can be understood in terms of collective and social identity leadership frameworks. The thrust of this chapter sheds light on their focus on community, on the humility with which they conceive of their roles as leaders, and on how the solidarity and loyalty that characterize their relationships are brought to bear on their understanding of leadership. Without such an appreciation of how leadership works on the part of these particular leaders, I contend that the mobilization of a vast majority of republicans would not have seen the success it did in garnering long-lasting support for the peace initiative.

Tipping the Balance From Secret Military Organization to Political Party

As has been mentioned elsewhere in this thesis, physical force was the cornerstone of the Republican Movement. Changing the course of the struggle was therefore a difficult and monumental decision to take. The bloody civil war that resulted from signing the Treaty that led to the partition of the North in 1920, and making enemies of former comrades who split into the pro- and anti-Treaty factions of the IRA, is a weighty legacy to bear when considering negotiations with the British. Anti-Treaty IRA members considered the Treaty as the worst possible betrayal of the Republican ideal. Adams and McGuinness are credited with having the

courage to take the decision to move away from the armed struggle, in the face of much concern over betraying the Movement. Paul explains:

> It would be a mistake to assume that they're [Adams and McGuinness] the only two. But...they're the most important in terms of the leadership issues. Because had they not been there I don't believe that there's any other leaders that would have taken the decisions that they took...because they had the capacity, both the intellectual capacity and the strength of will, to take the decisions that they took...which were massive decisions in terms of Republican history...absolutely massive! I mean, the sort of stuff that leads to civil wars. (Paul)[172]

Inquiry into how leadership works in this movement is captivating and one of the key reasons for this has to do with the traditional tension between the IRA and Sinn Fein (Feeney, 2003). The secret military nature of the IRA necessitated that its workings and decision-making be covert. Sinn Fein, on the other hand, since its accession to the status of almost a regular political party,[173] seeks to broaden debate, is concerned to be more democratic in its structures, and encourages followers (who may not have had, in the past, the reflex to speak up) to air their views and engage in discussion around key issues in their plank. Bob illustrates this point:

> ...there's a flattening, and I think Gerry Adams has always been very good at telling people, you know, it's not just about what I tell you to do, it's about you taking responsibility. But there is a level at which the Republican Movement was a very hierarchical organization. And until the leadership said okay, there wasn't much debate and discussion. I've seen that quite often you know, that, and again it goes back to being not only a military but a secret military organization, there was a tendency to wait until it was okay to talk, before you talked...
>
> So there's a flattening, but there's also a hierarchy, and it's kind of the dialogue between those two which actually tells the story and the richness of the story. (Bob)

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[172] See previous footnote.

[173] Leaders and activists are quick to differentiate between political parties and Sinn Fein, that the latter is considered more than a political party, rather, a collective movement. See passage from Eamonn below, p. 247.

So the challenges for the Movement have been many. Not only has it been a question of rejigging strategy, but it has necessitated an in-depth rethinking of communication processes.

Harry captures how the Army (IRA) functioned and the impact on leadership that being reared in such an organization can have on people:

> Well, you often find in people like Adams and McGuinness and people like that. They came through a very dictatorial sort of background, when something was said...when you look at the whole IRA background in terms of ...even for myself-- if someone said to do this, you done it. And, sort of, that was it. You mightn't be happy on occasion doing it, but you done it. (Harry)

Creating openness where there was once secrecy; encouraging dialogue in a Movement where not so long ago, policy was dictated from the top down;[174] persuading people to take responsibility and ownership of policies; implementing such grand scale changes has been the cornerstone of republican peace process leadership.

The slow rise of Sinn Fein, that began with the decision to run in elections in the 1980s, eventually enabled electoral politics to gain the upper hand over the armed campaign and created a space to consider a peace initiative. This was a difficult adjustment for those who had fought in the IRA, but many took up the challenge of changing course and continuing to take leadership:

> [Politics] is hard, hard work. It's not sexy. At the end of the day, the war was sexy. You know, because some people, after the ceasefire came about and the armed struggle eventually came to an end, said "whoa, well, I'm away, it's not for me, I'm a soldier" and my response to that is, "well, I'm doing whatever needs to be done for the struggle. And if that involves being a soldier, then I do that. But I do whatever else it takes", and this is the hardest bit, because it's so laborious. You don't see the results in the same way, and you get lots of criticism. If you thought we were getting criticized for what we were doing during the war, it's nothing

[174] It would be inaccurate to suggest that there is no longer a top-down route for policy. However, given the breadth of knowledgeable activists, and loyalty bred by solidarity in struggle, it has broadened policy-making and encouraged more input from every strata of leadership.

> compared to the way we get criticized now. I think some people don't really understand what you're capable of doing. Change comes very slow. And I think good change should come about slow. Grand flights don't often sustain. (Deirdre)

Conceptualizing Leadership

Where do leaders come from? This begs the age-old question "Are they born or are they made?" While the majority of participants in this study spontaneously suggested that leaders are made, they do make allowances for the notion that it takes a certain type of person to become involved in the first place.

> I think the personal decision that you have to make [to get involved in the first instance] shows a leadership and then you go on to different levels. I suppose in my opinion, when you compare the number of people who have been involved and put themselves on the line, or who went to gaol or whatever, compared to this community you come out of, then they are a minority, and always will be a minority. It'll always be a minority who fight struggles like that.
>
> So already they are leaders. Then out of a pool of leadership, if you're talking about the whole community, you then get people who go on to stronger things. So I do think it shows a strength of character if you can maintain a hunger strike, I suppose, and we had a considerable number of hunger strikers, when you think of the overall process.
>
> And then, people are tested in leadership. You get tested in military leadership and you get tested in political leadership, and in a political way forward. You know, lots of people peel off during that process. If everybody who had been in the IRA had stayed in the IRA, you'd have a massive number of people. Some went off and had lives, and some became leaders in different aspects of life, and others stayed with the struggle and became leaders within that struggle. (George)

This speaks to the trajectory of decision-taking in regards joining the struggle. First, one decides to get involved; then to go onto to more challenging forms of participation; in the last instance, to accept the challenge of being "tested in leadership". For instance, Gerry Adams went through this process and passed the "test". Many who know him will accord him a certain disposition that facilitates leadership. For instance, Deirdre points out two elements in regards his

leadership: "Gerry Adams had the gift but he also had the integrity. Because he has huge integrity. And getting that combination, I think, made him into the person who is able to lead our movement through all these phases" (Deirdre). Hence, Adams is seen to have the characteristics described by Burns (1978), that is, a combination of commitment, tirelessness, self-assurance and courage, to name a few (239).

In their discussion on what leadership entails, many participants prefer to talk about taking responsibility. They do not see themselves above others, but rather establish leadership as emanating from their commitment to the cause. Further, all members of the Movement are in a position to lead. During his address to the delegates at the 2010 Sinn Fein *Ard Fheis*, Gerry Adams said:

> The key to building the new republic, democratically shaped by the people, is to start now. We have to embrace our strengths. Our language. Our unique culture. Our history. And all of us who believe in a better way, in a just society, in a real republic, we need to make our beliefs relevant to more and more people. We need to be about empowerment. We need to raise our voices. We need to make a stand. If ever Ireland needed leadership it needs it now. Leaders from throughout our communities. Leaders who will make a stand. The Irish people needs leaders who will give voice on the ground and from the ground up. To the belief they have in their hearts, so that hope and networks for change can be built...
>
> But let me be clear about this. I am not talking about leaders coming down to us from on high. I am talking about everyone who is prepared to make a stand against corruption, greed and injustice. *Every woman, every man, every citizen who makes such a stand is a leader*[*Emphasis added*]. Every little act of resistance, of rebellion, of protest, makes change possible. Most struggles aren't won by single actions. Or by iconic leaders. Though they have their role. (Adams, 2010, *Ard Fheis* address)

Referring to the signing of the Hillsborough Agreement by Sinn Fein and the DUP, earlier in the year, Adams paid tribute to his colleagues in the North:

> Many thought this couldn't happen. But it did. This was a hugely important, symbolic moment. I want to pay tribute to Martin McGuinness, Gerry Kelly and

> our other Ministers, as well as to the Sinn Fein negotiating team. Here is proof, if proof was needed of the importance of negotiations as an area of struggle. (Ibid.)

Clearly, Adams' concept of leadership extends beyond the "iconic leader", and instead focuses on the part that all can play in shaping a free Ireland of equals.[175] He also makes the point that negotiation is but another form the struggle has taken.

The notion of taking responsibility is pervasive among republicans. Bob explains how membership in the IRA and the consequent stints in prison that many volunteers endured contributes to this approach:

> Rather than leadership it's maybe a kind of taking responsibility. Now I think that's what ex-prisoners are very good at. Some people would say that's a military mind-set. You know, like, once you have a task orientation, give soldiers a task and they'll do it. That's kind of a military approach. To the extent that people were formed in a military organization, you know, they see a task, their instinct is, "I'll do it". (Bob)

In prison, when Padraig was approached to become OC, he was unsure about wanting to take on the job. Again the concept of feeling a responsibility emerges. Here were his thoughts:

> The conditions were changing as were my thoughts of leadership in general...but also thinking of myself in terms of what leadership, if that's the term, I could give. I was thinking, "I don't really want this, I could be happily sitting in my cell reading a book", but feeling obliged, feeling responsible, feeling you have to respond to others, feeling well if everybody else is thinking you should have a particular role then, you must have some qualities or whatever. But I think that...leadership should be more thoughtful, planned out, not rushed, not emotional, able to take on all sorts of sides, all sorts of views, but at the end of the day, being able to come to a decision and implementing it. (Padraig)

Participants in this study consider that leadership is based on dialogue and exchange. The Republican Movement places great value on encouraging feedback from members of that community. In this sense, great strides are being made to alter the traditional hierarchical

[175] This is taken from Sinn Fein's slogan "Building an Ireland of Equals". See bibliography: Ireland of Equals.

method of functioning that was particular to the IRA during its armed campaign. Paul explains how constant feedback is sought from the wider Republican family:

> Well it's a constant interplay and I think one of the things that we learned from South Africa in the very early days whenever they were sending over their leaders to pass on their experience of how things happened there, one of the most important things they said is "you've got to negotiate with your activist base, the people who do the fighting, the people who go to gaol, the people who do the dying". And the relationship between that constituency and the leadership of the army or of Sinn Fein, whatever you want to talk about, it isn't, as Gerry Adams said himself, he didn't lead sheep. So it's not that type of leadership. It's a leadership which rises out debate. You know, it's more consensus...an attempt to find consensus. I mean one of the things that Sinn Fein did effectively was to exchange with the different constituencies such as the army and its volunteers, Sinn Fein and its activist base, and then the wider republican family.[176] So there would be meetings all the time all over the country, involving those categories of people. And then people would be feeding back. Leaders would ask: "What's the mood in such and such a place, with such and such folks?" So there's a constant dialogue and interchange.[177] (Paul)

On Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness

Regardless of the number of leaders at different levels in the Movement, there is no denying the fact that McGuinness and Adams have a particular standing, and this is recognized and celebrated by most leaders at different levels of the organization. Gerry Adams comes from a republican family on maternal and paternal sides. His credentials as a republican are above

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[176] The "wider republican family" includes international support groups such as the Comité Québec-Irlande and the Coalition for Peace in Ireland, based in Montreal. Since the peace process, these have been subsumed by Friends of Sinn Fein Canada, Inc. In Canada. In the US, NORAID (Irish Northern Aid) is subsumed under Caírde Sinn Fein.

[177] This extended for instance, to the US support base. On a permanent IRA ceasefire, Anderson (2002) states:

> There remained one element of the wider republican support base, a very important element, which needed to be reassured that there had been no sell-out, no abandonment of principle--that element was Irish-America. The Importance of the role played by republican supporters in the United States has often been underestimated, but the leadership knew the value of their power base there...If the announcement of a cessation was not handled properly, there was as much chance of a schism in the movement occurring there as in Ireland. It was imperative, therefore than an emissary be sent to the USA to brief the support base when news of the cessation broke. (348-349)

Joe Cahill, who was one of the few people who held sway with staunch US Irish republicans, was sent over to exercise persuasion for the peace initiative. Joe Cahill was a veteran of the Movement, and one of the leaders in the creation of the Provisional IRA in 1969.

question. He has said himself that the entire Adams *clann* has done time, from his uncles, father, brothers and brothers-in-law (Adams, 1997, 1-2). McGuinness is also thought of as embodying the IRA, its mission and its philosophy. As Toolis (1996) points out: "...his faith in a United Ireland is complete, unshaken and unshakeable" (332). These characterizations more than adequately support the social identity analysis of Reicher et. Al. (2005) which proposes that successful leaders are prototypical and "...embody the essence of the group" (24). Moreover, the relationship that Adams and McGuinness have with each other is held up as a model. Eamonn speaks to the bond between these two leaders and what it has meant for the Movement:

> You know, you couldn't get a piece of paper between Martin McGuinness and Gerry Adams. I've never seen them disagree on anything...ever in my life! I've seen them sometimes take a different view but never disagree or have an argument. And I've been watching them very closely for 10 or 15 years...You know, there's a very strong bond there, and I think people respond to that very united and cohesive leadership. It's a very strong personal relationship with each other. And I think that gives people confidence. 'Cause they don't see different arguments, and different debates and different people moving against each other... That has been necessary and I think that's borne of the fact that we all consider ourselves comrades and we always have and we're involved in a collective struggle. So it's not a career thing and I think that's been necessary in order to provide the type of leadership that we've provided. (Eamonn)

Several qualities are mentioned when participants discussed Adams and McGuinness. They spoke of commitment, astuteness, integrity, risk-taking and respect, all qualities elaborated by Burns (1978). For Deirdre, he is a towering figure of inspiration: "Gerry Adams", she says, "would be probably one of the most inspirational people and he would be probably the finest leader that I know. Just his courage and just, he just does what needs to be done and he doesn't shy away from any issue" (Deirdre).

Adams is also someone who is considered to be extremely intelligent and is credited with making the Movement what it is today. Digger sums it up: "He has great political foresight. I

think that what he done was he took a 19th Century political structure and shot it to its very foundations and modernized it and brought it into the 21st Century" (Digger). George also recognizes this quality. He proposes: "There are thinkers who lead this, and Gerry Adams to a great extent is someone who, at a very early stage, realized that you need to go to negotiations. It wasn't on his own, but he would be the key thinker" (George). The impact that Adams and McGuinness had on their contemporaries at the beginning of the conflict should not be underestimated. As Liam explains:

> When I first met Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness, what I admired about them was their independent thinking. Many of us who went to meetings would just stare in awe at whoever was on the platform, it could be John Hume one day and Maire Drumm the next, we would listen and their message would mean something to us because they were leaders and we weren't. But when we met people like Gerry Adams, who I first met in 1972, we were immediately impressed by his assertiveness and confidence, and independent method of thinking and not just accepting everything as taken for granted. I first met Martin McGuinness around 1975 or 1976 after he came out of Portlaoise I think. He was also on remand in Crumlin Road for a while. Again, I was massively impressed by his single-mindedness, the authority that he naturally exuded. (Liam)

George would argue that his respect for Adams doesn't have to do with his politics since he shares the same politics. But he says: "But what I do respect about him is his humanity. It's easy for a leader to become arrogant. No matter how good his ideas are, Gerry comes back and talks them over with people, and adapts them, and all of that" (George). This humanity and humility of which George speaks is also evident in Hugh's thoughts and, speaking of both Adams and McGuinness he recounts:

> They are part of a community, being part of the struggle...just because you are Deputy First Minister of a government doesn't mean that you don't walk down the street, and don't go fishing with the guy around the corner, or go to the football match with the kids down the street. That's what these guys do. They have a very hectic schedule, but they make time for people. And people respect this. If they get into the car, and the engine's running for an important meeting,

> and two wee women walk around the corner, Gerry Adams will stop in the middle of the Falls Road, and he'll wait to talk to them, and it doesn't matter what he's doing. That's the type of people they are. Even if their drivers are running behind schedule, they'll walk out and talk to the people. (Hugh)

It is also a reminder of the type of conduct that is promoted in the *Green Book*.[178] To further bolster his point, he mentions the survey in the Six Counties that declared Martin McGuinness the most popular politician, by far, in the North of Ireland. The Belfast Telegraph states: "Martin McGuinness was today revealed as Northern Ireland's most respected politician – signaling a remarkable transformation from IRA leader to respected political figurehead" (Belfast Telegraph, November 30, 2009).

One of the requirements needed to bring on enormous change is the willingness to take risks. Changes and improvements that were once thought impossible and that become a reality usually find their basis in the audacity of leaders. The end of apartheid in South Africa was the result of such risk-taking by Nelson Mandela. O'Shea speaks about Adams' courage and risk-taking, and compares him to Mandela:

> ...Why I admire people like Gerry Adams and McGuinness...[is that] when it came to making difficult decisions, they weren't afraid to make them. It sort of reminds me a bit of Mandela. When Mandela was in prison, and the South Africans wanted to initiate discussions with him, and he relayed that to the exiled leadership in Mozambique, they told him not to get involved. And he went against that and initiated discussions which later developed into negotiations with the apartheid regime. I don't think anybody would describe Mandela as a maverick or Gerry Adams as a maverick, but it's people like that who make decisions when decisions are needed. You know, difficult decisions. (O'Shea)

Adams and McGuinness are usually mentioned in the same phrase, but it is Adams that is considered to be the key thinker, responsible for moving the conflict from an armed campaign to the peace initiative. As George and Liam explain,

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[178] See Chapter 6, pp. 149-151.

> ...you know, people have to lead this, you know, there's thinkers who lead it, and Gerry Adams to a great extent is someone who at a very early stage realized that...you need to go to negotiations. It wasn't on his own, but he would be the key thinker, I think. (George)

> Well...there's no doubt that without Gerry Adams, the history of the peace process would have been entirely different and worse. It wouldn't have been as progressive as it's turned out. It was his personality and his patience and his doggedness which were able to bring the majority of the Movement around to a particular position. (Liam)

On Collective Leadership

A relatively recent addition to the study of leadership is the concept that there is more than one individual within a network whose talents and capabilities can be harnessed to fulfill leadership roles, thereby countering the idea that leadership resides in one individual. Friedrich et al. (2009) hold five assumptions about leadership. They posit that not all members of a team or network possess the same skills and expertise and therefore, "leaders and teams are most effective when this diversity of expertise is used strategically" (935). They stress that information and the ability to communicate it effectively are critical to teams and networks. Moreover, "...information is the medium by which the leadership role is shared among a collective" (ibid). However, they also contend that while there is a 'team' of leaders, there must also be a person who is going to take responsibility for the group, ensure accountability and be responsible for the development of the team and of its objectives: "Thus, it is assumed that there will be an individual or set of individuals acting in a defined leadership capacity that facilitates the conditions for the collective leadership process" (ibid.). Further they recognize that collective leadership is a dynamic process and therefore "....there may be shifts in the need for a single leader, multiple individuals sharing the leadership role, or even a shift in the roles that each individual engages in...Furthermore, this capacity is dynamic and can be dictated by the

situation at any given time" (ibid.). Given the dynamic nature of the process, and that it involves the sharing and utilization of information among a network of individuals, it is assumed that team-level processes play a critical role in collective leadership. They also put forth that social and team dynamics are important elements that determine "who will be perceived as a leader, who will emerge as a leader and who will succeed in given situations" (936). Lastly, they propose that it is difficult to pinpoint cause and effect in behaviors and outcomes but that such things as delegation and empowerment influence outcomes (ibid.). Elements found in the leadership approach of Irish republicans support a collective leadership approach and include the notions of flexibility and the management of ego. In addition, empowerment is explored more fully and solidarity is introduced as a new element facilitating the collective approach to leading.

On Flexibility or, 'Bob and Weave'

One of the themes focused upon during the interviews is the need for flexibility and the positive nature of "changing one's mind". The ability to alter the course, to re-consider, is promoted as a trait of the movement's leaders, in the years leading to the peace process. This has paid off and enabled them to move forward. Marty illustrates the point in the following way:

> You got to move and bend a wee bit, and bob and weave. Still go in the right direction, but you may have to deviate for a while to get there. Because if your enemy knows you're X and you will definitely not be Y, it leaves you with no option. Dead! And I think that's a major factor. I mean one of the main things within the cages in the early '70s was the divergence between the...more militarist view and the more politicized, radical, left-wing type of people... Normally your conservatives will be your more militarist, they'll be non-yielding, they'll be non-changing, they'll not overtly support the current trend of the Republican Movement because "it sells out our dead". I mean my dead are no less to me today than they were years ago, but they're not going to hold me back... You tell me a guy's name and I knew him in the '70s, I know where he be today. And I'll not be far out, 'cause they just won't change. Whereas people who were pragmatic, you know already where they are, because they'll be supportive,

> because they will be able to read the situation. That's a factor in leadership. (Marty)

The issue of policing illustrates this flexibility. The decision to sign up for policing was a difficult one for republican activists and leaders. During the conflict, the police were seen by republicans as the enemy. The Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) harassed the nationalist population by regular raids and arrests (Digger, Liam, Ted, Sean, O'Shea), killed civilians, and colluded with loyalist paramilitaries and the British Army in plotting the assassination of high-profile republicans like Alex Maskey, or solicitors such as Pat Finucane and Rosemary Nelson.[179] At the onset of the conflict in 1969, some neighbourhoods established no-go areas where the police were prevented from entering. Because they felt they could not trust the RUC to protect their community, the IRA did much of the policing in these neighbourhoods itself, the merits of which are highly contested.[180] The peace process established the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland, referred to as the Patten Commission, the mandate of which was to reform the RUC. This was an important demand of Sinn Fein during negotiations. T he reason for this is that "[t]he RUC [was] condemned by Irish nationalists, republicans, and human rights groups for embodying sectarianism..." (Maas, et al., 2003). The Patten Commission put forth 175 recommendations to reform the police addressing accountability, peace time policing, and culture and symbols, among other issues (CAIN). The new police agency is called the Police Service of Northern Ireland. Many of the recommendations of the Patten Commission have been

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[179] On security force collusion in the murder of Solicitor Pat Finucane, see http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/this-britain/loyalist-who-helped-police-admits-killing-pat-finucane-546202.html; on security force collusion in the murder of Rosemary Nelson, see http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/may/09/rosemary-nelson-inquiry-report-date; and on security force collusion in the Finucane, Nelson and Lundy murders, see, http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/EUR45/001/1994/en/5d33d0df-c38d-4a61-b7d8-358b1933b66d/eur450011994en.pdf (Alan Lundy was mistakingly shot and killed at Alex Maskey's residence. Alex Maskey was the missed target of that assassination.)

[180] For instance, see http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/if-mo-mowlam-has-lost-the-trust-of-the-unionists-she-has-to-go-1118292.html

implemented including the establishment of District Policing Partnerships, yet the decision by Sinn Fein to join the Policing Board was a difficult one, given the legacy of sectarianism associated with the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC). On the main page of the Board's website, it states: "To ensure for all the people of Northern Ireland the delivery of an effective, efficient, impartial, representative and accountable police service which will secure the confidence of the whole community by reducing crime and the fear of crime" (Northern Ireland Policing Board). Of the trajectory toward participating in the Policing Board, Deirdre says:

> We were involved in armed struggle for many years, and we're now in a different phase of the struggle but it's struggle nonetheless. And it's more difficult phase. This is a time when leadership is required of many of us. And one of the biggest issues that epitomizes that is policing. And it's so difficult for people. It requires republican leadership to step up to the mark. I would view that I took leadership when I made a conscious decision to apply to go on the DPP [District Policing Partnership], because it was stepping up to the mark. And it was putting myself out there as lots of other people have in far bigger ways.
>
> I wouldn't say I wouldn't change my mind because if you say that, then you close your mind. But I got clear about the policing issue by reading and listening to people who were making the arguments, who had been involved in the issue for far longer than me... We had an *Ard Fheis* based on that one issue, and that was very formative. When you listen to people talking about it, and when you have the experience of the community you live in, it's a no-brainer in the end. (Deirdre)

This type of reflection was also characteristic of prisoners who undertook to examine the Republican Movement, the armed struggle and the way forward and, it is fair to say, exercised a degree of influence on the attitudes of many both inside and outside the prison. The process of debating the struggle was a full-time job within the walls, and the stakes were high. In the following passage, O'Shea recounts the trepidation about changing the course of the struggle, a typical conversation in the early 1990s in Long Kesh:

> ...I had come to the conclusion independently of anyone else, that there needed to be a reassessment of the strategy... particularly of the armed strategy because in

> my view at that time, it wasn't going anywhere. And we were effectively in the doldrums. The campaign could have kept going forever but the question was how did we propose to use the armed struggle to strategically advance the overall struggle. The answer that kept coming back to me was not through armed struggle. But...when I was in gaol and talking about this--and we had discussions day in and daily, formal and informal. We talked about the war all the time...When you make a statement like "I'm only after saying that we need to re-examine the whole struggle and decide how do we propose to get to our objective, and everything has to be on the table for discussion." Well one of the first questions that was asked was "well are you talking about a ceasefire?" I'd say "no, I'm not talking about ceasefires, I'm talking about everything...everything has to be on the table." "But do you mean ceasefires?" And I'm saying "I mean, EVERYTHING!" ...The difficulty with a lot of people is that they tend to take things that are said at face value and believe it can never be changed.
>
> And the position of the IRA up until that time was that after the 1975 ceasefire, there would never be another ceasefire until the British government had declared their intention to withdraw from Ireland within the lifetime of one parliament.[181] So even if the British had said "we're going to pull out in 20 years" that wouldn't have been enough... And the difficulty was a lot of people did take things at face value. But one of the reasons they did was because by and large, they weren't political animals. Although what they were doing was political, they didn't really understand the nature of politics. They understood what they were doing, they were trying to improve their lives and the lives of their communities and stuff like that...(O'Shea)

Changing one's mind is often seen as a weakness. The ability to remain faithful to a given course is perceived as solidity. However, gifted leaders are not afraid to be flexible and indeed sometimes are victorious because of their willingness to change their tactics. In the Chinese revolution, it is what led Mao to consolidate and gain power (Burns, 1978, 234).

On Humility or, 'Check Your Ego at the Door'

Egocentric behaviour, self-aggrandizement and personal interest are frowned upon by republican activists. The urgency of behaving in a collective and unified voice has bred an

[181] The 1975 IRA ceasefire, committed to by the Army Council in the hopes that it would lead to talks with the British about disengaging from the North, was a failure. It took place just after the failed Sunningdale Agreement, which both communities rejected. The British took the space provided by the ceasefire to regroup, improve their intelligence, and further divide the IRA (Moloney, 2002, 140-142).

attitude that is loathe to put one's self above others, to behave as though one were better than one's counterparts, constituents, or fellow community members. Sean, George and Paul consider the notion of ego and propose this:

> We don't necessarily frown on leadership. We would frown on, if people think somehow or other that because they may have different leadership skills, that would somehow make them different, or better than some other activist. (Sean)

> You have to remember that if you're involved in a struggle, you're fighting for other people. And never start thinking that you're fighting for yourself. Or that in some way, you're owed something because you're involved in that. There was actually a political prisoner once said to me "the personal ego is a political question". And when he said it at the time, I wasn't too sure what it meant, but I found out. (George)

> ...You have to be careful with your ego. I think you have to recognize that you have qualities, you have experience which you pass on, which you bring to bear every day, whether you're answering the phone or taking notes to pass on to someone else. You use the experience that you've acquired over the years to the advantage of whoever you meet. So yes, in that sense, you have to be aware that you have these qualities. You also have to be aware that people look to you for leadership. They look to you for advice and they do so because they know you've been around a long time. That you've been tested...

> I think it's very important for leaders to be careful about their ego, because I think it can be destructive. And you can be a person who has qualities that you can use for positive ends, for the collective as opposed to the individual. Therefore it's important I think for leaders to be...let me get the right word for this, now...humble isn't the right word, but it's important for leaders to be... I don't like aggressiveness and I don't like arrogance. So therefore leaders have to be careful. They can shape situations just by contributing to whatever the issue at hand is, or by suggesting a certain course of action... I mean Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness are probably some of the best leaders we've had. Without them, we wouldn't be where we are today...their style of leadership suits me. They lead from the front. (Paul)

O'Shea, on the other hand, admits to having a certain amount of vanity, which he says he displays by being abrasive in discussions where he feels strongly that he has a valid point to make, but adds that people understand the context in which it is given. This is derived from his

history and standing in the Movement. While he contends it may be a flaw in leadership ability, he maintains that sometimes leadership demands it:

> *O'Shea*
> ...I'm not even suggesting by doing that, that I had made the wrong decision...In the same circumstances, I would do the same again, on the hunger strike. Because that was the position I took up. [...] But afterwards, in terms of issues relating to the struggle, and in particular, the armed struggle...and this is one of the reasons why I wouldn't class myself to be a particularly a good leader, because what a good leader would do would be try to persuade people to come along, and to think about these ideas and stuff like that, whereas I would be more just Pshhhoooo!, get it out in the open. You know, throw a hand grenade in.
> *Interviewer*
> You're saying you're not smooth.
> *O'Shea*
> No. I'm more abrasive (Chuckles)...because I think that sometimes, somebody has to break the path, you know, clear the way. And, you know, sometimes people like that are leaders in their own right. They force people to think about stuff...
> *Interviewer*
> Well, that would be you then...
> *O'Shea*
> To a certain extent, yeah.
> *Interviewer*
> There you go.
> *O'Shea*
> I saw that as my role. Well, that's a sort of a vain position to take up...You know, that it's vanity in some way: "Well, I'll do this, I'll do it my way." "I don't give a shit what anybody else thinks, I'm going to say this anyway"...
> *Interviewer*
> Do you think you are vain?
> *O'Shea*
> Ah...probably (chuckles)...No, in that sense...people would say, "you know, maybe there's a better way of going about it. I don't disagree with what you're saying but...maybe there's a better way to go about it." I don't give a fuck if there's a better way. If I have something to say, I'm going to say it. And I'm not going to sit at a meeting and listen to somebody talking shit and sit there...I'm going to tell him. So in that sense maybe it is vain, because you're taking up a position, actively saying well, I don't care what anybody else thinks, this is what I'm going to say. (O'Shea)

The demeanor of an Adams or a McGuinness may lead some to think that charisma and calm are the only way to achieve persuasion. One surmises in O'Shea's contribution the notion that there are leaders who gently persuade people along a given thought stream, while others' roles may be different. He makes this distinction by noting that for people like him, the role is to "clear the path". What he refers to as an abrasive quality is actually a capacity to see through the fog of a debate and to utilize frank talk strategically, in order to hone in on the crux of an issue. In a collective leadership situation, there are times when charisma and charm are prioritized, and other times when the person who is apt to forego detours, steps up in order to bring the discussion back to its essential points. The recognition of his commitment to the struggle ensures that he is not perceived as placing his own interests above the collective interest.

Such is the emphasis on collective leadership among this group, that personal identification as a leader is a point of humility. The following exchange illustrates at once the reticence to accept that one is a "leader", and also the emphasis placed on the notion of "taking responsibility". Here is a conversation between the author and O'Shea about his feelings around his status as a leader:

Interviewer
I wonder if you see yourself as a leader.
O'Shea
No. I don't like...I don't...well...I don't...aspire to leadership.
Interviewer
Okay, fair enough. Others, of course, would see you as a leader.
O'Shea
Yes.
Interviewer
You've been in leadership roles while in prison, and while outside of prison as well.
O'Shea
Yeah.
Interviewer

> I wonder if there was a time when you took stock of that fact. That you thought, okay, so here's me, having to take decisions and such.
> *O'Shea*
> Well, there was never any real time, I mean, even before I went into prison, I mean, I was only in my teens...when I first went into prison. But even, even at that stage, I was OC of an active service unit within a fairly wide area. And as soon as I went into Crumlin Road Prison, I was on the staff[182] there again. And, as I say, I don't aspire to leadership, but at times, you know, you don't have any real option.
> *Interviewer*
> Okay. It's kind of thrust upon you.
> *O'Shea*
> Well, in a way, I mean, partly it may be thrust on you, but partly you also know you have a responsibility; you know if you have the ability or the expertise to do something, and it needs to be done then, somebody has to do it. (O'Shea)

Similarly, Sean had trouble identifying as a leader. When asked whether he considered himself a leader, he responded: "No. I mean, I'm an activist and I work with a lot of leaders" (Sean). But when confronted with: "Oh, so there are other leaders out there, and you're not one of them" (Sean), he responded by saying, "Well, if I'm a leader, I'm one of quite a range of them, and very proud to be part of that...I mean, I wouldn't see it as much as leadership as I see it as taking responsibility, and I'm prepared to do that and I'll do it any day" (Sean). Eamonn's thoughts also show us the young age at which these men and women are prepared for taking on leadership, and again, it is seen in terms of taking responsibility:

> If you've been involved in structures[183] all your life, at some stage you're in a more organized role, or leadership role, I mean even if it's right back when we were teenagers at a very small local level. So there's always been an element of taking responsibility, taking leadership right throughout my life.
>
> Obviously when I got elected to the Assembly, then, I ended up working with the leadership of the party. And then, I suppose, at that stage, people looked to me, in a much broader sense, as a political leader, of sorts. Well, I mean...there's no big sense of that, you're part of collective leadership... I'm lucky to be working with

[182] Being on staff refers to IRA command in prison.

[183] "Structures" refer to an array of organizational units within the *Fianna*, the IRA, or Sinn Fein.

> people who are very gifted. You learn every day from what you do. And that's not just Gerry Adams or Martin McGuinness but a whole range of people in our leadership, both elected and non-elected. And so it's been very very interesting, rewarding and very fulfilling and you feel as if you're playing some small part in a kind of historical development. These are very interesting times we're living in, full of political challenges and changes and a very substantial political journey, not just for us as a political movement, but for the country generally. (Eamonn)

It is largely the collective aspect of leadership that promotes a sense of humility among those who direct the Republican Movement. As has been amply discussed, there is no room in this group for large egos and self-centered interests. It is what has been key in the sacrifices endured by volunteers and activists, including not only dramatic sacrifices of life, but also long hard hours or work to promote the movement's political strategy, win elections, and govern.

On Solidarity

Friedrich et al. (2009) argue that collective leadership or team work improves efficiency and maintains quality performance because the expertise of more than one person is put to use (955). However, though such authors (see also Manz et al., 2009; Yukl, 2008; Pittinsky and Simon, 2007) focus on the positive results of utilizing collective leadership, there is little that concerns how to achieve such collaboration beyond promoting virtue, commitment and authenticity (Manz et al. 2009). Exploring notions of solidarity, camaraderie and loyalty is virtually absent from these studies, elements that would be priorities for any protest movement. The Republican Movement knows all too well the importance of closing ranks. They have had, and continue to have adversaries, including republicans of other stripes. For example, after the birth of the Provisionals in 1969, there was bitter internecine fighting with the Official IRA (Anderson 2002; Feeney, 2003). In today's terms, the adversaries come in the form of armed

dissident groups such as Real IRA and Continuity IRA and a new political party, *Éirígí*.[184] And of course, there remains traditional unionist adversaries, those who remain loyal to Britain, as well as the British and Irish establishments.

There are also socialist republicans who have become disenchanted with Sinn Fein and with those at the helm and they are for the most part, former prison comrades. Denis, for instance, has a different take on how the party and the Movement is directed. Speaking on the possibility of having dissenting views within the organization, he says:

> ...you couldn't have another platform within Sinn Fein...What augers against conventional democracy within Sinn Fein is the existence of the IRA within the Party. And that's the same as having a freemasonry within the workplace or a fraternity... Once you have a group of people, centrally controlled and commanded by military leadership, and you can say this in practice is what is happening, as has been happening from the early '80s, that a group within Sinn Fein are actually military-commanded.
>
> So, at all levels of the Movement...of the Sinn Fein party, you have the IRA. Now they do NOT control the party by force. They don't pull up at a meeting and say this is what you'll do. But what happens is...you can send three or four people who know exactly what way they're going to vote, and know exactly what issues they're going to take on... The rest turn up, and when you're talking about a meeting of 12 or 13 and a few of them are coherent and are known to be members, or have previously been members of the IRA itself, there's a question, one, of prestige, that for years, a lot of Sinn Fein people believed that their role in life was to support the IRA. So when you have a meeting of a Sinn Fein Cumann, there'll always be a few people think, "well, if that's what the IRA, if that's what the BOYS want, I vote for it. (Denis)

The above view is shared by a minority of former prisoners that disagreed with the direction of the Movement while in Long Kesh. Eventually they asked to be transferred to Magilligan and most are engaged in socialist republican politics. Some of these ex-prisoners (Anthony McIntyre

[184] *Éirígí* is a socialist republican party, formed in 2006.

for example) established an online journal, critical of the peace process, entitled *The Blanket: A Journal of Protest and Dissent from 2002 to 2008*.[185]

Solidarity is based on shared ideals but it is also the result of a common journey and common sacrifice:

> I'm sure there are some egos in every organization, but that type of person doesn't advance in Sinn Fein, someone who's ambitious, who wants to be a leader, who's plotting their way to the top, as you find in other political parties. I don't think those people would survive in our party because there's a much greater sense of togetherness, of loyalty, of camaraderie. Because we've all come through the struggle, which has shaped us, in which we've lost people close to us, which is hard on us... It's created a much stronger bond than that of just people who happen to join the same political party... So it's a different organization, it's not a party in that sense. (Eamonn)

On Various Talents Put to Use

The notion that people have different talents that can be put to use to maximize the efficiency of the Movement (Friedrich et al.) is an issue that is illustrated by George who says:

> ...there's all different types of leadership. 'Cause there's some people who can deal with leadership in a struggle situation, but can't really deal with leadership in a peaceful situation...You know, there's people who were very good in those almost hectic circumstances, but when it came down to the mundane, the banality of day-to-day leadership, weren't able to either have the patience or the temperament to deal with that. But that's not a criticism, it's just horses for courses, different people have different talents. Some people have talents which go right across, and some people don't. And I think part of identifying leadership is to realize where somebody can't lead in one way, you may find they can lead in another way. (George)

Further, this collective leadership stretches across all tiers of the movement. As Bobby Sands said: "Everyone, republican or otherwise, has their own particular part to play. No part is too

[185] See also McKeown's (2001) chapter entitled "Resignations" pp. 160-170.

great or too small; no one is too old or too young to do something".[186] O'Shea relates the harnessing of such collective leadership in this way:

> I mean there are people in these areas who have been involved all their lives, in organizing people and communicating with people and trying to bring new ideas to people and it's like second nature to a lot of them. A lot of them have organizational skills that are second to none...in election campaigns. I mean you get--women in particular--who come out, and they would do nothing from one election to the next, but they're just experts on their own area; they know everybody... And they know how to get them out, collect information on who's voted and who hasn't... When I got out of gaol, I was just amazed at it. All these other political parties are spending fortunes on people to tell them how to increase their percentage of the vote and stuff like that. And these women who are basically classed as housewives come out and run this, you know, well-oiled efficient electoral machine. (O'Shea)

Kevin's thoughts are also revealing of this type of sharing of roles, and delegation of duty:

> You know there's certain people who are perfect in certain roles. But no one would look at him as though he was a leader. But they're brilliant organizers. Someone the next level up will step in and do the speech thing, but there's people in the background who say "here, who can get this group together, who can get that?" (Kevin)

On the other hand, Sean relates a different story in respect of the Movement's ability to put Bobby Sands' words into practice:

> ...so a lot of people, particularly younger people coming through today wouldn't see this as life or death, and would see it as more, and I'm not saying there's too many of them see it as an opportunity, but would say, "can I play a role in there," and we're still struggling with how to enable them to play a role. It's like putting the Bobby Sands sentiment into practice because we do talk about it a lot. We're not very good at doing it, where we say everyone has a role to play, no matter how big or small. We don't...we actually don't deliver that very well. (Sean)

[186] This quote is attributed to Bobby Sands but was shared among many prisoners. See O'Hearn (2009).

In terms of Sinn Fein working structures, and the interaction and relationship between activists, this notion of collective leadership and elasticity of roles is illustrated by this discussion on relationships with other party activists:

> We have an entirely different concept of leadership than others might have because it's the way we work on a more collective leadership basis. I mean, don't be getting me wrong, I'm not shy, we do have leaders...I have no problem acknowledging that and I would be a part of that, but we also work on a collective leadership basis as well...and I think our style of work is good in that you know, I might be leading a particular project today, and even in my own local organization, but the next person is going to be leading that project, or another component of it tomorrow, and then I fit under their leadership and direction. Same way as everybody else, I expect them to fit in if I'm leading or chairing a project. Because there's no one that's better or more important than the other.
>
> We even bring that down to the relationship between the elected representatives and the people who work with you. Because we have a PA, like any political representative, but we redefined what a PA actually is. In most parties, it's a personal assistant. We have a PA which is a political advisor. So our PA has an entirely different job description. And interestingly enough, the PA that I would have assigned with myself is the chairperson of the party structure within which I work. So on a *de facto* basis, he's my boss. His day job, so to speak, is to service my role as an elected representative and that means, yes, preparing briefs and organizing meetings and doing all of that. He works with me in his capacity as a PA but in his capacity within the organization, he's my boss. I'm accountable to him as chair of this organization in this area. So that's where we level out the leadership concept, I think. (Sean)

On Empowerment or, 'Having Confidence'

Activists who exercise responsibility for a protest movement should be empowered. However, in leadership studies, this is rarely addressed. Friedrich et al. (2009) say though, that coupled with delegation, empowerment can influence outcomes. On how to see the concept of empowerment, Bob contributes this:

> ...it's another way of saying it is having confidence in your abilities. Michael Culbert, who's now Director of the *Coíste*, he talks about the first time they challenged the way in which the prison was run, after all the protests and so on.

> And then, they just challenged the governor's rule, and managed to win cases in court...And it was just, challenge, challenge, challenge the whole time, you know? And, it takes a certain personality, but it also takes a lot of confidence in your own ability to do that and to keep having a go, keep having a go. And, it takes support, so it's like your own confidence but it's also the support of your comrades... (Bob)

In a discussion on the approach republican prisoners used to counsel other prisoners who were experiencing distress or trauma, Joe explained how empowerment is enabled through a political perspective:

> *Joe*
> And we were very good at supporting people. We wanted to be supportive. And part of that had to do with building up their political sense of themselves. We reinforced that all the time [...] it should be called something like "empowerment". Our empowerment comes from a political perspective. You know, it empowers you as a person so it made sense to me to start talking about those things. But it was really difficult for other people to grasp that. So I always find in gaol, we were trying to spread the power out a little bit. And I really like that instinctively. And people wouldn't try to grab power. (Joe)

Similarly, Sean indicates how one's self-determination and political goals are connected to produce empowerment:

> ...nobody dictates to me what I do in my life. I decide for me, as best I can. I do it within a discipline because my life is political, for the most part. So I take my political objectives right through to my day, my life, I'm very happy with that so that's how it works for me. My day job is not in conflict with my life. So I would value the role that I play. The point that I'm making [is that] I'm more than happy to take more responsibility within the party that I'm involved in, more than happy to do it because it gives me a stronger sense of my own self-determination as well as achieving my political goals. And I'm lucky they both marry. If they didn't marry, then I would probably be in trouble! If I didn't have a real say in the party I'm involved in, I couldn't live out, true to myself, my own self-determination...It's about who you are, your own self-empowerment. You see, I don't think I could do the party work that I do if I wasn't fulfilling my own self-determination. (Sean)

Empowerment as has been noted above is something that comes from within. It can be harnessed by a political understanding of where one is and an understanding of one's oppression (Freire,

1972). It also comes from chalking up experiences which put people through adversity and different tests of strength. While O'Shea does not use the term empowerment, the following passage explains how empowerment comes about from an understanding of oppression as Freire (1972) suggests:

> Well, I don't do it all the time, you know, but I tend to speak my mind. Do I think I ought to get away with it? Ahhhh...I think that I have a certain standing within the Movement. You know, I'm an ex-hunger striker, and a lot of respect comes along with that, a long-time commitment to the Army, and now I work here and there's a certain amount of credibility comes along with that. So when I do say something, most people in the Movement would take it, not as me trying to be negative or cynical or destructive...because people who know me understand that there's a certain level of commitment there anyway, and I wouldn't be saying it for any negative reason.
>
> So in that sense, no I'm not surprised I get away with it, I mean, I don't go around every day creating controversy, but on issues where I feel strongly, I would certainly speak out. And the issue of ending the armed struggle was a big issue for me at the time, that I felt the longer it went on, that more life was going to be lost unnecessarily, whether it was our own volunteers, or enemy forces, or civilians, and it wasn't going to be moving the situation forward. So in my view...intellectually it was very clear in my head. I think once you come to the position intellectually, that all emotion sort of...goes out the window. And, you know...some people, even at the time of the ceasefire, were saying how emotional it was, and I didn't feel that way... I just felt well the right decision has been made, let's move on. And without sounding too emotion-less, or being just clinical about things, but that's the way to go. You arrive at a position, within your own mind, you've made up your own mind, you weren't forced along the road to reassess your position. (O'Shea)

Sean's concept of leadership involves assisting the Irish republican community members to empower themselves:

> ...ideologically, I'm not about us as a political party coming to represent you. I'm coming here to help you empower yourselves. Because that's what is important here. And I'm very confident in people when they do empower themselves, they actually make the right choices, whatever they may be, but I have a sense of where they will make the right choices, and you're proven right nearly every time. So it's about having confidence. Martin McGuinness has said "have faith in the

> people, people are your best allies ever". Not a truer word would have been spoken. If you're honest with people, you get respect, you respect people, also give leadership and that's a kind of circular way of doing business. (Sean)

Siobhan's perspicacious explanation of how leadership skills come about also speaks to an empowerment that comes out of adversity:

> The Movement seems to invite a range of talented people. And they have to be particularly motivated because they don't get much pay for it. But we have some exceptionally skilled people and I think what I've found about it is sometimes the person has to self-educate. It's a better outcome and a lot of our people have to self-educate, in terms of negotiating skills, public speaking, or making an argument with the media... There are people who are extremely astute. I just sometimes marvel at how people land with very large tasks, jobs, responsibilities, and it doesn't seem to knock them. Not at all. Whether it's the confidence that people develop by going the hard route, or the slow route...they don't have PhDs or aren't from universities, but they're in to do whatever job is required of them, and they do it very skillfully. (Siobhan)

Irish Republican Social Identity

Reicher et al. (2005) propose that "leadership activity and effectiveness largely revolves [*sic*] around the leader's ability to create identity definitions and to engage people in the process of turning those definitions into practical realities" (556). They suggest that leaders are "entrepreneurs" of identity. They specify four tenets of social influence: that social identities provide the parameters of mass mobilization; that who is included within a social category determines who will be mobilized; that the content ascribed to the social category will determine what they will be mobilized for; and that the prototypes of the category will determine who will be in a position to direct the mobilization (ibid.). In terms of the current study, republicanism is the shared value in a reunified Ireland, in which the Irish people can master their own destiny. All republicans agree, but some do not agree on the strategy to be deployed in order to succeed. Sinn Fein republicans no longer see the armed struggle as a *sine qua non* but, rather, that the

reunification of Ireland, the basic tenet of republicanism which necessitates ridding all parts of Ireland of the British presence, can be achieved through political and peaceful negotiation. Who is included in the social category under consideration, the Republican Movement, is defined as those people who accept that the armed struggle is no longer the viable and most efficient means to attain the above-mentioned aims. However, republicans who think that the current peace process is a "sell-out" and a "betrayal" of the republican martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the cause, fall outside the group in power and efforts to persuading them to back the peace process are engaged. These efforts at persuasion have seen success among many constitutionalist-nationalists[187] and provide hope that their dissident republican counterparts promoting violence will also come to see the Sinn Fein strategy as the best hope of achieving a united Ireland. The prototypes of the category, which in this instance are the Sinn Fein leaders of pro peace process republicans, direct the mobilization. The authors suggest that leaders are "dependent upon followers both conceiving of themselves as a common 'us' and accepting their interpretation of what that implies for action in context" (564).

The Spirit of Community

This common 'us' is the cornerstone of community. In republican terms, it is the salient focus of their organization and undertaking. This is illustrated succinctly by Digger who says: "You can be a leader and you can show leadership, but leadership is nothing if you can't bring people with you. And that's what it's all about" (Digger). This notion that leaders and followers are mutually dependent on each other is further illustrated by Eamonn:

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[187] Constitutionalist-nationalists are those who traditionally voted for the SDLP (Social Democratic and Labour Party) and who were vehement opponents of the IRA's armed campaign. The considerable loss of seats in the Assembly that the SDLP has suffered over the course of the peace process suggests that many have now come to vote for Sinn Fein. It is a point of irony that it is the IRA's campaign of violence that made the peace process possible. Constitutionalist-nationalist efforts to negotiate the permanent departure of the British from the Six Counties had always been ineffectual.

> ...the ANC had said the most important and the most difficult negotiations you'd be in is with your own people. So I think that was a lesson which we absorbed and did use very well. One of the big strengths of our leadership is that we keep constant dialogue going with our grass roots, our own activists. (Eamonn)

> ...because we're leading a Movement through a process of great great change, great challenge, and people left, and people went off and did other things, and some just walked away, and some people think we're traitors, you know, and so it's a difficult process, but the vast majority of people have kept on board, kept faith in a leadership. That's been the same leadership over a remarkably turbulent period of time. So I think this is a testament to great leadership skills. I don't attribute myself in this, but I mean, collectively a leadership which is very much in touch with the people they lead; has a strong sense of what they need to do; because not only have we been trying to lead our own people but we've also been negotiating with the most ruthless, cunning, devious, heartless bunch of people that you could ever possibly meet in the British government and I don't mean by name, not the current government, I mean the British system. They're just completely ruthless and cynical. And so, we've had to really be on our toes to deal with those people...and with the Irish government...So to manage all of that, manage to bring people with us throughout the course of that, and continue to grow, I think that's been a remarkable feat. (Eamonn)

Respect for the community from which they emanate clearly illustrates the point about the mutuality and inter-dependence of leaders and followers. Gerard's take on that relationship is highlighted along these lines:

> I think there's enormous experience and wisdom in our communities going through struggle. But our communities throw up people, you know, this deeper insight as well. They make a contribution. Of course, that's the truth. A single person on his own? A single person couldn't do anything without that community... It's not as though Gerry Adams got everything right in his life. You know what I'm saying? Or anybody could. It comes out of a very specific culture, you know, that's gone through a lot and that has long long memories. We're all brought up on stories of Belfast pogroms and previous decades of struggle, and you know, that's had an impact as well. (Gerard)

And he also shows the agency he believes is inherent in followers:

> Leading who? How can I phrase this? Leading what? I mean, what are you leading? Are you leading a group of people who are just going to bow to your

> vision? You may as well be a shepherd. Because Gerry Adams is not a shepherd. (Gerard)

The respect and commitment for their community is the fundamental basis of their work. As Digger says: "One of the things I've learned over the years is that being a councillor or an MLA doesn't mean anything to me if it doesn't deliver for the community that elected me" (Digger).

Leadership in Prison

Elements of both social identity and collective frameworks for leadership are evident in the prison resistance of Irish republicans. O'Hearn traces the solidarity of blanketmen to the strong oral culture in which they partook (501) since the telling of stories promotes intersubjective communication whereas the written word encourages abstraction and the process of individuation (ibid). This is his starting point for leadership. Whereas social movements scholars who have analyzed leadership tend to dichotomize it in terms of 'people oriented' and 'task oriented' styles, O'Hearn posits that these two aspects should not be separated (502). During intense episodes of contention, charismatic qualities and organizational skills must be combined for maximum effect. Leaders are those who are able to not only combine these abilities, but possess a keen awareness of their environment and the "sentient beings within it" (503). They are able to exercise good judgement about when and how to use these different skills. Moreover, good leaders are those who have the predisposition to put the collective's wellbeing ahead of their own. It is in this respect that good leaders are willing to undertake sometimes dangerous action and encourage others to follow suit. Bobby Sands was such a leader. He was known for his storytelling abilities, his daring, and his indefatigable capacity to keep on fighting the prison authorities and dreaming up new methods of protest. He was responsible for turning some four hundred prisoners into fluent Irish speakers, which in itself

was a resistance tactic since it created a method of communication that was covert, and gave the prisoners agency. He was also known to smuggle vast quantities of material by secreting it in his anus: "Sands always had a parcel up his anus containing communications, writings, a stock of cigarette papers, cling wrap and two shortened ballpoint refills. Prisoners said that he was so organized, he could pull out 'the' comm...he wanted from the dozens that were there" (515). He encouraged others to follow suit, which they did. Successful smuggling not only procured the prisoners needed supplies, but it was a morale boost when they got away with it. Sands was also responsible for orchestrating a vast letter-writing campaign on the part of the prisoners, as a way to broadcast their struggle to the outside. More importantly, with Sands at the helm, prisoners were able to convince a recalcitrant Adams and company on the outside[188] that the Republican Movement should take on the prison struggle. When they finally did, it was the prisoners, via communications from Sands that

> ...provided them with strategies of protest, campaign slogans, and even a utopian analysis of a political way forward in which the movement would nominate prisoners for elected office and then use the legitimacy they gained from electoral victories to build a parallel government in their communities... (518)

The men who were on the blanket with Sands were all young and some would have been friends of his. In conceptualizing leadership, Padraig recounts how his appreciation of leadership changed over time. He discusses both Sands and Hughes, who was older, and who was an IRA leader prior to being in prison:

> In terms of leadership or people thinking of you as being the type of person that would fill that role, they were sort of airy things but they didn't mean a lot. And I suppose to me leaders were more people who had this real presence and charisma about them...Brendan Hughes would have been the OC at the time and to

[188] Adams was not imprisoned at that time, though he had been in briefly in 1978 on charges of IRA membership which were eventually dropped. At the time, those responsible for communicating with the prisoners were primarily Gerry Adams, Martin McGuinness, Tom Hartley and Danny Morrison.

> me...he's a leader because he has a sort of aura or an air. And then in later years, I thought how did I ever think that.[189] But that's changed my thinking (chuckles) [...] When Bobby Sands became OC, I didn't really see Bobby as a leader because he was too much one of the boys. So in terms of where your ideas are coming from, I suppose they are shaped by your whole socialization. Someone who can hold themselves in a particular way, can talk in a particular way, whatever else, suddenly you can create a whole aura of leadership, and they may be total absolute dick-heads (chuckles), with not two thoughts to rub together. I suppose when you're younger, it's more of that outward appearance, or whatever, whereas in the case of Bobby, I thought, he's one of the boys, he's one of us. He's not the leader, but then, when he was in the role, I suppose that was the turning point...because he was someone who could be aware at that moment where he was, that sort of historical moment, realize what has to be done, and step up to the plate to do it. Not in any brash way, I mean, opposite to people, Bobby tried his best to avoid a hunger strike... At the same time, realizing that probably it's going to end up on hunger strike. And then, simultaneously, plan a hunger strike, and then follow through with it. (Padraig)

Padraig's reflections on leadership continued as he was faced with taking on a leadership role after the second hunger strike. Of course, the stakes had changed post-hunger strike, and so did the exigencies of leadership, which required less dramatic courage but nonetheless needed abilities in relating to prison authorities as well as fellow prisoners. In the following passages, one can appreciate the various dynamics at play. On the one hand, one had to interface with the prison authorities:

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[189] Here, Padraig refers to the fact that, after the first hunger strike, Brendan Hughes had changed:

> ...as I was saying before about Brendan Hughes had a bit of a presence, an aura. I didn't have that view of him by '82, and it didn't have to do with the first hunger strike, it was more the behaviour after, and I could see why he was--well, I don't think he ever recovered psychologically from the first hunger strike. The fact that he had been the OC, organized it, called it off, and then, there's a hunger strike and ten people died on it, because the first one didn't work. So I can see how he never really recovered from it but a big part of it was, well part of it for me was when he--other people who were on the first hunger strike continued on in later years to be, to play a part in the wing, whereas Brendan dropped out of everything and became almost anti other leaderships, you know? So it's interesting for someone who I saw way up here, ended up going seriously, Christ, how did you ever, and was it just physical? Is that what impressed you? Like it was an outward sort of thing that really...I don't know. But it had been. Which isn't to take away from all that Brendan did in the cages, even in the blocks, but it was about how people respond to situations , and particularly how they respond when they've made an error of judgement, made a mistake..." (Padraig)

> Well my whole view of leadership developed. [...] After the blanket, you're up against screws...it was screwed up people walking about who appear more aggressive, or just physically bigger, because the screws have to deal with them, and you're thinking that in their heads, they're thinking "oh God, going to have to deal here with Jimmy, and Jimmy's OC. And Jimmy's six foot two, and he's been on the blanket for four years, so and he's just waiting on a chance to get wired into me." So that conditions your view, that your OC was this sort of almost aggressive person, thinking the screws would get the view of, you know, he'll take no shit. (Padraig)

> ...I know for me realizing that we should be operating as a collective so the screws understand it doesn't matter who the OC is, four foot nothing, but if he says "here's what we're doing, here's what we're not doing", now, then they realize that's what it is. (ibid.)

On the other hand, one had to focus on how to best secure conditions that would provide a measure of well-being for one's fellow prisoners:

> ...leadership within the gaol is not really big massive political issues, it's just how 40-odd people live together knowing...social organization: like it's not big IRA decisions, it's just, you know, "the food is cold". What do we do about it? Or how do we get organized so that everybody can get into the shower, get warm water, organize visits, what about exercise, and how do you get in, what are the screws doing. It's very sort of, low-key stuff, but it creates massive problems if it's not working. Somebody gets really hyper about it, so it's how do you do it, and how do you not take things personal, and how do you strategize so that their share has been dealt with, you know, it's been taken on, it's not going to be probably very fast results or immediate results but hopefully it will end up with a result, so it's very focused 'cause everyone's living in the same space, so it's not as if it's some distant person doing something. (Padraig)

Being a leader in prison requires the same elements as in other situations. In the republican instance, collective action remained a focal point for the purposes of negotiating conditions with the authorities. Moreover, a leader needed to be clear-thinking and have organizational abilities that will enable the group to work out a livable collective situation on the wings.

Burns (1978) says there needs to be a "prophet" but leadership requires an institutional and collective dimension as well (239). Philp (2007) mentions that leaders are hardwired with

qualities such as vision, flair and charisma (12). Again, Padraig captures these notions in this way:

> I think it is totally about one's energy. There's a guy in the Movement and a very good thoughtful sort, in particular on socialism, and a bit more radical and such like, but you know, nobody would follow him at all, and I think he won't inspire [...] This fellow just doesn't have it, whereas someone else who wouldn't have formulated the whole idea to the degree that he has, but would have that power, you know, that people would be enthused by it, and say "yeah, I think we should", and you know, could fire up people. (Padraig)

The necessity for collective leadership becomes apparent when one considers that an individual may just attract people without necessarily having the ability to clearly think out and transmit ideas, because she or he has "charisma". On the other hand, there are people, like Gerry Adams, who seem to possess more than adequate amounts of several of the elements that leadership seems to require.

The IRA had been waging an armed offensive since the early 1970s. But it became clear fairly early on that the Movement would eventually have to re-position itself into a situation of political negotiations to achieve their aims. Adams was onto this from early on and made his views clear in his writings from prison. However, the prospect of suggesting a route to negotiations dredged up painful memories of the civil war that erupted in 1920, within the IRA, following Michael Collins' negotiation of the Treaty that partitioned the island in the first place. The war was waged between the IRA's pro- and anti- Treaty factions and was a bloody internecine affair, pitting friend against friend, and family members against each other. Collins was considered a traitor by the anti-Treaty faction for his actions and was eventually assassinated for it. So the specter of suggesting a negotiations route was anathema to the IRA of the 1970s and 1980s. For the pro-Adams agenda to gain traction, the leadership of the IRA had to include

like-minded people, or at least people over whom he could hold sway. Strategically, he quietly and subtly promoted the notion that eventually the Republican Movement would have to move from an armed campaign to a political campaign. He did this in part during his internment in Long Kesh, where he wrote profusely and smuggled articles under the pen name 'Brownie' to *Republican News*. He was out of prison during the hunger strike period, and along with Danny Morrison and Tom Hartley, he co-managed the events during the hunger strike with his counterparts in prison, namely under the leadership of Bobby Sands and Bik McFarlane. Electoral politics, which began to see success in 1981 when hunger strikers ran and won their seats both in the North and South of Ireland, positively influenced the change of course toward politics as republicans honed their ability to gain voter support in elections. Adams was elected in 1983 to represent West Belfast in Westminster.[190] By 1987, he undertook discussions with John Hume, the leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), which led to the publication of "A Scenario for Peace". While there was an assassination attempt on him by loyalists,[191] Adams has not been targeted by the IRA. For he and McGuinness to succeed in steering the movement away from the armed campaign without being taken out, they had to command the respect of an overwhelming majority of IRA supporters. They could not have

[190] As is policy, he abstained from sitting in the Westminster Parliament.

[191] March 14, 1984, Gerry Adams was shot in a car, along with three others (the fourth escaped injury), when he was coming out of a court hearing in Belfast on charges of obstruction. He was shot in the neck, shoulder and arm. The Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF), a loyalist paramilitary organization, claimed responsibility for the attack.(BBC On This Day, n.d.)

achieved this without having gathered around him a solid core of seasoned republicans, esteemed by the community, a great many of whom have been imprisoned for their part in the conflict.[192]

This chapter illustrates a number of key elements that have combined to explicate the nature of leadership in the Republican Movement. Many analysts contend that the "great man" theory of leadership is no longer a viable theoretical construct in leadership studies, however they nonetheless acknowledge the part that charisma and personal demeanor can play (Burns, 1978; Philp, 2007). While the Republican Movement is based on a collective application of leadership, people like Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness, as recounted by the participants in this study, have vision and charisma which conspired to provide them with mobilizing social capital for the peace initiative. This corresponds to Burns' (1978) notion that leadership requires *both* collective elements and a 'prophet'[193] (239), and Philp's (2007) idea that "vision, flair and charisma" are key traits to possess (12). Collectively, this group has been able to maximize its political outcomes by utilizing a wealth of talent among its many leaders, lending credence to Friedrich et al.'s (2009) argument that multiple leaders are necessary in order to exploit the maximum talents which often do not reside in a single individual (935). It has drawn on and illustrated the concepts of commitment, flexibility and empowerment as elements that dovetail with a collective leadership framework. Moreover, it has introduced solidarity as a quintessential aspect of such a theoretical design, at least where protest movements are concerned. Whether it be daily negotiating with their loyalist counterparts in the Assembly, working to harness the

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[192] Of course, not all leaders in the Movement have been in prison. Some prominent individuals, such as Baírbre de Brún and Mitchel McLaughlin have not been in prison and have been leaders since prior to the peace process. Now, there are more people, given the time that has elapsed since the beginning of the peace initiative, who are too young to have faced imprisonment for their involvement. Nonetheless, there are many at all levels of the leadership, who spent years in prison and who work now either as elected officials, or staffers in Sinn Fein.

[193] The term 'prophet' does not appropriately characterize Adams and McGuinness. However parallels can be drawn in terms of the respect they command.

interest and commitment of youth in the community, getting the vote out on election day or discussing issues on British or Irish national media, republican leaders have gone about their work with energy, devotion, humility and conviction. There is no escaping that Adams and McGuinness have set the tone for this, and have served as guides and inspiration. However in the background, there are a number of influential people who are not as well known, but without whom Sinn Fein would not be in a position of relative strength with respect to voter support and to achieving their goal of reunifying Ireland and forming a Republic more attuned to the needs of Irish people on the whole island. This is ongoing and unfinished business. Their ability to tune into and reflect the needs and desires of republicans, by being loyal to republican objectives and keeping an ear to the ground with respect to the community's feelings shows that by keeping a tight focus on a republican social identity, which they also have helped to mold and construct, followers have gladly taken their guidance and put their faith in Sinn Fein's strategy. As Reicher et al. (2005) propose, leaders are *entrepreneurs* of identity and are also dependent on followers for accepting their interpretation of the common "us" (564) and the strategies put forth to successfully achieve the goals of the community.

Leadership talents are partially "hardwired" in individuals; some talents are honed from membership in a covert guerilla army and waging war; and some of these abilities are enhanced by being at the coal face of British oppression and suppression, in the carceral environment, and undertaking collective forms of prison resistance. Whether this resistance has been brought to bear on their overall disposition and experience in leading by providing opportunities to study and debate conflict and politics, or by such violent and extreme forms as the campaign for special status, incredible bonds of solidarity and astute political thinking were developed as a

result of the application of such strategies. The next chapter explores the relationship between such resistance to their imprisonment and their development as leaders. Participants' thoughts will be showcased in order to situate their prison experience and resistance in the overall array of experience which made republican leaders what they are today.

> ***Crucible***, n. *1. A vessel made of a refractory substance such as graphite or porcelain, used for melting and calcining materials at high temperatures. 2. A severe test, as of patience or belief; a trial. 3. A place, time, or situation characterized by the confluence of powerful intellectual, social, economic, or political forces* (Free Online Dictionary)

Prisoners resist their entrapment by asserting their agency and attempting to regain, however small, a measure of control over their persons and their lives. When this resistance is motivated by an overt political agenda, and/or when prisoners are able to act on a collective basis, such resistance can bring about much more than improved conditions. It can fundamentally alter carceral/captive power relations.[194] Moreover, in some instances, highly-organized political prisoner resistance can assist in reconfiguring the contours of an existing political conflict on the outside. Such resistance work is the result of internal organization and discipline, intellectual debate, systematic knowledge acquisition, and the honing of strategic manoeuvers. The by-product is that it helps develop leadership skills among politically-motivated captives, which in turn stands them in good stead to exercise leadership both in prison and once they are released.

In chapter 7 prisoner resistance strategies used by Irish republican prisoners were explored in order to show how historical continuity, community, collective resistance and especially education as resistance molded imprisoned republican activists. It illustrated the transformative experience of imprisonment. Then, chapter 8 focused on research participants' conceptualization of leading and their personal trajectories toward leadership. It shed light on the

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[194] For instance recently, long-term maximum-security prisoners in Lucasville prison in Ohio embarked on a hunger strike to protest their treatment by the prison by saying that death-row prisoners had better conditions. They won their demands within days, and this spurred on other prisoners to fight back in Pelican Bay Prison in California. In addition it sparked debate over the death penalty in Ohio (O'Hearn, 2011). In Canada, prisoners collectively resisted when two prisoners died in solitary confinement, instituting the now 37-year long, internationally observed Prison Justice Day, August 10, where prisoners go on a one-day food and work strike to commemorate those who have died in custody and to raise awareness about their conditions (Gaucher 2002b).

importance of having strong ties to the community, on their humility, and on how the solidarity and loyalty that characterize their relationships are brought to bear on their understanding of leadership. This chapter examines what it is about prison resistance actions that facilitated leadership formation. It establishes a number of elements that helped foster various skills. The following pages expose participants' thoughts on the role that prisoner resistance played in their lives as leaders. Firstly, it establishes the key links between the Campaign for Special Status and the evolution of the peace initiative. Secondly, it speaks to the development of management skills emanating from campaigning for rights within the carceral establishment. Thirdly, this chapter shows the link between education and leadership development. In the last instance, this final section of the thesis discusses resistance as a method of surviving, and how the adversity of being held captive can encourage an individual to dig deep within to find clarity and courage, two of the necessary prerequisites for effective leadership. Such a positioning of prison resistance in the continuum of republican experience adds to already established case studies demonstrating the role such resistance played in leadership development elsewhere (Buntman and Huang, 2000). In the case of the Republican Movement, this leadership development was instrumental in devising and promoting the peace initiative and was key in consolidating support for Sinn Fein, making it a solid political party that has maintained its focus on attaining a united Ireland via exclusively peaceful means. As an example of the role that prisoners played in devising the peace proposal, Siobhan, recounts:

> ...then, the peace process started to dawn in at some point, I think, the late '80s, and somebody came over with a document called 'Towards a Lasting Peace' and he said, "Have some scrutiny with that, have a look at it, and pick holes in it". (Siobhan)

In their study of South African and Taiwanese political imprisonment, Buntman and Huang (2000) posit that "[t]he different levels and forms of political prisoner resistance served to mold and bolster inmates' activist skills both in jail and upon release, in opposing government and becoming the new rulers" (56). According to them, this resistance "...strengthens and enhances the individual and organizational capacities and capabilities of inmates, first in prison, but with consequences for their release" (44). Three factors condition such development. The first is a legitimation factor. Political prisoners are held in high regard by their community because of their loyalty to, and sacrifice for the cause. The second is that surviving and coping with incarceration expands skills knowledge and experience which can be transferred to post-release activity. The third factor is that political prisons can become sites where new power relations are negotiated (ibid.). They chronicle Taiwanese and South African prisoner resistance among which, one of the significant facets shared by both groups is the use of education to expand knowledge and understanding, and train current and future leaders. They argue that

> [i]n both countries' political prisons, education, sport, and cultural and intellectual endeavors were more than a challenge to the regime, though this aspect was an important attribute. They were fundamentally important as a deep form of resistance as prisoners attempted to wrest control from the authorities in ways both large and small. The inmates took the initiative for defining the nature and quality of prison life, as well as the day-to-day organization of the prison world, away from the regime, to whatever extent was possible. The development of a prisoner-run life-world within the prison was also a means to promote and enhance the skills and experiences of individuals. (50-51)

Moreover, Taiwanese and South African political prisoners "sought to maintain their political identity, political education and even political activism in prison in order to shape politics inside, but also beyond the prison" (51). Just as in the South African and Taiwanese examples, in the Irish republican case, the same three factors are present. First, imprisoned activists also

benefitted from a heightened credibility accorded them by their community by the very fact of their incarceration (Shirlow and McEvoy, 2008; Feeney, 2003; O'Shea; Hugh). Second, their skills were enhanced by the strategies they used to survive and cope with their captivity. For instance their ongoing debate on the future direction of the struggle and their commitment to become educated in politics, history and revolutionary writings around the world provided analytical skills that enhanced their capacity to re-think strategy (McKeown, 2001; Ó Mocháin 2011; Ted; Hugh; George). And third, prison was indeed a site where new power relations were negotiated. The campaign for special status, in particular, is an example of the altering of power relations from within the prison (Clarke, 1987; Feeney, 2003). This was done by proving to the Movement that it was not only possible but indeed desirable to run candidates in elections after hunger strikers themselves ran and won on H-Block tickets. Their role in influencing the acceptance of the peace initiative via their prisoner-run publications such as *An GLor Gafa* and their status as a *Cumann* that participated in Sinn Fein *Ard Fheiseanna* by proposing motions to be debated on the floor of the conference are also examples of contributing to the change in the political landscape of the North (McKeown, 2001; Ó MocháinÓ Mocháin, 2010). Republican prisoners also used their temporary parole from prison to meet and discuss the merits of the peace initiative with members of the community (Feeney, 2003). In general, their writings, whether it be in the form of correspondence to those outside the walls, their poetry and music, or their publications in newspapers and magazines were ways in which they imparted their thinking on the future of the republican struggle (*Republican News*, 1975-76; *An Glor Gafa*, 1990 -2000).

Leadership studies pioneer Warren Bennis (2003) advances that adversity or crisis is the crucible upon which leadership is formed. In a number of interviews with famous leaders from

the business, political and arts worlds, his participants refer to difficult moments in their life which they identify as one of the experiential elements that contributed to their leadership development. Norman Lear, for instance, says "everywhere you trip is where the treasure lies" (cited in Bennis, 138). He also cites the poet John Keats who said real achievement comes from "negative capability...when a man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts..." (ibid.).[195] Crucibles such as those referred to by Bennis are akin to Cohen and Taylor's (1972) notion of "...extreme situations in which the man who fights back, who overcomes his environment, who refuses to be beaten down, whatever the odds, is the hero" (129) These authors equate such "man-made horrors" and "natural hazards" such as are the subject of countless adventure stories, with the struggle to survive long-term incarceration. Unlike the adventure hero, however, Cohen and Taylor remark that:

> The long-term prisoner who fights back is not endowed with personal qualities such as nerve, bravery and 'character' nor is he allowed anything like an acceptable set of motives--let alone an ideology--through which his behaviour could be comprehended...on the whole the criminal who can't take his punishment is condemned. (130)

Preceding chapters have set out how the Anglo-Irish conflict is a context in which people are faced with taking vital decisions in their responses to the injustice their communities face and their reaction to security force assaults. They made decisions about their broader involvement in the struggle, particularly the choice to take up arms, and the decision to lay them down again. The conflict is thus a situation of adversity which, in the words of this study's participants, "throws up leaders" (O'Shea, Gerard, George). In other words, the context is conducive to developing leadership. Indeed, such situations demand that someone step up to the plate. The

[195] Lear is well-know for producing such US TV sitcoms as *All in the Family* and *Maude*, but he also achieved prominence as a vocal proponent of First Amendment rights (freedom of speech) and liberal causes. John Keats was an English poet, and one of the key figures of the Romantic Movement.

contention here is that Irish republican prisoner resistance also affected current and future leaders in much the same way Taiwanese and South African prisoner resistance did.

The Campaign for Special Status

The Campaign for Special Status helped develop leadership skills on several levels. Those who participated in it benefitted from Sands' leadership and learned how to lead from having such a model. Bobby Sands was considered "one of the boys", so his becoming OC encouraged a reassessment of what leading entails. It showed other young prisoners that it did not necessarily have to do with being a seasoned Republican, or how having the "aura" of leadership, but that "stepping up to the plate" in the way he did by "simultaneously planning...and going on hunger strike" became the lesson of what leading is all about. He was one of them, yet he was able to plan and participate in a hunger strike. As Adams has often said, speaking of Bobby Sands, "Bobby was an ordinary person who was called upon to do extraordinary things".[196] In addition, Sands encouraged other protesting prisoners to participate in debate, develop strategies and exercise their communication skills through a massive letter-writing campaign (O'Hearn, 2009). Those who went on hunger strike and survived, discovered the depth of their inner strength, an empowering experience for building leadership. Later on, other young imprisoned activists learned from its legacy and the campaign had far-reaching impacts on the entire movement.

In terms of crucibles, there is none more severe than being on a hunger strike and nearing death. Bennis (2003) says "...some magic takes place in the crucible of leadership, whether the

[196] Paraphrasing Gerry Adams' speech at the inaugural Friends of Sinn Fein Canada dinner, in Toronto, November 3, 2001.

transformational experience is an ordeal like Mandela's years in prison or a relatively painless one..." (xx). He contends,

> The individual brings certain attributes into the crucible and emerges with new, improved leadership skills. Whatever is thrown at them, leaders emerge from their crucibles stronger and unbroken. No matter how cruel the testing, they become more optimistic and more open to experience. They don't lose hope or succumb to bitterness. (ibid.)[197]

O'Shea's experience of being on the second hunger strike for nearly two months and being seriously ill when the strike was called off, exemplifies the type of crucible experiences referred to by Bennis. The transformation he underwent is clear in his mind:

> What the hunger strike probably taught me, more than anything, was that the human spirit just has enormous depths, and most people don't realize it, until they're in a situation like that. (O'Shea)

George was also on a hunger strike and was subjected to force-feeding.[198] Overcoming that experience attests to his strength of character. In explaining his ordeal, one can see leadership skills at work in his resistance. The following passage shows the persuasion he used to break the doctors' will to engage in such a form of punishment:

> What they did then, your stomach rejects it, because your stomach's very small, you vomit it up, then they pour it back down, yeah, all that stuff...it was an interesting battle because there were about 10 doctors...and they were supposed to take their turns and I broke them down, talking to them, over a period until there was only three would do it. The three just maintained it.
> (George)

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[197] This citation is used to demonstrate what Bennis means by saying that crucibles are instrumental in the development of leadership. It is not meant to downplay the psychological and strategic complexity of engaging in such experiences as the hunger strike, for instance.

[198] Republican comrade Michael Gaughan died from force-feeding in 1974 while he was imprisoned in Parkhurst on the Isle of Wight. Thereafter, the British government abandoned the practice. Gaughan's death caused controversy in English medical circles, as some forms of treatment can be classed as assault if given without the express permission of the patient (See Coogan, 2002b, pp. 415-418).

For Eamonn, the hunger strike coincided with his imprisonment as a young man of 17, after his involvement in the IRA. This whole period had a significant impact on him:

> The major event around that time, that was 1981, was obviously the hunger strikes. ...Obviously as the gaol protest developed, we would have been on protest and marching from the late '70s into 1980 and the first hunger strike. There would have been quite a lot of activity then. The second hunger strike involved someone from our village who died on hunger strike. I knew him as a kid. So that I suppose heightened it even more. We would have been fairly active then, myself, brothers, friends--we were all involved in the Republican Movement. We were arrested in June 1981, just after Ray McCreesh died, a couple of weeks after that, and five of us, an older brother of mine and three friends--we grew up together--all ended up in gaol. So that had a huge impact on me, because it confirmed my Republicanism and deepened my understanding...Having just got involved in the excitement of active Republicanism as a teenager--you actually got some space where you could sit down and read, discuss politics and develop your political thinking. (Eamonn)

In terms of the impact of the campaign on the leadership and on the Movement, Hugh provides a comprehensive overview of the breadth of the mark it left:

> People developed politically in prison...One of the biggest aspects to it was the H-Block protest and the hunger strikes because, that's not just prison, that was a key focus and the coal face of pushing this struggle forward [...] The whole H-Block protest and particularly the hunger strike has gelled a lot of people whether they were outside or inside. Martin McGuinness and Gerry Adams were outside as well as Danny Morrison, and others, but they've all been in prison. Everybody is locked on the importance of the development of that struggle because the prison struggle played a huge part.
>
> What makes our struggle slightly different is that the prisoners broke the back of the criminalization policy that was designed to break Republican struggle. It was the prisoners along with the Relatives' Action Committees, and then the H-Block/ Armagh Committees. But prisoners broke the Brits on a key plank of destruction of republicanism...by criminalizing our struggle and the prisoners defeated that. And so that is one of the key factors as to why the prison, and the H-Block protest and the hunger strike are so deeply ingrained upon our leadership, upon our membership, and upon people who weren't born and who are now involved in struggle...
> There are students who talk to me, who weren't born in 1981, and they talk to me about Bobby Sands, and they want to ask questions and they want to do

> something about the H-Block hunger strikes. To me this is powerful because it's huge the impact that it had! So, it's ingrained, and it's getting bigger, and there's more interest coming in it. And then, of course, the further you get away from something as severe as that, the more people want to make documentaries and films about it. 'Cause it's safer to touch now than it was 10, 15, 20 years ago. And when Steve McQueen made the film *Hunger*, he just blew the Brits away with it. It was absolutely immense and has had a huge impact. (Hugh)

Eamonn discusses how the hunger strikes, as a crucible, deeply inspired activists to continue the struggle:

> It's almost a cliche to say it's like "our 1916". But I think it was, for this generation, a very defining moment when people consolidated their belief that the struggle that we were involved in was correct. You know we had been battered--the '70s was a turbulent period, because people got involved thinking it would be over in two years...from the mid 1970s on, you really saw the the British government taking a very strong determined long-term policy of trying to deal with this conflict so I think it dawned on a lot of people that this was going to be a long-term game to struggle through. The hunger strikes cemented all of that and we were really in a very long-term life or death battle which was going to be very difficult. It wasn't just going to be like the War of Independence, over in two years, you know, lose some people, but make some significant political gain; this was going to be a long hard struggle and we needed to be organized and educated for it and determined. In that sense, it confirmed the nature of the struggle and sorted out the wheat from the chaff. And people who were determined to go on with it, stayed with it, and those who weren't, perhaps left [...]
>
> And then the sacrifice of the hunger strikers inspired people. The '80s were...a long hard difficult struggle as well, a lot of people were dying, and I suppose that inspiration from the hunger strikers, people who not only fought on the outside, but fought using their bodies when they were in prison, determined not to be criminalized, or determined to prove the integrity of the struggle. And I think that has always been a kind of inspirational thing for people. Whenever you are at low ebb or facing into more and more struggle or challenge, you can always draw on that, to give you some sense of strength. (Eamonn)

The memories of the campaign for special status are still difficult for the Republican community. It is, in many ways, the touchstone of the struggle and the benchmark for commitment. In this sense, it has been the well from which to equip and re-equip activists with the necessary

determination to keep up the struggle. The decision to present H-Block candidates in elections was an idea that emanated from prison (O'Hearn 2006, 2009), and the success of their elections forever changed the contours of the struggle. It is the genesis of the peace initiative, since once it was clear that republicans and nationalists would support IRA prisoner candidates, Sinn Fein undertook to systematize the political route and invest in electoral politics. This was a winning strategy and helped to tip the balance between politics and armed struggle. Once it was perceptible that politics was a viable route, and since it was becoming clear that the armed campaign had reached an impasse, Adams moved on drafting "A Scenario for Peace" and undertook talks with John Hume of the SDLP. Six years had elapsed between the end of the hunger strike and the publication of that document. It was, in large measure, the work of protesting prisoners with help from their comrades outside, that was responsible for bringing about a change in republican strategy.

The Development of Management Skills in Prison

Shirlow and McEvoy (2008) discuss the role of former prisoners (both republican and loyalist) in conflict transformation and argue that former prisoners were key actors in persuading their communities at a grass roots level to forego violence, and have been instrumental in leading restorative justice (RJ) initiatives to counter anti-social and violent behaviour in their home communities (137-139). Moreover, they have managed sectarian tensions at interface areas and have acted as stewards in contentious marches (131). They argue that former prisoners have exercised "small 'p' political leadership" by promoting "...values of non-violence, human rights,

inclusiveness, and respect and tolerance for differences..." (127).[199] Among the activities in which former prisoners have been involved are:

> Direct services such as counseling and training for ex-prisoners and their families; capacity building in local communities; ex-prisoner self-help initiatives including conflict related tourist programmes delivered by former combatants; community based anti-poverty and anti-racist work; resolving disputes at interface areas and concerning contested marches; community based restorative justice as alternatives to punishment violence; youth diversionary work; initiatives on dealing with the past including truth recovery, developing relations with former enemies and victims of violence and devising forms of memorialisation and commemoration; equality and human rights campaigning, and a host of other related activities. (McEvoy and Shirlow, 2009, 34)

It is their contention that former prisoners on both sides of the divide have "finely honed antennae" tuned to the potential for expanding their political base and exercise "considerable dexterity" in surmounting political difficulties (125). Because ex-prisoners are considered by the community as having "done their bit" on their behalf, they have respect and credibility (126). In turn, they have brought legitimacy to RJ initiatives and Shirlow and McEvoy argue that they are highly skilled activists and charismatic RJ practitioners (127). Further, they say that particularly in republican areas, "...there are high levels of community expectation upon former Republican prisoners that they will take on leadership roles at all levels" (139). In support of the above argument, Bob makes the connection between former prisoners' abilities in leadership and prison resistance:

> ...it's another way of saying it is having confidence in your abilities. Michael Culbert, who's now Director of the *Coíste*, he talks about the first time they challenged the way in which the prison was run, after all the protests and so on.

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[199] The actual quote from the book is: "By working with and proscribing in a very public fashion to values of no-violence, human rights, inclusiveness, and respect and tolerance for differences, such former prisoners have provided significant small 'p' political leadership in transforming community attitudes to violence" (127). The word *proscribing* in this sentence is clearly erroneous and probably should have been *prescribing.* This was changed in a later article to read: "By working with, *and aligning themselves in a very public fashion* to values on non-violence..." (McEvoy and Shirlow, 2009, 42)

> And then, they just challenged the governor's rule, and managed to win cases in court...And it was just, challenge, challenge, challenge the whole time, you know? And, it takes a certain personality, but it also takes a lot of confidence in your own ability to do that and to keep having a go, keep having a go. And, it takes support, so it's like your own confidence but it's also the support of your comrades...
>
> I think there's no doubt prison had a huge formative experience...All the backroom staff for the political project, and now the governmental project, are, by and large, ex-prisoners, like Padraig Wilson, Aidan McAteer, they're all key advisors, they're all ex-prisoners, in some shape or form. (Bob)

To highlight his point, he suggests that this leadership emanates in part from ex-prisoners' experience as Volunteers in the IRA and then draws the connection between prison and political activism:

> It was seen as an extension of the struggle in the first place anyway, you know--armalite in one hand, ballot paper in the other. So this is now a new area of struggle, so it's natural ex-prisoners would be to the fore in that. There are many people who described actual elections, going out to canvass, as part of a military exercise--that's how it was conceived of by the Republican community, and many of the canvassers would have been ex-prisoners. That was when you saw it most, that the ex-prisoners would be actively involved, because there are clear, discrete roles for them... It was most clear, the transition from gaol to political activism, during election time. (Bob)

In their discussion of DDR (Disarmament, Demobilisation, Reintegration), McEvoy and Shirlow (2009) quoted former UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan as saying that post-conflict stability and recovery necessitates the DDR of former combatants (35). Of all the "non-state armed groups", they assert that the IRA has been at the forefront and has moved the most on demobilization (ibid.). They cite republican ex-prisoner Seanna Walsh reading a statement on behalf of the IRA in 2005 in which he said: "...volunteers should 'assist the development of purely political and democratic programmes through exclusively peaceful means'" (36). Hugh explains the role that ex-prisoners played in the difficult task of persuading their communities to get behind the peace process:

We have a leadership there and one of them is the joint, the Deputy First Minister in government, and another one is the junior Minister and we have a number of ministerial positions, some of whom are ex-prisoners. You know, Martin McGuinness, Gerry Kelly, Conor Murphy, these are all ex-prisoners, there's a load of ex-prisoners up there. And even on our own Caral Ni Chuilin, MLA here, is a former prisoner as well. So you have all these people at a at a middle level and then at a senior level of leadership who have an absolute phenomenal amount of respect within their own communities, from Adams and McGuinness, to Kelly and Pat Doc,[200] you can go through every one of them. Now it's because there's a gel in there and there has been a bedrock of NOT stepping outside to do their own thing. And not worrying about furthering their own careers. People recognize this, because when they move, they move with the people and they move in the midst of the people, and they make themselves available to the people.

I would be with Gerry Kelly at different meetings over the years when the changing nature of circumstances away from military activity and the specific political activity was difficult especially in areas that we came up in and grew up in 'cause they are hard hard working class areas with tough people who were on the receiving end of some of the worst excesses of state violence historically over 40 years.

And I would tell people, "we're not going to shoot anybody anymore and we want you to support us, because we're going to go totally and absolutely, everybody, all our volunteers were told, no more weapons, you're now instructed to devote your energies solely and specifically to political activity". Their first question is, "who's going to defend these areas against the onslaught of loyalists?" You have to work your way through the arguments about the changing nature of circumstances and our leadership have been able to do that. And they get shouted at...and they come back again. And they won't walk away. So they've got credibility and integrity; they've got respect in the areas, and they are gelled and they're in the position, the collective position over years, from the hunger strike period and before it, many of these people were stuck in the midst of our leadership and are still there. They didn't take themselves off, they're still in leadership positions. They're all in leadership positions and they were key, and a focal point for the development going back to the early 1980s. (Hugh)

[200] "Pat Doc" refers to Pat Doherty who is an MLA for West Tyronne and is considered a central figure in the peace process. He was Vice-President of Sinn Fein from 1988 to 2009. http://www.sinnfein.ie/contents/14976

As the above passage illustrates, Freire's (1972) notion of dialogical interaction is evident in the approach used to persuade the republican community to get behind the peace process. On liberation, Freire notes:

> Because liberating action is dialogical in nature, dialogue cannot be *a posteriori* to that action, but must be concomitant with it. And since liberation must be a permanent condition, dialogue becomes a *continuing* aspect of liberating action. (134)

O'Shea discusses specifically how leadership skills are honed in prison, and upon release how those in outside leadership positions recognized that prisoners do develop good management skills.

> Well..we were faced with a situation in prison and it was often a very dangerous situation, where you were in constant conflict...well, you were in conflict at some times, and you were in negotiations at other times, and you were protesting and it was a constant battle up until probably 1989. By '91, the prison administration had effectively thrown in the towel. But, up until that period, it was a constant battle. And, you know, you were involved in organizing, organizing protests, trying to think of new ways to put pressure on the administration, and then, you were also involved in negotiation, even on a very basic level within your wing, and then within a block, and then on a wider global level within the camp. So, in terms of leadership, it certainly prepares you. I mean, when I came back out of prison, I was effectively thrust into, not a senior leadership level within the Army, but certainly at a middle level anyway, so you know, people outside obviously recognized that you had acquired management skills, for want of a better word, within prison. And they wanted to put them to use. (O'Shea)

Similarly, Siobhan draws the same conclusion when discussing taking on leadership positions in prison and contributes this:

> I think it's also considered to be a good experience for a prisoner. So it would be considered kind of "it would be good for her to do that." It's quite sensible because it can give people quite a lot of confidence as well. It's like a minor management role. If you've got 20 or 30 women Republican prisoners and you're the person in charge of overseeing every challenge that must be taken to the governor, every request, every special visit that must be...that's a large area of

> responsibility so it's actually very good working experience for afterwards. And it probably gives them a lot of confidence, you know. (Siobhan)

Participating in IRA prison structures and being responsible for the smooth functioning of a wing in prison, especially since these republican prisoners had more than normal control over their affairs, helped develop skills that could be transferred outside. Whether it has to do with the ability to chair a meeting, or to delegate tasks, such experience was helpful in their later leadership outside.

The Impact of Education as Resistance on Leadership

As is noted in Chapter 7, education was a pervasive, traditional resistance tactic throughout incarceration periods from internment to the release of prisoners, and took place among all prisoners, regardless of where they were. From Frongoch to Mountjoy Gaol, Long Kesh and Armagh Prison for women, to prisons in Britain, education was a priority. Gerard contributes to the notion of how it prepared him for a return to the struggle:

> But you're in the culture, of course, it's all part of the resistance and a lot of people, some with great insight and intelligence, and knowledge, and seemed to have the answers and you listen to these people too. So it was a real education being there. And you're in a situation where a lot of people are discussing matters. You know, the failings of the Movement, where we're going wrong, what we need to correct things. So you come out armed with all of that insight as well. I'm saying my own...I just got the feeling "yes, I know exactly!" Whereas before I just wanted to be a part of it, be prepared to slot in somewhere and do what I was told. When I got out, I knew what I wanted to do. I knew what my contribution could do. That was the big change in those two and a half years. (Gerard)

Eamonn talks about how the focus on reading and debating helps to develop one's political thinking:

> We were arrested in June 1981, just after Ray McCreesh died, a couple of weeks after that, and five of us, an older brother of mine and three friends--we grew up together--all ended up in gaol. So that had a huge impact I suppose on me,

> because it confirmed my Republicanism, deepened my understanding--obviously it was a space where you could ...having just got involved in the excitement of active Republicanism as a teenager--you actually got some space where you could sit down and read, and you know, discuss politics and develop your political thinking. (Eamonn)

Being tasked with a leadership role in the prison in regards to education is a key way to develop leadership skills. Getting involved through research was part of it. Joe contributes the following:

> Nobody would ever be given roles straight away to do anything. We all chipped in and did maintenance work on the wing and things like that...Most people would get a few months to settle in but I found myself being a wee bit bored so I wanted ...to get involved in things, politically. So I got a bit of work up and running, 'cause there was an interest and people saw that there was sense in what I was trying to do. I did some intelligence work and did a bit of research work as well. I did one on the British Army. Just getting books on the British Army, breaking them down, trying to write up a bit of an analysis of how they were structured and their history and how they saw themselves, and how they described their own weaknesses just...so people could get their heads around where they are based, get a political perspective on what other battles they're involved in, and try to get a bigger picture of their involvement in Ireland...There would have been discussions in the paper about where British troops would be deployed and how much it was costing to deploy them and if there was going to be an end to the Cold War and, just trying to get a handle on all that. We may have been a small part of that, but part of it nonetheless...The many military troops that have been tied up in Ireland: break down their structures and look at what the different groups tended to be that were operating here and what was the nature of their structures...I felt positive about doing it and that's gone on. (Joe)

Eamon, who holds an important position in the Belfast Assembly, draws immediate connections between being incarcerated, getting educated within the walls and his entry into electoral politics.

> I was sentenced to 5 years. I ended up doing 2 and a half years. So I had an opportunity to get involved in reading more, political dialogue, more structured political dialogue. It was just at the end of the Blanket protest so we had access to books and our own clothes and association with other prisoners and all of that so... People were organizing in the prison, organizing the Republican structure in the prison, after the blanket, having an education going, discussion, dialogue,

> reading and all that. So it was kind of like finishing school, I suppose in a certain sense.
>
> When I came back out of gaol again, then, in '84, Sinn Fein had become more electorally active. So then, I got involved with Sinn Fein, and started organizing our area. We started building up the party...across this constituency and stand candidates for elections. Eventually, I ended up standing for election myself as a councillor, a local government councilor, in 1989, and was elected for the first time. So I served in the local council for 8 years... (Eamonn)

Many republican prisoners did formal university programs and some have attained the highest level of university education. Bob draws attention to women republican prisoners:

> I think prison had a lot to do with it but not everything. If you think about the level of comradeship that people had, you know, it was much more easy to create, and the level of education that went on in gaol, and incidentally the female prisoner is an important one, you know, there are people like Rosie McCorley, who's now an advisor up at the Assembly, she was an OC in Maghaberry, Ella O'Dwyer, Dr. Ella O'Dwyer, who still writes for APRN, you know? and just produced a biography, a memoir of Sheena Campbell. She would see that as an extension of her Republican commitment, which partly, she was kind of schooled in the gaol, you know.[201] (Bob)

The Freirian approach to learning provided imprisoned republican activists with a framework that was conducive to leadership. Freire's (1972) anti-hierarchical revolutionary notion of education, and the *Training for Transformation* (Hope and Timmel,1984) series that used Freire's principles in a guide for facilitating group organization and discussion, were instrumental in providing leadership skills. Ted explains what that learning provided in terms of community leadership:

> The *Training for Transformation* books[202] became standard texts on how to deal with issues, how to ask questions as opposed to giving dogma. What that gave you was a set of skills which says "I need to be involved in the community." But

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[201] Others who have attained PhDs include Laurence McKeown and Deaglán Ó Mocháin, Pat Magee. See Bibliography.

[202] See Hope and Timmel,1984.

> not in the sense of taking over the community but to go into the community, trying to build its capacity. As soon as it has built its capacity, then you move on to something else.
>
> It's this idea of a political cadre, where the job of a political cadre is to make him or her redundant as soon as possible--where you go into an area and you try to build its capacity, and then, you move on. So that's been my candlelight as well. So if you go up the Falls, we have the Falls Youth Providers...the Residents' group... (Ted)

One can see the very real application of *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* in which Freire (1972) explains the notion of praxis which is action combined with reflection (75). Freire says:

> It is as transforming and creative beings that men, in their permanent relations with reality, produce not only material goods--tangible objects--but also social institutions, ideas, and concepts. Through their continuing praxis, men simultaneously create history and become historical-social beings. (91)

Ted was very active in the prisoners' campaigns from the time of his release in December 1988. He shares the trajectory his leadership took:

> So by 1988, we were well established and I was due for release in December. And so I come out in February, and then, June, on parole. So I met the leadership here in the city. And then you're having this conversation about how you're coming out of gaol in December, what do you want to do? This is where we think you're going to be best suited. So I had about 8 or 9 months before I come out of gaol. I knew exactly what it was I was going to be doing and who it was I was going to be working with. So just to make that transition from prison...
>
> I was working on behalf of the prisoners, the prisoners' families, and all the prisoner campaigns. So I got out on the 20th of December 1988 and I had my first press conference on the 21st... It was the next day. Okay? So yeah, that was a good baptism. 'Cause we kicked in already by then, from inside the prisons in terms of the life-sentence prisoners...the Life Review battle.
>
> The life-sentence review was a good starting point for us 'cause I knew all the issues...in the prison. So for me to be a spokesperson for that campaign seemed logical. So that's why I was only out one day. Because they were coming out on Christmas parole, for the first time, and that's why we did a press conference... and it was a bit of a disaster but it was okay. I mean, some of the questions, you could see now, you should have answered better.

> So, that was me in ’88...So all the campaigns you can think of, in terms of prisoners, the strip-search campaign against the women prisoners, prisoners in England, prisoners in Germany, prisoners in America, all that became our remit. The Crumlin Road Gaol, the forced integration of republicans and loyalists, the prisoners in Portlaoise, anything to do with republican prisoners became our responsibility.
>
> It hasn’t left you if you know what I mean. You’re still part of that group. You’re never not an ex-prisoner, if you know what I mean... You’re just a former prisoner and you’re always going to be.
>
> You can’t walk out of that. So, that took you down a road then. If you had 700 prisoners, with 700 families, then, how did you start to work with the families? So the first thing we decided, about 1990, was we needed a centre for republican prisoners. But you also needed one for loyalist prisoners... So by 1991, we’re actually negotiating with the loyalist prisoners...now the war’s still going on! (Ted)

McEvoy and Shirlow (2009) explain that the prisoners exercised small “p” leadership and were instrumental in advancing peace. This is evident in the following passage where Ted takes us through the process of getting beyond armed conflict by focusing on the needs of released prisoners, be they loyalist or republican:

> But for us as prisoners, whether you were loyalist or whether you were republican didn’t matter. So we formed a joint committee. It’s about 1991 going into ’92. And we were talking together, this was years before the politicians were because, for any prisoner coming out of gaol, first of all you’re trying to get your head around the whole psychology of trying to reintegrate back into society. And how do you get a house? And how do you get a job? And how do you get money to live? Those were the issues so it didn’t matter whether you were loyalist or republican. So we came together and formed a joint committee called PROPP: The Progressive Release of Political Prisoners. And that was mostly UVF and Republican prisoners. The UDA was in at the start but then, they were never organized as a structure the way the UVF was. So eventually we got funded... The sponsor from England, the Roundtree Trust came over to meet us. And so you know, like an icebreaker, we’re all sitting...the Quakers was our neutral venue.

> You had to hang your weapons up on the door before you went in so it was like a sacred zone where you could meet in total safety. So that was us in those early meetings.
>
> Yeah, so you imagine this person. A guy come over from England...and you done the icebreaker. Alright, so you can imagine your man in this room. So you introduce yourselves "I'm Billy Hutchison, UVF lifer", "I'm Marty Snodden, UVF lifer", "Tony Catney, Republican lifer", "Jennifer ....., republican, 20 years," do you know what I mean? And you're going around the room and your man says, "I've heard of cross-community, but you're not going to get much crosser".
>
> So, he had no problem of giving us the money, and that's it. That's what started Tar Anall,[203] here in the Falls, and EPIC, which is the Ex-Prisoners Interpretive Centre, on the Shankill. And we've had that relation ever since. (Ted)

In terms of dealing with sectarianism, the fact that loyalist and republican prisoners began to speak to each other, whereas in the past they had been mutual targets for assassination, was a significant development in the normalization of relations between the two antagonistic communities. This is not widespread and there still exists important tensions on the street between these two communities, but there has been a visible improvement. Republicans have long-held that their enemy was not loyalists or unionists, but Great Britain. Without such an understanding, it is doubtful that communication between the two groups would have been possible. Martin McGuinness' ability to co-govern with his nemesis Ian Paisley of the Democratic Unionist Party speaks loudly to the republicans' anti-sectarian positioning. It should be mentioned that all republican elected leaders undertake to work *with* their unionist counterparts.

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[203] Tar Anall is "a drop in centre for ex-prisoners and ex-prisoner's families in Ireland. Tar Anall supports and provides services for those who have been directly affected by imprisonment as a result of the political conflict'". http://www.heartprojectbelfast.com/default.aspx?CATID=5838. Last retrieved October 11, 2011.

Overcoming Adversity as a Crucible of Leadership

The prison experience and resistance were not the only features of the conflict to have assisted in the development of leadership skills and it would be erroneous to suggest as much. Growing up in a family that is harassed by the authorities because of their republicanism, being on active service in the IRA, and being the target of violence on the streets, are all fear-inducing and it requires courage to confront this type of adversity. For instance, Eamonn talks about the imprint of his uncle's incarceration on the family and explains that his (Eamonn's) political activity was ensured by the harassment he and his family suffered at the hands of the authorities:

> He was in for about 18 months, I think. He was my mother's only sibling, and he had no kids of his own, so they were very close, and he was very close to us. So, he ran a bar...in which we worked from when we were kids, and it would have been considered a republican bar... There was a lot of political talking so, it's almost an education working there, as a child and listening to all these conversations. So we grew up fairly steeped in it, so when the Troubles[204] happened, it was inevitable that we became more politically conscious of where we fitted in terms of the power struggle between the British and what was going on in the country. And also, because of the fact that we were identified as a republican family, we would have been singled out for particular attention from the British or the British Army. The house would have been raided... So I suppose that had a reinforcing effect in that we probably would have drifted toward political activity, but the fact that we were singled out for attention ensured that that was the case. (Eamonn)

Moreover, being on active duty in the IRA and the "24/7" aspect of it, certainly poses enormous challenges in terms of adversity and difficult life conditions.

> I think there's a process. There's a process in...struggle, revolution...there's great pressure. This was the throes of revolution, this was something that was happening every day. I mean I was busy, every day. I was a republican 24/7. And, therefore, in circumstances like that, leadership is thrown up. It's the only way I can describe it. 'Cause you can't plan for leadership in those circumstances....there was no leadership classes, there was no officer classes,

[204] The "Troubles" is a euphemistic term to refer to the Anglo-Irish conflict. It is not generally used by Republicans because it tends to diminish the extent and brutality of the conflict.

> there was none of that, you know? What happened was that you floated to the top because you took on responsibility. I mean, you took on responsibility, and a lot of it was experimental, so... if they thought somebody would be able to do it, so they'd give you the responsibility and then , you know, they'd find that that's not where your strengths are. In other circumstances you plan it, you know, and you train for it, and you do this. In this circumstance, there wasn't. (George)

The terror felt by activists on the street is very powerful. Liam recalls:

> Well, of course you're scared. I mean being stopped on a lonely country road at two o'clock in the morning by the UDR when you know the UDR have been involved in assassinations is quite scary...you'd be traveling those roads late at night and that was pretty scary! In 1972, I had a couple of shots fired at me. The Brits opened fire on me during internment week and the bullets hit the wall behind me and then at a riot, there were shots fired at me [...] as I was walking along the Falls Road in '72; and then loyalists opened fire on my wife and myself on Christmas Eve, we were walking down the Falls Road, and then there were reports they were trying to put a bomb underneath my car; and then I was in the cemetery when Michael Stone was trying to kill [us] and then in the gaol. There was a lot of violence in the Crum the last time I was in. There were stabbings and boiling water poured over people, assaults, trying to cut throats and all that there between the Loyalists and their selves. So the thing is that you try to rationalize the fear but it's interesting because [...] to tell you the truth, when I got into the Crumlin Road Gaol, it was like a weight had been lifted off my shoulder, and I hadn't appreciate the stress that I had been under in the previous twenty--twenty five years". (Liam)

In other words, arrest and imprisonment are not necessarily the most terrifying part of the struggle. Managing to stay alive on the street could easily outdo the fear of captivity. And this is a powerful reminder that the brutality endured by republican prisoners is but one facet of the general terror of being involved in the conflict. While prisoner resistance is an important and even crucial part of their development, one should not underestimate the armed struggle as a powerful crucible. So braving the conflict on the streets is a crucible that can benefit leadership development. Yet, there was an understanding that leadership involved much more than brute courage and daring. George discusses the conscious effort to train leaders from prison:

> At a later stage actually, in gaol, for people going out of gaol again, we would have done lectures which was sort of focusing people in on what leadership means, and how you act as a Republican, and what's important, and the principles that you have to have and all of that. That's something we worked up by discussing these things out. (George)

This points to the fact that leadership was important to republicans and upholding a certain standard of behaviour was a key part to exercising leadership.[205] It is important to republicans to adopt exemplary behaviour which bolsters their credibility and encourages others to emulate them. It acts as a significant antidote to the misplaced British security apparatus-inspired reputation of being thugs and criminals. The seriousness with which they approach the cause of liberation is palpable at every turn.

Prisoners' carceral journey was an education in itself. The continuity of the prison struggle has been important in helping republican prisoners cope with their captivity. Siobhan is eloquent on this point:

> ...when you're talking about leadership qualities...in a sense, the prison struggle is a kind of journey. Like I said in the first part, it's a heavy trip. But you get inspiration from the other ones and you get your guidance as well, like "don't do that", "that's going to end up in shit". Or you might end up trying something, and someone will say "no, that doesn't work, try another angle, let's look at something else here". So in that sense, it is like a graduate course, you know, you're offered a course and you're a PhD by the end of it. That is kind of a leadership in itself too. So the prisoner that's been in the longer length of time is the person who actually takes responsibility for the other ones coming in, and shows them the ropes and makes sure they get their act together and that they're coping ok and that they're making the best possible use of their time in gaol. (Siobhan)

She also addresses the psychological anatomy of resistance. It has to do with having more latitude to fight when one has "nothing to lose". When one faces constant oppression, one can

[205] In my observation of republicans, I have noted that such behaviour includes a calm and sober demeneaor and the utilization of a language that is devoid of sectarian references or excessive terminology.

become fear-less. Since fear can sometimes prevent people from acting or fighting back, taming the terror one feels can build up the capacity to fight:

> And one of the screws said to us afterwards, after about three years, he said "we always felt when we got you to this prison that we'd break you." But, they openly admitted that they couldn't. Because you actually come to a point, especially for life-sentences, when you've got nothing to lose; if you're consistently oppressed, or put down, you actually stop...there's nothing... Well, you do care about being put down, but they can't hurt you anymore. We didn't get into physical battles with them, psychological battles probably, more than anything else, but we never gave up and we fought the system for other women as well which is important...psychologically, funny enough, after a certain length of time, you don't mind it, it gets easy, the fear goes out of you, you don't have any fear anymore.
>
> I've met very few people actually who've not wanted to have something to do with the Republican Movement. You know, write an article up for the An Phoblacht, a weekend of your time, or go to a march or something. Not too many people just want to go away...I would have ended up being involved in the Movement one way or another 'cause that's what I'm about. It doesn't go away, you know. It's part of what you are... (Siobhan)

Hugh explains how the centrality of prisoner resistance is situated among other facets of adversity brought on by the conflict:

> Well I think it's probably multi-faceted in the sense that people come to struggle because of some sort of impact that it's had on their life. You know, people went to prison because they got involved in struggle so you need to ask why did you get involved in *conflict*! So you need to go back [snaps his fingers]: Civil Rights Campaign when we were all beat off the streets, so '69 for a lot of us was the influential thing and 1969 was a crucial time for responding to the State violence. *However*, taking it on from there, most people in leadership positions, both at middle leadership and senior leadership, the vast majority of them have been in some shape or form of internment or sentence. So, most of our people at senior leadership or middle leadership have had some form of going through the prison. Now, prison is hugely important to us, right, because it shaped a lot of our political thinking from in there. People developed politically in prison, so there's a crucial aspect to it, and one of the biggest aspects to it is the H-Block protest and the hunger strikes because, that's not just prison, that was a key focus and the coal face of pushing this struggle forward. (Hugh)

One garners from this passage that, while leadership may find its roots in the initial context of violence on the streets and the response to state authorities' assaults, resisting political incarceration is singled out as a key factor in developing leadership via political education and undertaking campaigns for improved conditions, most notably the campaign for special status, aimed at countering the criminalization of the entire republican struggle *in-* and *ex-carcere*.

This chapter has shown how the participants in this study understand the role that imprisonment played in their development as leaders in the transition to the peace process. The republican community fought back state repression with all the means at their disposal. Republicans were not only incarcerated for their actions but often simply for their ideology. As Freire (1972) reminds us: "In order to dominate, the dominator has no choice but to deny true praxis to the people, deny them the right to say their own words and think their own thoughts" (121). In the face of such denial in prison, they resisted the regime and even created space in which to resist, where there was none. Republicans in or out of prison recognize that change comes about when leaders and the people act in unison. The lessons learned in prison, notably though not solely from Freire (1972), assisted in the transformation of the political lay of the land:

> The revolution is made neither by the leaders for the people, nor by the people for the leaders, but by both acting together in unshakable solidarity. This solidarity is born only when the leaders witness to it by their humble, loving, and courageous encounter with the people. Not all men have sufficient courage for this encounter--but when men avoid encounter they become inflexible and treat others as mere objects...(124).

Internalizing this lesson is, in large part, responsible for a range of developments in the Republican Movement. The level of solidarity apparent in the republican community and the painstaking process, eloquently described by Hugh, of going to meet with the people in order to

persuade them to back the peace process and to continue to support Sinn Fein, testifies to this. Sinn Fein has continued to make gains, most notably in recent times, in the South. In the face of the gravity of the faltering economy, Irish citizens have recognized that Sinn Fein is a party that speaks *with* the people about the necessity of ending corporate greed and the complicity of government in bolstering banks rather than community. Moreover, Sinn Fein has highlighted the contradiction in the fact that Martin McGuinness of Derry in the North ran for the Presidency of Ireland but Northerners could not vote for him. The appropriateness of reuniting Ireland is thus made more palpable. If reunification is the eventual result of the current political context, then the wager that a United Ireland was possible while putting weapons beyond use, will have been won.

At the outset, this dissertation sought to explore one element that helped make the Irish peace process a relative success. More particularly, I focused on the actions of the Republican Movement in helping to secure talks, and on its commitment to a way forward politically, which transformed the zone of conflict that was the North of Ireland into a democratic transition zone. This investigation examined the nature of leadership in the Republican Movement and teased out some of the ways in which imprisoned leaders developed their skill set in order to persuade the community to adopt a radical change of strategy. In particular, this work focused on the massive and sustained incarceration of republican activists and how they systematically resisted that domination and suppression. It captured how collective acts of resistance played a part in honing the strategic leadership development of a group of activists who were or who became leaders of the Movement. This concluding chapter briefly reviews the main findings of the study. It addresses the contributions that this dissertation brings to scholarship, and discusses new questions that it elicits and which are worthy of further exploration.

To set the stage for the main components, that is, prisoner resistance and leadership development, this dissertation analyzed the ensemble of state security measures of the British government that were ostensibly implemented to respond to the crisis in the North, but that exacerbated the conflict. Rather than quell the IRA, military measures such as internment and the lethal response of the Parachute Regiment to a peaceful civilian March (Bloody Sunday, 1972), sent many new recruits to the ranks of the IRA and fueled its armed campaign. Moreover, the exceptional laws that led thousands to be imprisoned, did not have much effect in slowing down the resistance of Irish republicans. In fact, the prison issue became the central focus of the struggle during the campaign for special status (1976-1981). This dissertation then focused on

the military organization of republicans and discussed the historical relationship of the IRA with the political party Sinn Fein. I addressed the tensions between the physical force ethos of the army and the electoral strategy of the party. This served as an important contextual element in understanding the significance of the transformation from the armed campaign to the peace initiative.

Subsequently, this study examined resistance and explored five forms of prisoner resistance in order to showcase the strategic and collective approach that republican prisoners adopted in fighting the prison regime and more broadly, the British government. Notably, many of their resistance campaigns bore results. Of central significance, the campaign for special status and the republican driven education agenda contributed to the elaboration of the peace initiative and broad support for it. In turn this propelled Sinn Fein's electoral gains, largely diminished the necessity for the campaign of violence, led to the establishment of a consociational form of governance in the North and a general amnesty for many republican and loyalist prisoners.

This investigation also provided a first-hand account of leaders' conceptualization of leadership, what makes it work, how they see their roles as leaders in the movement, how they view their comrades and associates, and what they believe is intrinsic to good leadership. In turn, this allowed me to frame leadership in terms of a common social identity (Reicher, et al., 2005). I also utilized a collective leadership approach (Friedrich, et al., 2009) and stipulated several factors that go into successful collective leading: the ability to be flexible; the ability to manage one's ego; having strong relations that are built on solidarity; putting different people's

talents to use as the situation requires it; and empowerment, or having confidence in one's abilities, which in the republican context is a collective empowerment.

The crux of this study lies in the connection between prisoner resistance and leadership. Participants stated very clearly that prison was central to their development. They used prison to get educated about their history and their politics, and also to learn to lead. The campaign for special status stands out as a significant period that solidified the spirit of resistance (O'Hearn, 2009). Its legacy is an unshakeable collective solidarity that eventually led to a rethinking of republican strategy. The education that took place on the blanket, and the pragmatic education programme that drew its inspiration from Paulo Freire, all contributed to honing important skills in debating, analyzing and communicating. Moreover, it was the means by which republicans changed the hierarchical IRA camp staff structure. The thinking that went into supporting the peace initiative was, to a significant extent, the result of this.

Findings

This investigation has produced a number of empirical, theoretical and methodological findings. Empirically, for the first time, this study places in central focus and demonstrates in depth, the vital impact that prisoner resistance had on the development of peace negotiations. Moreover, it shows how former prisoners continue to play a significant role in peace process activism and governance. Others have undertaken ethnographic explorations of republican imprisonment (Ó Mocháin, 2011; Mac Ionnrachtaigh, 2008; O'Hearn, 2006; McKeown, 2001) but this study stands alone in its presentation of republican leaders' own interpretations of their trajectory from the armed struggle to the peace table and focused principally on the roles that prisoner resistance and leadership played in that journey. The conversations that took place

during the interviews brought the participants' insight into the dynamics of contention and leadership to the fore. In addition, these conversations enabled me to conclude that Paulo Freire's work influenced some of the former prisoners at the heart of this study.

The thesis establishes how resistance helped to re-conceive prison as a site where incarcerated republicans appropriated control over their lives, specifically, though not solely, by emphasizing self and group education, expanding substantive knowledge and using empowering pedagogical strategies. In essence, one of the results was that prisoners shifted the republican culture from a practice of war to a practice of politics. Republican prisoners reinvented a way forward, based on and in the tools that they fashioned for themselves in their collective educational endeavours. Part of the changes the former prisoners helped facilitate was a shift in the IRA's culture and practice. Prison was a key site where the hierarchical nature of the IRA was successfully challenged which enabled it to become more open to change. In turn, this helped to tip the balance in favour of a political path forward to securing the peace agenda. In short, prisoner resistance helped to shape the reinvention of the Republican Movement away from the physical force credo. While not the only resource, prisoner resistance was a very significant place where leadership was learned, relearned and practiced.

In terms of theoretical considerations, this work has analyzed the relationship between resistance and leadership at a new level. It has probed deeply into how leadership develops under situations of resistance; and how the practice of leadership in a contentious atmosphere has important consequences in later more conventional forms of contention (electoral politics and the peace process). By placing Freire at the axis of the resistance-leadership dynamic I was able to establish the process that binds these two concepts. Freire's conceptualization of praxis shows

how resistance and leadership are connected. This investigation demonstrates how republican prisoners followed the steps that Freire set out. By engaging in extensive reading and ongoing discussion, they addressed the structures of oppression with which their community was faced. By engaging in a dialogical relationship with others they discovered and rediscovered ways to collectively resist British domination and create a vision for change; implementing this vision by a continuous dialogue with the community and honouring the community's ability to engage in praxis. Revolutionary leadership recognizes that all members of the group are agents fully capable not only of critical consciousness but of leadership (Freire, 1985). The latter is the purview of each and thus develops collectively in new and creative ways. This allows a group to conceive and re-conceive ways to alter power relations in a fashion that is empowering and that has positive consequences for the entire group. It is this notion of praxis that places resistance and leadership on a continuum. I was able to point to republicans' appreciation of this trajectory in many excerpts from our discussions. Not least, Gerry Adams' 2010 *Ard Fheis* speech demonstrates this understanding of leadership and further confirms the republican concept of leading as being collective and the responsibility of all.

From a methodological perspective, this dissertation is the result of the elaboration of a qualitative approach that not only produced high-caliber data, but also fine-tuned the notion of "semi-insider" and the perspective whence it comes. At the start, this project, quite rightly, was met with skepticism about my ability to actually access leaders of the Irish Republican Movement in order to interview them. While those in the academy did not discount the value of the approach, they cautioned that actually finding people to speak to me would prove an ominous task, given the perceived clandestinity of the movement, as well as the stature of some of the key

actors with whom I wished to engage. The fact that I did secure interviews with a representative sample is the result of my lengthy engagement with the subject matter. My commitment to Irish republicanism and the peace process has been a positive factor in this investigation. It not only assisted me in consolidating relations with Sinn Fein leaders, but it also led me to develop a deep questioning of the issues herein. My consideration of these over a long period facilitated and enhanced the discussion that took place during the interviews.

I was keen to delimit a space for researchers who are not wholly insiders, but whose engagement with a group has provided them with knowledge and contacts that cannot be adequately explained by traditional ideas about participant-observation. Here, I have highlighted and probed the notion of being a "semi-insider" (Munn, 2009) and adapted it to suit the specifics of this particular relationship. But I have also pointed to other examples in order to better show some of the breadth of relationships that can exist between a researcher and a group being studied.

Contributions to Scholarship

Participants in revolutionary movements purposely use whatever means at their disposal to advance their cause. There is no course or formula to learn leadership skills in protest, but such skills are nonetheless developed. Imprisonment can be a space to hone such skills. As Buntman (2003), Buntman and Huang (2000) and Mencia (1993) affirm, reconfiguring the prison as a "university" has been the strategy of South African activists, Taiwanese political prisoners and Cuban revolutionaries, respectively. This investigation in part, answers Buntman's (2003) call for exploring the role of prison in transforming conflict in jurisdictions other than South Africa (7) and is offered as a contribution to this reflection.

In addition, these findings show the central link between prisoner resistance and leadership. To lead is to provide a vision, create social power, and direct that power toward the realization of the vision (Reicher, 2005, 564). To the extent the Republican Movement has been effective, elaborating a vision for the future that precluded the armed campaign was the first step. Realizing that vision entailed building capacity in all the places where republicans gathered for political purposes, from Sinn Fein *cumann*, to residents' committees and various broader street level political campaigns.[206]. Such capacity-building testifies to the collective leadership and social identity approaches that are the cornerstone of Sinn Fein politics. These approaches were deepened in significant part, due to the prison-based challenges to hierarchical leadership structures, itself profoundly influenced, and perhaps the direct result of the influence of Paulo Freire's (1972) work on their thinking.

The link between prisoner resistance and the development of leadership skills of this group is teased out in further depth in this study. O'Hearn's (2009, 2006) works on solidary cultures of resistance show how effective leadership in challenging and constricted prison spaces requires the ability to combine different skills and traits in a rapidly changing environment and pays particular attention to intersubjective communication. Significantly, O'Hearn demonstrates how Bobby Sands was a high-caliber leader in part because of his ability to combine people-oriented and task-oriented skills. He has certainly occupied a space in the literature on social movements that addresses leadership and its development, an area identified by social movement theorists as being sparsely inhabited by scholarly investigation (Morris and Staggenborg, 2002; Aminzade et al. 2001; Barker, Johnson and Lavalette, 2001). This dissertation further

[206] Such campaigns include, for instance, the "700 Irish Political Hostages -- Release Them Now" campaign in 2000 (Ted).

contributes to this body of work. It deepens the conversation about the relationship between resisting and learning to lead.

In the area of leadership studies, this work is a case study for the social identity approach (Reicher, 2005) and confirms that the conceptualizations underpinning this avenue are sound theoretically. Addressing the deep community spirit at the heart of this movement and the ways in which it is nurtured, helps to explain how leadership succeeds when it defines a common 'us' and regularly checks with followers to ensure this corresponds with their aspirations and self-identification. As for the collective leadership approach (Friedrich et al. 2009), this investigation explores in more depth the notion of empowerment and its role in facilitating leadership. In addition, and significantly, it introduces the notion of solidarity as one of the key aspects of collective leadership. While solidarity encompasses the notion of loyalty, it is deeply wrapped up in a common understanding of the political project, and speaks to a more profound form of communication among leaders, and between leaders and followers, that is made possible by developing bonds and trust.

This dissertation additionally contributes to a growing number of challenges to Giorgio Agamben's deterministic and fatalistic conception of biopolitics and the politics of the exception. In fact, in the case of Irish republicans, the success of prisoner resistance, as well as street-level resistance, contributed to significantly alter the dynamics of power in the Anglo-Irish conflict. Laclau (2007) confronts Agamben by suggesting that those who are banned by the Sovereign are not "lawless" but have constituted their own spaces and given themselves another set of rules by which to live (17). This exploration shows how republican prisoner resistance accomplished that goal. How captive republicans created their own alternative structure within prison is a salient

point. It addresses agency, and the elasticity and fluidity of power relations--that space where, as Foucault (1978) reminds us, resistance flourishes.

Lastly, this research focused on the work of Paulo Freire. While Freire's stature in critical cultural studies is well established (Giroux, 2006; 1985), this thesis shows the salience of Freire's ideas for leadership studies. In particular, it focuses on *conscientização*, accomplished by critical debate and reflection. Combining dialogical reflection and action (praxis) is the foundation of empowerment which in turn enables those engaged in struggle to devise the parameters of leadership by creating a fluid, dialogical and dynamic collective. Deconstructing traditional hierarchical notions about leading, engaging community, and building capacity among all the tiers of the movement--such a trajectory, as we have seen, is the guarantor of success in struggle. That Freire's notion of critical consciousness development connects resistance to leadership is a conclusion of this thesis that answers a fundamental question in regards to leadership development: by what processes does resistance help to develop leadership?

Paths to Further Research

Every study needs to be bounded; all research is inevitably constrained by time, resources, and other realities. One way to celebrate rather than lament these limits is to identify some of the new research questions sparked by this dissertation.

There is very little written specifically on republican leadership barring the biographies of individual leaders. To reach a broader readership who is interested in Irish republican politics, leadership or protest movements, is a project that I hold as worthwhile. In light of the current study, my aim is to engage with a mixed group of leaders (participants in this study, and new participants) and apply Gómez' critical communicative methodology to further excavate

leadership issues in a collaborative fashion. Such an undertaking would be an apt approach for the application of Freire's principles of dialogical interaction since

> social situations depend on meanings constructed through social interaction, and therefore reality does not exist independently from the subjects who experience it. From this perspective, "objectivity" is reached through "intersubjectivity" between researchers and the social actors involved in the reality studied. (236)

One of the areas of focus that is being developed in leadership studies is the centrality of the physical body to the leadership experience. Not much research has been done on this. Sinclair (2005) states that the body is relatively absent from investigation and analysis in terms of its role in leading. There is a need for more case studies on this aspect of leadership. One contribution would be to engage with leaders, and with followers, on how leaders' bodies in the context of the Republican Movement, occupy a particular place in followers' conception of leaders. In this case study, the Irish republican leader has put on the public place, his or her body, in terms of discussing their resistance. This revolves around being tortured, being naked in captivity, being subjected to brutal and humiliating body cavity searches, having their bodies battered, urinating and defecating in their cells, and hunger striking. Their bodies are "known" by the public, in their most intimate and vulnerable states. How does this affect their leadership? How does an increased knowledge of the histories and hurts of bodies affect people's perception of leadership?

This brings me to another consideration: the perception of followers of the Republican Movement, its trajectory to the peace table and then to governance, and the relationship between leaders and followers. Such an investigation would more aptly complete the picture of leadership since followers can make or break leaders, and since, from a collective perspective, followers are also engaged in leading. Notably, a further avenue that warrants examination is

looking into leadership from the perspective of the role of families and how they engaged their own and their imprisoned family member's leadership roles. How did this develop in the cauldron of community strife? What participation did they engage in and how did that turn them into community leaders?

In another vein, an investigation into how women leaders in the Republican Movement both conceive of leadership and how they see the Republican Movement's leadership, is worthy of further attention. The women participants in this study did not allude to obstacles they faced with respect to participating in the Republican Movement's structures, nor whether there was sufficient and well-fashioned space for women to lead. It is a policy of Sinn Fein to make more space for women at leadership levels. How that translates in reality is a question that warrants further attention. In addition, drawing further connections between prisoner resistance and leadership with more former prisoners-turned-leaders who are women would help to flesh out the discussion about the relationship of prisoner resistance and leadership.

Final Thoughts

This journey has provided me with a deeper understanding of a Movement of which I have been part for nearly 20 years. It has been a personal journey that has reconfigured my understanding of leadership, and has brought about changes in my appreciation of group resistance work. I celebrate the discovery of Paulo Freire. It is the reference that has had the most significant impact on my understanding of domination and liberation. This exploration of leadership has left me with renewed hope in the potential for transformation that exists for realizing our objectives of social justice. I believe that approaching group processes from a

Freirian perspective can benefit other struggling actors, be they political protesters, and political or non-political prisoners. I look forward to continuing to delve into all the elements that have been explored in this dissertation. Most especially, using Paulo Freire as a beacon, I hope to continue to explore in scholarly and participatory ways, issues of resistance and leadership.

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Kevin, December, 2009.

Kieran, December, 2009.

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Marty, December, 2009.

O'Shea, December, 2009.

Paul, December, 2009.

Padraig, December, 2009.

Sean, December, 2009.

Siobhán, December, 2009.

Ted, December, 2009.

Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 05/21/2009

Université d'Ottawa University of Ottawa
Service de subventions de recherche et déontologie Research Grants and Ethics Services

This is to confirm that the University of Ottawa Research Ethics Board identified above, which operates in accordance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement and other applicable laws and regulations in Ontario, has examined and approved the application for ethical approval for the above named research project as of the Ethics Approval Date indicated for the period above and subject to the conditions listed the section above entitled "Special Conditions / Comments".

During the course of the study the protocol may not be modified without prior written approval from the REB except when necessary to remove subjects from immediate endangerment or when the modification(s) pertain to only administrative or logistical components of the study (e.g. change of telephone number). Investigators must also promptly alert the REB of any changes which increase the risk to participant(s), any changes which considerably affect the conduct of the project, all unanticipated and harmful events that occur, and new information that may negatively affect the conduct of the project and safety of the participant(s). Modifications to the project, information/consent documentation, and/or recruitment documentation, should be submitted to this office for approval using the "Modification to research project" form available at: http://www.rges.uottawa.ca/ethics/application_dwn.asp

Please submit an annual status report to the Protocol Officer 4 weeks before the above-referenced expiry date to either close the file or request a renewal of ethics approval. This document can be found at: http://www.rges.uottawa.ca/ethics/application_dwn.asp

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Ethics Office

Signature:

APPENDIX B - Consent Form

Informed Consent Form
Project: Developing Leadership in the Republican Community: An Exploration

This doctoral research is undertaken by Claire Delisle, doctoral candidate at the University of Ottawa, in Canada. The thesis supervisor for this project is Dr. Bob Gaucher, adjunct professor of the Criminology Department at the University of Ottawa, Canada. (See addresses below)

This research investigates the nature of leadership development in protest movements. There is an extensive literature on government elites, and corporate leadership, but the corpus on protest movement leaders is relatively scant. Moreover, in both cases, the focus on leadership skill development is scarce. As regards protest movement leaders, little is explored in terms of how they develop and how they acquire the particular skill set required to lead. This project seeks to investigate the dynamics of leadership in order to elucidate the elements that go into the toolbox of leadership.

This exploration seeks to garner from leaders their perceptions and understanding of the position they have held or hold in the community of Republicans. The method of doing this will be by engaging in in-depth semi structured interviews. This is an open interview guided by themes that seek to elicit the journey undertaken by leaders, and the guiding forces that they attribute to their development. The researcher is concerned with making possible a space in which the participant is the author of the ideas expressed concerning her/his path and development.

Participants are asked to be interviewed. This will last from one to two hours. You will be asked if you want to have the interview recorded. There will be a possibility to review the written transcript to give you the opportunity to delete certain parts, or to correct certain statements with which you feel uncomfortable or which you think need clarification. If you don't wish to have the interview recorded, your permission will be sought to take detailed notes of the interview. These notes will be made available to you for review as well.

This research explores your experiences in the Republican movement. It is accepted that the nature of this investigation may be sensitive, and painful. Feelings of sadness may arise from the discussion. There may also be feelings of anxiety experienced in relation to the subject matter. It is also acknowledged that your efforts to help advance this project entail time and energy on your part. This is mitigated by the opportunity to have your voices tell an important story of struggle and leadership which will be beneficial to scholars and activists, as well as those engaged in other protest movements, and conflict regulation dynamics.

The research participants in this project may ask any question regarding any part of the research being conducted. Moreover, information requests and complaints regarding the ethical conduct

of the researcher may be addressed to the University of Ottawa Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research. (See address below)

If at any time, you feel discomfort, you may choose not to answer any and all questions. In addition, you may decide to end the interview, and/or end your participation. There will be no negative consequences to you if you choose to do this. There is no payment for participating in the project.

Digital and written transcripts will be retained for a period of three years after completion of the project. The supervisor of the project and the researcher are the only people who have access to these. After the said period of retention, digital transcripts will be deleted and paper transcripts will be shredded.

Confidentiality will be respected, names will be changed, and other identifying clues will be suppressed. In the same manner, names of locations will be altered to ensure anonymity. Following the interview, the digital recording will be immediately uploaded to a password-protected computer and USB drive. The digital recording will then be erased. Written transcripts of the interview will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher's home. Transcripts sent to participants for review will be transmitted to their home address via courier.

This form will be reviewed before the interview, in order to give you an opportunity to get clarification regarding the project, the goals and methods used by the researcher prior to the start of the interview.

This research is being conducted for the purposes of writing the researcher's doctoral dissertation. The research will also be used for journal articles and academic presentations.

Your consent will be obtained verbally first by telephone, then at the start of the interview process. At such time, two copies of the consent form will be completed and signed only by the researcher to protect your anonymity. One will remain in your possession while the other will be in the sole possession of the undersigned researcher.

Thank you,

CONSENT FORM

The goals of the research have been explained to me and I have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that I retain the right to refuse any questions or withdraw from the process at any time.

I understand that should I choose to withdraw from the research project, at any time, there will be no negative consequences for me.

I agree to participate in the interview on the understanding that the above-detailed criteria regarding anonymity, confidentiality and the use of interview material will be respected.

I agree to have the interview recorded:

Yes ____

No ____

Date: _____

Researcher: _____

Signature: _____

1. Let's first talk about how you came to be involved in the Republican Movement.

2. You were in prison for xxx amount of time. I'm wondering what your memories are all about, and how you felt during those times.

3. Let's talk about the resistance undertaken in prison, and your role in certain events.

4. Let's now talk about leadership and how you conceptualize it.

5. I'd like to know if there was a particular time when it dawned on you that you were a leader or that you felt you had important responsibilities toward the Movement.

6. There must be events, or books, or people, that helped you along the way.

7. Let's discuss what leadership looks like, and how it works in the Republican Movement and those around you that you think are effective leaders.

8. It could not have been easy to persuade your comrades of the benefits of the peace initiative at first. Tell me about that.

9. I'm wondering what skills you think are necessary for leading a movement such as this one. There must be certain experiences that assist in developing those skills.

10. Tell me what you would focus on if it were you who was writing this dissertation on leadership.

Acronyms

ANC: African National Congress. Nelson Mandela's party. Has governed South Africa in a tripartite alliance since 1994, the end of apartheid.

ASU: Active Service Unit of the IRA. Usually composed of between 4 and 6 members. The cell structure was established in the 1970s following infiltration by informants. The previous structure was a battalion structure. The new cell structure was safer as fewer people were involved. There was also more autonomy for each cell, as they were able to plot and operationalize actions without having to seek approval from higher ranks.

DDR: Disarmament, Demobilisation, Reintegration.

DUP: Democratic Unionist Party. Its former leader was the Reverend Ian Paisley.

ECHR: European Court of Human Rights.

EPIC: Ex-Prisoners Interpretive Centre.

GFA: Good Friday Agreement, or Belfast Agreement, or "The Agreement".

INLA: Irish National Liberation Army.

IRA: Irish Republican Army. Guerilla army of the Republican Movement. Usually refers to the Provisional IRA.

MLA: Member of the Legislative Assembly (Belfast Assembly)

OC: Officer Commanding in the IRA leadership structure.

Official IRA: The IRA before the split in 1969. The Official IRA were embarked on a marxist trajectory and contemplating entry into politics. Disaffected republicans split and created the Provisional IRA, which led to internecine violence between the two groups.

OTR: On the run from the authorities.

Provisional IRA: As the result of a split in 1969, the Provisionals came into being. Prior to this, the IRA were unwilling or incapable of defending nationalist neighbourhoods against attacks from loyalists and the RUC. They were named "provisional" pending confirmation of the new organization by a meeting which never took place.

RJ: Restorative justice.

SF: Sinn Fein “We Ourselves” Political party of the Republican Movement. Established in 1901.

PSNI: Police Service of Northern Ireland. Reformed police service. It came into being in 2001.

RUC: Royal Ulster Constabulary. Northern Ireland Police Force until it was reformed during the peace process. It was considered sectarian by the republican community and was made up mostly of Protestants.

SDLP: The Social Democratic and Labour Party founded in 1970 by John Hume. A consitutionalist-nationalist party in the North that supports Irish reunification but is opposed to violence.

TD: Teachta Dála, the Irish equivalent of a member of Parliament.

UDA: Ulster Defence Association, a loyalist paramilitary group.

UI: United Irishmen, a group founded by Theobald Wolfe Tone in the 1790s.

UVF: Ulster Volunteer Force, a loyalist paramilitary group.

Irish Terms

Ard comhairle: Executive Committee of Sinn Fein.

Ard fheis: Annual party conference.

Ard Fheiseanna: Plural form of Ard Fheis.

Coíste: Committee. It usually refers to Coíste na nIarchimí, the Republican Ex-Prisoner Committee.

Cumann: Association. A local branch of Sinn Fein (in this context).

Dáil or Dáil Éireann: Lower House of the Irish legislature

Orieachtas: National legislature of the South of Ireland.

Taoiseach: Irish equivalent of Prime Minister.

Tar Anall: Drop-in centre for prisoners and their families.

Teachta Dála or TD: Irish equivalent of a member of Parliament.