

“Cutting with the grain”

Policy and the Protestant community:

What is to be done?

A paper from **Cllr Mark Langhammer** (Independent Labour councillor, Newtownabbey Borough Council) to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Mr Paul Murphy and the Northern Ireland Office team

Foreword

The current state of many Protestant working class areas poses one of the biggest challenges facing policy makers in Northern Ireland. Despite the rhetoric of the PSNI and Government ministers, there is little indication that paramilitary influence is waning in these districts. If anything it is becoming more entrenched and increasingly centred on criminality and “turf”.

The likelihood is that whatever political structures are in place in the future, many Protestant districts will be characterised by disaffection and defeatism. And at their heart will be armed factions that pose a danger to both local residents and Catholics in neighbouring districts.

There is, in short, a deepening crisis in housing estates in various parts of Northern Ireland. Yet those in positions of influence seem unaware or uninterested. Mainstream unionism appears to have turned its back on its working class voting fodder. Nationalist and republican politicians do not seem to be exercised on the need to address the growing alienation. And the British Government is still clinging to the discredited notion that positive voices within loyalism can be encouraged to emerge.

The UDA announcement that it will not shoot and pipe bomb people for 12 months was given a gushing welcome by the NIO. The viewpoint at street level is more sceptical. The violence, crime and degeneracy within loyalism of the past few years cannot be airbrushed out of history. And while any decrease in violence is welcome, the UDA’s initiative must be judged on the long-term.

It should certainly not herald a redoubling of the discredited Government policy of showering influence, status and community funding on those designated as “good loyalists”. That approach has underpinned paramilitary power and helped create the current crisis.

Policy makers must realise that Protestant working class communities yearn for a restoration of legitimate order. They are the people suffering the daily brunt of paramilitary oppression.

This document sets out some elements of a new approach towards Protestant communities. It is being issued in the hope that it will stimulate debate.

1 Introduction

In a recent interview, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Mr Paul Murphy stated:

“People really have to make their minds up within the Loyalist community as to what they support. ... I believe the vast majority of people in those communities want political loyalism to be their badge, as it were, but as for the sort of gangsterism we have been seeing over the last number of months

... that sort of loyalism is loyalism masqueraded. Effectively it is Mobsterism”
Irish News 8 February 2003

Paul Murphy is wrong. People in Protestant working class districts made their minds up about such things a long time ago. Some “Loyalist” politicians have been elected – usually in the latter counts in our PR elections – but only as a function of moving away from paramilitarism (or moving paramilitarism away from sectarian violence and mobsterism). In any other instance, the privacy of the polls are the only place where working class Protestants can punish paramilitaries, and they never fail to take the opportunity to do so. This paper takes its starting point from a recognition that paramilitaries are both dissolute and degenerate, are no basis for development within the Protestant communities. Mr Murphy would be wise to start from the premise adopted by his colleague, Ms Jane Kennedy, during the recent feud that the UDA was “*beyond the Pale*” and seek other ways of connecting with the Protestant community.

This paper sets out to address the growing mayhem being caused in society by this “unhinged”, apolitical and unpoliced element within Protestant paramilitarism. The paper examines the nature of Protestant politics and the Protestant community, and the failure of current NIO policy to connect with the positive, the good and benign within the Protestant community. In particular, the NIO policies aimed at keeping Protestant paramilitarism “onside” are misguided. When Secretary of State John Reid told the Institute of Irish Studies on 21 November 2001 that “*Northern Ireland must not become a cold place for Protestants, or we will have failed*” he did not take account of the impression that playing ‘footsie’ with the UDA was making it a cold place for the Protestant community as a whole. The clear up of gangster paramilitarism is the pre requisite of order in the Protestant communities, but not, it should be emphasized, an end in itself.

The paper suggests a “carrot and stick” approach to policy vis-à-vis the Protestant community. On one hand it suggests a thoroughgoing security operation aimed at the backward and sectarian elements of Protestant paramilitarism with the aim of **closing down** paramilitarism. On the other, it proposes a structured and purposeful development of both centrally planned state services aimed at the Protestant community as well as supporting community services channelled, where possible, through statutory services, established national charitable bodies, or via the two main civilising bodies in Protestant civil society, the Churches and the trade union movement.

It is a project about managing the decline of the traditional role of communal Protestant Ulster and, hopefully, opening up avenues of a more positive nature, in tune with the traditional talents and instincts of that community

2 Summary of main issues

- That a vital cultural force in Protestant Ulster is biblical Protestantism, an elemental force able for maintaining an internal order of sorts, but at sea in a world of political change.
- That there should be no compromise in a thoroughgoing campaign of clamping down on sectarian paramilitarism to create “breathing space” for new policing arrangements, political arrangements and community services to take root peacefully
- That the Protestant middle class has effectively disengaged from the political process and from public life. This trend, hastened by the flight of Protestant middle class children to university in Scotland and England is set to continue.
- That within the Protestant working class there remains a rudimentary “trade union” solidarity, but that there are, broadly, two “spheres of influence” – the churches on one hand, and paramilitarism on the other.
- That the “community development” approach to engaging with people, notably in disadvantaged communities does not sit easily with the organisational forms prevalent within the Protestant community, tending to ignore social development within the faith communities’ “sphere of influence” in favour of those within the paramilitary “sphere of influence”. A community development, or participatory approach is unlikely to “cut with the grain” in most Protestant communities and districts – where a representative approach, more in keeping with prevalent forms of Church democracy, is more likely to be successful.
- That the approaches of Government regeneration schemes as well as the approach of the first EU Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation and PEACE II may, in some cases, have stimulated sectarian antagonism.
- That universally available statutory services are the best way of getting services to people in need within predominantly Protestant districts.
- That, where local intermediaries are required, it is strongly recommended that Government consciously seek out assistance from Church based influences, women’s groups, sporting associations and, where possible, trade union based approaches, or through well established national charitable bodies such as Citizens Advice Bureaux, Mencap etc. Groups within the paramilitary sphere of influence should be rigorously excluded from state aid.

3 The Crisis in Protestant areas

The immediate current crisis in Protestant areas has largely been brought about by the political behaviour of Ulster Unionism under David Trimble. David Trimble signed an Agreement with which he was not comfortable. Since he signed it, he has been attempting to rewrite it. It may be more accurate to say that Trimble signed up to the content of Tony Blair’s letter, rather than the Agreement. But the prevalent malaise and mood of

despondency is more deep rooted than that and dates from the roots of the setting up of the odd entity of Northern Ireland.

The Protestant community in the North East has been placed in an intolerable position. In 1921 the British Government, against the advice of Sir Edward Carson, placed this new entity of Northern Ireland in a half way house between its desired location (integral to the United Kingdom without local or provincial Home Rule), and its undesired destination (a united Ireland). The conditions placed on Protestant Ulster remaining in the United Kingdom in 1921 were that firstly it accepted exclusion from participation in the party politics of the UK State and secondly, that it governed, and kept in order, the Catholics. For years the communal existence of the Protestant community took the form of policing the Catholic community. Now that this function has been denied them, it is vital that the state assist in steering an essentially apolitical Protestant community towards community activity more in keeping with the times.

Rejecting the British Road

Protestant Ulster could have resolved its “limbo” position by organising around the principle of normalising Northern Ireland’s position in the UK and accepting the development of governmental party politics (Labour versus Conservative) and the consequent erosion of communal based politics. This argument was comprehensively defeated at the UUP conference in 1986, after which the UUP started to expel supporters of British politics from its ranks. The UUP was at one with the entirety of the “Unionist Family” in rejecting British politics – rejecting, “de facto” - the British Constitution.

With the closure of the “British Road” by the Unionist family, in favour of the limbo of communal politics within Northern Ireland, the Unionist family have since been demoralised by the development of an island wide dynamic in political life. The Anglo Irish Agreement in 1985 was bedded in and followed by the Downing Street Declaration, the Joint Framework documents, and then the 1998 Belfast Agreement all of which stress three planks:

- Inter Governmental co-operation between Britain and Ireland
- Equality within Northern Ireland as between the “two communities”
- Cross border development in a range of areas and programmes.

Defeatism

The 2001 Census has indicated that, for the foreseeable future, “Limbo” will remain for some time yet. But “Limbo” is weakening and will, gradually, dissolve. The traditional role of the Protestant community within “Limbo”, and what it *understands* as being its culture, is – gradually, inexorably - being made redundant.

However much Census demographics predict the maintenance of “Limbo”, defeatism is the general mood within the Protestant community. Politicians from pro and anti agreement faction are adding to this despondency, with the relentless patter about “*concessions*”.

The Orange Order and Loyal Orders generally also raise the stakes unnecessarily by proclaiming that, if they don't get "*down the Road*"; it is the end of the Protestant way of life. Previously, the symbolic expression of communal domination took the form of marching in organised and military form through Catholic areas has come to be known by some as "protestant culture". This damaging and negative "culture" has been challenged, regulated and eroded. The residue of this instrument, the "blood and thunder" bands, which were recruited and fashioned into an embryonic army by the UDA, to march from Drumcree Church to Portadown (amongst other locations) by the direct route, have had to go home unbloodied. Is it any wonder, drugs, turf and "face" aside that they have turned on themselves in feuding as a result.

It is unlikely that the Protestant middle classes, who since 1970 have retreated to Helens Bay and the golf course, are going to take matters in hand. As a result, the only answer to the standing armies, drilling, parading and preparing to "*fight the Fenians*" is a strong security apparatus of state.

4 The Agreement and since

Since the ceasefires in 1994, but more notably since the Agreement in 1998, there has been a significant increase in sectarian activity in many Protestant districts. This has been most noticeable in the urban area, but has also included areas previously relatively undisturbed in the years of the conflict. More "marking out" activity by way of flags, ever more aggressive murals and intimidations, more "internal housekeeping" by paramilitarism, more engineered confrontations over marching and at "interfaces". In my own constituency, since the Agreement, there have been five murders, only one of which has seen anyone brought to account, many pipe bombings, shootings galore and the constant "bleeding" of young people to carry out sectarian acts. The engineered mobilisation of sectarian forces to create "interfaces" in areas where there were never any interfaces has become prevalent. The new "interface" at Whitewell/Longlands for instance was engineered from "recreational" confrontations and has led directly to two deaths in the past 18 months. And the near complete absence of policing on the ground has emboldened a new generation.

One feature has been that, in addition to the nightly disorder in traditional paramilitary hotbeds, the post ceasefire era has seen the development of "ceasefire soldiers" or "truceliers" in districts which saw very little activity during the conflict. The UFF has recruited very heavily in North Antrim (and the link to high drug abuse and addiction rates in these areas is no coincidence). Previously quiet estates in Coleraine and Ballymena have seen struggles for paramilitary supremacy. Paramilitary flags and emblems have appeared in towns like Bushmills, Dervock and Mosside, hardly the forefront of the war in years past. Recruitment through flute bands is widespread. If this were a matter of small numbers it would be of little concern. Ordinary uninvolved Protestants have looked on helplessly as their formerly tranquil towns and areas have been turned into battlegrounds. Some have been able to set up 'bona fide' residents or tenants associations to establish alternative

sources of power. The “Tidy Towns” group in Broughshane is an interesting example of this. The question arises, why has the UDA/UFF recruited such large numbers in Derry/North Antrim and “taken control” of previously peaceful villages, and why have they been allowed to? Why Loyalists have hung around the battlefield, even creating new fronts, is not easy to answer.

5 The Nature of the Protestant community

The Protestant community is characterised by a weak political culture. The partition settlement of 1921 to 1972 gave Protestants the rudimentary role of “*policing the Taigs*” and turning out a Protestant majority every four or five years. When the communal conflict erupted in 1969, as a consequence of the perverse political arrangements put in place by Britain, the Protestant middle class gradually disengaged from political and public life. They went “*to play golf*” in 1969-70 and the number disengaging from public life to play golf grew as the years went by. Indeed, it was seen to be a laudable thing that the Protestant middle class eschewed political and public life. The political expression of Unionism has suffered as a consequence.

Despite coming out in large numbers to vote for the Agreement (for the purpose of allowing the golf to continue) the Unionist middle class have remained on the golf course. Protestant middle class is disengaged from public affairs to a degree barely imaginable in Great Britain. When Mrs Thatcher declared that “*There is no such thing as society*” it is probable that the only part of the United Kingdom that remotely accorded with that vision was middle class Protestant Ulster.

Within the working class, a rudimentary trade union solidarity still remains, residue from the large scale Protestant working class participation in the manufacturing industry prevalent in the building of industrial Belfast – linen, textiles, engineering and shipbuilding.

In political life, Protestant politics is characterised by an absence of guile, an inability to “bob and weave” or “duck and dive”. The rigid nature of Ulster Protestant politics is connected, at least to some degree, to the historical development of Ulster Presbyterianism – the largest Protestant denomination – since the Test Acts of 1704. Presbyterianism developed coherently, effectively as a ‘national’ community in its own right, but outside of political structures or responsibility. So whilst Presbyterians were the largest Protestant denomination, and the Synod of Ulster (later the General Assembly) was, in effect, the only representative institution or Assembly, it never had to deal with making the awkward compromises associated with practical government. And whilst Presbyterianism threw energy into, and developed, a public spirit or civic culture in the 17th Century – the development of a rudimentary Poor law system, for instance – it never was able to dirty its hands with the responsibilities of government and was able to develop inflexible unfettered positions within the spirit or organised religion. This history has had a corroding effect on its ability to develop outward looking policies capable of evolution and development.

And if one looks carefully at the recent history of post Agreement Unionist politics, and the role of the 860 strong Unionist Council, it is easy to see the influence of Church democracy at play. Unionist leaders exercise a moderatorial influence, rather than a strong front leadership role.

In grass roots social and community life there is a less active “civil society” in Protestant areas than in Catholic districts – that is, the layer of collective activity in Tenants Associations, Credit Unions, single issue campaigning groups, cultural activity, publishing, community arts and the like - all below the level of politics, but nonetheless feeding successful active politics. It is that aspect that suggests that representative forms of organisation are more likely to be successful in Protestant Ulster, rather than collective or participatory fora.

The **British Cultural Forum** report into “The Future of Orange Halls” held in 2001 in Killeel noted *“Protestant involvement in collective activity has been generally low; they have not developed the structures or the networks necessary for community led activity. They have failed to avail of the opportunities for improvement and progress, which the European Union’s funding mechanisms have provided.”*

The rural based **Protestant Unionist and Loyalist Network** in its 2002-05 strategic plan noted that *“Community action has been limited in Protestant areas by a number of cultural barriers. As well as the individualism of their doctrine and the fragmentation of the churches, there was also the perception that the increase in community activity was associated with the political and social events of the time. This was viewed by some sections of the Protestant community as anti establishment and a threat to their government and their Britishness.”*

The report “The Way it is” undertaken by Peter Quinn for the **Fermanagh Partnership** in 1998 noted: *“The Protestant community has not taken advantage of the opportunities created for the community sector, largely because of a philosophical anathema to collective activity” (p19) “The fact that Protestantism is not homogenous, combined with the strength of the commitment to their individual churches, reduces the potential for community development in the Protestant community” (p10)*

These comments reflect earlier work covered in the report of the 1991 conference in Community Development in Protestant Areas (Redpath et al)

6 The Civilising influences

Traditionally, the civilising influences within the Protestant working class have been the labour and trade union movement and the churches.

6.1 The Labour influence

The large scale participation of the Protestant working class in traditional industry, the shipyards, engineering work such as Shorts, Mackies Sirocco Works as well as in traditional textile trades had the side effect of inducting

large numbers of people in the 'mores' of the trade union movement. Every working class district had, until recently, a large smattering of men and women who had involvement at shop steward or convenor level within their union, and those organisation skills learnt in the unions lent discipline to the Protestant community.

Recruits to Protestant paramilitarism in the 1970's, for instance, would often be drawn from a layer of society that was usually "skilled trades", often involved in "respectable" loyal orders, almost invariably a member of a trade union and in work. Today, by comparison, paramilitaries recruit most heavily from a more lumpen layer – unskilled, unemployed, often with criminal history, rarely in a trade union. The undated 1977 paper "*Loyalist Prisoners of War, Special Category, Long Kesh*" – a statistical breakdown of the background and occupational trades of the UVF, RHC and UDA prisoners of the time sets this trend out clearly.

The ICTU itself, in a recent submission to the Dublin Peace and Reconciliation Forum has recognised that the Communist Party influence in the post war years which brought through trade union leaders from the Protestant community has dried up, and the Union movement has felt it necessary to run "Protestant leaders" courses to stimulate the emergence of trade unionists.

6.2 The Churches

In most predominantly Protestant districts today, most of the "social cement" is provided by, or within the sphere of influence of Churches. The Boys and Girls Brigades, the Scouts, the Mother and Toddlers groups, Senior Citizens lunch clubs, bowls clubs and tea dances are typically run by Churches or in Church premises. In sporting life the Old Boys (ie former Boys Brigades) league and Churches League arrangements in soccer are replicated across a number of sports. In many districts over the past twenty years, Churches have acted as intermediaries for Government training schemes such as Action for Community Employment (A.C.E.), the Job Training Programme, community jobclubs, Worktrack and so on.

Rev Norman Hamilton, Presbyterian Minister in Ballysillan mapped social in voluntary activity within the sphere of influence of Churches in the Oldpark Electoral ward as part of his unpublished thesis and concluded that "*The Churches are major contributors to the local community in the Oldpark Electoral Area. In particular they are major contributors to youth work and through volunteering for community benefit*". This is consistent with the findings of **Maurice Kinhead's** 1995 finding that "*Protestant Churches are more involved in responding to social need than is sometimes assumed and would appear to be one of the 'major players' operating in Protestant urban communities.*" (Involvement of Protestant Churches in areas of urban deprivation: Belfast Churches Urban Development Committee)

The influence of Protestant clergy in the resolution of community problems has been noticeable. The Rev Norman Hamilton, for instance, was to the fore in helping Protestant paramilitarism to reconsider the wisdom of their sectarian campaign at Holy Cross School in Ardoyne. Methodist Minister, Rev

Gary Mason was paramount in influencing the recent removal of intimidating wall graffiti across East Belfast. And the Rev Roy Magee has had a long term role in negotiating the Loyalist ceasefire. These are high profile examples of influences which are widespread and unreported in communities across Northern Ireland.

At their best, the influences of church leaders and the labour movement were seen in the development of the Northern Ireland Labour Party. At its height it had 4 Stormont MPs in the 1960's, including the Methodist lay preacher David Bleakley (Labour MP for Pottinger) who recently described the NILP as a form of Christian Socialism. All four of its MPs were actively involved in "church" as lay preachers, missionaries or lay volunteers.

The influence of both the Churches, particularly in urban areas and the trades unions in the world of work. are declining within the Protestant communities. This is undoubtedly a factor in the "unhinged" nature of Loyalism. **However, they both remain important influences and should form the core and basis of an alliance with Government in the delivery of social and community services in the Protestant community.**

Examples of good practice are set out in **Julie Harrison's** 1998 Evaluation of the Belfast Churches Urban Development Committee project (unpublished report for Making Belfast Work, DoENI) and can act as a stimulant for a wider, deeper and more conscious government policy initiative.

7 Paramilitaries

Through the efforts of the NIO, along with programme money from schemes such as Belfast Action Teams, Making Belfast Work (now Belfast Regeneration Office) a faction within Loyalism made valiant efforts to become something other than militarists and militants, to be sent on the rampage against 'Taigs' by signals from polite Unionism. This effort produced a group of very presentable, public relations adept, Loyalists. David Ervine, Billy Hutchinson, Hugh Smyth and Billy Smith on the PUP side and Gary McMichael and David Adams on the UDP side made initial inroads and made public their determination never again to be used through "winks and nods" from "fur coat" or "Big House" Unionism. The political position they adopted has become unsustainable however, in the faced of skilful Ulster Unionist insider intransigence against the Agreement. Their effort has been brought to nothing by the influence (or lack of "cover") of the UUP and loyalism is largely back where it started.

Although both main Protestant paramilitaries have matched each other in the primitive nature of their killings, there are significant differences. The UVF has a centralised command structure, based in the Shankill district, with subordinate local commanders. Its central leadership, although now changing, has been in place for a period of some twenty years allowing for some degree of stability, space and tolerance for political thought to emerge.

The UDA by comparison, does not have a centralised leadership. Its inner council of 6 commanders brook little interference in the running of their individual fiefdoms, and are not politically motivated. The current Chief Constable, Hugh Orde, correctly likened the UDA to the crazed, gun toting Jamaican gangs he crossed with in the Metropolitan police. The UDA coheres around its network of drinking clubs, is deeply involved in the drugs trade and has stood down its political wing the UDP (Ulster Democratic Party), in favour of an Ulster Political Research Group which acts as a front for the UDA/UFF and has not produced any “research” worthy of the name.

Historically, Glen Barr, Harry Chicken and others attempted to inculcate political thought into the UDA with their 1979 pro Ulster independence paper “*Beyond the Religious Divide*”. It is debatable whether more than a tiny fraction of the UDA even read “Beyond the Religious Divide” let alone agreed with the notion of independence.

Later, John McMichael and others produced a blueprint for power sharing devolution in the 1987 paper “*Commonsense*”. Again, it would be surprising that the bulk of the UDA ever read Commonsense or agreed with power sharing. Gary McMichael, David Adams, Joe English and others made a valiant attempt within the UDP to steer the UDA constituency towards a political route within the current peace process. They were dismissed in contemptuous terms by a UDA set on returning to its traditional role, as irresponsible sectarian militants.

The UDA coheres around two key factors. Firstly, raw, primitive and brutal sectarian hatred. Secondly, local control – “*running the area*”, the fiefdom. This usually involves a social club. The UDA is an alcohol sodden organisation. Many of its killings have started with the intake of copious amounts of alcohol. Through a nexus of social clubs, protection rackets, distribution of counterfeit goods, tax fraud and latterly the drugs trade has been to the core of the paramilitary *raison d’etre*. Whether it could ever be said to have had a political function is dubious. What is certain is that it has none now.

8 Creating space for stability

In order to create space in society for politics, for local policing or for church based and other community social efforts to work, there is no alternative but for Government to work consciously to break up and dissipate the influence of dissolute, sectarian paramilitarism on the ground. This is the “stick” part of the package which is an essential and non negotiable part of any attempt to “connect” with the wider Protestant community.

This could include:

- Use of confession evidence to lock up active sectarian elements. The wider Protestant community, with a strong instinct for order, would happily “hold its nose” and “close its eyes” to a regime similar to that undertaken under Secretary of State Roy Mason from 1976-79, when sectarian paramilitarism was brought to the point of extinction.

- Use of selective internment, as suggested by Lord Ken Magennis, as a short term measure.
- Active use of accountancy professionals, the Criminal Assets Bureau and licensing laws to break up the network of social clubs that is at the heart of the sectarian organisation. Close the clubs and you close the “modus operandi” of the UDA. (An interesting local example, from within my own constituency, is the closure of the UVF run “Farm” social club on the northern edge of Rathcoole. This closure broke up paramilitarism to such a degree that the UVF has never presented a real threat in Rathcoole since, some of its elements leaving, some “going political” and some even getting jobs!)

9 Policing

People within working class districts only ever have one means of rejecting sectarian paramilitarism – at the polls. At the polls they almost always reject loyalist paramilitarism in very large numbers. **The step now required is to enable civil society within the Protestant working class areas – notably those responsible for providing social and community services within the sphere of influence of Churches - to be enabled to occupy a central position in the public lives of their communities.**

The plain fact is that predominantly Protestant districts, notably in the urban areas, are left to their own devices, unpoliced. These are ideal conditions for the development of sectarian Loyalism. From the Anglo Irish Agreement in 1985, after which many RUC personnel resident in Protestant working class districts were intimidated out, there has been no organic connection between the police and those policed. It is also the case that the high salary levels of police allow anyone getting a job to “buy out” of their community and live in one or other of the sheltered suburban developments where police personnel tend to live. The disconnection of police with policed leads to two equally unacceptable modes of policing

- “Parachute in” policing, where police respond to emergencies and incidents by dropping in, usually heavily reinforced in Army mode. The “parachute in” method cannot be sustained in the longer term
- “Intelligence based” policing: informer led activity aimed at recruiting informers from within to base intelligence on. The major disadvantage here is that a “blind eye” has to be turned to the activities of the informers – usually recruited from vulnerable and criminal elements. **The ends to which the police and security services will go to protect intelligence sources is itself deeply subversive of the proper operation of law and order within Protestant districts.** And, of course, the use of agents within Loyalist groups by police and state agencies has involved organised, effectively state, murder such as in the Finucane case.

Reliance on these forms of policing means that the natural, informal flow of information does not occur. The local “eyes and ears” needed by the police stay shut.

10 Measures Recommended

Security

Military: The first requirement for the state military and security services is to face the right direction. Richard Haas correctly noted the main threat to the Peace Process is coming from Loyalists. Security and military efforts should be trained on that threat. The UDA, an apolitical grouping without values or beliefs, should be rolled up and put out of business through application of a rigorous and pro active interrogatory regime. With the aim of getting the state security services to “*face the right way*” the installation of some military facilities in the heart of “paramilitary territory” is a necessity. For example, as a first step within my constituency, a military watch facility at the top of the Rathcoole multi story flats in South East Antrim is recommended.

Policing

There is a requirement for a warden level of policing. Since 1985 many RUC personnel have been intimidated from Protestant districts. The current PSNI has no significant organic connection with the people in the Protestant working class districts being policed. A natural information flow does not occur.

A warden policing presence, such as that recommended for many years by Maurice Hayes, would help to bridge the gap. The Patten recommendation to allow the District Policing Partnerships, with their local Councils, to raise up to 3p in the pound on the rates for local policing should be trialled as a means of putting local people, in uniform, in the estates. A connection between police and policed is an urgent requirement and cannot be undertaken without the clear up of paramilitarism.

Vocational Education

Protestant working class participation in manufacturing industry from the Industrial revolution onwards has shaped and influenced its development. Today, with manufacturing decimated, and no obvious “trade” or vocational lines to follow, it has become evident that education is a large part of the problem. Protestant middle class children, from grammar school backgrounds, are leaving in ever greater numbers to take up places in Universities in Great Britain, notably Scotland, and rarely return. Within the working class, it is evident that the “thirst” for education prevalent in Catholic districts is not to be found in Protestant districts.

A range of Unionist politicians, but notably the P.U.P., have correctly drawn attention to the low level of Transfer Test passes from work class districts at age 11. Aside from the removal of selection at 11, which would help, one answer is that within some secondary level schools, for targeted groups of

young people, to set aside the national curriculum, and to pilot vocational training routes at 12, 13 or 14 – a stage when a sense of worthlessness sets in to young people who do not have an academic bent, and who are vulnerable to the “kudos” and local status seemingly offered by paramilitarism.

Quasi military avenues

The Protestant community has a strong military tradition and many young people develop a fascination for things military. The Peoples Museum in Fernhill House in Glencairn is a particular example of this fascination. The shared experience of many within the Protestant community of regimentation through uniformed youth organisations such as the Boys and Girls Brigades are an expression of this fascination. The military avenue should be legitimated by ensuring the provision of outlets for this fascination. Whether through the school curriculum, and through legitimate military outlets such as the Territorial Army, the Sea Cadets, the Officer Training Corps and recruitment to the mainstream full time Army, the military fascination within the Protestant community should be catered for and channelled into legitimate routes – again, at the vulnerable ages of 11-13.

Youth Opportunities / Sport

If it is accepted that education is not providing “safe routes” to worthfulness within the Protestant community, support should be sought to encourage **sport as community development**. Boxing, martial arts and football are examples of initiatives which should be supported as a means of “safety valve” activity, but also as a means encouraging stable local leadership – accepting that Protestants will not find their leaderships from tenant associations, cultural and arts activity, publishing and other “civil society” outlets prevalent in the more political Catholic community.

Community

‘*Community development*’ activity always carries the risk, with Protestant communities, of encouraging the paramilitary “sphere of influence”. The community development approach, based on **participatory** forms of organisation, sit uneasily with the more **representational** forms prevalent within church democracy. As such, funding for community development should be based on **services**, monitored by formal Service Agreements, but not for agitational, “*capacity building*” schemes such as those routinely funded under the EU Peace programmes and regeneration schemes such as MBW, BRO and previously OBAT which have a propensity to turn into “better bigot” schemes.

General

As a general tendency, the Protestant community will respond better to universally run and accessible (as opposed to “targeted”) schemes and programmes. Where local, grass roots intermediaries are required by the state, these should be chosen carefully to avoid bolstering the paramilitary

“sphere of influence”. As a general rule, partnerships with local churches, sports associations or the local arms of statutory services (eg statutory Youth centres, reading and writing schemes in neighbourhood libraries etc) are to encouraged over schemes or programmes that emphasize forms of grass roots organisation that – under the guise of “*participation*” and “*grass roots, bottom up, involvement*” actually get “*taken over*” by paramilitary influences.

The Secretary of State and the Northern Ireland Office team is urged to strongly consider the measures recommended in this document, across all Government departments.

Cllr Mark Langhammer (Labour)

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