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Extremists Embedded in Politics: Securitisation and Desecuritisation in Northern Ireland During the Troubles and the Peace Process

Master's Thesis

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Dedicated to my grandparents.

ABSTRACT

This master's thesis will analyse the period of the Troubles and the following Peace Process in Northern Ireland using the Copenhagen School of Security Studies theories of securitisation and desecuritisation combined with discourse analysis. Through this, this thesis will analyse and outline what the main securitising factors were and who securitised them, what the main methods of desecuritisation were and which actors implemented them, and lastly will briefly look at the lessons learned from the Peace Process in a wider perspective.

Key words: Copenhagen School, Securitisation, Speech Acts, Northern Ireland, Terrorism, Counterterrorism, Rhetoric.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Troubles in Northern Ireland is a topic that is well trodden in the world of academics. It poses a number of questions about how such a state of affairs could occur in a modern, otherwise stable, democratic state, how events spiralled out of control and became significantly violent, and how the violence was, apparently rather rapidly, brought to an end. According to the oft-cited Sutton Index of Deaths, the conflict took the lives of almost 3,400 people and injured countless others between its start in 1968 and the reestablishment of devolution in Northern Ireland after the Peace Agreement in 1999 (Sutton, 2001). The causes of the conflict have been analysed in terms of economics, politics, history, and in terms of security studies, in some significant depth, but continued analysis of the conflict in Northern Ireland is vital to understand why it happened, how it was brought to an end, and above all, how to prevent such a thing from happening again.

Thus, this master's thesis will examine the conflict in Northern Ireland in a way that has not yet been undertaken. Through the lens of the Copenhagen School of Security Studies' theories on securitisation and desecuritisation, and via a discourse and historical analysis, this thesis will examine the perceived security issues from all domestic parties that led to the conflict, the security issues that escalated the conflict, and the manner with which these security issues were deescalated in order to achieve relative peace in Northern Ireland by the turn of the millennium. In order to do this, this thesis will examine the rhetoric created by the three major domestic parties that were part of the conflict; the British Government, the Unionists in Northern Ireland, and the Nationalists in Northern Ireland. Both political and military aspects will be considered, looking at the major political parties and government decisions, as well as the actions undertaken by the security forces, including both state security forces and paramilitaries.

This thesis will firstly outline the concept of the Copenhagen School, what has been chosen for this thesis, what has not, and justifications for why in either case. After outlining this theoretical framework, this thesis will then attempt to answer the research questions outlined in the subchapter on research design (Chapter 2.7).

Lastly, this thesis will reach a brief joint conclusion on the first two research questions, bringing the individual conclusions together to paint an overall picture, after which a brief list of topics for further study will be outlined.

In order to retain focus, this thesis shall focus primarily on the domestic actors within Northern Ireland, namely the aforementioned British Government, the Unionists in Northern Ireland, and the Nationalists in Northern Ireland. This is not to downplay the role played by others such as the United States, the Republic of Ireland, and the European Union in the both the conflict and the Peace Process itself, but merely serves to keep the discourse analysis focused on what was occurring domestically within Northern Ireland, and by extension due to its legal membership, the United Kingdom, at the time. The time limit applied to this analysis will be the beginning of the conflict, with a brief overview of historical origins in terms of securitisation, up to the re-establishment of the Northern Ireland Assembly in Stormont in 1999.

1.1 Semantics

Before beginning this thesis, it is worth clarifying some semantics to ensure that this thesis retains its clarity.

Firstly, this distinction between Catholics and Protestants, Nationalists and Unionists, and Republicans and Loyalists. To begin with the former pair, throughout the first section of the historical analysis of securitisation in Northern Ireland, the two main parties in this conflict will be referred to as Catholics and Protestants, as this represents the historic religious nature of the origins of division in Northern Ireland. Throughout the remainder of this thesis, however, the most common terms used will be Republicans and Unionists. This sides are not quite analogous, a mistake which is often made particularly in the media, as there are effectively two stages to the conflict; the religious historical background outline in the first section where Catholics and Protestants are the main actors, and the political conflict that followed where Republicans and Unionists are the main actors (Melaugh, 2006). To an extent, the Republicans are a natural extension of the Catholics in as much as the Republicans were predominantly Catholic, and the Unionists an extension of the Protestants for the same reason. However, as that misleads the reader into assuming that the conflict in Northern Ireland was one of religion and not of politics, the change in terms between sections is necessary. Where the religious denominations are used later in the thesis it is intended to refer to the specific religious groups, not to the political or otherwise societal groups in Northern Ireland.

Within the framework of the Copenhagen School one could argue, to some extent, that religion has been misleadingly securitised by speech acts from all sides in the conflict, as well as from the media. To a large degree this stems from what investigative journalist and expert in the Troubles Peter Taylor refers to as an ignorance of the roots and history of the conflict that affects both members of the public and journalists alike (Taylor, 2011), with even Home Secretary at the outbreak of the Troubles, and later Prime Minister James Callaghan stating:

> *'I never do believe, frankly, that anybody from this side of the water [the Great Britain] understands Ireland. …Certainly we didn't have enough understanding of it at the time' (Taylor, 2001).*

This misunderstanding has led to an oversimplification of the conflict, and as such one could argue a incorrect securitisation of religion as a key factor, where in reality the securitised factors are mostly, if not almost exclusively, political.

There is also the issue of differentiating between Unionists and Loyalists on the one hand, and Nationalists and Republicans on the other. For the purpose of this thesis, the distinction is to more easily determine between the paramilitaries and the political wings of each movement. As such, Unionists refers to those who wished to use politics to ensure that Northern Ireland remained part of Britain and that the status quo of Unionist and Protestant dominance of Northern Ireland was upheld. Loyalists, on the other hand, refers to those organisations who sought to use violence to achieve the same goals. Similarly, Nationalists refers to those political parties who wished to use politics, at least primarily, to make Northern Ireland independent from Britain and to become part of Ireland, and who sought more equal socio-economic rights for those who identified as Irish, and to a large extent Catholic, in Northern Ireland. Republicans refers to those organisations who, like Loyalists, wished to use violence to achieve the goals of their political counterparts.

Finally, it is worth very briefly stating that where terms such as 'Westminster' and 'Stormont' are used, these are intended to refer specifically to the governments of Great Britain and the various iterations of devolved governmental bodies in Northern Ireland respectively, unless made clear otherwise in the text that it refers to the actual location themselves rather than the organisations.

Aside from this, as a footnote, 'securitisation' does not equal justification, and it was not the authors intention to justify the actions of *any* party to the Troubles, rather securitisation is used to simply explain their potential origin and give insight to the thought process that lead to the Troubles and the action taken by the relevant parties throughout.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Before analysing the peace process and the developments surrounding it a theoretical framework is needed. For the purpose of this thesis, the Copenhagen School of security studies will be used, specifically the theory of securitisation and speech acts, as well as the sub-theory of desecuritisation. This section will first explain the concept of securitisation as a whole, then explain these two sub-theories. For the purpose of this thesis, only the aforementioned concepts will be outlined. Other concepts such as the regionalisation of security will be excluded, and the division of security into five sectors will only be covered on a basic level, as neither concepts do not provide a particularly large amount of added value to the analysis of the topic at hand.

This section will therefore cover the necessary aspects of the Copenhagen School as listed above, as well as outlining exactly why this theoretical framework was chosen, why the aforementioned excluded frameworks are excluded, and finally the shortcomings of the Copenhagen School with regards to this topic.

2.1 Why the Copenhagen School Was Chosen

When approaching a topic as complex as the Troubles and the peace process that followed from a policy and discourse perspective, it is very difficult to find a school that effectively allows for and explains all aspects of the issue. Traditional schools of international relations such as Realism and Liberalism fall short of explaining respectively either the apparently sudden shift and desire for peace in the beginning of the 90's or the use of violence when political options were present in the 1960's to the 1980's. Realism and Liberalism's 'neo' counterparts also fall short for the very same reasons.

On a more local level, theories of Public Administration also leave much to be desired. Analyses of the security networks and the actions of street-level operatives in the Troubles would be very interesting, but in order to reach a meaningful conclusion any study would have to be exhaustive and cover all sides. Considering the legally illegitimate and criminal nature or certain aspects of the conflict, as well as the covert aspects of the actions undertaken by all sides, it would not be reasonable to expect to come to a reasonable conclusion from this study without exhaustive access to individuals and records. The addition of studies such as those conducted by Peter Taylor, perhaps combined with theories from intelligence studies of filling in the blanks left open by primary sources and interviews, could provide a certain level of insight, but would still leave an unknown number of unknown unknowns. This is particularly evident when it comes to paramilitary and terrorist actions, but is no less true when it comes to certain actions undertaken by the British security services.

As a result, there are few schools left that provide an effective analytical framework for at least most aspects of the Troubles that offer something significantly new. Of these, the Copenhagen School was chosen because it allows for an analysis of both discourse and policy in a way that hasn't been undertaken before on such an all-encompassing scale. There is some existing literature on specific actors, or aspects, of the Troubles within the context of securitisation and desecuritisation, but there is very little in the way of literature that covers the entire conflict and Peace Process. Thus, this thesis will cover this topic, through the analytical framework of the Copenhagen School, in the most concise way possible with respect to the fact that the Troubles is an extremely complex issue with a high number of moving parts and therefore conciseness is not something that is easy to come by. The Copenhagen School, as an analytical tool, allows for the build-up in tension in Northern Ireland before the troubles, the sudden and game-changing shifts in securitisation at the

beginning of the conflict, as well as desecuritisation and a return to political discourse by the end of the conflict. Although it is primarily designed for analysing international security and particularly regional security complexes, this thesis will demonstrate that it can also be extremely valuable for analysing more localised and smaller conflicts between non-state and state actors. As such, it provides one of the most effective analytical frameworks for a general overview of an extremely complex topic.

As such, in order to add something new to the literature both on Northern Ireland, and on the Copenhagen School and desecuritisation theory in particular, the Copenhagen School's theories of Securitisation and Desecuritisation will be applied to the topic at hand as it was intended; A framework for analysis to help understand the conflict, its causes, and its eventual end, and what, if any, lessons can be learned from this, from the major parties involved.

2.2 Why Certain Aspects of the Copenhagen School Were Excluded

The Copenhagen School, as can be surmised from its seminal work, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, consists of three main concepts; the regionalisation of security, the division of security in to 5 sectors and 5 levels of analysis, and the theory of securitisation (Buzan, Waever, & de Wilde, 1998). For the purpose of this paper, regionalisation will be not included because, although it could be applied on a wider perspective if one were to consider the British Isles (the United Kingdom and Ireland) as a security region, it offers little benefit to the analysis this paper seeks to provide. This is simply because this thesis is not about interactions between the United Kingdom and Ireland on a wider scale, but simply to the extent to which they affected Northern Ireland. As such, whilst the theory of regionalisation is applicable in a more general sense, it shall be excluded from this thesis simply because this thesis is intended to provide a more focused and localised analysis.

Additionally, the School's aforementioned division of security into five sectors will also be excluded. The sectors outlined by the school are as follows; political, economic military, societal, and environmental (ibid.). Whilst these sectors undoubtedly feature in Northern Ireland to varying degrees, to deal with each sector individually and therefore spending time categorising each act within this framework would result in this thesis becoming bogged down in analysis. On top of this, most aspects of securitisation in Northern Ireland are multifaceted when it comes to these sectors, and thus spending time categorising them would not provide additional benefit to the outcomes of this thesis. Instead, a holistic approach will be undertaken, with speech acts outlined with regards to their effect on securitisation as a whole, rather than on individual sectors.

Likewise, the school's five levels of security will be excluded for similar reasons. The levels are defined as follows; international systems, international subsystems, units, subunits, and individuals (ibid.). Suffice to say, only the latter three levels of analysis are applicable to the case at hand, but due to the nature of the topic the line between all three is blurred in as much as no single level could be defined as being the key level for the topic at hand. As securitising actors from all three levels are present, this thesis will once again take a holistic approach and deal with analysis of these three levels as a collective whole in order to firstly provide concise analysis of the topic at hand, and secondly to prevent needless categorisation and thus distraction from the overall analytical goal of this thesis.

2.3 Securitisation

The final and most important aspect of the Copenhagen School that will be used throughout this thesis and form the bulk, if not almost all, of the analysis, is the concept of securitisation and by extension desecuritisation. Securitisation theory is a key point of the Copenhagen School but is a relatively simple concept to explain. As such, even though securitisation theory and desecuritisation theory form the main part of the theoretical framework used for this paper, this subsection will not be a particularly lengthy one.

Originally outlined by Ole Waever in a section in Ronnie Lipschutz's *On Security*, securitisation is entirely based around the concept of threat construction – that being that something only becomes a threat when it is defined as such by a securitising actor, as will be outlined later in this chapter (Lipschutz, 1995). The act of securitising an issue is known by the school as a 'speech act'. Barry Buzan, another key figure of the Copenhagen School, defined exactly what constitutes a security threat in a 1991 article in the academic journal International Affairs, stating:

> *'Security is taken to be about the pursuit of freedom from threat and the ability of states and societies to maintain their independent identity and their functional integrity against forces of change, which they see as hostile.'* (Buzan, 1991)

Furthermore, both authors along with Jaap de Wilde outline in the school's seminal work, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* that once an issue has been defined as an existential threat, emergency measures and

> *'...justifying actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure'* (Buzan, Waever, & de Wilde, 1998).

The two of these statements can effectively be combined to form the wider theory of securitisation as outlined in *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* – that is, a non-security issue becomes a security issue when a securitising actor defines an issue as a threat to the existence of a referent object via speech act, and when the referent object accepts it as such.

The authors also admit that the term existential threat is extremely subjective, and does not necessarily mean a direct threat to the basic survival of a referent object, but can also be a threat to the maintenance of the status quo. To illustrate this, the authors use the example of a family securitising a particular job in order to protect a certain lifestyle (Buzan, Waever, & de Wilde, 1998). As such, securitisation is extremely subjective and depends entirely on both the

influence of the securitising actor and the susceptibility of the referent object concerned to securitisation of that specific issue. As such, there are a large number of variables that need to be covered in order for securitisation to be achieved, meaning that although the concept is relatively simple to explain, it is very difficult to predict concretely without the benefit of prior examples and prior experience. This is where analyses such as this thesis come in useful as guidelines for predicting potential future securitisations and, where possible, addressing them before more severe measures are required.

Within the framework of Securitisation, the authors also outline two distinct parties – referent objects, and actors (ibid.). This categorisation helps in terms of analysis as it effectively allows the framework to distinguish between cause and effect. Firstly, referent objects are the objects which are securitised, defined by the authors as objects which have '…a legitimate claim to survival' (ibid.) and towards which there is a perceived threat. In this context, both concepts of legitimacy and threat here are not scientific and are completely subjective. This is key to the topic at hand as there is it removes any analysis from prejudice; if an object is defined by one or more securitising actors as legitimate, and is also thus described as threatened, then for the purpose of analysis it is securitised as such.

Secondly, the latter group, actors, are split up into two sub-groups – securitising actors and functional actors. Securitising actors are those who have the perceived legitimacy to commit a securitising speech act towards a referent object, as outlined above. Such actors can be anything, ranging from individuals, to groups of individuals, right up to states and supra- or super-national organisations. The second sub-group, functional actors, are defined by the authors as actors who have an influence on securitisation, but do not actively hold a steak in the securitised object itself. The example given by the authors is a polluter directly affecting an environmental sector, but not being either a securitising party or a party that is securitised (ibid.).

For the purpose of this thesis, functional actors will thus be discarded as, once again, they widen the field of study to one that would result in the thesis getting bogged down in excessive analysis that would not serve to add significant benefit. As such, within the concept of securitisation, most attention will be given to the securitising actors, and the effects that their speech acts had on their respective referent objects.

2.4 Desecuritisation

Now that securitisation has been effectively outlined, the final vital part of the theoretical framework is desecuritisation. Desecuritisation is outlined along with securitisation in the aforementioned chapter by Ole Waever in Ronnie Lipschutz's *On Security* (Lipschutz, 1995) as the process by which a threat that has become securitised ceases to be so through a change in rhetoric. This can simply mean that the securitising actor can simply refrain from referring to an issue as a security issue or shift focus onto another issue. However, in this case, desecuritisation would be a very long and drawn-out process as it would take time for the referent object in question to no longer perceive the initial issue as a threat. Instead, the most effective way to desecuritise an issue is to change rhetoric, explicitly framing an issue as a non-issue, rather than simply ceasing to talk about it.

One of the example of desecuritisation that Buzan, Waever and de Wilde note in *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* is the desecuritisation of Germany by the United Kingdom Post-World War II (Buzan, Waever, & de Wilde, 1998). This was a perfect example of a change in rhetoric that shifted the country that had been the United Kingdom's traditional adversary for at least three decades not only to a reduced threat but, for West Germany, a valuable ally, all within a very short amount of time. This is a perfect example of the aforementioned desecuritisation occurring as a result of the creation of a new, more potent security threat, in this case in the form of the Soviet Union post-World War II. In addition, West Germany was defined as a new actor in the field of security, and thus to some extent could be redefined as opposed to Nazi Germany, its predecessor in terms of security actors.

Similar examples have occurred in modern times. One notable and particularly pertinent example is that of the securitisation of Islamic Extremism over the actions of various nationalist groups across Europe post-9/11, including Northern Ireland. However, as this thesis will outline, desecuritisation in Northern Ireland was already well underway, and was apparently successful, before 9/11 and the appearance of the new, more significant, threat to security. As such, there are other significant examples not given by the authors of desecuritisation occurring where threats were actively desecuritised and not simply superseded by alternative, apparently more significant, threats.

As such, the topic covered in this paper analyses desecuritisation in its purest form; an active change in rhetoric regarding a perceived security threat to redefine the threat at hand as a lesser issue, or even as a non-issue. To achieve this requires effectively the opposite steps of

securitisation as outlined above. To put it in rather simplistic terms, a credible securitising actor must credibly define the threat posed to security as being no longer a threat. Due to this process simply being the opposite of what was stated above, desecuritisation theory will not be covered in any more depth to save repeating what has already been covered under securitisation.

2.5 Criticisms of the Copenhagen School

In spite of being a highly suitable analytical tool for the problem at hand as previously outlined, the Copenhagen School is not without its critics. The main opponent of the school, Bill McSweeney, has criticised the school on several levels. Much of his criticism is levelled at the societal sector of security which, as this paper is not focused on sectors, is not relevant and thus will not be covered further. His other main criticism, written in a review of Buzan's previous work on securitisation, was published in the Review of International Studies journal in 1996. In this review, McSweeney accused the school of being purely retrospective and therefore being of little use for predicting future events (McSweeney, 1996). Whilst this is true inasmuch as the Copenhagen School certainly doesn't outline a set of rules or types of behaviour in international security in the way that classical schools such as Realism and Liberalism do, as an analytical tool to analyse historical examples, even from very recent history, the Copenhagen School is extremely useful. In that sense, whilst the Copenhagen School doesn't outline an overall vision of how the world is, through analysis of topics using the framework outlined by the School one can certainly learn from historical examples to gain insight into the causes, effects, and outcomes, and thus apply these insights to present or future issues. As such, reviewing case studies through the lens of the Copenhagen School can firstly provide a deeper level of understanding as to why certain events occurred the way they did along with the effect that rhetoric had on the way that these events played out (and vice versa), and therefore can potentially provide lessons for future cases to assist in conflict resolution and a deeper understanding of what causes conflicts and how they can be resolved in terms of rhetoric and threat perception.

In addition, other scholars have seen the concept of securitisation as too philosophical. One such author, Thierry Balzacq, outlined a framework for a more sociological approach in his work *Securitization Theory: How Security Problems Emerge and Dissolve (Balzacq, 2010)*. Balzacq outlines a difference between the Copenhagen School's philosophical framework and a more empirical sociological approach intended to create a more scientific approach to securitisation. However, as indicated by the title of the Copenhagen School's seminal work, the Copenhagen School's approach to security is inherently intended to be philosophical, and is by nature a framework for analysis. The criticisms levelled by Balzacq and others like him overlook this factor in favour of a desire for scientific outcomes. As this thesis intends to simply provide an analysis of the shift in rhetoric via the concept of

securitisation from a philosophical standpoint through discourse analysis, the Copenhagen School's framework is the preferred tool for the task at hand.

Beyond McSweeney and Balzacq, the other main criticism of the Copenhagen School are that it is too Eurocentric, or at best cannot be used outside of Western examples. One such scholar, Claire Wilkinson, in an article written for Security Dialogue, gives the example of Kyrgyzstan and claims that the Copenhagen School is not applicable to its main security concerns (Wilkinson, 2007). Whilst Wilkinson's points in this case may be correct, more and more scholars are applying the Copenhagen School to conflicts outside of Europe, particularly to South East Asia. Regardless, the potential Western-focus of the School does not present a significant problem in terms of this paper as this paper is entirely based on a Western, and European, case. As such, the Copenhagen School represents a valuable tool for the topic at hand, in spite of its critics.

2.6 Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis in itself is a topic that has a variety of different approaches, with different schools having their preferred way of approaching the field. However, for the purpose of this thesis, the Copenhagen School's approach to discourse analysis will be used. Within the framework of the School, discourse is effectively defined by speech acts. These do not necessarily need to be sourced from actual speeches, but rather refer to any definition of a security threat within any kind of rhetoric, whether written, spoken, or otherwise conveyed, generally accessible by the audience for which the 'speaker' intends to define a threat to security (Buzan, Waever, & de Wilde, 1998). Any such material therefore becomes available for analysis, with a number of key factors being analysed. These factors range from the simplistic, such as the use of the actual words 'security threat', to the more complex, in terms of overarching themes and general tone.

The unifying factor that makes material fall within the framework of securitisation and desecuritisation is that it must firstly be defined as an existential threat to a referent object, and that subsequently the right to undertake, and need for, extraordinary measures and ruling-breaking behaviour to deal with this threat are conveyed to the audience, and the audience is subsequently convinced of the need for such actions (ibid.).

In the context of this thesis, the discourse analysed will by and large be primary sources relating to the conflict as much as possible. This includes public speeches, press releases, memoirs written by key actors from the time, interviews, and policy documents from the relevant actors in the conflict. The primary sources reviewed in this thesis will be analysed for significant changes in rhetoric in terms of security and threats to security, or significant bolstering of existing rhetoric, in order to outline the key speech acts and securitisations throughout the Troubles and the Peace Process. These primary sources will be bolstered with news articles and academic writing where appropriate, or where necessary to fill in gaps not filled by primary sources. On top of primary sources, key events will be analysed where they pertain to securitisation and either add to, or indicate the status of, the level of securitisation through discourse at the respective point in time.

As securitisation and desecuritisation are focused around the concept of speech acts, a discourse analysis of the aforementioned sources is the most effective way to put the Troubles and the Peace Process that followed in to perspective within the framework of the chosen theoretical framework. This analysis of primary sources will provide the best possible analysis

in terms of securitisation as it indicates both the ongoing speech acts as well as the level of threat perception among the main actors at the time they were created. As there is a wealth of primary sources, particularly regarding the latter period of the Troubles and the Peace Process itself, only the most relevant sources to this thesis will be covered. As such, a high number of sources have been reviewed and refined to those reviewed in this thesis in order to present a clear and effective indication of the level of securitisation through discourse and action throughout the period covered.

2.7 Research Design

With the above outlined theoretical framework in mind, this thesis will answer the following two research questions:

- What were the main securitisations in Northern Ireland from the start of the Troubles up until 1986 and the beginning of the negotiations that would eventually become the Belfast Agreements?
- How, and by which domestic actors, were these factors desecuritised in order for the Belfast Agreement to be successful in 1998?

The first research question will examine the timeline, firstly briefly in the run up to the Troubles, and then of the Troubles themselves, through the framework of securitisation, to examine the main factors. This section will feature the largest amount of secondary sources due to the historical nature of the topic, but will use primary sources where possible. At the end of this section, a clear overview of who was securitised against who, and why, will be presented, with reference to the events of the Troubles and their origins.

The second research question will step off from this conclusion and examine how the parties concerned desecuritised themselves, or at least changed their securitisation, in order to permit the Belfast Agreement to be successful. In this section, three separate timelines of the same events will be examined; firstly, the British timeline of desecuritisation, then the Nationalist timeline, then finally the Unionist timeline. These timelines have been split into their specific parties in order to better indicate the specific steps taken to address each group's specific securitisations outlined at the end of the first section. As such, there is some overlap in some cases, but events will only be covered twice if there were significant steps undertaken by both parties, otherwise they will be covered in the subsection of the most relevant party. This section will look at almost purely primary sources except for some references, particularly to the paramilitaries, where primary sources are not always available from the source but can be found in academic literature. This section will also split each timeline in to three subsections; changes in securitisation before the Belfast Agreement, changes in securitisation during the campaign for the referendum on the Belfast Agreement in Northern Ireland, and changes in securitisation after the Belfast Agreement, up until the reestablishment of Stormont in 1999.

In order to achieve this analysis, this thesis will use the Copenhagen School as outlined above and apply it to primary sources, namely key speeches and documents released by the

main parties to the conflict. Using this method and these sources, this thesis will analyse the speech acts made by key individuals through discourse analysis, putting them in the context of securitisation and desecuritisation. The speeches and actors have been selected based on their effect on the security landscape. In that sense, some actors and sources have been excluded where they either would simply serve to repeat points made by other actors, or by the same actors in other sources, or where their inclusion would further muddle an already complex topic whilst adding little to the analysis at hand.

3 SECURITISATIONS PRIOR TO THE PEACE PROCESS

The Troubles are often treated with a level of simplicity that betrays the complex reality of the securitisations that were occurring at the time, particularly in the media, especially the British media. It was not, as is often implied, a simple case of Catholics versus Protestants, with the British as impartial peacekeepers. Nor was it as simplistic as the IRA versus the British Army and Ulster Constabulary, and separately the Loyalist militias. When it comes to securitisations among the participants in the conflicts, the reality is that securitisation was not only a complex issue in Northern Ireland, but also somewhat more fluid than one would expect given only the basic facts surrounding the conflict.

In this sense, analysing securitisation prior to the Peace Process provides significant value in terms of this thesis as it provides the reader with a deeper understanding of the situation through the lens of securitisation theory that is necessary to understand the process of desecuritisation. As such, this chapter will outline the main securitisations that existed between the main parties in the Troubles, with a brief overview of the roots of securitisation in Northern Ireland and a more in depth overview of the securitisations each side had in the conflict and how these shifted in the period leading up to 1986, the year that can be seen as the beginning of the negotiations, talks, and changes in rhetoric that would eventually lead to the signing of the Belfast Agreement in 1998. Rather than providing an in depth historical overview, this chapter will instead provide the reader with a general understanding of securitisation as a whole in the period. The goal of this chapter is to answer the first research question outlined in the introduction to this thesis: What were the main securitisations in Northern Ireland from the start of the Troubles up until 1986 and the beginning of the negotiations that would eventually become the Belfast Agreements?

3.1 Roots of the Troubles: 16th to the First Half of the 20th Century

The roots of the Troubles can be traced back to the 17th and 18th centuries. When Britain finally gained control of all of Ireland, with Ulster being the last area to fall under British control, a mass resettlement process was started. During this resettlement, and due to the religious tensions in Britain at the time, Protestants were given favour over Catholics when it came to redistributing property. This was undertaken in such a drastic manner that by the early 18th century as little as 14% of all available farmland in the whole of Ireland belonged to Catholics (Kelley, 1982). The redistribution of land in favour of Protestants, in particular Anglicans, was even made explicit in law, with acts such as the 1701 legislation *'An act for the relief of the protestant purchasers of the forfeited estates in Ireland'* where, under section XV, it is explicitly stated that *'...papists, or persons professing the popish religion…'* would therefore forfeit all inheritance rights (Parliament of England, 1701). As such, the British takeover of Ireland already began in a very divisive manner. After a joint Catholic-Protestant rebellion, known as the United Irishmen Rebellion was put down in the late 18th century, by the beginning of the 19th century Ireland was fully incorporated into the newly-formed United Kingdom.

The joint rebellion represented somewhat of an anomaly, as for the next century Catholic's started campaigning for Catholic rights alone, alienating Protestants that were also disenfranchised with the British control and the newly created United Kingdom (Kelley, 1982). This rough beginning of Ireland's participation in the United Kingdom already sowed the seeds for the Troubles that would follow some one and a half centuries later.

Calls for more independence for Ireland throughout the 19th century, culminating in a war of independence were answered at the beginning of the 20th with the Fourth Home Rule Act and, later, the Anglo-Irish Treaty. The 1920 Home Rule Bill split Ireland in to two parts – the now predominantly Protestant controlled Northern Ireland and the still predominantly Catholic Southern Ireland. The initial idea was to allow both parts of Ireland greater autonomy, but would have had both Northern and Southern Ireland remain part of the United Kingdom. However, the outcome of the Irish War of Independence meant that Home Rule was only put in place in Northern Ireland – Southern Ireland left the United Kingdom and became a free state, although still a dominion of the United Kingdom and thus a subject of the monarchy, under the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1922. Although officially Northern Ireland left the United Kingdom for this time, it voted a day later to leave the Irish Free State and return to

the United Kingdom. With Southern Ireland effectively out of the picture, what followed in Northern Ireland was essentially a power-grab. Under the Fourth Home Rule Bill, new Parliamentary powers were granted to a new Northern Irish Assembly in Stormont. As the leaders of Northern Ireland at that time were predominantly Protestant, they moved to effectively restrict access by Catholics to power through limiting voting to property owners only.

This resulting parliament was therefore predominantly Protestant and resulted maintenance of laws that restricted Catholic access to property ownership, among other things. This Protestant domination was also reflected in the state workforce, where 90% of all state workers, including the Royal Ulster Constabulary, the police force in Northern Ireland, were Protestant (Alcock, 1994). This segregation also spread into the private sector. With most big businesses and industries such as ship building in Belfast being predominantly owned by Protestants, Protestants were looked on more favourably as employees. As a result, Catholic unemployment at this time was significantly higher than Protestant unemployment (McKittrick & McVie, 2012), a trend that continues to an only slightly lesser extent to the most recent 2011 census (Northern Ireland Executive, 2011).

In spite of these socioeconomic tensions, and in spite of the objectives of certain parties in the Irish Free State and within Northern Ireland itself, no meaningful attempts were made in the following two decades to reunite Northern Ireland with Ireland. The peace was kept within Northern Ireland itself by and large, although the aforementioned discrimination resulted in a society weighted in favour of Protestants. However, for whatever reason, no matter how unbalanced the socioeconomic and political systems were, neither side were securitised by the other to a significant enough degree to spark meaningful conflict. As such, even as Ireland ceased to be a dominion in the late 1930's and became a fully independent state, and even as Ireland remained neutral during the Second World War, tensions in Northern Ireland between Catholics and Protestants, or Nationalists and Unionists, did not come to a head during this period.

Despite this relative peace that prevailed after the split between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, there were some actors on both sides that, through their own agendas, were promoting less peaceful rhetorics. On the Republican side, at the end of the 1950's, the IRA (Irish Republican Army), a paramilitary group established after the Irish War of Independence in the early 20th Century that sought to see Ireland united, had conducted actions such as 'Operation Harvest'. The operation started with the objective of freeing

Ireland (including Northern Ireland in this case) from the British, but ended in 1962 with disarmament and a grand total of 14 casualties – 8 members of the IRA and 6 members of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, the Northern Irish Police Force (Taylor, 2001). This operation and its objective completely reflect the goal of the IRA to reunify Ireland without British influence. In this sense, the IRA was not open to reform, but at this time mainly existed on the fringes of politics.

On the Unionist side was the Protestant minister, the Reverend Ian Paisley who, when the Irish Taoiseach (Prime Minister) Jack Lynch visited Stormont in the mid-1960's to discuss cooperation with the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland Terence O'Neil, denounced O'Neil as:

'...a traitor prepared to sell Ulster to the Irish Republic and the Pope.' (Taylor, 2001)

Paisley, a key figure in the later peace process, was a hard-line Unionist, and even though O'Neil was also a Unionist, he was more liberal and open to cooperation with the Republic of Ireland. The actions of the IRA and the quote from Paisley demonstrate the two more extreme ends of the spectrum, but it is worth keeping in mind that, until the mid-1960's, these were fringe views. There were more liberal Unionists, such as O'Neil, and more peaceful and politically-focused organisations representing Catholics, and to some extent, Nationalists in Northern Ireland, such as the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA).

As such, politics and discourse was the preferred method, and to this end O'Neil's government in Stormont tried to implement economic and social reforms to try and redress the balance between Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland in the early 1960's. As an unintended side-effect, rather than improving the political situation in Northern Ireland it instead opened the floodgates. For hard-line Unionists the reforms were far too much, but to Catholics, Nationalists, and Republicans the reforms did not go far enough and took far too long to implement (Collier & Sambanis, 2005). To some extent, some scholars such as Douglas Woodwell even claim that the reforms undertaken by the O'Neil government in the 1960's created the kind of democratic transition that often leads to civil war and ethnic conflict (ibid.).

3.2 The Troubles: 1960-1986

This subchapter will provide a brief historical overview of the key events in the Troubles that had a direct impact on securitisation. Many books have been written on the Troubles that provide a very detailed and in depth overview of the full historical context of the Troubles and, as such, this subchapter will not re-tread well-trodden ground. Instead, this subchapter will attempt to provide the uninitiated reader with a sufficient understanding of historical events to better understand the following analysis in this chapter. As such, some events will be overlooked. That is not to say they are not important and certainly does not serve to diminish the significance or the effects these events had, particularly on a personal level; their exclusion is simply for the sake of simplicity and clarity within the framework of this thesis. For a deeper understanding of all events in a significantly wider perspective, works by David McKittrick and Peter Taylor in particular provide an excellent overview of the wider issues and events.

The Troubles have their roots firmly placed in the socio-economic and political disparity between Catholics and Protestants outlined in the previous subchapter. A lack of availability of jobs within the Catholic community, coupled with under-representation in politics, lead to significant clamour for reform (McKittrick & McVie, 2012). On the other hand, the ruling Protestants felt that such reforms would eventually see Northern Ireland united with the Republic of Ireland to the south and, as such, meaningful reforms had not been forthcoming. This lead to growing unrest in Northern Ireland. Attempts by Stormont's then-leader, Terence O'Neil, to redress this in the early 1960's were divisive; for Catholics, the reforms did not go far enough and were taking far too long to implement, for more hard-line Protestants and Unionists, including members of O'Neil's own political party, the reforms went too far (Collier & Sambanis, 2005). In introducing the reforms, O'Neil began the kind of democratic transition that often leads to civil war and ethnic conflict (ibid.).

Tensions between the two groups and, by October 1968, civil rights protests in Northern Ireland began to turn sour. On October the 5th and a Civil Rights protest in Derry, the Northern Irish police force, the Royal Ulster Constabulary, were seen to be:

> *'...charging into what appeared to be a peaceful crowd of demonstrators and batoning them over the head....'* (Taylor, 2001).

This is a key moment in the conflicts in many ways. Firstly, it represents the beginning of the Troubles proper, in that from this point on protests became increasingly violent. Secondly, it

demonstrates the point that the Royal Ulster Constabulary were not an impartial force, instead viewed as a sectarian Protestant force designed to *'...put Catholics in their place...'* (ibid.). At the same time, according to Taylor, the government of the United Kingdom was slow to react to the situation, completely failing to grasp the severity of the situation until it was too late.

In an attempt to escalate the situation, Loyalist paramilitaries attacked Belfast's water and electricity supply in 1969 in an attempt to firstly frame the Republican paramilitaries, and secondly to discredit O'Neil's government due to their perceived appeasement of Catholics, Nationalists, and Republics through their proposed reforms (ibid.). Subsequently, O'Neil resigned, and his successor tried to rapidly implement the reforms that had been proposed under significant pressure from Westminster who had now realised the severity of the situation and were attempting to intervene. However, as Taylor argues, this was too little, too late, and seemingly nothing Stormont or Westminster could have done at this point could have prevented what followed.

By August, Westminster and moderate elements of both sides in Stormont were stuck between a proverbial rock and a hard place with regards to Unionists; any steps taken to provide concessions to Catholics and deescalate the situation were seen as betraying the Protestants and Unionists. As such, when British Prime Minister James Callaghan permitted a Unionist march by the Apprentice Boys of Derry on the basis that he was *'...a Libertarian, I don't like banning marches'* (ibid.), riots erupted. Both Nationalists and Unionists alike attacked each other and the police with rocks, bricks, and petrol bombs in what would become known as the Battle of the Bogside. By this point, the violence in Northern Ireland had already spread to Belfast to such an extent that it made the violence in Derry look like *'a sideshow'*. (Taylor, 2001). The Royal Ulster Constabulary could no longer contain the situation and in some cases were making the situation significantly worse. This meant that extraordinary measures were required. As such, the decision was undertaken in Westminster to deploy the British Army to Northern Ireland, a move that was interpreted differently by all sides; the Catholics and Nationalists assumed it was to protect them from the Royal Ulster Constabulary, the Protestants and Unionists assumed it was to put the Catholics in their place, the Government of Northern Ireland assumed it was to back up the Royal Ulster Constabulary, and the British Government and the Army themselves believed they were deploying as impartial peacekeepers (ibid.).

After a short honeymoon period of relative calm, by the end of the year violence reignited, with claims from both the Nationalists and Unionists that the British Army was

biased towards the other side. In addition, Dublin also got involved, with the Irish Taoiseach Jack Lynch stating that the Royal Ulster Constabulary was *'...no longer accepted as an impartial police force.'* (Raidió Teilifís Éireann, 2012). In the same speech, broadcast on Irish state broadcaster Raidió Teilifís Éireann, Lynch continued that:

> *'....reunification of* [Ireland and Northern Ireland] *can provide the only permanent solution to the problem.'* (ibid.)

The riots in Belfast meant that the British Army was thus deployed to Belfast as well, a move that temporarily calmed the situation. Westminster seized the opportunity to reform the Royal Ulster Constabulary, turning them into *'...an unarmed, civilian police force like the rest of the United Kingdom.'*, later also moving to remove the highly controversial Protestant reservist police force, the B-Specials (ibid., BBC, 2008). This was met with heavy resistance from the Unionist community, resulting in the first casualty for the Royal Ulster Constabulary in the Troubles; a police constable shot dead by Loyalists protesting the disarming of the police. Most riots at this time were still being contained to localised areas by the deployment of the British Army, preventing significant sectarian clashes. However, by this point the Troubles had begun in earnest.

By the turn of the decade the Republican paramilitaries had begun to reform, splitting along political lines creating the Marxist Official IRA and Official Sinn Féin, and the solely Republican Provisional IRA and Sinn Féin. The Provisional IRA became very active in Catholic areas, superseding the British Army as the primary dedicated defence force for Catholics, particularly as under the Special Powers Act of 1922, the British Army was technically under orders from Stormont (Taylor, 2001). Protestants and Unionists became increasingly concerned by the actions of the Provisional IRA, and, as a result of the mistrust in Stormont and especially Westminster due to perceived betrayal with earlier reforms, also turned to Loyalist paramilitaries for security, setting the scene for the troubles that would follow. However, in spite of reforms, the Royal Ulster Constabulary was, without doubt, a Unionist and to some extent Loyalist tool. This cannot be better demonstrated than the massacre of the Irish band, the Miami Show Band, by members of the Loyalist Paramilitary group the Ulster Volunteer Force. The men who committed the attack later transpired to be members of the Ulster Defence Regiment, a regiment of the British Army and the effective replacement for the B-Specials under British reform (Bailie, 2015). This significantly increased tensions between Nationalists, Republicans, and the British.

In 1970 and 1971 the political landscape in Northern Ireland changed significantly through the creation of two new political parties, the Democratic Unionist Party, and the Social Democratic and Labour Party, representing Unionists and Nationalists respectively (Flackes & Elliot, 1998). This was a significant addition to politics in Northern Ireland as both parties would play a critical role in the Peace Process, particularly the Social Democratic and Labour Party due to their significantly more moderate stance than Sinn Féin. Conversely, the Democratic Unionist Party, founded and lead by Ian Paisley, represented a more politically extreme side of Unionism. In spite of this history, at the time of writing (Summer 2017), the Democratic Unionist Party is currently propping up the Conservative government in Westminster (The Guardian, 2017).

Meanwhile, the conflict between the IRA and the Army escalated significantly. Being seen by the Nationalist population as a tool of Stormont, the IRA started to engage in open conflict with the Army. This resulted in the death of the first British soldier in Ireland since the 1920's, Gunner Robert Curtis, killed whilst out on patrol in 1971 (BBC Wiltshire, 2009). This quickly escalated into all-out war, with the deaths of two innocent Catholics, Seamus Cusack and Desmond Beattie, being killed by the army in July of the same year (England, 2003). At this point, the Social Democratic and Labour Party withdrew themselves from Stormont in protest over the lack of an inquiry into the killings (Taylor, 1997).

In response to increasing violence, the British began to intern paramilitary members. Although not stated as such outright, the reality of internment was that it was only applied to Republican paramilitaries, and not Loyalists (Coogan, 1996). This resulted in increased distrust between Nationalists and the British Army, and as a by-product, increased support for the IRA and other Nationalist paramilitaries both within Northern Ireland and globally (Bew & Gillespie, 1999). The Republic of Ireland also referred the United Kingdom to the European Court of Human Rights for subjecting detainees to degrading treatment and torture (European Court of Human Rights, 1978). The process of internment was ended in 1975, before the judgement by the European Court of Human Rights, and as a result, policing reforms were undertaken to prevent this happening again (Committee of Inquiry into Police Interrogation Procedures in Northern Ireland, Great Britain, 1979).

In January 1972, one of the most significant events in the Troubles occurred. On January 20th, the British Army opened fire on a Catholic protest, killing 12 and wounding 14 in what would become known as Bloody Sunday. The British claimed that there were IRA elements present within the protest, and subsequent inquests by the British into the event prior

to the Peace Process were effectively seen by Republicans and Nationalists as a whitewash (Foy, 2010). What followed was an increase in targeting British targets by the IRA, including targets on the British mainland. These started with initially military targets such as the attacks on the Aldershot Barracks in which the Parachute Regiment, the regiment who had been present and opened fire on Bloody Sunday, were directly targeted (Woollacott, 2009). Following this, attacks on bars frequented by military personnel (Edwards, 2014), as well as other attacks targeting military personnel and their families. In addition to this, in the same day as an attack on the British Army at Warrenpoint, the IRA also killed Prince Phillip's Uncle, Lord Mountbatten, along with members of his family and entourage (Time Magazine, 1979). The IRA also turned to targeting civilian targets both in the mainland United Kingdom, and Unionist targets in Belfast. One key example of this was Bloody Friday, in which the IRA detonated 20 bombs within 80 minutes of each other in Belfast (Taylor, 2001). The IRA were certainly not alone in targeting civilian targets, one example being the Loyalist attack on McGurks bar also occurring in 1971 (House of Commons, United Kingdom, 2008). The ongoing violence against civilians meant that the paramilitaries began to lose favour among their respective communities, their referent objects in terms of securitisation – a key factor in the run up to the Peace Process (Morrison, 2016, and Raines, 1987).

At this point the British began to take power in Northern Ireland away from the Unionists, namely though the Norther Ireland (Temporary Provisions) Act 1972 (Government of Great Britain, 1972). The act took a number of powers away from Stormont and put them into the hands of Westminster, officially because the Unionist government in Stormont was failing to provide security, but speculation from the Unionist side believed the British were also trying to force through laws they knew would not pass through the Unionist Stormont (Faulkner, 1972). This represents an attempt by the British to redress the balance in the conflict and become more aligned with the role of peacekeeper that they seemingly intended to play from the beginning, particularly as, around this time, the British Government was holding secret meetings with the leadership of the IRA (Taylor, 2011).

Also in 1972, Republican prisoners began using the tactic of hunger strikes in order to draw attention to changes in British counter terrorism legislation that left them without certain rights when detained for terrorist offences, the most noteworthy of which being the ability for the security services to imprison suspected terrorists without trial for seven days (Government of Great Britain, 1974). The tactics of hunger strikes continued for almost a decade, culminating in the death of Bobby Sands who became seen as a hero of the Republican

community for his sacrifice (English, 2003). The hunger strikes were also used as a vehicle to encourage the boycott of elections and the 1973 Border Poll (Hayward & O'Donnell, 2011). The result of the boycott of the latter was a 98.9% result in favour of remaining part of the United Kingdom (Whyte, 2005).

1972 and 1973 also saw bombings in Dublin, although it has never been determined who undertook these attacks as almost any party to the conflict would have their reason; the Republicans to draw support from the Irish population, Loyalists as an attack for perceived support of the Republican cause, and the British secret services for a number of reasons (Oireachtas Éireann, Joint Committee on Justice, Equality, Defence, and Women's Rights, 2004). However, the Republic kept working with the British, trying to resolve the conflict. The main outcome of this was the Sunningdale Agreement (Government of Great Britain, Oireachtas Éireann, & The Northern Ireland Executive, 1973). At the time, Sunningdale was a huge step. Its content was more less the same as the Belfast Agreement, leaving the latter to eventually be referred to as 'Sunningdale for Slow Learners' (Moran, 2012). However, as there was no significant period of negotiations and peace process beforehand, the parties in Northern Ireland were left with an all-or-nothing choice; peace at the terms of Sunningdale immediately, or no peace. Unsurprisingly, without time for the relevant parties to negotiate or come to terms with the terms of Sunningdale, the latter prevailed and Sunningdale failed (ibid.).

Violence and division continued to escalate in Northern Ireland and the United Kingdom in the 1970's and 80's, but the conflicts first, but not last, Noble Peace Prize was awarded in this period to the 'Peace People'. Established in 1976 by a group of women who expressed deep concern not only for the escalation of violence, but in particular the largely inadvertent killing of innocent women and children throughout the Troubles, the Peace People represented a non-partisan group with no political, ideological, or religious affiliation (Peace People, n.d.). As a result of their actions, the founding members Betty Williams and Mairead Corrigan were awarded the 1976 Noble Peace Prize (Nobel Foundation, 2016).

The end of the 1970's and early 1980's marked several talks between several parties. Firstly, the Atkins talks, held between the Ulster Unionist Party, the Democratic Unionist Party, and the Social Democratic and Labour Party were all invited to sit down by then-Secretary of State Humphrey Atkins to try and pave the way for a consensus that may result in some form of settlement. However, the Ulster Unionist Party boycotted the talks, the Democratic Unionist Party wouldn't accept anything short of majority rule, ruling out power

sharing, and the Social Democratic and Labour Party were more concerned about the involvement of the Republic of Ireland in the future of the North (McEvoy, 2008). In addition, the Nationalists held their own talks in Dublin, the New Ireland Forum, but the only outcome was a report that was extremely critical of the British involvement in the North, and was heavily biased in that regard (ibid.). The only successful talks were between the British and the Irish in 1985. The main outcome was the Anglo-Irish agreement, outlining cooperation between the two states in matters pertaining to Northern Ireland and emphasising self-determination as paramount in the future of Northern Ireland (Government of Great Britain, 1985). The move was received with disdain by Unionists, claiming they were being betrayed by the British and leading to the famous 'Ulster Says No' slogan and Ian Paisley's *'Never, Never, Never'* speech in reference to the idea that the Republic of Ireland would now hold a major stake in the future of the North (BBC, 2014).

3.3 Securitisations in Northern Ireland During the Troubles 1960-1986

As stated in the introduction to this chapter, the Troubles are somewhat complex in terms of relationships between the main parties when viewed through the lens of securitisation. This subchapter will thus outline these securitisations within the historical framework outlined in the previous subchapter in order to answer the first research question and thus present a framework and understanding that is necessary to understand the subsequent chapters on desecuritisation in Northern Ireland and the lessons that can be learned and applied to other such conflicts globally.

First and foremost, the parties of the conflict must be defined. For the purpose of this thesis, external actors not directly involved with the conflict on the ground but who undoubtedly had influence on the conflict itself, such as the United States of America, will be excluded simply because their inclusion would introduce further complication to an already complex topic that would provide little benefit to the conclusions of this thesis as a whole when viewed through the scope of the defined research questions at hand. As such, the parties to the conflict relevant to securitisation can be defined as follows:

- Protestants within Northern Ireland
- Catholics within Northern Ireland
- Nationalist and Republican political actors, namely the Social Democratic and Labour Party, Sinn Féin, and their respective securitising actors
- Unionist political actors, primarily the Ulster Unionist Party, the Democratic Unionist Party, other minor Unionist parties, and their respective securitising actors
- Republican Paramilitaries, namely the IRA and its various iterations throughout the Troubles, the most prominent of which being the Provisional IRA
- Loyalist Paramilitaries, mainly the Ulster Volunteer Force and Ulster Defence Association, but including a number of smaller paramilitary forces
- The British, including the British Government, its securitising actors, British Armed Forces (excluding the Ulster Defence Regiment), and the British Intelligence Services
- Northern Irish State actors, including Stormont, its relevant securitising actors, the Ulster Constabulary, and the Ulster Defence Regiment
- The Republic of Ireland

The relationships between all these actors is often complex, and as such this subchapter will attempt to outline the relationships between each of the above listed parties as concisely as possible through the framework of securitisation. To provide clarity and simplicity, each securitising will be dealt with individually below in a numbered, with clear headings before each paragraph to denote the parties involved.

Below, the term 'vs.' is used where clear securitisation is present and open conflict was present. Although 'vs.' is somewhat simplistic, as it allows for clearer definition under each numbered point and the prevention of need for duplication, particularly under point 3. The term 'and' in points 4, 6, 9, and 10 is used to denote securitisation being fluid, to varying degrees, throughout the conflict.

1. Protestants vs. Catholics

The first main securitisation that existed in the conflict is that between Protestants and Catholics. Due to the previously outlined socio-economic disparity between the two groups, the Catholic population were presented with a security threat in terms economic survival in as much as a lack of availability of jobs for Catholics when compared to protestants and a lack of political representation represented a significant threat to their survival (McKittrick & McVie, 2012). As this situation had been created by the ruling, predominantly Protestant, government in Stormont, this led to securitisation against Protestants as a whole, as well as the Stormont government and, by proxy, the British government. As mentioned in the previous subchapter, although there were attempts by Stormont to alleviate this, particularly through O'Neil's reforms, this was seen as too little, too late.

On the other hand, Catholics posed a significant threat to the existence of Protestants in as much as there was a fear that, should the Catholics be given the same rights as Protestants then Protestants would eventually be driven out of Ireland and Northern Ireland would cease to exist (Collier & Sambanis, 2005). This is most effectively summed up by the quote from the Reverend Ian Paisley referenced in the previous subchapter, that any reform made, discussed, or suggested, to create a more equal society was seen as an attempt to *'...sell Ulster to the Irish Republic and the Pope.'* (Taylor, 2001). The fact that Paisley mentions the Pope very much frames this as a religious, as well as socioeconomic, securitisation.

For both sides a very perceivable and credible threat to their existence is presented in terms of securitisation. In both cases neither side was faced with absolute annihilation, but each was presented with a significant enough security threat to become securitised. For Catholics, the denial of access to work and housing that they believed that they were entitled to was an actual threat to their existence within Northern Ireland. Having seen how Ireland was treated under British colonialism, they feared that Northern Ireland was an extension of this oppression that ought to be ended in Northern Ireland as it had been for the rest of Ireland (McDonald, 2016). Likewise, for Protestants, the concern that Northern Ireland would be united with the Republic, and thus their current lifestyle would end at best, or at worse they would be completely ejected from Northern Ireland, represented an actual threat to their security (Collier & Sambanis, 2005). Thus, both sides perceived threats were irreconcilable, and neither could achieve the desired level of threat reduction without increasing the perceived threat by the other. As such, Catholics and Protestants securitised against each other for the reasons listed above. However, it's important to remember that whilst the basis for the conflict stems at least in part from religious discrimination, in reality it was not a sectarian conflict. Therefore these securitisations represent an important backdrop for understanding the securitisations between Nationalists and Unionists, as outlined below.

2. Nationalists vs Unionists

As the Nationalist and Unionist parties were the political manifestations of their predominant respective Catholic and Protestant populations, a large amount of the securitisations are effectively the same, particularly around socio-economic issues, and for the same reasons, as those noted under point 1. However, there were additional political dimensions. From the Nationalist side, the struggle against British rule in Northern Ireland was viewed as an extension of the Irish War of Independence, in which Britain was a colonial power that should be removed from Ireland completely to rectify the socio-economic and political oppression Ireland had been subjected to in their opinion, outlined under point 1 (McDonald, 2016). The flipside of this was that Unionists feared that if the Republicans were to get what they wanted, logic would dictate that they would also have to leave. This securitisation was addressed by Gerry Adams directly during the Peace Process in which he stated that would not be the case, as will be outlined later on in this thesis. Thus the aforementioned irreconcilable issues from point 1, coupled with these uniquely political

issues, represented a significant enough threat between the two groups to create securitisation on both sides. As such, the Atkins Talks, New Ireland Forum, and other attempts to host negotiations in the late 1970's to mid 1980's invariably failed due to both political groups being significantly securitised against the other for the aforementioned reasons in point 1 (McEvoy, 2008).

3. Republican vs. Loyalist paramilitaries vs. Catholics, Nationalists, Protestants, Unionists

With Republican paramilitaries seeing themselves as the defenders of Nationalists and Catholics, and Loyalist paramilitaries seeing themselves as the defenders of Unionists and Protestants, the reasoning for these two groups being securitised against each other is once again the same as those listed in point 1. Republicans particularly used on the religious aspect of their struggle by using tactics such as hunger strikes. Hunger strikes hold some significance in Catholic history and are thus seen by some authors such as Maggie Scull, who, when writing for the Irish Times in 2015, outlined the theory that use of hunger strikes as a tactic may have had some symbolic value to Catholics as a whole and therefore been used to curry favour with the Catholic community (Scull, 2015). The violence undertaken by both Republicans and Loyalists did, however, cause divisions between them and the respective communities they claimed to defend.

One key example of this schism between defenders and defended is the Nobel Peace Prize-winning 'Peace People', the growing gap throughout the conflict between the paramilitaries and their respective proclaimed protecees being one key reason for the eventual peace process being successful. As the groups the paramilitaries were supposed to protect became weary of the actions undertaken in the name of their protection, the paramilitaries campaigns were no longer seen as a legitimate action by their referent objects. Therefore, within the framework of the Copenhagen School as outlined in the theoretical framework of this chapter, the paramilitaries' campaigns no longer held the right to enact extraordinary measures and ruling-breaking behaviour on behalf of their referent objects and thus, to some extent, ceased to be securitising actors.

4. Catholics, Protestants, Northern Irish State Actors, and the British

The securitisations between Catholics, Protestants, and to some extent Northern Irish State Actors, with regards to the British, in particular the British Army and Security Services, represents one of the most complex securitisations of the Troubles. The deployment of the British Army was in 1969 met with a different response from all parties. According to author and expert in the Troubles Peter Taylor, the Catholics and Nationalists assumed it was to protect them from the Royal Ulster Constabulary, the Protestants and Unionists assumed it was to put the Catholics in their place, the Government of Northern Ireland assumed it was to back up the Royal Ulster Constabulary, and the British Government and the Army themselves believed they were deployed to keep the peace between all sides (Taylor, 2001). According to one soldier interviewed by Taylor, upon deployment in Belfast, the British Army *'...were treated as saviours* [by the Catholics]. *... The Protestants were baying at us and they weren't very pleased to start off with but when they realised that we were fair and firm to both sides then it all settled down.'* (ibid.).

This variety, and even outright contradiction, in securitisation among Catholics and Protestants in particular really highlights the complexity of the Troubles, but also goes a long way towards demonstrating the usefulness of securitisation theory as a whole, as one action undertaken by one actor was read in a different way towards almost every referent object to which it could be seen to be directed.

Catholics relied on the British to protect them in part due to the perceived failures by the IRA to protect them during the onset of violence in 1969 (Taylor, 1997). After a short time, these securitisations shifted significantly, and by the time British soldiers who had been deployed in 1969 returned for a second tour in 1970 that Catholic households who had previously offered tea, biscuits, and a place to get much needed respite would no longer have anything to do with them (Taylor, 2001). Eventually, once the dust settled, the British Army and Security Services became part of the problem in the eyes of the Catholic community. This is, in part, due to the appearance and commencement in earnest of the actions of the Provisional IRA. The Provisional IRA touted themselves as defenders of the Catholic population in Northern Ireland, as outlined in section 3, a feeling that was apparently reciprocated by the Catholic community as outlined by Taylor (Taylor, 1997). As the Provisional IRA and thus other Republican actors were significantly opposed to British rule

and sought to protect the Catholic community from the perceived oppression from Stormont and Northern Irish state actors, this perception of threat was trickled down through general rhetoric, in turn securitising the Catholic population against all British actors, political, legal, and security.

The deployment of the British Army, even under the guise of peacekeeping, was an extension of both of these issues, and thus the Catholic community were swiftly securitised against the British Army at the turn of the decade (Taylor, 2001). This fact was particularly exacerbated by the fact that the British Army, at least initially, were under direct command from Stormont (ibid.). The other securitisations outlined in the first paragraph of this chapter did not significantly shift throughout the conflict – a complex relationship between the British Army and Loyalists in particular meant that the Protestants viewed the British Army as their defenders for the majority of the Troubles as this relationship was never securitised by speech acts due to the convenience of its existence for securitising actors among the Loyalist, Unionist, and subsequently Protestant communities. This complex relationship will be covered in more depth under point 6.

Politically, the Protestants also became securitised against the British, although to a significantly lesser degree, as the reforms that the British were trying to push through in Northern Ireland threatened Protestant social, political, and economic dominance, and subsequently lead to a perception of total threat to their survival via a threat to completely changing the status quo. As a key example of this, in the wake of Bloody Sunday the British Government shut down Stormont via the Northern Ireland (Temporary Provisions) Act 1972 due to a perceived failure by the Unionists in power to effectively administrate (Government of Great Britain, 1972). The act was, as the name suggests, originally intended to be temporary, but ends up in force until 1999 when the Northern Ireland Assembly established by the Belfast Agreement takes its place. It is worth restating from the previous subchapter that this move was met with significant criticism from Unionists, who felt that they had not failed to provide security in spite on the ongoing conflict, and that the powers were being removed simply to implement changes the British wanted but knew the ruling Unionists would never accept (Faulkner, 1972).

5. Republican paramilitaries vs. the British

The securitisation of the British Army by the Republican paramilitaries is the most widely covered aspect of the Troubles. This point will therefore cover this aspect in order to give this topic the necessary context in terms of securitisation. For the reasons outlined in point 4, the Republican paramilitaries securitised themselves against the British. The British, initially, were not securitised against the Provisional IRA remarkably more so than any other party to the conflict as they viewed themselves as peacekeepers. However, as time went on, the standoff between the British Army and Provisional IRA created deep rooted securitisations between both parties.

Actions undertaken by the British to try and ease tensions between parties in Northern Ireland were wildly misjudged. One key example was the disbanding of the controversial 'B-Specials', the controversial irregular reservists that supported the Royal Ulster Constabulary in particular due to the formers apparent crossover in membership with Loyalist paramilitaries, and replace them with the Ulster Defence Regiment, a reservist unit of the British Army (BBC, 2008). This was, however, only really a cosmetic change as the membership of the regiment was not significantly different to the membership of the B-Specials and, as illustrated by the previously outlined case of the massacre of the Irish Miami Showband (Bailie, 2015). This, and similar occurrences, greatly harmed the position of the British Army and increased securitisation among the Provisional IRA due to suspicion of collusion and that the Loyalist paramilitaries were either British agents, or had been established by the British to combat the Republican cause (Taylor, 2001). This was thus used to justify increasingly extreme actions to combat the threat posed by the British to the Provisional IRA's referent objects.

The Provisional IRA thus turned to targeting the British Army directly, beginning in 1971 with the death of the first British solider in Northern Ireland since the 1920's, Gunner Robert Curtis (BBC Wiltshire, 2009). The killings escalated rapidly, and in response the British Army took a more hard-line stance towards Republicans and Nationalists due to the threat posed directly to themselves. This resulted in a shift of securitisation within the British Army on both an individual and a systematic level. On the individual level, the attacks by the Provisional IRA against the British Army increased the threat posed by Republicans to the individual in the British security forces, a factor which doubtless played at least some part in the actions of the British security services and its members throughout the conflict. The attacks from the Provisional IRA were initially carried out within Northern Ireland, but

eventually spread to the mainland UK, targeting soldiers on and off duty, as well as their families and other military events, such as the bombing on the Parachute Regiment's base at Aldershot in 1972 (Woollacott, 2009), the killing of Lord Mountbatten (Time Magazine, 1979), and the most deadly attack by the Provisional IRA on UK soil on a military concert in Hyde Park in 1982 (Whitehead, 2014).

The attacking of families and the death of comrades and friends in attacks on the military in particular would have doubtless significantly increased securitisation towards the Provisional IRA on an individual level. General Sir Mike Jackson, then commanding a company of the Parachute Regiment in Northern Ireland, stated after an attack by the Provisional IRA at Warrenpoint in 1979 which resulted in the biggest loss of life for the unit since Arnhem in 1944 stated that the attacks were mentally very difficult to deal with for a number of the soldiers present (Jackson, 2007). This increase in securitisation meant that from the beginning of the 1970's the army became increasingly wary of Nationalists and Republicans alike. This increase in wariness lead to a greater desire to respond to suspected Provisional IRA activities with lethal force to prevent further loss, resulting in a number of innocent civilians being killed, the majority Catholics, by the British security forces, starting with Seamus Cusack and Desmond Beattie in 1971 (England, 2003), and escalating up to events such as Bloody Sunday, with subsequent enquiries into these events, such as the Widgery Enquiry into Bloody Sunday, failing to hold the respective members of the British armed forces responsible for their actions in Nationalist and Republic eyes, further increasing securitisation against the state rather than just the security forces (Foy, 2010).

Alongside this the British also began the process of internment in which the British security services attempted to round up members of paramilitaries in Northern Ireland. As an indicator of where the British securitisation lay, the program was solely targeted at Republican organisations and did not include any Loyalists (Coogan, 1996). This significantly increased the perception of collusion among Republicans, Nationalists, and Catholics alike (Bew & Gillespie, 1999). In addition, the target of internment was initially the Official IRA, split from the Provisional IRA in 1969 and significantly less active than the Provisional IRA. This is likely because of their Marxist ideology (Coogan, 1996). This is remarkable in the context of this thesis as it demonstrates how securitisation can alter perception; in spite of the Provisional IRA's significantly greater activities, the Official IRA were targeted because, in the context of the ongoing Cold War, the greatest threat posed to the British at the time in

terms of securitisation, the Marxists seemed to present a philosophically greater threat to security in spite of the clear evidence suggesting otherwise in a purely military sense.

The Provisional IRA also targeted civilian and political targets, most notably the Brighton Bombing on the Conservative Party Conference in 1984 and the pub bombings throughout the period, most notably in Birmingham and Guildford and initially at least targeted at pubs frequented by the British military on leave, but escalated to other pubs and public places throughout the Troubles. These attacks demonstrate further securitisation against British rule as a whole beyond the security services due to the threat they felt the British posed to the position or themselves and those they claimed to defend in Northern Ireland (Bingham, 2013).

As such, scholars outside the Republican and Nationalist movements, such as Irish journalist Peter O'Toole, claim that the British represented an active player rather than an impartial referee in the troubles (O'Toole, 2007). The Provisional IRA and the British did, however, eventually begin talks in the 1980's, several years after British focus has also shifted towards tackling the problem of Loyalist paramilitaries in the same way as their Republican counterparts, largely addressing one of the biggest securitisations the Provisional IRA had towards the British, and thus shifting the justification for their extraordinary actions with which to tackle the perceived threat, although this justification would not be removed until the mid-1990's.

6. Loyalist paramilitaries and the British

The relationship between the Loyalist paramilitaries and the British was, once again, complex. As outlined in point 5 on the IRA, there were accusations of collusion between the British and the Loyalists that were, in some cases, not unfounded. Due to the over-securitisation against the IRA, the British also failed to fully accept, and subsequently effectively deal with, the threat posed by the Loyalists, in spite of the fact that in reality Loyalist actions killed more civilians than Republican actions; an estimated 864 vs. 728 according to some sources (Council on Foreign Relations, 2005).

Aside from the policy of internment as covered in the previous section, another indication of the biases of the British Security Services in Northern Ireland towards Loyalists is the example of the McGurk's Bar bombing in December 1971. McGurk's Bar was a pub in

Belfast mostly frequented by Catholics. In an apparently botched operation, the Ulster Volunteer Force bombed the pub instead of another pub frequented by the IRA (House of Commons, United Kingdom, 2008). The British Security Services, including the Army, in spite of almost overwhelming evidence to the contrary, claimed that the bombing had been a premature explosion of a bomb being prepared by the IRA at the pub, and had not involved Loyalist paramilitaries in any way (ibid.). These are not lone examples of the British being evidently significantly less securitised against the Loyalists when compared to the Republicans, as in spite of the British claims of impartiality, the significantly greater security threat posed by the Provisional IRA to the British Army, and later the British people and British government lead the British as a whole to be systemically more securitised against the Republicans and Nationalists and therefore inherently biased.

This persisted until 1975, when the British started listing Loyalist paramilitaries as 'proscribed organisations', therefore banning membership and rendering the organisations themselves illegal, the most notable of these being the Ulster Volunteer Force (Taylor, 1998). Although the Loyalists and the British Army were never in open conflict anywhere near the level that the British and the Provisional IRA were, from this point on the British began to treat both sides more equally. However, in terms of securitisation, it is clear that based on the activities of the two sides the British were never securitised towards the Loyalists as much as they were towards the Republicans, even after they officially treated them the same under the law.

7. Catholics, Nationalists, Republicans, and Protestants, Unionists, Loyalists vs. the Northern Irish state actors

The securitisations existing between the above mentioned groups and the Northern Irish state actors, particularly the Royal Ulster Constabulary and the B-Specials, but also the Stormont Government is relatively straightforward given what has been covered in the previous sections. With regards to the Royal Ulster Constabulary, it's predominantly Protestant membership lead to it being viewed negatively among Catholics (Taylor, 2001). This securitisation was also reflected in the Republic of Ireland. The Irish Taoiseach Jack Lynch stated at the beginning of the Troubles that the Royal Ulster Constabulary was '*...no longer accepted as an impartial police force.'* (Raidió Teilifís Éireann, 2012).

This securitisation was reflected by Protestants, Unionists, and particularly Loyalists, in that the Royal Ulster Constabulary represented a key force in defending them from the perceived threat from Catholics to the status quo. This is perhaps best illustrated that when the British Government tried to reform the Royal Ulster Constabulary to make it an unarmed police force as was the case in the rest of the United Kingdom, Unionists and Loyalists protested, resulting in the first police casualty of the Troubles in 1969 – a Police constable shot dead by extremist Loyalists protesting the disarming of the police (Taylor, 2001).

Running battles between the police and protestors and the paramilitaries subsequently became a regular feature of the Troubles. Mostly these occurred between Catholics, Nationalists, and Republicans against the police, but, as noted above, conflict between protestants and the police also happened. Thus these securitisations persisted throughout the troubles and were one of the big reasons for the Royal Ulster Constabulary being rebranded as the Police Service of Northern Ireland as part of the terms of the Belfast Agreement (Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland, 1999).

8. The British, Northern Irish state actors, and the Republic of Ireland

Securitisation between the British and the Northern Irish state actors towards and from the Republic of Ireland, particularly at the outset of the conflict. The securitisations held by Protestants towards the Republic have been covered under section 1 of this subchapter, and thus naturally the same securitisations were reflected by Stormont due to it being predominantly Protestant. As referenced in section 7, the Taoiseach spoke out directly against the Royal Ulster Constabulary at the outset of the conflict, in the same speech stating *'...reunification of* [Ireland and Northern Ireland] *can provide the only permanent solution to the problem.'* (Raidió Teilifís Éireann, 2012). At the same time, in 1969, the Irish Army was deployed to the border, being viewed as openly inflammatory by the British and a significant threat to Protestants due to the aforementioned concerns a united Ireland presented covered under point 2:

> *'*[Nationalists] *thought that the deployment of the Irish Army to the border meant that the 5th Cavalry was coming.* [Unionists] *thought that doomsday was at hand. The British Government thought that the normally mild-mannered Taoiseach had lost his head.'* (Taylor, 2001).

As stated, this caused securitisation between the British and Irish governments. This wasn't the only time they butted heads, for example due to the controversy surrounding internment, the Republic of Ireland referred the United Kingdom to the European Court of Human Rights due to the inhumane treatment and apparent torture internees had been subjected to. When the case closed in 1978 the court found that whilst the United Kingdom had treated internees inhumanely and they had been subjected to degrading treatment, they did not go as far as to call their treatment torture due to the ongoing state of emergency in Northern Ireland (European Court of Human Rights, 1978). The British eventually also admitted their own wrongdoing in the Bennet Report of 1979, and sought to implement policing reforms to prevent these abuses from reoccurring (Committee of Inquiry into Police Interrogation Procedures in Northern Ireland, Great Britain, 1979). This illustrates that, although actions were undertaken by the Republic against the United Kingdom, the tensions never seriously reached a head and the two parties were never realistically fully securitised.

This situation eventually lead to an initially somewhat uneasy, but eventually successful cooperation between the two states to settle the situation in Northern Ireland. This began when the British and Irish government had a series of meetings that would eventually result in the Anglo-Irish Agreement 1985. Prior to the conference, the then-British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher outlined her position on the proposals being tabled by the Irish government, and thus the securitisation of the British Government on the issues at hand:

> *'I have made it quite clear—and so did Mr. Prior when he was Secretary of State for Northern Ireland—that a unified Ireland was one solution that is out. A second solution was confederation of two states. That is out. A third solution was joint authority. That is out. That is a derogation from sovereignty.'* (Thatcher, 1984)

The conference, along with the resulting Agreement, set out a series of steps where the British and Irish governments would cooperate on matters relating to the security, law, and politics, as well as highlighting the fact that self-determination was paramount when considering the future of Northern Ireland (Government of Great Britain, 1985). This once again shows the two parties were uneasy due to the issue at hand, but never really securitised against each other.

However, in spite of the emphasis on self-determination, the agreement was met with disdain by Unionists, leading to aforementioned protests under the now famous slogan 'Ulster

Says No', in which Ian Paisley made his famous *"Never, never, never"* speech, in reference to the outcome of the agreement being that the Republic of Ireland would be guaranteed involvement in any major decision on the future of Northern Ireland (BBC, 2014). Such protests civil action went on for two years after the agreement was signed. This shows that in spite of the lack of full securitisation between the British, the Irish, and the Northern Irish governments, the situation on the ground among a significant part of the population did not reflect the threat assessment of the governments as evidently cooperation with the Irish was perceived as a significant threat by Protestants, Unionists, and Loyalists.

With regards to the Republic's opinion towards all parties, 1972 and 1973 marked a significant point in terms of securitisation. As outlined in the previous subchapter, multiple bombings and attacks were undertaken in Dublin (Hoggart, 2015). A 2004 report into these bombings, known as the Second Baron Report outlined that, at the time, essentially every party to the conflict was suspected; the Provisional IRA, the Ulster Volunteer Force, and the British Intelligence Services, each with its own motives outlined in the report. However, no party was ever convicted, and no one has ever been charged for the bombings (Oireachtas Éireann, Joint Committee on Justice, Equality, Defence and Women's Rights, 2004).

3.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, the above section clearly outlines the existing securitisations between all the parties. This complex topic has been approached in the simplest way whilst still trying to achieve the goals of this thesis, and as such an executive summary was given rather than a full historical overview of all the occurrences in the period covered.

To summarise the previous chapter, the main securitisations within the conflict for each party are listed below:

- Protestants, Unionist political entities, and Loyalist paramilitaries
    - Major securitisations:
        - Catholics within Northern Ireland
        - Republican paramilitaries
        - Nationalist political entities
        - The Republic of Ireland
    - Other securitisations:
        - The British on the topic of reform and negotiations with the above listed parties
- Catholics, Nationalist political entities, and Republican paramilitaries
    - Major securitisations:
        - Protestants within Northern Ireland
        - Unionists
        - Loyalist paramilitaries
        - The British (late 1969 onwards)
- The British
    - Major securitisations
        - Republican paramilitaries
        - Loyalist paramilitaries (1975 onwards)
    - Other securitisations
        - The Republic of Ireland was never really securitised, but is worth mentioning
- Northern Irish State actors
    - Major securitisations:
        - Republican paramilitaries

        - Loyalist paramilitaries (occasionally, but to a significantly lesser extent)
        - Protestors and rioters on both sides
- The Republic of Ireland
    - Major securitisations:
        - Paramilitaries operating in, or from, the Republic of Ireland
        - Loyalist paramilitaries threatening Irish citizens in Northern Ireland
    - Other securitisations
        - Very minor degrees of securitisation to all parties, if one can go as far to call it that, to all parties at varying times to varying degrees.

This thus provides the groundwork for the following chapter, examining how these groups became desecuritised over the period of the Peace Process.

4 CHANGES IN SECURITISATION DURING THE PEACE PROCESS

With the securitisations of the Troubles outlined above, this section will deal with the second main research question of this thesis – who were the main actors involved in desecuritisation, and what was their role. To this end, this section will be split in to four sections; a historical overview, then three sections that deal with each of the main parties of the conflict and their position on the Belfast Agreement of May 22nd 1998, also known as the Good Friday Agreement. The three parties covered will be the British, the Nationalists, and the Unionists. In order to keep this section focused, it will be limited to political or governmental actors only, as they were the key actors involved in the Peace Process, and will be presented with a contextual backdrop where necessary. It should be noted that as they had political objectives, both Republican and Loyalist paramilitaries will be included in this umbrella. Outlining the position and role of each party in the run up to the signing of the Belfast Agreement, should provide enough insight as to determine the parties that played an active role in desecuritisation and those that either did not play any role or instead tried to hinder it.

Within the framework of discourse analysis, the main focus of this sector will be on primary sources such as documents and speeches produced at the time by each of the actors where available, along with press statements and articles. Secondary sources and academic literature will only be used to back up primary sources, or where primary sources are absent or lacking. Lastly, there is obviously to some degree a level of overlap between certain events and certain parties. To this end, an overarching historical overview will be provided, then each party's individual experience of the Peace Process will be covered separately in order to ensure clarity and continuity, with brief reference to other respective parties if necessary. To this end, after the historical analysis, this section will continue with the United Kingdom, followed by Nationalists and Republicans, and finishing with Unionists and Loyalists. As the three aforementioned sections cover three timelines of the same period and events, events covered will not be subsequently repeated throughout sections unless they contain further specific developments beyond what is initially covered in the relevant section, or in the historical overview.

This section will therefore cover the research question on who the main securitising and desecuritising actors were during the Peace Process.

4.1 The Belfast Agreement: Historical Overview

In 1988 the leadership of Sinn Féin and the SDLP had been holding regular meetings to discuss potential developments in Northern Ireland (Melaugh, 2014). These talks culminated in a meeting between the SDLP and Unionist political parties at the end of the year, notably not including Sinn Féin. By March the following year Gerry Adams, the then-President of Sinn Féin, made a speech in which he first outlined a desire for Nationalism in Ireland to move towards unarmed political means (ibid.)

In 1989, a key speech was made by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Peter Brooke, in which he was the first Secretary of State to publically admit in a speech in 1989 two key factors that were paramount in the British position in the Peace Process; firstly, that the [Provisional] IRA could not be defeated by military force alone. Therefore, this lead to the secondary idea that Sinn Féin who, up until that point, had been excluded from previous attempts at peace processes due to their association with the Provisional IRA, could not be completely ruled out from the Peace Process as a whole, providing they renounced violence (BBC, 2006). Brooke followed this up in a second speech almost exactly a year later in November 1990, stating that Britain had 'no selfish strategic interest' in retaining Northern Ireland as part of the United Kingdom and, therefore, it was not the Nationalist movement that the United Kingdom was against, but rather the violence of the Republican paramilitary forces (ibid.).

His successor, Sir Patrick Mayhew, echoed this sentiment two years later in a December 1992 speech on culture and identity at the University of Ulster at Colerain in which he called for Sinn Féin to renounce the Provisional IRA's use of violence. (Mayhew, 1992). It is worth noting that, by this time, the UK was sitting down with both Sinn Féin and the Provisional IRA anyway behind the scenes. Multiple sources state this had been done on a governmental level for at least two years prior (Adams, 2003, and BBC, 2006), with Gerry Adams claiming these meetings had been spanning back to around the time of Brooke's first speech in 1990 (Adams, 2003). The UK's Secret Services had also been conducting talks on and off throughout the entirety of the Troubles (Andrew, 2009, and Taylor, 1997, 2001, & 2011). The latter talks between the Provisional IRA and the Secret Service eventually leaked to the public in 1993 (BBC, 2006).

Multi-party talks between the British, Irish, and main parties in Northern Ireland, including the SDLP, started in the early 1990's, but once again Sinn Féin were excluded due

to their perceived unwillingness to completely renounce violence (Melaugh, 2014). This was reflected in the voting patterns of Nationalists as well, who, in the 1992 UK general election, voted Adams, Sinn Féin's president, out of his seat in favour of an SDLP candidate. In February 1992, right before the general election, Sinn Féin released a document entitled *Towards a Lasting Peace in Ireland*. In it, they were extremely critical of the United Kingdom's position in the conflict, but once again outlined a willingness to move away from violence to a much more politically focused strategy (Sinn Féin, 1992).

In 1993, in the first action taken by heads of state, on a visit to the UK the then-Taoiseach Albert Reynolds from Ireland and British Prime Minister at the time John Major made a joint statement with regards to the future for Northern Ireland in what became known as the Downing Street Declaration. For the part of the UK, the main commitment within the framework of this thesis was the further legitimisation of the Nationalist movement through peaceful means, with a commitment to implement the necessary legislation to ensure that Northern Ireland could join a united Ireland, should the majority of people in Northern Ireland wish it, '…without external impediment.' (Major & Reynolds, 1993). In direct response, a document known as TUAS began to circulate within the Republican movement, outlining their suspicion of British intentions (Seaton, 1998). What TUAS stands for is unclear, but according to Seaton it likely either meant Totally UnArmed Struggle or, more likely considering the Provisional IRA's return to violence shortly after, Tactical Use of Armed Struggle.

Throughout the year, Adams and John Hume, leader of the SDLP, also made three important joint statements, each expressing optimism in a peaceful outcome. The statements were the result of ongoing talks they had been holding between Sinn Féin and the SDLP, with the last being released after a meeting between Hume, Major, and Reynolds (Melaugh, 2014).

By October 1993 the negotiations between Adams and Hume had culminated in a peace initiative that was welcomed particularly by Republicans, securing backing from the Provisional IRA and other Nationalist and Republican movements (Melaugh, 2014). This initiative, however, never materialised, but was passed on to the British and Irish governments for consideration and therefore it wouldn't be unreasonable to assume that it may have had at least some influence on the actual Peace Process that would materialise later. The proposal was shown to Unionists and was rejected, although they were more accommodating than had been previously expected (O'Kane, 2004). However, in spite of backing the potential Peace Process, the Provisional IRA were still active. Still in October of 1993, only weeks after

explicitly backing Adams and Hume's peaceful initiative, the Provisional IRA prematurely detonated a bomb in the Protestant Shankill Road in Belfast, resulting in the biggest loss of life in the 90's up until that point (Melaugh, 2014).

In September 1994, a broadcasting ban on Sinn Féin that had been instated in 1988 in the Republic of Ireland was lifted, and by October, John Major announced that the exclusion orders on Gerry Adams and Sinn Féin's Vice-President, Martin McGuinness, were also lifted, permitting them to take part in peace talks once more (Melaugh, 2014). This then lead to an official and public meeting at Stormont between Martin McGuinness and officials from the Northern Ireland Office at the end of the year – the first official visit by members of Sinn Féin to Stormont in over 73 years (O'Brien, 1999). This was followed with further meetings between Sinn Féin and the British Government throughout the following year, culminating in a meeting between Sir Patrick Mayhew and Adams in July. Also noteworthy from this period is the Combined Loyalist Military Command's ceasefire of October 1994 (Combined Loyalist Military Command, 1994). This theoretically held until after the referendum, although some groups continued activities and called individual ceasefires, in spite of never officially stating the 1994 ceasefire was over.

By March 1995, with David Trimble taking over from James Molyneaux as the leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, and with the background of a ceasefire by the Provisional IRA, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Patrick Mayhew stated that, in line with the joint declaration made by the Taoiseach and the Prime Minister two years prior, if Sinn Féin were to be permitted to join the Peace Process there would have to be 'significant' signs of disarmament of the Provisional IRA (Gay, 2001). To this end, Mayhew stated three points, points that would become known as the 'Washington Three', that would have to be met in order for Sinn Féin to potentially sit at the roundtables:

> *'a) A willingness in principle to disarm progressively;*
>
> *b) A common practical understanding of the modalities, that is to say, what decommissioning would actually entail;*
>
> *c) In order to test the practical arrangements and to demonstrate good faith, the actual decommissioning of some arms as a tangible confidence building measure and to signal the start of a process.'* (Gay, 2001)

These points were met with some interest from Republicans, however, the ceasefire at the time eventually ended with the bombing of the London Docklands, in part due to the British placing the onus solely on Republicans (O'Neil, 1996). For the next six months, Sinn Féin continued to attend talks whilst the Provisional IRA and the new Continuity IRA conducted further attacks in mainland Britain, before Sinn Féin removed themselves from the multiparty talks all together (Melaugh, 2014). The ceasefire was finally reinstated on the 20th of July 1997 (BBC, 1997). Sinn Féin re-joined the Peace Process at this time, a move that was seen as risky by Loyalist and Unionist political actors, leading some to boycott the Peace Process altogether due to their dissatisfaction with the apparent inclusion of terrorists into the process. However, Sinn Féin's agreement to sign up to the Mitchell Principles indicated a significant change in attitude (McKittrick, 1996).

May 1997 brought elections in the United Kingdom. These elections saw a change of government and, therefore, a change in the actors that were dealing with Northern Ireland and the Troubles. Prime Minister Tony Blair and Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Mo Mowlam oversaw the reopening of dialogue with Sinn Féin within two months of being elected, a dialogue that would eventually lead to the Belfast Agreement. Due to the inclusion of Sinn Féin, the Provisional IRA agreed on a new ceasefire and president of Sinn Féin Gerry Adams met with both Mowlam and Blair and was, for the first time, permitted to sit at the table for peace talks in spite of the lack of movement thus far from the Provisional IRA with regards to disarmament (BBC, 2006). This resulted in key actors in the Unionist movement, most notably Reverend Ian Paisley, boycotting the talks all together.

Paisley was not alone in his disdain for the way the talks were progressing. Two months after the Democratic Unionist Party conference in 1997, members of the Loyalist paramilitaries that had been imprisoned in HMP Maze withdrew their support for the Peace Process altogether in protest at the inclusion on Sinn Féin (Mullin, 1998). To rectify this, the newly-appointed Northern Ireland Secretary Mo Mowlam went into the prison, to the protests of representatives of all sides of the conflict, to convince the Loyalists to change their mind. The gamble paid off, and the Loyalist paramilitaries backed the Peace Process.

In January 1998 the British and Irish government released two documents that would serve as the basis of the Belfast Agreement, the *Propositions on Heads of Agreement*, and, after amending the document somewhat due to the response of the parties concerned, at this point effectively withdrew from the process to let the Unionists and Nationalists discuss the potential final agreements themselves, offering further guidance but not directly taking part,

and not campaigning in the referendum on the agreement. The talks progressed for some time before, in the middle of January 1998, Sinn Féin was briefly expelled as it was determined that they had been involved in a number of killings over the past two months (Melaugh, 2015b). However, in spite of their disagreements, once Sinn Féin were readmitted to the talks an agreement was reached by April the 9th 1998, as per the deadline set up the independent head of the negotiations, the American George Mitchell, who had also been the author of the aforementioned Mitchell Principles. The negotiated document was signed by all parties present, and a referendum was organised to take place the following month. At this point, the British also opened an inquiry into Bloody Sunday, a key moment in the Peace Process as the British began to look more critically at their own role.

During the campaign for the Belfast Agreement, both Sinn Féin and the SDLP campaigned in favour, along with the majority of Unionist parties. The only exception to this support was the Democratic Unionist Party, lead by Ian Paisley, the UK Unionist Party, and for the Republicans Republican Sinn Féin, an offshoot of Sinn Féin that had no candidates in Northern Ireland. Although the line of the Ulster Unionist Party was to support the agreement, many members personally campaigned against it, as will be outlined in more detail in the subsequent analytical subchapters. In spite of their campaigning against the agreement, the most significant party to campaign for the 'no' side, the Democratic Unionist Party stated they would not to obstruct the outcome (Melaugh, 2015b).

After the Belfast Agreement was passed, the British began to wind down their military operations in Northern Ireland, switching from Kevlar helmets to soft caps and berets and reducing their patrols significantly (Tonge, 2006). Eventually all the barricades were dismantled, and the elevated British military presence in Northern Ireland began to wind down (BBC, 2007). As such, there was no cathartic moment of massive desecuritisation in Northern Ireland as far as the British Army was concerned. Instead, almost 10 years after the signing of the Belfast agreement, in huge contrast to the ceremony in which they had marched in with fixed bayonets in the end of the 1960's, the British Army '…melted away, rather than marched away from the conflict in Northern Ireland.' (Connolly, 2007).

Although the leaving of Northern Ireland was unceremonious, the British Army had certainly achieved their objective of allowing political talks to occur without the threat of coercion through violence, albeit at a cost (Connolly, 2007). As such, Operation Banner, as the Army's operations as a whole in Northern Ireland were known, was by no means a failure. In fact, compared to other asymmetric conflicts against irregular forces like Afghanistan and

Iraq, the ending of Operation Banner, although controversial, was considered a success by the Army (Ministry of Defence, 2006). Lessons learned from the Army's operations in Northern Ireland have been incorporated in to standard tactics of many armed forces across the world, including the US (ibid.), although as the dust settles in Afghanistan and Iraq it has become apparent that these tactics were perhaps not as successful as they had been in Northern Ireland. The last significant action undertaken by the British in the timeframe of this thesis was thus the enacting of the policing reform in Northern Ireland promised in the Belfast Agreement.

Also after the passing of the Agreement, both Hume and Trimble were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their contributions to the process. This, and their relative acceptance speeches, will be covered in some detail in the analytical section of this chapter. By this point, all parties had accepted a more positive outlook, aside from Ian Paisley, who continued to speak out against the agreement (Paisley, 1998).

4.2 Desecuritisation: The United Kingdom

The United Kingdom's role in desecuritisation in Northern Ireland is a rather tricky one. It essentially consists of two dimensions: speech acts and desecuritising actions conducted by the UK government in Westminster, with particular focus on those conducted by Prime Ministers John Major and Tony Blair as well as Secretaries of State for Northern Ireland, and desecuritising actions undertaken by the security services in Northern Ireland. The sources for the former dimension will be mainly made up of speeches, whereas the sources for the latter dimension will mainly come from concessions offered in the Belfast Agreement itself, presented in regard to the preceding section on the historical securitisation.

4.2.1 The United Kingdom: Changes in Securitisation in the Run-Up to the Belfast Agreement

The beginning of British desecuritisation in Northern Ireland in terms of the Peace Process begins with the speeches from Brooke and Mayhew (BBC, 2006, & Mayhew, 1992). What is interesting in terms of desecuritisation is that these speeches by both Brooke and Mayhew were quite clearly intended to open the door for desecuritisation of Sinn Féin from a British perspective, but only if Sinn Féin made the significant move of denouncing violence. This therefore meant effectively asking Sinn Féin to sever ties with the Provisional IRA, a force which in Sinn Féin's view was paramount in protecting Catholics and Nationalists from Unionist and Loyalist attacks as outlined in the previous subsection on the 1970 split in the IRA and Sinn Féin.

What is also noteworthy, particularly in Mayhew's speech, is that the focus is clearly on the Republican movement. He does make some reference to the violence also conducted by Loyalists, but undoubtedly the speech is solely aimed at opening the door for desecuritisation and participation for Republicans (Mayhew, 1992), or most likely more explicitly Sinn Féin. This demonstrates the state of securitisation on Britain in as much as British securitisation in Northern Ireland was focused to a massive degree towards Republicanism, despite the fact that the majority of attacks, and the majority of deaths, in Northern Ireland itself were caused out by Loyalists (McKenna & Melaugh, 2014). This reflects the securitisation of the Troubles in Great Britain outside of Northern Ireland, as it was the Republican IRA and Provisional IRA that had mounted by far the most attacks outside of the six counties of Northern Ireland and thus it was the Republican movement that

was most securitised, warranting a focus on its desecuritisation. It is likely, then, that this focus on desecuritising the Republicans was in order to create the necessary conditions in the United Kingdom among the British people and Loyalists and Unionists who had lived under the threat of Republican attack for some time, but also in Northern Ireland, opening the door for Sinn Féin to desecuritise.

Also, important within the framework of Securitisation Theory and the Troubles in Northern Ireland, these securitisation and the speech acts committed by both Mayhew and, to a lesser extent, Brooke, did not reflect the reality of the situation at all and were simply speech acts.

Whilst paving the way for desecuritisation of Sinn Féin, and insisting that the UK would only sit down with Sinn Féin if it denounced violence as a legitimate form, an idea which it initially refused although it was intrigued by the suggestion (Adams, 2003), the secret talks between the UK occurring simultaneously are of particular interest (Adams, 2003, and BBC, 2006). This very aptly reflects the difference between public threat perception and the way that is dealt with, and the actual threat perception at a state level which by necessity in some cases is handled differently in order to justify certain actions in the name of security – a key point of securitisation theory.

The next major step in desecuritisation for the UK came in 1993 with the joint statement from Reynolds and Major (Major & Reynolds, 1993). The statement was clearly designed to further desecuritise the Nationalist cause by putting it on an equal footing with the equally legitimate Unionist cause, shifting Nationalism once again from the realms of a security threat into the realms of a partner that could be worked with. To some extent this legitimisation and placing of the Nationalist cause on equal footing with Unionism was likely an effort to tempt Sinn Féin and the Provisional IRA away from violence towards more political means, particularly as the statement was made jointly with the Taoiseach. Considering that secret talks had already occurred between these parties as outlined in the previous paragraph, this makes it even more likely that, having accepted the necessity to talk to terrorists as it were, the British government were positioning to make these talks more acceptable to both the British public and Nationalists alike considering all that had occurred in the decades prior. The latter Nationalist dimension of this positioning will be covered in greater detail in the upcoming section on Nationalists.

The next significant act of desecuritisation came in the form of the 'Washington Three'. Mayhew was once again laying the groundwork for the desecuritisation of Sinn Féin, giving concrete meaning to the Prime Minister and Taoiseach's joint statement that the conflict should end peacefully and without the threat of violence or coercion (Major & Reynolds, 1993). This was essentially a continuation down the path of trying to desecuritise Sinn Féin to becoming a credible political partner in the peace process from the British perspective which would justify their inclusion in the Peace Process, giving Catholics, Nationalists and most importantly Republicans the political voice they needed to eliminate the need for violence.

However, again this reflects the British point of view in the Troubles – that the only securitised actor that needed desecuritising was, once again, Republicans. This was in contrast to the more general statement issued by the heads of the Irish and British governments in 1993. Placing the blame solely on the Republicans and thus placing more demands on Republicans than Loyalists was one of the factors that lead to the ending of the Provisional IRA's ceasefire in early 1996 with the bombing of the London Docklands (O'Neil, 1996).

However, under the Blair government, things apparently started to move significantly quicker. It is worth noting though that in spite of some of the key desecuritisations brought about under Blair, academics (Cox et. al), journalists (Taylor) and people directly involved in the Peace Process themselves as part of Blair's staff (Powell) emphasise that it was Major who did most of the groundwork that set the scene for the talks that lead to the Belfast Agreement (Taylor, 2011, and Cox, Guelke & Stephen, 2006, and Powell, 2008). That said, within the framework of this thesis the focus is on securitisation, and as securitisation is a public-facing phenomenon, events have to be taken in to account for when they occurred in the public eye and therefore does not really take groundwork and preparation in to account. Therefore, regardless of who is most deserving of the credit for the Peace Process, Blair and Mowlam are the actors that can be most associated with desecuritisation, and thus the addressing of the securitisation that was ongoing under the Major government and previous governments.

The permission of Sinn Féin to join peace talks undertaken by Mowlam signalled the first significant move that Westminster had taken in favour of the Nationalists, desecuritising them as a political threat and instead affording them, for the first time, political legitimacy. This was effectively the first major landmark on the road to desecuritisation Sinn Féin that had started in the late 80's. Mowlam, meanwhile, tried to convince Unionists to re-join, or at

least back, the Peace Process, including visiting Loyalists that had been imprisoned (BBC, 2006). This was, again, a significant step in terms of desecuritisation, demonstrating that the British were not only prepared to legitimise previously excluded Republicans and Nationalists, but also Loyalists and Unionists, demonstrating that all sides were welcomed at the table providing they were prepared to stop using violence.

The last significant step in desecuritisation of the British position in Northern Ireland was the opening of the Inquiry in to Bloody Sunday in January 1998 (Blair, 1998). The new inquiry, led by Lord Saville, was opened due to the desires of victims and their families, who according to Blair:

> *'Most do not want recrimination. They do not want revenge. But they do want the truth. I believe that it is in the interests of everyone that the truth is established, and told.'* (Blair, 2008).

This last act of desecuritisation before the signing of the Belfast agreement was aimed not so much at the British public as the desecuritisation of Sinn Féin had been, but also at Republicans particularly. The British government made a much more credible partner in the Peace Process if they were also open to scrutinising their own role in the Troubles – the opening of an inquiry into Bloody Sunday was a major step along this road.

4.2.2 The United Kingdom: Changes in Securitisation Within the Belfast Agreement

Compared to the Unionist and Nationalist movements within Northern Ireland, Britain's involvement in campaigning during the run-up to the agreement was minimal due to its need for impartiality, aside from a general government campaign encouraging a yes vote. As such, in contrast to this section in subsections on other actors where the focus will be on campaigns during referendum on the Belfast Agreement, this section will simply analyse desecuritising factors within the text of the Belfast Agreement itself.

With that in mind, this section will be rather short as, in essence, there is relatively little new that the agreement offers that had not been offered before and has thus been previously covered in the previous subsection on desecuritisation in the run-up to the Belfast Agreement, suffice to say that the Belfast Agreement represents a codification of previous statements of intent, agreements and concessions. With that in mind, there are effectively two

substantial and new developments that the Belfast agreement has to offer in terms of desecuritisation from the British side.

The first of the more significant desecuritisations is the introduction of the European Convention on Human Rights to Northern Irish law in full (Government of Great Britain & Government of the Republic of Ireland, 1998). This essentially brought an end to restrictions to human rights both imposed by Stormont and, subsequently, Westminster, for various objectives including security, but also political objectives. This represents a significant step in changing the way the United Kingdom particularly had dealt with the conflict and therefore outlining a shift in the way it was securitised – to make such a significant step was a sure indication that the United Kingdom no longer felt it necessary, or was at least prepared to indicate as much, to limit human rights in Northern Ireland in the name of security. As such, this represents a significant step in desecuritisation.

The second main desecuritisation was the outlining of a need for change in policing and justice in Northern Ireland. As outlined in the section on historical securitisations, the Royal Ulster Constabulary was viewed by many, particularly Catholics, to be a tool of Unionists or even Loyalists due to its almost exclusively Protestant makeup (Alcock, 1994). As such, because the Royal Ulster Constabulary was securitised to such a degree, the agreement outlined a need for a review of policing in Northern Ireland with a view to provide Northern Ireland with a significantly more representative, and importantly an unarmed police force. In doing so, the agreement outlined the following:

> *'[The participants] believe that the agreement provides the opportunity for a new beginning to policing in Northern Ireland with a police service capable of attracting and sustaining support from the community as a whole. They also believe that this agreement offers a unique opportunity to bring about a new political dispensation which will recognise the full and equal legitimacy and worth of the identities, senses of allegiance and ethos of all sections of the community in Northern Ireland. They consider that this opportunity should inform and underpin the development of a police service representative in terms of the make-up of the community as a whole and which, in a peaceful environment, should be routinely unarmed.'* (Government of Great Britain & Government of the Republic of Ireland, 1998)

This was again a huge step, especially in terms of desecuritisation as it meant that the Government of the United Kingdom particularly was committing to investigating and, given

the wording of the agreement, would be hard pressed to not find at least some areas that could be reformed to fit the policing of Northern Ireland within this framework. The outcomes of this investigation, however, are a topic of their own that will be covered in the following subsection on UK desecuritisation post-Belfast Agreement.

There were some additional somewhat lesser desecuritisations – referred to as such not because they were lesser in scope, but because they did not alter developments as significantly as the two provisions outlined above – involving other sectors. The first of these was a commitment by the UK to officially recognise Northern Ireland's right to self-determination, stating that both the UK and the Republic of Ireland would:

> *'...recognise that it is for the people of the island of Ireland alone, by agreement between the two parts respectively and without external impediment, to exercise their right of self-determination on the basis of consent, freely and concurrently given, North and South, to bring about a united Ireland, if that is their wish, accepting that this right must be achieved and exercised with and subject to the agreement and consent of a majority of the people of Northern Ireland'* (Government of Great Britain & Government of the Republic of Ireland, 1998)

Secondly, an agreement for the release of prisoners who had taken part in 'scheduled offences' in both Northern Ireland and elsewhere in Ireland and the UK, and who were part of paramilitary groups who had agreed to ceasefire terms and to a cessation of violence, would be considered for release (ibid.).

The former issue of self-determination is only slightly related to desecuritisation as it does not represent a significant shift in securitisation, in spite of being a key policy, as it does not reframe the conflict in a way that was not a new policy as such, simply a codification of an existing policy. The latter issue of the release of prisoners represented a greater degree of de-securitisation as it made it evident that the UK no longer viewed organisations that renounced violence as a threat, but this is not as significant as it seems as the UK had made this position very clear in the run-up to the peace talks and therefore it did not represent a shift in securitisation, but rather a codification of policy that stemmed from a previous shift. Likewise, the overarching theme within the agreement of multi-party talks, multi-party governance and multi-party policing was simply a codification of a previous shift in securitisation already covered in the previous subsection of this thesis.

4.2.3 The United Kingdom: Changes in Securitisation Post-Belfast Agreement

Desecuritisation post-Belfast Agreement was mainly focused around delivering promises outlined in the agreement itself, as well as a level of demilitarisation that could be expected due to the de-escalation of the conflict. The first of these occurred around the time of the agreement itself, whereby the British Army switched from wearing Kevlar helmets to wearing cloth berets. Some scholars, such as Jonathan Tonge, view this switch as a step in demilitarisation and desecuritisation (Tonge, 2006), but in reality the change was also related to a simple reduction in threat – the prevailing ceasefire meant that the threat of guns and explosives in particular was significantly reduced (Ministry of Defence, 2006) and therefore the heavy and bulky helmets were no longer a necessity on regular street patrols. It is difficult to tell in this case then whether this change was a desecuritisation in policy sold to the military as a practical measure, a practical measure sold to and by politicians and academics as a desecuritisation mechanism, or both. Regular street patrols by the military were also significantly reduced, with the army instead preferring to allow the police to patrol on their own where possible and where necessary to decrease securitisation in areas where this was practically possible (ibid.).

Elsewhere, in the years after the agreement the Army started dismantling barricades and bases, slowly moving away from the streets and cities, then away from Northern Ireland as a whole, leaving behind only those units who would normally be based in Northern Ireland for training (BBC, 2007). But the Army's actions certainly led to a substantial degree of desecuritisation, particularly with regards to the ending of street patrols and the dismantling of barricades, allowing Northern Ireland to return to a sense of relative normality that it had not seen in a long time.

The biggest step in desecuritisation, however, was the outcome of the review into policing in Northern Ireland. As stated in the previous subsection, given the strong wording of the Belfast Agreement, Westminster would be hard-pressed to not offer something substantial in terms of police reforms. After the review into policing in Northern Ireland was conducted, the substantial reforms came, particularly in terms of desecuritisation. The end result of the report lead to a complete re-branding on the Royal Ulster Constabulary, which effectively ceased to exist and was replaced by the Police Service of Northern Ireland. The Patten Report which had been outlined in the Belfast Agreement that initially established this outlined how the Royal Ulster Constabulary as a whole had been significantly securitised to the point where there were substantial differences between the views of the Royal Ulster Constabulary as a

whole and local policing in most areas of Northern Ireland – Catholics felt that the Royal Ulster Constabulary as a whole was ineffective, but were generally satisfied with local policing in their local area, and conversely for Protestants, despite the fact that it was the Royal Ulster Constabulary that was carrying out the local policing (Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland, 1999).

As such, a significant change was undertaken to address this securitisation under the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 (Government of Great Britain, 2000). In it, the Royal Ulster Constabulary's assets were incorporated into the newly-formed Police Service of Northern Ireland, the name Royal Ulster Constabulary ceased to be used and all badges and other insignia related to the Royal Ulster Constabulary were replaced. The force also outlined a goal for a more equal hiring plan to address the Protestant dominance of the police force, as the Police Service of Northern Ireland would inherit all staff from the Royal Ulster Constabulary. As such, although Protestant dominance would still be present, it was intended to fade out over time as more Catholics were taken in for future vacancies. It was also outlined that the police force should be primarily unarmed, as with other regular police forces throughout the United Kingdom. These changes, which were mostly cosmetic as the significant operational changes that were made do not bear relevance to this thesis, represent a concentrated attempt to desecuritise policing in Northern Ireland, which thus far would appear to have been successful.

In a somewhat related move, splinters of the IRA and other paramilitary movements that continued to view violence as legitimate were no longer referred to as 'terrorists', but instead as 'dissidents', as can be seen in media articles from the time (for example, BBC, 2000). This represented a wholesale shift in the way these groups were defined in the context of Northern Ireland. This shift was likely intended to desecuritise acts of terrorism as acts of criminality instead, allowing the British government and media to downplay any further occurrences of violence after the signing of the Belfast Agreement. Whilst this could be cynically looked upon as an attempt to over-exaggerate success in Northern Ireland, it does hold significant value in terms of desecuritisation. Classifying these acts as criminality removes the political element, therefore re-enforcing peaceful political engagement as the main, if not only, effective way to achieve political objectives, and therefore makes violence with political goals seem pointless. Therefore, despite the fact that splinters of paramilitaries that were active after the Peace Process may define their acts as having political goals, if the state will not treat them as such and instead offers more effective alternative ways of

engagement, the goals of these splinter organisations become significantly less appealing and therefore significantly less relevant or even legitimate.

4.2.4 The United Kingdom: Conclusion

Overall, the British efforts at desecuritisation in the run up to peace were somewhat biased towards Republicans, reflecting the views and general understanding of the Troubles among the British public at the time – the Provisional IRA were responsible for most attacks that happened in the mainland UK, and therefore they were the ones who needed most desecuritisation to permit acceptable peace talks to occur from a British point of view. The British did, however, play a key role in creating the legislation that would permit Northern Ireland to transition to peace after the Belfast Agreement, as well as playing a key role in the normalisation, particularly of policing, in Northern Ireland post-Belfast Agreement. The British role in the Peace Process from a policy point of view has the benefit of being theoretically apolitical as Britain's role was primarily bureaucratic, simply to facilitate the talks and create the required legislation. Britain's general shift in rhetoric did have some political goals however, as outlined by the focus on Republicanism in the creation of conditions for the Peace Process, but in comparison to the political objectives of Unionists and Nationalists that will be covered in the following two sections, British aspirations were significantly less political.

4.3 Nationalists and Republicans

In the same way as the United Kingdom, Nationalist desecuritisation consisted of only a few major parties, and was essentially two-dimensional; the shift in political rhetoric from Sinn Féin particularly but also the main nationalist political party at the beginning of the negotiations, the SDLP, and the shift in paramilitary rhetoric and actions from the Provisional IRA. As with the previous section on the United Kingdom, the following section will therefore consist of speech acts committed by both Sinn Féin and its key figures, most notably Gerry Adams, and speech acts and actions undertaken by the Provisional IRA. For the purpose of this thesis it shall be assumed that the Provisional IRA and Sinn Féin were acting independent of each other, although there was without a doubt some level of crossover between the two organisations and thus some level of coordination between the two parties. The SDLP on the other hand will be treated as a completely independent actor without any ties to paramilitary activities.

4.3.1 Nationalists and Republicans: Changes in Securitisation in the Run-Up to the Belfast Agreement

As with desecuritisation in the United Kingdom, the first meaningful steps towards desecuritisation from the Nationalist side started in the late 1980's with the meetings between Sinn Féin and the SDLP (Melaugh, 2014). This was a significant step in terms of desecuritisation as it represented a bridge between the moderate SDLP and the significantly more hard-line Sinn Féin, who still had relatively obvious ties to paramilitary groups. Sinn Féin was notably not present at the cross-party talks that followed these meetings as they were still far too significantly securitised both as a realistic partner for the Unionist parties to sit down with, but also in their own internal position to the extent that sitting down for open talks with Unionist parties would have been unpalatable.

Gerry Adams' subsequent speech outlining a desire for the Nationalist movement to step away from armed struggle is also important (ibid.). Adams' use of the word Nationalism is somewhat misleading here as he was quite clearly referencing particularly the Provisional IRA and other Republican groups, rather than the peaceful and political Nationalist parties such as the SDLP. As such, by referencing Nationalism as a whole and effectively painting the movement with the same brush, and in the same breath admitting that the actions undertaken by those seeking to use violence instead of politics were undesirable, Adams' was

effectively trying to bring Sinn Féin in from the political cold. Additionally, this distancing between Sinn Féin and those who sought to use violence, i.e. the Provisional IRA, also meant that for the first time Sinn Féin could be perceived by other parties as an equal party to the peace process, and therefore one that potentially ought to be considered in future negotiations.

That said, Sinn Féin's desecuritisation of the British position was not by any means set in stone. This is perhaps best indicated by Adams' response to Brooke's speech of November 1990. Writing later in his autobiography, Adams described his position:

> *'...the onus was on those who believed there was an alternative to armed struggle to prove it. Still, we acknowledged that Brooke's remarks were interesting and the position he was proposing deserved to be explored.'* (Adams, 2003).

This illustrates very effectively the securitisation, and thus the level of desecuritisation that had to be gone through for the Nationalist and Republican movements to accept the United Kingdom and Unionists as credible negotiating partners. Although there was a strong desire to end the violence, there was a clear breech in trust from the point of view of the Nationalists particularly who were still sceptical. That meant that even at this early stage of both cautiously admitting interest in peace talks, neither the United Kingdom nor the Nationalists were declaring any kind of amnesty or opening the floodgates. This was, rather, the beginning of the beginning of the Peace Process as far as Sinn Féin were concerned. However, the door to Sinn Féin was more open than ever from the British perspective, with regular visits from British agents and government representatives over the coming years, in spite of a very cautious public rhetoric.

The start of multi-party talks without Sinn Féin, and Adams losing his seat in the national election in 1992, showed that by this point in the Peace Process there was therefore clear indication that Sinn Féin's position particularly absolutely had to shift, else Northern Ireland may move on without them, but the level of securitisation between the hard-line Sinn Féin and other parties, particularly in comparison to other Nationalist parties such as the SDLP, meant that this was a relatively huge task.

Sinn Féin's *Towards a Lasting Peace in Ireland* reinforced earlier actions and further re-securitised Sinn Féin as a potential partner for peace among other parties to the Peace Process. Sinn Féin's distancing from the Provisional IRA with whom they had traditionally had close times made them an invaluable party to the negotiations, partially because of the views they represented (Sinn Féin, 1992). Additionally, because, from the British point of

view, having the more extreme political wings involved in the Peace Process would further alienate and undermine the actions of the paramilitaries. This made it much easier to desecuritise both the political wings as a reduced threat, and the paramilitaries as a much wider threat as, it could be claimed, that they were getting further and further away from the groups of society they claimed to represent.

These shifts in Sinn Féin's policy and approach were set against a backdrop of continued violence by paramilitaries from both sides. This culminated from the Republican side in the Provisional IRA releasing a statement in April 1993 calling for the British to:

> *'...pursue the pathway to peace or resign themselves to the inevitability of war.'* (Rowan, 2014)

The much more threatening position taken up by the Provisional IRA was, however, beneficial to the efforts of Sinn Féin. Sinn Féin's caution and criticism of the British approach appeared much less threatening and aggressive when compared to the rhetoric being used by the Provisional IRA. Sinn Féin could therefore distance themselves from extremism, but still retain most of their hard-line rhetoric, whilst still effectively desecuritising themselves externally and desecuritising the potential for negotiation internally. However, it's very unlikely that this was a strategy that was coordinated between Sinn Féin and the Provisional IRA, particularly as those from the Republican movement who wished to pursue more peaceful means would likely have left the Provisional IRA for organisations like Sinn Féin rather than trying to change the Provisional IRA's line itself – the Provisional IRA was, after all, an army by its own definition.

The next significant step in desecuritisation from the Nationalist side came in the form of the first joint statement from the SDLP and Sinn Féin leaders John Hume and Gerry Adams. It was the first in a series of three public statements to be made in 1993 (Melaugh, 2014). There seemed to be some concern among the general public that the meetings between the SDLP and Sinn Féin were an attempt at reaching a peace settlement without the involvement of Unionist parties or the British. The first of Adams and Hume's joint statements was aimed at quelling this rumour and trying to outline both parties' desires for a peaceful, and inclusive, Peace Process:

> *'We accept that the Irish people as a whole have a right to national self-determination. This is a view shared by a majority of the people of this island though not by all its people. The exercise of self-determination is a matter for agreement*

between the people of Ireland. It is the search for that agreement and the means of achieving it on which we will be concentrating. We are mindful that not all the people of Ireland share that view or agree on how to give meaningful expression to it. Indeed, we do not disguise the different views held by our own parties. As leaders of our respective parties we have told each other that we see the task of reaching agreement on a peaceful and democratic accord for all on this island as our primary challenge. We both recognise that such a new agreement is only achievable and viable if it can earn and enjoy the allegiance of the different traditions on this island, by accommodating diversity and providing for national reconciliation.' (Adams & Hume, 1993)

Two more statements followed throughout the year expressing increasing optimism in a peaceful outcome. The third statement was released after John Hume had met with British Prime Minister John Major and later Irish Taoiseach Albert Reynolds to discuss the potential for future talks between the British government, the Republic of Ireland, and the main peaceful Northern Irish political parties. Although Sinn Féin was initially not considered a party to these talks due to their prior association with the Provisional IRA, the securitisation was clearly shifting – a shift that was definitely assisted by their association with the much more moderate SDLP. If Sinn Féin could not take part in the talks directly at least they could take part by proxy, allowing them to further work to establish themselves as a credible partner in the Peace Process, as well as working to establish the Peace Process as a credible option to its own members, and Nationalist and Republican supporters.

However, the disconnect between the rhetoric of Sinn Féin and the actions of the Provisional IRA demonstrated a significant rift between the political and paramilitary wings of the Republican movement in terms of desecuritisation goals – whilst Sinn Féin seemed ready to commit to a Peace Process, albeit currently only on their own terms, the Provisional IRA's statements did not match their actions in any regard. After the Shankill bombing, reprisals went on among both sides for some time (Melaugh, 2014).

The public revelation of the secret meetings between Sinn Feín, the Provisional IRA, and various element of the British Government and Security Services, and their swift confirmation by both the British government and Sinn Féin, are key points in terms of securitisation (BBC, 2006, and Adams, 2003, and Andrew, 2009, and Taylor, 1997, 2001, & 2011). From Sinn Féin's point of view, they demonstrated at least a willingness to sit down with one of their key adversaries in the conflict to at least discuss a potential future peace

settlement. Additionally, however, the fact that the talks had to be secret were a very clear reflection of the fact that there was still a high level of securitisation from both parties and also from their referent objects – neither the British public nor Sinn Féin's Nationalist supporters would have likely fully understood the reasons behind the talks happening due to the levels of securitisation ongoing among all parties at the time, especially as early as 1990.

However, the path forward was not clear. Although Sinn Féin and the British government were now talking, there was still a lot of things that they didn't agree on, and there was still a great deal of suspicion from the Republican side that the British were not sincere. This can be seen particularly from 'TUAS', usually understood to mean Tactical Use of Armed Struggle, a document that was circulated widely among the entire movement – the exact meaning of the title TUAS, as well as the document's exact source, are up for debate, but it does offer a very good insight into the wider Republican mind-set at the time. The version of TUAS published by Seaton in his 1998 book *'Northern Ireland: The Context for Conflict and Reconciliation'* gives a clear outline of the Republican position (Seaton, 1998). Most notably, Republicans felt that the Downing Street Declaration had been undermined by Unionists and was a ploy by the British Conservative party to keep the Unionists on side and thereby keep themselves in government. As such, they felt the Declaration was still too favourable to Unionists, and that although there was certainly some merit to the proposal they were still extremely suspicious of British intentions. Additionally, they were not prepared to wait for the United Kingdom to change their position and instead were prepared to force their hand (ibid.). Although the meaning of forcing Britain's hand is not explicit, its meaning is not hard to guess. As such, it seems that at least some sections of the Republican movement were not entirely sold on the principle of unarmed struggle and were quite prepared to revert back violence in the interest of peace should the British and Unionists not be seen to be changing fast enough or in the desired direction.

However, the document was definitely a step in a much more peaceful direction overall, and one of the first times that all major Nationalist actors in the conflict were *'...rowing in the same direction.*' (Melaugh, 2015a). The document also outlined the new Nationalist position that all dialogue between the British and the Republicans was to take place through '*...official channels.*' (ibid.). This seems to express a desire to end the secret talks that had been a major feature of the peace process up to this point. From the point of view of desecuritisation, this appears to be an attempt to further legitimise Republican actors through political process, effecting securitisation twofold. Firstly, it enhances the

desecuritisation of discourse as a tool for reunification among the Republican movement. Secondly, it attempts to push the desecuritisation of Republican actors from the British and Unionist perspective – if dialogue could only occur through legitimate political channels, then that would mean that Republican actors would have to be deemed, and thus desecuritised, to be legitimate political actors by the other parties at the negotiating table.

What is also interesting in TUAS is a renewed focus by the wider Republican movement on self-determination (Seaton, 1998). This had been the reserve of significantly less hard-line Nationalists previously, but was now also being featured prominently in the Republican rhetoric. This is, once again, a significant desecuritisation – the change of a preferred means from nothing less than a united Ireland at all costs to a united Ireland achieved by peaceful political means should the majority of the population wish it represents a significant step down from previous Republican rhetoric and, again, quite clearly sets the stage for peaceful negotiations. This was reflected by the Provisional IRA's statement on August the 31st, announcing a complete cessation of military operations.

To bolster this legitimisation and renewed focus, the Republicans also expressed a desire to communicate more cohesively and regularly across the organisation (Melaugh, 2015a). This can be interpreted as an attempt to give the Republican movement a single voice, both internally and externally. Internally, this would require some desecuritisation among Republican parties to ensure that every party was singing from the same proverbial hymn sheet. Settling these differences internally among the movement would require both strong leadership and compromise from all parties, internally desecuritising a vast number of issues upon which there was at that point in time some considerable disagreement. Externally, this internal desecuritisation and stronger focus on coherent communication would result in presenting the Republicans as a much more credible, unified actor. This, coupled, with the renewed focus on dialogue and the right to self-determination, would present the Republican movement as significantly less hard-line and, as such, much more palatable to the more average member of the Nationalist movement as a whole.

With the outlining of the 'Washington Three' in 1995, the limitations to which the Republicans would follow the principles outlined in the TUAS document became apparent., One of the key points of the 'Washington Three' previously outlined was:

'*a) A willingness in principle to disarm progressively*' (Gay, 2001).

The issue of disarmament would become – and remain – a long-standing issue in the Peace Process. The IRA did not finish disarming until 2005, with some Loyalist Paramilitaries disarming significantly later (BBC, 2009). This shows that, to an extent, the shift in securitisation up to this point was only skin deep, and that there was a certain level of distrust at least within the IRA that the British intentions were sincere. This would make sense – if an issue is to shift from a securitised issue to a desecuritised issue via a change in speech acts, there must inherently be a period of transition in which the rhetoric does not necessarily match with the perceived securitisation at least with regards to some of the referent objects. However, the Republican attempts at desecuritisation continued, and in the beginning of 1996 Sinn Féin met with both the British and Irish governments.

The gulf between rhetoric and action came to a head in February of 1996 when the Provisional IRA ceasefire was broken by the Dockland Bombings in London and the following attacks (Melaugh, 2014). This period seems to represent the Republican movement's struggle to find its place in the Peace Process. Full desecuritisation and a full committal to talks alone seemed to be an unreasonable course of action from at least some actors in the movement. This suspicion and reluctance to fully commit to the values of TUAS show how highly the issue was securitised within the movement as a whole. Attacks by the IRA continued throughout the year, including attacks on British security services in Northern Ireland.

However, one key indication of how the situation was changing to at least some degree was the emergence of a new split in the IRA – the Continuity IRA (CIRA). The CIRA is believed to have carried out its first attack in July 1996 (ibid.), and would become one of the first of a handful of splinters from the Provisional IRA that would continue armed action after the Belfast Agreement. When considering this within the framework of the Copenhagen School where language is such an important issue, the names of the organisations that splintered from the Provisional IRA give an indication into the status of the Republican movement at the time. In addition to the CIRA, the Real IRA would also appear the following year in 1997. The words 'Continuity' and 'Real' hold a lot of weight in terms of securitisation, and seem to give some indication that those forming these organisations felt that although the Provisional IRA had broken the ceasefire, the change in focus outlined under TUAS and being undertaken by Sinn Féin were perhaps viewed as not being real or in continuity with the goals Republican cause by some. Their relatively low membership according to databases such as the START database of terrorist organisations, run by the

University of Maryland, who estimate the membership of both organisations at less than 200 (National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and the Responses to Terrorism, 2008), shows however that these groups were in a minority within the Republican movement, especially considering that as the two groups were allied it would be logical to assume a high likelihood of an overlap of membership between the two.

The next key turning point in the peace process was the UK general election of 1997. This election saw one key event that can be seen as a significant turning point in terms of desecuritisation. The election of British Prime Minister Tony Blair saw a significant shift in the attitude of Westminster to Sinn Féin. This lead directly to a shift in the attitude of Sinn Féin towards the peace process – now being considered as a legitimate partner, the party started to distance itself more and more from violence. The July 20th ceasefire followed the inclusion of Sinn Féin fully into the Peace Process – a move undertaken by the Blair government in spite of the ongoing activities by the IRA (BBC, 1997).

As outlined by McKittrick, the intent to sign up, and the eventually signing up, to the Mitchell Principles by Sinn Féin had been expressed over a year prior (McKittrick, 1996). Effectively the actual signing up by Sinn Féin to the Principles was a desecuritisation on their part. They would not have exposed themselves to the perceived threat if they did not genuinely believe that it might pay off. This move also overcame a significant stumbling block in terms of Sinn Féin's participation, as without desecuritising Sinn Féin and Sinn Féin desecuritising itself in return, the Peace Process would lose a key bridge between politics and violence in Northern Ireland, and thus any significant peace agreement may not last. The signing of the document was also shortly followed by a meeting between Adams, McGuinness and Blair for the first time, effectively demonstrating the desecuritisation of both sides (Powell, March 2008).

In reaction to the *Propositions on Heads of Agreement* in January 1998, both Sinn Féin and the Provisional IRA immediately dismissed the document as a basis for negotiation. A statement from the Provisional IRA at the time effectively summed up the position of both organisations, believing that the document was meaningless due to the lack of Unionist engagement, stating:

> *'Most significantly of all, in attempting to impose the "Heads of Agreement" document on the talks process, yet another British prime minister has succumbed to the Orange card. This was against a background of the Unionist leadership refusing to*

meaningfully engage in the talks process and the continuing assassinations by loyalist death squads.' (Irish Republican Army, 1998)

The reference to assassinations was due to the ongoing activities of the Ulster Freedom Fighters in spite of a stated overall Loyalist ceasefire. This will be covered in more detail in the following section on Unionists. In terms of securitisation, it effectively shows that both the Provisional IRA and Sinn Féin felt that they were fully committing themselves to the Peace Process, but that the Unionists were not reciprocating. This lack of commitment was largely due to a fear of what would happen if they lost the monopoly on power and were exposed to the perceived threat of unification with the Republic of Ireland and will, once again, be covered in the following section. However, this does illustrate a point of how significantly both sides were securitised against each other, as well as towards the issue of peace as a whole, and how neither side wanted to be the first to blink. In response to this, the British and Irish governments tabled a significantly amended version of the proposals, which both Sinn Féin and the SDLP welcomed, and left the rest of the negotiations up to the parties themselves to decide how they wanted to proceed.

The temporary expulsion of Sinn Féin from the negotiations proved that although the amount of violence being committed by all iterations of the IRA had significantly reduced, the desecuritisation towards the Peace Process had not reached a significant enough level for them to abandon violence completely (Melaugh, 2015b). Likewise, the expulsion of Sinn Féin for the IRA's activities showed that, in spite of their significantly lower view of violence, it was still widely considered by most parties that there was still significantly strong enough links between the IRA and Sinn Féin for the latter to be held accountable for the former's actions. The topic of the link between the IRA and Sinn Féin would be a point of contention, particularly between the Unionists and the British and between Britain and the Republic of Ireland, somewhat paradoxically in both cases the former accusing the latter of being too quick to forget the close link between the two.

4.3.2 Nationalists and Republicans: Changes in Securitisation During the Campaign for the Belfast Agreement

Unlike the Unionists, whose positions will be outlined in the following section, the Nationalists were all openly is support of the Belfast agreement when it was put to a public referendum. As such, almost all the desecuritising actions that would be undertaken by the Nationalists had been undertaken prior to the referendum itself. As such, this subsection will

be brief, covering the positions of both the major political parties, Sinn Féin and the SDLP, during the campaign for the referendum on the Belfast agreement.

Firstly, as seen in Fig. 2 in the appendix of this thesis, the SDLP canvassed voters with a leaflet saying that the Belfast Agreement was the key to sustainable peace and prosperity for Northern Ireland (Fig. 2). The image contained in the appendix is the front page to a leaflet whose entire message was focused on the issue of unity, peace, and prosperity (The Social Democratic and Labour Party, 1998). The leaflet emphasises the word 'agreement', usually featuring it in significantly larger text wherever it is mentioned, and features very positive, almost completely apolitical messages about hope and a future for all the people of Northern Ireland. This effectively demonstrates the SDLP's approach to the agreement in that it was not securitising the issue of peace in any particular way, instead portraying the agreement as a seemingly completely desecuritised issue. This is in stark contrast to the rhetoric offered by some Unionists, particularly the Democratic Unionist Party, as will be outlined in the subsequent section.

Sinn Féin also offered a similar rhetoric, with leader Gerry Adams making a speech to the party congress in May 1998, just 12 days before the referendum, stating that:

> *'I am conscious of the difficulties faced by unionists. Let me try to assure you and your leaders that Sinn Féin comes to these latest developments and that we face the future seeking a good faith and a genuine engagement with you. When we call for the end of the British presence in Ireland we do not mean our unionist neighbours. You have as much right to a full and equal life on this island as any other section of our people.'* (Adams, 1998).

This was a key step, taking a huge step in addressing a key Unionist fear that had lead to them being securitised against Nationalists in the first place. In the same speech, Adams continued to outline that the peace agreement was not the end, but a vital step along the way to ending the conflict in Northern Ireland. He also stated explicitly that the referendum was not an exercising of self-determination, and was therefore not a vote on whether Northern Ireland should join Ireland. This directly contradicts the highly securitised rhetoric utilised by the Democratic Unionist Party during the referendum that will be outlined in the following section. Once again, the message was very positive, strongly encouraging a 'yes' vote, but was significantly more political than the message offered by the SDLP in that it addressed political

factions directly and by name, rather than simply addressing the people of Northern Ireland as a whole.

This shows the different level of securitisation to some extent between Sinn Féin and the SDLP, in that the SDLP were trying to ignore political differences and appeal to morals, whereas Sinn Féin were attempting to encourage a yes vote whilst acknowledging, and therefore in spite of, significant political differences between both factions. This is once again in line with the desecuritising activities undertaken by both parties in the run up to the referendum. As the SDLP were significantly less securitised towards other parties and had been more actively involved in the negotiations for the Agreement, they were in a better position to offer an apolitical stance as it would not be too drastic of a shift in securitisation. Sinn Féin, on the other hand, were still significantly securitised against other parties involved in the Process in spite of a wide-ranging desecuritisation of rhetoric in the run up to the agreement. This is understandable, given their position prior to the agreement, as one could not expect a complete about-face in such a short amount of time. As such, due to the remaining securisiations among Sinn Féin, offering a political message was the only rhetorical outcome that would make sense in the context of their parties historical position, but they were still clearly making an effort to fit this securitised rhetoric within a significantly more positive outlook for the future than they had previously given.

Due to the overwhelming political support for the Agreement from the Nationalist side, almost all of the 40% Nationalist population in Northern Ireland voted 'yes' (The Times, 1998).

4.3.3 Nationalists and Republicans: Changes in Securitisation Post Belfast Agreement

Much like the previous section on desecuritisation during the referendum for the Belfast Agreement, this subsection will be short as there was little in the way of significant change in securitisation among the Nationalist parties after the Belfast Agreement was voted through in the May referendum. There are, however, a few speeches and occurrences that are worth noting.

The first, and perhaps foremost, of these was the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to John Hume and David Trimble. They were chosen due to their role in the Peace Process – uniquely selectable as they had, through their own political parties, been by and large separate

from the violence and the most securitised, and therefore apparently harmful, rhetoric provided by their counterparts in other political parties and their movements' respective paramilitary organisations. Trimble's speech bares much more fruit in terms of desecuritisation, and thus will be given relatively significant attention in terms of what this thesis can afford in the next section. Hume's speech, on the other hand, was significantly less valuable in terms of desecuritisation, but once again this was by and large due to the fact that there was little less for Hume and the SDLP to desecuritise; now it was simply a waiting game for the desecuritisation to set in.

However, it is worth noting at least one quote from Hume's speech that outlines his position, and thus the position of the SDLP, post-Belfast Agreement:

> *'I want to see Ireland - North and South - the wounds of violence healed, play its rightful role in a Europe that will, for all Irish people, be a shared bond of patriotism and new endeavour. I want to see Ireland as an example to men and women everywhere of what can be achieved by living for ideals, rather than fighting for them, and by viewing each and every person as worthy of respect and honour. I want to see an Ireland of partnership where we wage war on want and poverty, where we reach out to the marginalised and dispossessed, where we build together a future that can be as great as our dreams allow.'* (Hume, 1998)

This shows once again that Hume was promoting apolitical peace. What is interesting in terms of securitisation, however, is that aside from the first sentence of the above quote and a few select examples throughout, Hume spends much of his speech talking of Ireland and the Irish people, and in doing so clearly intending to refer to both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland as a single entity. This can be seen in the subsequent sections of the excerpt above, and found throughout the rest of his award speech. This demonstrates that, in a roundabout way rather than outright saying so, the Nationalists were still pushing for the idea of Ireland being unified, and although this issue had been put on the proverbial back-burner for a later date under the Belfast Agreement, they were not shying away from making this apparent in public speeches.

The other Nationalist speech worth noting from the period up until the re-establishment of Stormont in 1999 came from Gerry Adams. In a keynote statement, speaking about the peace process in Northern Ireland, Adams spoke on behalf of Sinn Féin, stating that:

> *'Sinn Féin is totally committed to the implementation of the Belfast Agreement in all its aspects. We believe that the wholehearted implementation of the Agreement has the capacity to transform the existing situation through constructive and dynamic political development. It is an unprecedented opportunity to start afresh. An opportunity to put behind us the failures, the tragedy and the suffering of the past. There is no doubt that we are entering into the final stages of the resolution of the conflict.'* (Adams, 1999)

Once again, Adams was restating the optimism and hope with which Sinn Féin were apparently approaching the Peace Process. In terms of securitisation, the keynote speech offers two compelling insights. The first was an assertion by Adams that Sinn Féin were confident that the IRA ceasefire would continue to hold. Here he was referring only to the part of the IRA that Sinn Féin still had direct links with, the Provisional IRA, as by this point other offshoots not clearly associated with Sinn Féin had formed and were carrying out mostly very limited operations throughout Northern Ireland, the most apparent example of this being the Omagh Bombing of late 1998, which was carried out by the Real IRA and decried by all parties to the Peace Process, showing a clear distance being created between politics and violence by all sides, including the Provisional IRA itself (McKenna, 2015).

To conclude this section on desecuritisation post-Belfast Agreement, the last noteworthy quote from Adam's keynote speech was referring to disarmament. As mentioned throughout this paper, disarmament was an issue of contention for long after the Belfast Agreement had been signed and Stormont had been restored. However, Sinn Féin were strongly behind disarmament as part of their commitment to maintain the principles established in the Belfast Agreement. As such, Adam's concluded his keynote speech stating:

> *'We reiterate our total commitment to doing everything in our power to maintain the peace process and to removing the gun forever from the politics of our country.'* (Adams, 1999)

This further serves to demonstrate the desecuritisations undertaken by Nationalists and Republicans, Sinn Féin in particular, throughout the late 80's and the 90's. Sinn Féin and, to some extent, the SDLP, were entering the newly restored Stormont under the Belfast Agreement in starkly different positions than they had been not ten years before, and the majority of the IRA and other Republican paramilitary organisations were holding true to their ceasefires and openly backing the political aspects of the Agreement.

4.3.4 Nationalists and Republicans: Conclusion

Compared to the other actors who were directly involved in the conflict, the Republicans had to undergo the most significant desecuritisation in order to reach the point where a peace agreement might be successful. This was not a simple task given the fact that they were significantly securitised against both the British and the Unionists, and therefore required a number of high-profile speech acts from both politicians and paramilitary organisations in order for peace to be achieved. These acts were, by and large, successful, permitting Nationalist and Republican actors to be overall the most enthusiastic about the peace agreement. As such, although there was some disagreement between the two major parties, Hume and Adams were able to present a relatively united front towards desecuritisation and peace when compared to their Unionist counterparts, as will be outlined in the subsequent section on Unionist desecuritisations.

The Republican paramilitaries were also, on the whole, much more transparent in their communication. If there was a ceasefire, it tended to be upheld, and if the ceasefire was to be broken it was done so officially. Once again, this is significantly different from their Loyalist counterparts, as will be outlined in the following section. This was an attempt to portray themselves as significantly more reliant, in spite of the legal in most cases moral issues raised by their actions. This most likely had an effect on securitisation, however, as if they kept to their word it meant they could be treated as somewhat of a more legitimate party to the process providing they were officially on board. This does seem somewhat counter-intuitive due to the severity of their actions and the way they were treated as a, if not the, primary threat in terms of securitisation by the British and the Unionists, but undoubtedly played at least somewhat of a role.

Overall, the desecuritisation undertaken by the Nationalists, and particularly Sinn Féin and the Provisional IRA, was huge and, as can be seen from the subsection on desecuritisation post-Belfast Agreement, very swift. The speed of the Nationalist and Republican desecuritisation likely at least in part comes from the significant desecuritisation being undertaken at the same time by the British. It was a major goal, particularly of Sinn Féin and the Provisional IRA, to be considered as equals at the table, and for the more significant involvement of the Republic of Ireland in the future of Northern Ireland. The fact that both of these were offered by the British meant that desecuritisation was significantly more possible for Republicans and Nationalists. That is not to say by any means that the British should take the credit for Nationalist and Republican desecuritisation, but rather that there is a somewhat

of a chicken and egg situation and it is not clear who gave in to whom first, but the resulting concessions offered by the British as a result of one or the other side being willing to move permitted Nationalist and Republican desecuritisation.

4.4 Unionists and Loyalists

Like the Republican movement, the Unionist political movement during the peace process also featured two main political parties; the Ulster Unionist Party and the Democratic Unionist Party, one of whom also dropped in popularity after the Peace Process was completed. The Loyalist paramilitary forces were, however, somewhat more diluted that the Republicans, by this late stage in the conflict spread over two main organisations, the Ulster Defence Force and the Ulster Volunteer Force. This section will once again look at the change in political rhetoric against the backdrop of a shift in paramilitary activities to overall assess the desecuritising activities undertaken by Unionist and Loyalist groups. However, it is worth keeping in mind that in stark contrast to the dramatic shift in position undertaken by Sinn Féin in the period of negotiations leading up to, and the signing of, the Belfast Agreement, the Unionist position, and particularly that of figurehead the Reverend Ian Paisley, comparatively changed very little.

4.4.1 Unionists and Loyalists: Changes in Securitisation in the Run-Up to the Belfast Agreement

The main difference between Nationalists and Unionists during the period in the run-up to the Peace Process is the roles they took and thus the desecuritisation that was required. Whilst the Nationalists had to desecuritise many factors, such as the end of violent struggle, the overall notion of negotiating with the British and the Unionists, and the engagement in political discussion to name but a few, the Loyalists did not face such a significant shift. Firstly, they had always been included in talks by the UK government since the beginning of the troubles and therefore had quite an amicable relationship. Secondly, politics and violence were not as clearly intertwined as they were in the case of Sinn Féin and the Provisional IRA for example; violence on the Loyalist side was used to prevent change rather than try to cause it, and was divorced from the political aspects of Unionism as no major Unionist party openly operated as a front for an armed group in the way the Sinn Féin did for the IRA and Provisional IRA. This meant that the Unionists were more politically legitmate, going some way to explaining the initial British position of coming down harder on Unionists. The British Government's shift to rectify this imbalance would lead to the main issue in terms of securitisation for Unionists during the run up to the Peace Process.

Unlike the Nationalist and British sections that can be presented as a linear series of events that relate directly to securitisation or desecuritisation, the Unionist experience of the Peace Process is more of an overall existential crisis as a result of external changes enacted by the other parties in the process rather than an internal push to redefine and remodel its own ideology from within. As such, the Unionist path to peace can be summed up in two 'phases'; an initial reluctance and concern about the abrupt changes that were happening, followed by an eventual acceptance of the reality that peace was needed, and in order to achieve it the Unionists had to be willing to sit down with the Nationalists and not only talk, but share government. This also means that the Unionist timeline of the Peace Process starts significantly later than the British and Nationalist timelines as they weren't included on a meaningful level until the mid-90's.

The British understood the necessary risk that the inevitable eventual inclusion of the Unionists in the Peace Process posed due to this reluctance. One Cabinet Secretary, Robin Butler (now The Lord Butler of Brockwell), went as far to say that, whilst considering the October 1993 peace proposal tabled by Hume and Adams:

> *'One of the most difficult decisions we had to make was at what point we brought in the [Unionists]? John Major was always anxious that if he did it behind the [Unionists]' backs he was asking for trouble. If, however, he brought in the [Unionists] there could have been an explosion, not a physical explosion, but a political explosion, and [Unionists] could have said, 'this is outrageous' and published the whole thing and said they weren't going to have anything to do with it; and of course that would have wrecked it.'* (O'Kane, 2004).

This is where the Unionist view splits, in a similar way to the way the SDLP was the more moderate partner to the more aggressive Sinn Féin on the Nationalist side, the Ulster Unionist Party, led by James Molyneaux, represented a somewhat more moderate view on the inclusion of Nationalists in the Peace Process when compared to the Democratic Unionist Party, led by the infamously steadfast Reverend Ian Paisley. When consulted on the eventually rejected proposals by Hume and Adams in 1993, Molyneaux was more accommodating than the British had initially expected, although the he still expressed his disapproval of the proposal that was eventually rejected by the British Government anyway, partially due to his reaction among other Unionists, and partially because the British also reached the conclusion on their own that the proposal was untenable (ibid.).

Paisley, on the other hand, was adamantly against any discussion between the British Government and the Nationalists. In a September 1994 speech to the Democratic Unionist Party Conference, he declared:

> *'If we do not resist every step marked out for us by the present British Government, then we will see every so-called safeguard which they mouth set aside at their convenience to further the monstrous act of the final betrayal of the Union.'* (Paisley, 1994).

In the same speech, Paisley also criticised Molyneaux for 'selling out' and claiming that the Union would still be secure in the event of a peace agreement, stating:

> *'The present Leader of the official Ulster Unionist Party Mr James Molyneaux, has stated in the midst of this, the worst crisis in Ulster's history since the setting up of the state, that there is no sell-out, that the Union is secure, that the IRA has been conned, and that there is no possibility of betrayal. Let us examine these four assertions. Firstly, that there is no sell-out. We might well ask what a sell-out is. A sell-out consists of those who should know well the value of what in is their possession and to which they have paid the most wholesome allegiance in words, selling that possession to the enemy. Secondly, Mr Molyneaux asserts that the Union is secure. Two men, Hume and Adams are both the inveterate haters of the Union. They came together and planned a conspiracy against the Union - a conspiracy whose details have never been revealed to the people of Northern Ireland. Why? Because men like them love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. From the womb of the Hume/Adams conspiracy came the Downing Street Declaration.'* (ibid.).

These two excerpts effectively outline Paisley's approach to the Peace Process – an approach that didn't really change as the process went on, and still remained even after the Belfast Agreement had been signed. Paisley therefore best represents the side of the Unionist movement that didn't really change its stance in terms of desecuritisation, but he also represented perhaps the most noteworthy aspect of the conflict in terms of desecuritisation throughout the process. Paisley, along with a number of other members of the Democratic Unionist Party, actively opposed the agreement throughout the process, resulting in the party campaigning against the agreement when it came to the 1998 referendum. Conversely, the Ulster Unionist Party was split over the issue, officially backing the 'yes' vote, but with a significant number of party members individually campaigning against the agreement. This

potentially shows an understanding of both sides of the reality of peace in Northern Ireland; it was understood to be necessary, and as such, had to be backed and supported, but those who had been so vocal throughout the Troubles from both sides found it seemingly difficult to personally change their stances so drastically in what was a relatively short period of time. In Paisley's case, his rhetoric never shifted, and most speeches made by him at the time follow a similar significantly-securitised theme.

What's also noteworthy in terms of desecuritisation from this period is the Combined Loyalist Military Command's ceasefire of October 1994. The Combined Loyalist Military Command represented all the major Loyalist paramilitaries. It issued the aforementioned ceasefire after a series of murders and attacks carried out by its representative organisations' members, particularly in 1993. The ceasefire statement itself is somewhat odd in that sense, in as much as it expresses 'abject and true remorse' for the loved ones of all 'innocent' victims over the course of the Troubles (Combined Loyalist Military Command, 1994). Considering this was coming from a representative of organisations who, even in the previous year, had killed multiple civilians and had been widely condemned by both sides for doing so, it represents a rhetoric that seems to be attempting to justify these deaths as necessary, whilst at the same time almost going as far as to condemn their own actions.

The other perhaps more remarkable point made in the ceasefire document is that it puts the onus on any continued conflict on the Republicans:

> *'The permanence of our ceasefire will be completely dependant [sic.] upon the continued cessation of all nationalist/republican violence, the sole responsibility for a return to War lies with them.'* (ibid.).

This somewhat echoes the sentiment of Adams and others within the Nationalist movement, and the Troubles were getting to a point where both sides were seemingly ready to step away from violence, but only providing the other side did so as well. At face value, to the apparent credit of the Loyalist paramilitaries, they by and large held up on their end of the ceasefire even after the Provisional IRA reneged from theirs shortly after they had announced it. However, some organisations, namely the Ulster Freedom Fighters, a front for the Ulster Defence Association, were suspected of being involved in killings and attacks even though the official ceasefire was still being upheld, made evident by the fact that they reinstated their organisation's ceasefire a few years later in spite of it never officially having been broken. In that sense, neither side was at all reputable, but the Republicans seemed to be much more

committed to transparency when compared to their Loyalist counterparts, for better or for worse.

The third main player in the run up to the Belfast Agreement was James Molyneaux's successor, David Trimble. Trimble came to be head of the Ulster Unionist Party in 1995 after Molyneaux stepped down in the face of declining popularity and other setbacks over the previous few years. Trimble was somewhat more publically Unionist than Molyneaux, who had been seen as more middle-of-the-road in order to try to maintain the stability of the relatively volatile Ulster Unionist Party. To this end, only shortly before he had been elected as leader he had walked with Paisley at the front of Orange Order parades through Belfast (Abrams, 2001). Trimble, however, was much more open to negotiation than Molyneaux had been, but was much more aggressive in his speeches.

In a 1996 speech at his party's conference in the wake of the Provisional IRA's bombing of the London docks, Trimble stated:

> *'The Canary Wharf bomb clearly and conclusively proves that there is no prospect of the republican movement becoming committed to exclusively peaceful means. The duty of government is clear. But the British and Irish Governments have shirked that duty. Instead of making terrorists amenable to the law, they have responded to their agenda asking in return only for a "credible ceasefire".*
>
> *The concept of a credible ceasefire is now a contradiction in terms.'* (Trimble, 1996)

This opening part of his speech clearly showed an increasing securitisation against the actions of the Irish and particularly the British governments due to their actions in the peace process up to this point, whilst expressing a lack of desecuritisation towards the Republicans. This does not seem completely unreasonable due to the Republicans breaking the ceasefire they had instated that long ago, but does not fit with the rhetoric of the British, who continued to be optimistic about desecuritisation and peace efforts regardless of the break in the ceasefire. In this sense, the reasoning for a lack of desecuritising efforts from the Unionists is not without its merits, but does not fit into the wider picture of desecuritisation and the desire for peace at all costs.

Taking a further swipe at the British in particular, Trimble's speech continued:

'Instead of a resolute defence of the community we have the pathetic and degrading sight of democratically elected politicians pleading with terrorists.

What would have happened if John Bruton [Irish Taoiseach] *and John Major* [British Prime Minister] *had been in charge of the investigation into Fred West? You can just imagine it. There they would have been, on the doorstep of number 25 Cromwell Street* [West's home, where he famously buried many of his victims] *saying,*

"Mr West, if you could just see your way to stop all this killing. And maybe if you could, we could make a deal to satisfy your needs in other ways." And then imagine it if Fred turned round and said, "OK, maybe I will not kill anybody for the time being, until I see what you will do for me."' (Ibid.)

Trimble was referencing the serial killer Fred West, who had murdered a number of people, mostly women and children, in the 1970's before being caught in the early 1990's. The example given by Trimble clearly shows the attitude of the Unionist's towards the British, the Irish Republic, the IRA, and the Peace Process overall; Westminster and Dublin were negotiating with a group of what the Unionists believed to be serial killers by talking to the IRA, and in doing so was letting the IRA take charge of the situation. Whilst the British deemed this negotiation to be necessary in order to achieve peace, the Unionists saw it as a betrayal of trust and as an apparently foolish approach.

On the Provisional IRA and Sinn Féin, Trimble outlined that in his opinion they had had, and wasted, their last chance, and should thus be excluded from the Peace Process altogether:

'The Government statement of 28 February only makes sense on the basis of giving Sinn Féin/IRA a last chance and then of going on without them if they do not take it. […]…the refusal of Sinn Féin to commit itself to peace blocked talks and prevented all the other parties from proceeding. Now their refusal should only veto themselves and those who prefer their company. We proceed on that basis. The alternative would be appeasement and surrender to which we will not be a party.' (Ibid.)

This backs up the previous two statements, but comes with an interesting caveat – whilst Trimble said his party would not be part of any further negotiations that involved Sinn Féin and any iteration of the IRA, his party only very temporarily excluded themselves from the

Peace Process. After Sinn Féin was excluded for the bombings, then welcomed back within a year, the Ulster Unionist Party was the first of the main Unionist parties to re-join the all-party talks in 1997, whilst other major Unionist parties continued to boycott the Peace Process for some time after this, with the Democratic Unionist Party never joining the talks. This perhaps reflected the reality of the situation that the peace talks would happen with or without the Ulster Unionist Party's input because the people of Northern Ireland were tired of the conflict, and peace at this point was still far off but seemed more likely than ever. Trimble seemed to understand this inevitability that one way or another they would have to be involved. He summarised this in one of the penultimate lines of his address to the party conference:

> *'[The upcoming general election] will show the people of Ulster yearn for peace and democracy.'* (ibid.).

Whether or not the peace that came was what Trimble had in mind or not is unclear, but this entire speech represents the shift in position that the Unionists had been put in by this point. For years they had been able to claim to be the victim at the hands of the IRA and other Republican paramilitary organisations, but if the IRA really could stick to peace and the Unionists couldn't get on board the entire perception, and thus the securitisation, of the conflict would change; the Unionists could hardly claim to be the victim in a conflict they refused to help stop when the opportunity presented itself.

Lastly, Trimble's address to the 1996 party conference contained another noteworthy swipe at the Irish Republic and, to a much lesser extent, US President Clinton's involvement in the Peace Process:

> *'And Mr Clinton, if you want to help, remember how you have just arranged to supply Israel with 100 million dollars worth of anti-terrorist technological assistance. Why don't you consider supplying the Irish Republic with the intelligence equipment it so obviously lacks. And if from your resources you can supply Dublin with the odd backbone it would help!'* (ibid.).

Trimble was clearly being ironic about what he perceived to be the failings of the security services in the Republic of Ireland to deal with the Provisional IRA, showing at least some level of securitisation remaining against the Republic. His references to the US could also be interpreted as ironic, likely also in response to the fact that some considered the US to be

relatively pro-Nationalist, although largely representing an impartial player in the Peace Process.

As stated previously, the Ulster Unionist Party quickly reversed their stance on not negotiating with the IRA and Sinn Féin, and by the end of the following year the negotiations were going relatively well. This prompted a new shift in securitisation within the Unionist movement, with the Democratic Unionist Party securitising against the Ulster Unionist Party. This had been seen before with Paisley's criticism of Molyneaux, but with Trimble now negotiating with the Nationalists, and particularly with Sinn Féin, Paisley's rhetoric increased. By the 1997 Democratic Unionist Party conference in November, Paisley lashed out at both Trimble and his deputy John Taylor:

> *'In July of this year Ulster Unionist Deputy Leader, John Taylor, said he would refuse to sit down with the Provisionals' political wing under the present circumstances. "I personally could not take part in talks with Sinn Féin with a gun to my head." So he was not going to sit down with them but now he has sat down with them. What is more, he is deeply impressed by them and their behaviour. In the last issue of The Sunday Times Mr Taylor says he has also been impressed by the demeanour of Sinn Féin in the talks. He says "The body language is suggesting to me that Sinn Féin are beginning to slowly, slowly become realistic." Think of that! Here is a man who would not sit down with them but now is impressed with their body language. Is this a man who is going to defend and maintain the Union? A man who is actually impressed with the body language of gunmen and IRA terrorist leaders. So we need not go any further. I could give quotation after quotation from Mr Trimble who said if the IRA did not give in their arms he would close down the talks. Have they given in one weapon? No, but instead of that they are going to receive new licensed weapons from the British Government. So the British Government, instead of taking away the weapons of the IRA are going to supply them with legally held weapons and yet Mr Trimble still maintains his place at the table with them. On every real principle essential to the defence of the Union the Official Unionists have weakened and are continually weakening.'* (Paisley, 1997)

Whilst this is a lengthy quote, it is certainly worth considering in full in the context of this paper. Paisley was, once again, sticking very strongly to the rhetoric he had maintained since the beginning of his involvement in the Troubles and refusing to back down, whilst drawing attention to what was effectively, whether rightly or wrongly, an existential crisis in

terms of securitisation among the Ulster Unionist Party. Paisley's approach made him somewhat of an oddity in the framework of the rest of the process as he seemed unwilling to desecuritise his rhetoric, at least within the then current peace framework, and instead chose to securitise those who were involved on it from all sides.

On the 10th of April, the Belfast Agreement was signed by all parties who were party to the multi-party talks. The campaign for the referendum on the Belfast agreement marked a split in the Loyalist approach; the Ulster Unionist Party was internally split, and the majority of the Democratic Unionist Party were campaigning against the agreement. April 1998 began with a small victory, however, as when Ulster Unionist Party came to vote on whether or not to support the agreement in the upcoming referendum, the result was 23 against and 55 in favour, but with 6 out of 10 elected MP's rejecting the agreement (Melaugh, 2015b). The split was an effective indication of the political reality of the Peace Process from a Unionist perspective; the Nationalists had in reality given up a lot of ground, but for a number of Unionists this simply wasn't far enough, and any agreement in the current state posed a significant risk to security.

Aside from the aforementioned issues with the Ulster Freedom Fighters' ceasefire and the subsequent ejection, then reinstatement, of the Ulster Democratic Party in the talks due to being the Ulster Freedom Fighters' political wing, this effectively concludes the process of desecuritisation in the run-up to the Belfast agreement. Everything after this point can effectively be considered part of the campaign for the agreement.

4.4.2 Unionists and Loyalists: Changes in Securitisation During the Campaign for the Belfast Agreement

This subsection will analyse the role the two major Unionist parties played in the campaign for the referendum on the Belfast Agreement that had been signed by all present parties on April 10th 1998. As opposed to the previous section where most attention was given to speeches, in this case most attention will be given to election materials. A poster outlining the main views of each of the parties from the referendum campaign will be analysed, along with references to the internal stance of the party where appropriate. The posters displayed by the Ulster Unionist Party and the Democratic Unionist Party are represented in the appendix of this thesis, sourced from the CAIN online database (Melaugh & McKenna, 2015). Aside from the political parties, a number of Loyalist paramilitaries were in favour of the agreement

partially due to the work of Mo Mowlam's aforementioned visit to the prisons. Namely these organisations in favour were the Ulster Defence Association and the Ulster Freedom Fighters, perhaps bolstering the support in some degree as if those who were engaging in violence from the Loyalist side were in favour of the agreement then, in terms of securitisation, it represented a real opportunity for peace. Conversely, the Orange Order declared themselves against the agreement.

Firstly, the Democratic Unionist Party, led by Paisley, was the only one of the four major parties analysed in this paper to actively campaign for the 'No' vote in an organised manner. The cover of the leaflet sent out by the party seen in the appendix to this thesis *(Fig. 1)* clearly demonstrates their opposition to the agreement, claiming:

'It's right to say "no" to the United Ireland Process' (Fig. 1)

This headline alone very effectively indicates the securitisation that the Democratic Unionist Party was trying to convey; not only was voting no the *'right'* thing to do, but the use of the phrase *'the United Ireland Process'* indicated what they expected to be the outcome of the Peace Process. This is almost textbook securitisation of the agreement, in the sense that the party are trying to convey a sense of threat that at least on paper did not exist by inferring that a yes vote would lead to the unification of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland in spite of that not being guaranteed within the text of the agreement itself. To counter this, they have created a sense of duty to vote no. Although the word defence is never specifically used, it's strongly implied that voting no would protect the people of Northern Ireland from the perceived threat that a unification with the Republic would pose, and the Belfast Agreement in that sense was not a step towards peace, but rather a step towards defeat.

The party further outlined this is the interior of the leaflet, in a letter written by Paisley for the leaflet outlining how the British government had 'bent the knee' to the violence of the IRA, and further on in the leaflet it was stated that a yes vote would result in the Royal Ulster Constabulary, a force which was seen by many Unionists as vital to their own safety and security, being 'decimated' (The Democratic Unionist Party, 1998). This is, once again, quite a clear attempt to solidify the securitising rhetoric consistently put forward by the party, and particularly by Paisley. Lastly, with regards to the All-Ireland Council outlined in the Agreement, the leaflet states that when all Ireland is considered, the Unionists are in the minority and would thus find it difficult to get anything through (ibid.). This again follows the earlier rhetoric of Unionists being victims of the Peace Process, and therefore apparently

being sold out. This is well in line with the Democratic Unionist Party's rhetoric throughout the entire run-up to the Peace Process, further highlighting the fact that there was little to no actual desecuritisation from the party, and if anything, they were trying to actively increase securitisation on a number of issues.

The Ulster Unionist Party, on the other hand, released a poster featuring Trimble and his deputy John Taylor stood in front of Stormont looking apparently optimistically and hopefully into the middle distance – i.e., the future *(Fig. 3)*. As previously stated though, the Ulster Unionist Party's message of hope was somewhat a diluted one. The party was presenting the agreement as the way forward for peace, but a large part of the party did not support this approach and individually distanced themselves from the message and even actively campaigned against the agreement (Melaugh, 2015b). Those who didn't support it felt that the agreement was a step too far, particularly with regards to cooperation with the government in the Republic. As such, the Ulster Unionist Party's approach to the Belfast Agreement referendum was somewhat chaotic, a fact which would see the party's support diminish significantly post-referendum. Thus the party had attempted to desecuritise the conflict throughout, not so much through rhetoric but through actions, and in doing so they were successful, but paid a heavy price internally.

With some pundits claiming at the time that the referendum would need a majority of at least 64% in order to be successful in the long term, as it would be backed by almost all Nationalists anyway and they represented 40% of the electorate (The Times, 1998), the final result of the referendum in Northern Ireland was 71.1% in favour. Trimble's message of hope and peace from the agreement, and his attempts to somewhat desecuritise the conflict at least to some degree, had won out in spite of a lack of overall support from the majority of the members of the two main Unionist political parties. Based on the previously referenced article from the May 22nd 1998 edition of The Times, if the Nationalists made up 40% of the electorate, that means that the referendum had passed with just over 50% of the Unionist popular vote as well. This effectively illustrates the gap between the parties and the people when it came to Unionists in the Troubles; the people were tired of conflict, and apparently agreed with Trimble and those in the Ulster Unionist Party campaigning for a yes vote, showing that in spite of the inherent securitisations for Unionists the Belfast Agreement represented a way out of the conflict that was at least workable, and that was better than no foreseeable way out at all.

4.4.3 Unionists and Loyalists: Changes in Securitisation Post-Belfast Agreement

Even with the Belfast Agreement passed, there was a lot of issues within the Unionist movement that still remained in terms of securitisation. This section will therefore take in to account speech acts from both of the party leaders of the main Unionist parties in the two years following the signing of the Belfast Agreement. Little consideration to the Loyalist paramilitaries will be given at this point as officially all operations had ended with the ceasefire prior to the agreement. This is perhaps best illustrated by the leader of the Loyalist Volunteer Force stating in August 1998 that 'the war is over' (Anderson, 1998). That is not to say that Loyalists no longer carried out attacks and other activities on an individual basis, but officially the Loyalist forces were not conducting military action and, as such, their command remained mostly silent and inactive, producing little in the way of meaningful speech acts. The main concern for the Loyalist command after the referendum was thus the disarmament of the Republican paramilitaries. Disarmament would not take place for both the Loyalists and Republicans until after the devolved government in Stormont had been established and is therefore outside the scope of this thesis.

Four days after the referendum, the Democratic Unionist Party held a press conference in which they stated their intent not to 'wreck' the assembly, in spite of their dissatisfaction with the outcome of the referendum (Melaugh, 2015b). The Democratic Unionist Party did not, however, change their position in any meaningful way, as illustrated by Paisley's comments in July, calling for the Unionist celebrations on the 12th of July, known as the 'Twelfth', to be used as a 'settling day' at a rally in Portadown (Government of Great Britain, 2011). This was considered by some to be an incitation of violence, particularly as on the morning of the 12th of July three Catholic children were killed in an act of sectarian violence. After this attack, support for the Democratic Unionist Party's protests against the outcome of the agreement rapidly declined (Melaugh, 2015b).

By the end of 1998, the idea that the Peace Process had been a success seemed to become solidified both in Northern Ireland, and internationally. This was perhaps best demonstrated by the aforementioned awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Trimble and Hume for their role in delivering the signing of the Belfast Agreement. Trimble's speech is so intricate that, in terms of discourse analysis, it could almost warrant a paper or at least a section of its own. However, within the framework of this thesis, it will be covered only on a superficial level in terms of securitisation in order to retain focus. Trimble's speech, whilst long, carried an overarching message of optimism, but did not in any way stray from

confronting both the past, present, and future issues of peace in Northern Ireland. With that regard, Trimble touched on the ongoing issues in some depth in a very serious manner, but did include some humorous references to the political landscape in Northern Ireland. One of the most noteworthy of these was a clearly humorous quip directed somewhat towards his counterpart, Hume, in which Trimble stated that:

> *'...the way politics work in Northern Ireland - if John Hume has a medal, it is important that I have one too.'* (Trimble, 1998a)

This humorous take on politics in Northern Ireland, whilst likely not too distant from the truth, shows an important change in securitisation as not only were Hume and Trimble appearing together to celebrate peace in Northern Ireland, they were prepared to joke about the past and current issues rather than fight over them. However, Trimble did not shy away from the issues, highlighting that a decommissioning of weapons was an imperative before what he referred to as a *'decommissioning of hearts'* could be achieved (ibid). The issue of disarmament remained a key point within the Unionist rhetoric for many years to come.

Trimble also focused on the issue of the moral imperative for peace throughout his speech. He began this point by referring to the cause of the conflict as a whole, stating that:

> *'We have a few fanatics who dream of forcing the Ulster British people into a Utopian Irish state, more ideologically Irish than its own inhabitants actually want. We also have fanatics who dream of permanently suppressing northern nationalists in a state more supposedly British than its inhabitants actually want. But a few fanatics are not a fundamental problem. No, the problem arises if political fanatics bury themselves within a morally legitimate political movement.'* (ibid.)

He also stressed that Northern Ireland not be considered a success story, at least certainly not then, but that the initiative had been successful so far and would hopefully continue to be, on the basis that it was morally right, and therefore what the majority of people in Northern Ireland really wanted. He summed this up just prior to his closing remarks, stating:

> *'There are two traditions in Northern Ireland. There are two main religious denominations. But there is only one true moral denomination. And it wants peace.'* (ibid.)

Securitising peace as a moral objective was not a significant shift on Trimble's part, but is extremely noteworthy on its own merits as it demonstrates that peace transcends religious,

political, and national boundaries and is therefore a movement which everyone, regardless of any particular persuasion, can get behind.

In spite of Trimble's central role, and the central role played by the Ulster Unionist Party throughout the Peace Process, they would eventually fall away from being the largest Unionist party in Northern Ireland. Marred by infighting, much of it related to the concessions given in the agreement as outlined before, the party was superseded by Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party by the mid-2000's as the primary Unionist political force in Northern Ireland.

Whilst Trimble was attempting to drive home the optimism and moral imperative of peace, Paisley instead was focusing on the perceived betrayal that he and his party still felt the Belfast Agreement had enacted on Northern Ireland, particularly by the British Government. In a speech at a party conference in November 1998, Paisley focused heavily on betrayal, and was overall very pessimistic about the future of peace in Northern Ireland. Highlighting the ongoing violence, despite the supposed 'historical agreement', Paisley stated:

> *'Republican terrorists, in November alone, drove into exile nine people, intimidated 67 and carried out two shootings and seven beatings. Loyalists were involved in exiling 11 people, intimidating 48 and carrying out five shootings and seven beatings. This makes an alarming total of 20 people exiled, 115 people intimidated, seven shot and 14 beaten and that only for this as yet unfinished month of November. This is not peace, Mr Blair. '* (Paisley, 1998)

Unlike Trimble's positive securitisation of the Peace Process as a moral obligation, Paisley continued his previous rhetoric of securitising the process as a great betrayal of Unionists in Northern Ireland. Whilst he had some valid points, as outlined by his referencing of statistics relating to terrorist attacks in Northern Ireland after the agreement, his rhetoric had not changed in spite of promising not to ruin the agreement. To this end, Trimble also had a response to Paisley's talk of betrayal, having stated at a party conference a month prior to Paisley's:

> *'The Ulster Unionist Party had the courage and the vision to take the fight to our opponents to secure the Union - others, loud in declaring their unionism, did not. Don't ever let any of them take a shred of credit for what we have achieved. They ran away from the enemies of Unionism in the Talks. Now they enter Stormont as the self-proclaimed defenders of Unionism, well, they weren't to be seen when they were needed, when there was hard work to be done. Oh no they wouldn't dirty their hands*

then. But there is some dirty work they are only too willing to do now. That is to blackguard those who did the work, who are delivering accountability, who are building a future, secure within the Union.' (Trimble, 1998b)

This effectively shows that, due to their difference in rhetoric, the political parties that represented the Unionist cause were also securitised against each other to degree. In spite of this, Unionists as a whole managed to hold the Belfast Agreement together until power was dissolved to Stormont in 1999.

4.4.4 Unionists and Loyalists: Conclusion

Compared to the previously outlined Nationalist and British positions, the Unionists were in a unique position in that they were the only group of actors who significantly securitised the conflict more than they desecuritised. This is largely because, prior to the Peace Process, the Unionists were in a clearly dominant political, social, and economic position in Northern Ireland, due to the Nationalists inability or unwillingness to take part in political discourse for various reasons. Thus, the introduction of the Nationalists into the political arena in Northern Ireland represented a significant threat to Unionist dominance and, as such, the Peace Process was effectively a process by which the Unionists were stripped of their dominance in order to share power with the Nationalists.

As such, Unionist rhetoric effectively split and took two paths; one, headed by Ian Paisley and the Democratic Unionist Party, decrying the Peace Process as the ultimate betrayal of Northern Ireland by Britain and any other Unionists who supported it, and the other headed by Mollyneaux, Trimble, and elements of the Ulster Unionist Party, promoting the Peace Process as necessary, but with some significant reservations and misgivings about the perceived potential outcome. However, as outlined in the previous section, the majority of Unionist voters supported the referendum, demonstrating that the parties themselves did not necessarily represent the voices of the people that they claimed to represent.

In spite of this, actors such as Ian Paisley effectively never desecuritised their rhetoric and were still very aggressively securitised to their Nationalist counterparts as well as the British government well into the 2000's and beyond. As peace has prevailed in Northern Ireland, albeit it at times shaky, one can argue that this shows the gap between the political rhetoric and the perceptions of the people upon which it is intended to securitise. To this end, one can argue that Unionists as a whole, outside of the political parties, were much more on board with Trimble's desecuritsation-lite moral obligation for peace than Paisley's securitising

talk of betrayal, despite then electing Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party to be the largest party in Stormont in the mid-2000's. This shows the irrational nature of politics, but also shows how tired the people of Northern Ireland on both sides were with the conflict, desiring peace and desecuritisation in spite of securitisation towards, and discomfort with, all the political changes that peace brought.

5 CONCLUSION

Through the above two sections, the two research questions as to what the securitising factors were in the Troubles, and who the key actors were in desecuritisation and securitisation during the Peace Process.

In both cases there is a clear argument to say that Nationalists and Republicans represented the biggest shifts in both cases, securitising themselves in the beginning of the Troubles against the British and the Unionists and Loyalists, then subsequently desecuritising themselves, particularly against the British. But in that sense, they had farther to come. The British securitisations towards Nationalists and Republicans during the troubles can be seen as a direct result of the extraordinary measures the Republicans in particular undertook due to this securitisation. That is not the say that the Nationalists and Republicans bear the majority of the blame for the conflict as, given the political and socio-economic issues present before the conflict escalated, one can certainly see that the seeds for conflict had been sewn by the British and the Unionists long before the Troubles effectively started.

Conversely, the Republican and Nationalist desecuritisations during the Peace Process meant that the British were also able to offer significant desecuritisations and, in turn, lead to the Unionists and Loyalists being the only party that by and large seemingly increased securitisation to varying degrees via rhetoric during the process itself. That said, in spite of this the peace has held, although it has certainly not been smooth by any means, with last year's football European Championships seeing Northern Ireland play Poland, with more and more fans united behind their national football team from both sides of the Troubles than ever before (Ofman, 2016). On the other hand, Brexit and its after affects will throw the Peace Process into question, particularly with regard to the open border between North and South, all in spite of Northern Ireland's majority desire to remain part of the European Union (Kirk, Coles, & Krol, 2017). In addition, the Democratic Unionist Party are currently propping up the UK government after their shock election result in 2017, an action received with understandable discomfort among Nationalists (The Guardian, 2017).

With regards to the dynamics of securitisation and desecuritisation, Blair perhaps is given unfair credit as although he was instrumental in the final stages of the Peace Process, much of the initiatives he undertook had been already laid down by his predecessor, John Major, as can be seen throughout the section on British desecuritisation, particularly as it would not have been possible to achieve everything Blair did within the year that he had been

Prime Minister without the careful planning, preparations, and negotiations carried out beforehand. That is not to say that Blair and his government's role was not significant, it certainly was, particularly in the case of Mo Mowlam, but there is an unduly small amount of credit given to those who laid the foundations prior to his election win of 1997. This is perhaps a downside of the use of securitisation theory within the framework of this topic as, purely looking at speech acts, Blair deserves more of the credit than the he is due when put alongside the work he put in. That said, the methods this thesis undertook of always putting the primary sources into historical context addressed this issue.

Hume and Trimble's win of the Nobel Peace Prize is also misleading in terms of securitisation as, as can be seen from the section on Republicans and Nationalists, it was certainly Adams and Sinn Féin who had achieved significantly more in terms of desecuritisation, although of course due to their position and association with the Provisional IRA they had significantly more to desecuritise. Conversely, Trimble's win is quite the opposite as he was one of only a few high-profile Unionists who were trying to desecuritise the conflict, or at least see that the Belfast Agreement was successful. In that sense, Trimble at best could be considered to be the best of a group who did very little, as the Unionists and Loyalists made no significant attempts to desecuritise the conflict when compared to the majority of Republicans, Nationalists, and the British. Of course, the former had further to come and more to desecuritise, and the fact that the Unionists were effectively divorced from the violence undertaken by the Loyalists put them in a significantly different position to begin with. However, there was some still effort to be made and, as outlined in this thesis, the effort was not particularly forthcoming from Unionists. The fact that they did not associate themselves with violence in the way that Sinn Féin did with the Republicans meant that they did not have as far to come in terms of desecuritisation, but the fact still remains that some securitising actors within the Unionist movement did not make significant effort to desecuritise, the most notable of these actors being Ian Paisley.

As such, one can clearly see from this thesis that there was effectively no single event that caused the troubles in terms of securitisation, but rather it was a situation created by on-going and long-term securitisation that came to a head and, due to a number of miscalculations by the British, was allowed to escalate to the point that it did. Likewise, there is not a single event, or single actor, that can be seen as being responsible for the success of the Peace Process. One can speculate that one of the major causes of the Peace Process was the British addressing the securitisations they had had for decades prior, and finally treating

the Nationalists and Republicans as gradually more legitimate partners and the Loyalists in particular on a more, although not fully, equal level with their Republican counterparts. As such, the main cause for the conflict and the eventual peace that emerged can be seen to stem from British failures in understanding the situation initially, and later putting a greater level of securitisation on Republicans over Loyalists, followed by the steps taken to address Republican concerns to a significant enough degree that the Loyalists and Republicans, Unionists and Nationalists, and the British people, could get on board with the Peace Process.

Overall, the theories of securitisation and desecuritisation as outlined by the Copenhagen School have provided an excellent framework of analysis for better understanding the conflict in Northern Ireland. Through the analysis of primary sources in a historical context, the main issue with the theories of attributing undue credit as outlined in this chapter was effectively put to rest by providing historical context for the analysis of speech acts. Overall, the outcome of this thesis is a better understanding of the Troubles and the Peace Process within the framework of discourse analysis.

5.1 Lessons Learned from Northern Ireland

Having examined the root causes of the conflict and its resolution in terms of securitisation, namely what are the lessons learned from Northern Ireland that could be used to achieve at least apparently sustainable peace through desecuritisation. With ongoing conflicts in the Middle East, North and Sub-Saharan Africa attracting a lot of media attention in particular, lessons from the past have been, and will surely continue to be drawn, whilst resolutions are sought for such conflicts. In addition, other internal conflicts will doubtless ignite in the future elsewhere in the world where the lessons learned in Northern Ireland could potentially be applied.

Northern Ireland effectively demonstrates that desecuritisation provides a valid and apparently effective part in bringing an end to conflict; the study of the changes in rhetoric provides a clear path to peace when viewed in the context of historical events. However, for rhetoric to change and lead to desecuritisation, two factors need to exist. Firstly, a desire to change rhetoric in the first place. In Northern Ireland this stemmed from a desire among Nationalists and Republicans to be treated as a legitimate political force in order to ensure equal rights and treatment for the people they represented and, thus, when this was offered in a way that was meaningful and acceptable for them, the desecuritisation process could begin. Secondly, and this follows on from the first point, access to the political, economic, or social infrastructure so that the issues that sparked the conflict can be addressed, and therefore desecuritised, in the long-run in a stable manner. Many would argue that that requires democracy, however that is not necessarily the case as Buzan, Waever and de Wilde provide cases where securitisation and desecuritisation has taken place in non-democratic states (Buzan, Waever, & de Wilde, 1998). To put it rather bluntly, if a conflict has started because of a perceived threat to security due to a lack of adequate food, or access to jobs, a provision of food or jobs could be enough to desecuritise the conflict. This does not inherently require democracy, but simply requires access to mechanisms that would provide food or work to the actors that perceive the lack thereof as a security threat. However, in the case of Northern Ireland, as the key issue was political representation, and everything else effectively trickled down from this, some level of democracy was required to solve the conflict.

In addition, as can be seen from Northern Ireland and the failed peace attempts prior to the Belfast Agreement that weren't all-party, peace processes that exclude significant parties to a conflict will likely fail because that party is not able to desecuritise itself as it has not

achieved its goals and therefore has not addressed the perceived threat to its security. As such, before desecuritisation can even take place, an agreeable middle ground needs to be established, or even simply an agreeable outcome, even if that is biased to one side. In the case of Northern Ireland, the middle group was power sharing.

This perhaps reinforces in part the idea put forward by Wilkinson in critique of the Copenhagen School, in that when aiming to bring an end to a conflict where one party maintains extremist views that extend beyond the realms of democracy, one simply cannot aim for desecuritisation in order to achieve peace, and therefore could show the Western-focus of the School once more (Wilkinson, 2007). To that end, conflicts much reach a point where the aforementioned agreeable outcome becomes acceptable at least in theory to all parties. In this case, desecuritisation must also be a key part of post-conflict state building, much in the way that Buzan, Waever and de Wilde gave the example of its use in post-Second World War Europe (Buzan, Waever, & de Wilde, 1998).

As such, Northern Ireland does provide a valuable example of how a conflict can be desecuritised, but as the conflict arose, was perpetuated, and largely resolved, in very specific circumstances, it is not a model of desecuritisation that can be applied to most of the ongoing internal conflicts that dominate current affairs. There are, however, certainly valuable lessons in conflict prevention and post conflict state building in that the lessons learned from the causes of the conflict and the successes and failures of the various peace processes can be used to prevent securitisation of other such issues in the future in Britain and further afield. As such, to prevailing peace in Northern Ireland is far from perfect, but does demonstrate that a change in rhetoric, whatever the cause, does reflect a profound change in the development of a conflict or peace process, and can be both a cause and effect, but requires the right environment in order to be truly effective.

5.2 Opportunities for Future Research

After the conclusions of this thesis, there are a number of topics that could be further researched, either in order to better understand the factors left out of this thesis in order to retain focus, or as an extension to the conclusions of this thesis. Briefly, these topics include:

- The role of third parties in the Troubles and the Belfast Agreement, and how they assisted in desecuritisation.
- Desecuritisation by the domestic parties after the reestablishment of Stormont.
- A comparison of desecuritisation in Northern Ireland compared to other peace processes, both successful and unsuccessful.
- The changes in the securitisation of British security policy between the Troubles and in the post-9/11 world.
- The potential effects of Brexit on the Peace Process

Through the conclusions of this thesis, and potential through these avenues for future study, one hopes that lessons will be drawn from the conflict in Northern Ireland to help prevent such a tragic turn of events from occurring again either in Northern Ireland itself or elsewhere. To this end, the continued study of conflicts and peace processes through the framework of securitisation and desecuritisation is vital to understand the root causes of conflict, and of peace, to ensure that the latter might prevail more often over the former.

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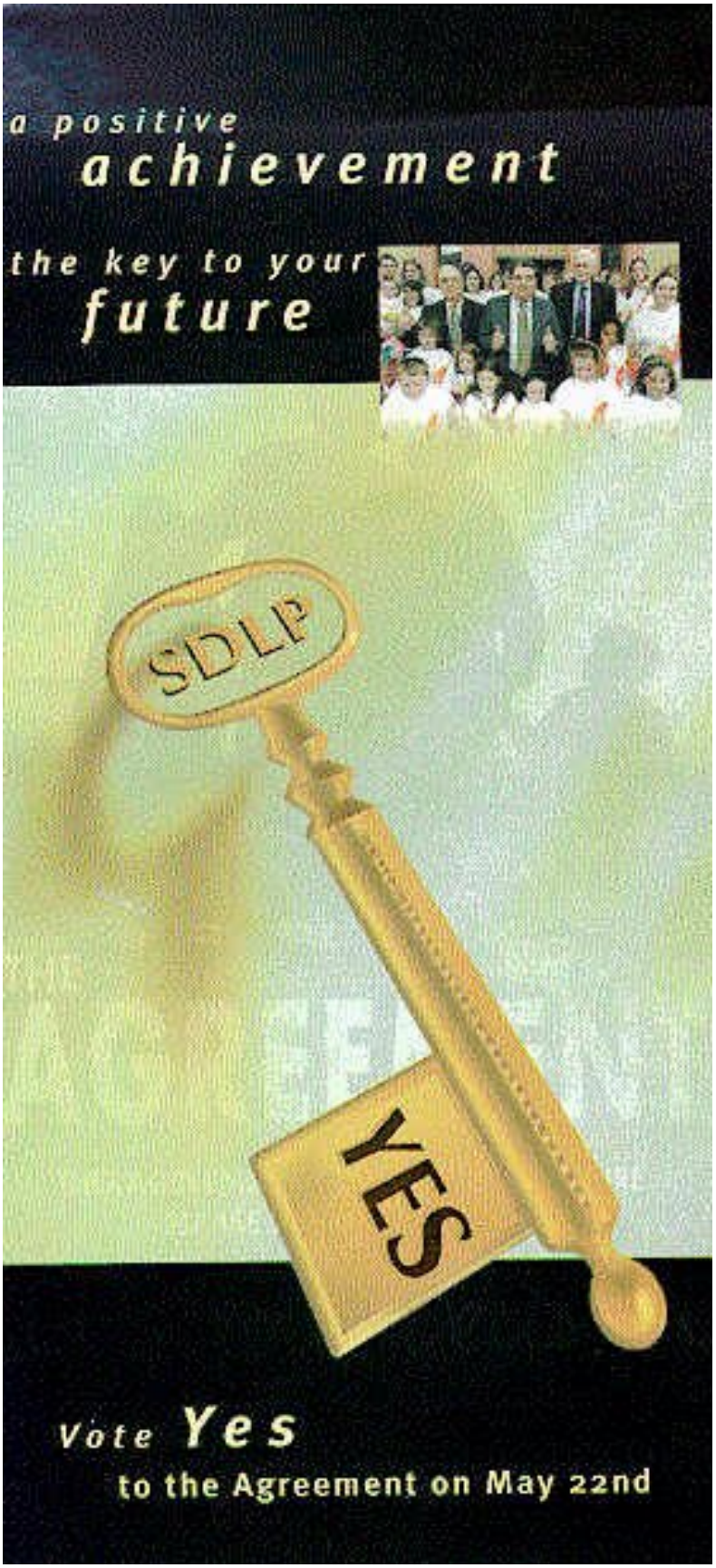
7 APPENDIX

Party posters for the referendum in Northern Ireland on the Belfast Agreement, 22nd of May 1998. All posters sourced from the CAIN database (Melaugh & McKenna, 2015).

(Fig. 1) Democratic Unionist Party leaflet cover:

(Fig. 2) Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) leaflet cover:



(Fig. 3) Ulster Unionist Party Leaflet: