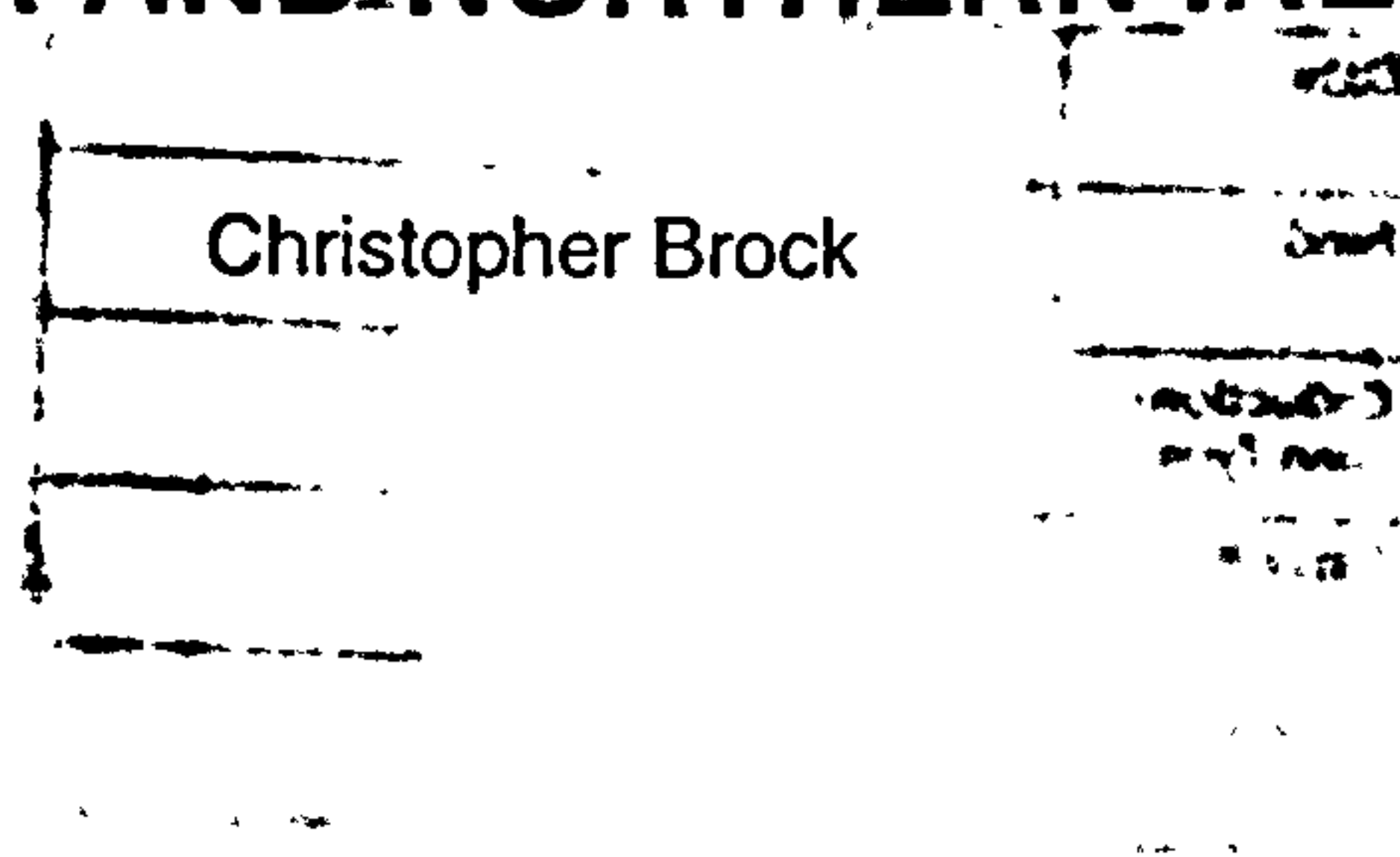


**LONDON METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY**

**POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND INTER-ETHNIC CONFLICT:  
AN ANALYSIS WITH REFERENCE TO  
CHECHNYA AND NORTHERN IRELAND**



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## **ABSTRACT**

With an emphasis on the conflicts of Northern Ireland and Chechnya, this thesis investigates the contributing factors prevalent in the emergence and continuation of inter-ethnic violence and division. A willingness for one ethnic group to engage in political violence against another requires the acceptance of ideological constructs that stress difference – political movements that position other ethnic groups as ‘the enemy’. This thesis attempts to analyse the emergence, establishment and dominance of such ideological constructs within each respective ethnic community and aims to assess their influence in contributing to environments of protracted inter-ethnic conflict and political violence.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>ANC</b>	<b>African National Congress</b>
<b>BNP</b>	<b>British National Party</b>
<b>CHR</b>	<b>Independent Chechen Republic</b>
<b>CIA</b>	<b>Central Intelligence Agency</b>
<b>DUP</b>	<b>Democratic Unionist Party</b>
<b>FSB</b>	<b>Federal Special Branch</b>
<b>IRA</b>	<b>Irish Republican Army</b>
<b>IREX</b>	<b>International Research + Exchanges Board</b>
<b>KKK</b>	<b>Ku Klux Klan</b>
<b>KPRF</b>	<b>Communist Party of the Russian Federation</b>
<b>MCC</b>	<b>Military Construction Complex</b>
<b>MDCI</b>	<b>Main Department of Construction Industry</b>
<b>MDSC</b>	<b>Main Department for Special Construction</b>
<b>MSI</b>	<b>Media Sustainability Index</b>
<b>NCCL</b>	<b>National Council for Civil Liberties</b>
<b>NGO</b>	<b>Non-Governmental Organisation</b>
<b>NPD</b>	<b>National Democratic Party of Germany</b>
<b>NUP</b>	<b>National Union of Protestants</b>
<b>PIRA</b>	<b>Provisional Irish Republican Army</b>
<b>RIRA</b>	<b>Real Irish Republican Army</b>
<b>RUC</b>	<b>Royal Ulster Constabulary</b>
<b>SDLP</b>	<b>Social Democratic and Labour Party</b>
<b>UDA</b>	<b>Ulster Defence Association</b>
<b>UN</b>	<b>United Nations</b>
<b>UUP</b>	<b>Ulster Unionist Party</b>
<b>UVF</b>	<b>Ulster Volunteer Force</b>

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

An investigation into the contributing factors prevalent in the emergence and continuation of inter-ethnic violence and division within Chechnya and Northern Ireland must begin with due consideration of their similar colonial pasts. The roots of both conflicts can be found in the colonial presence of Britain and Russia within the respective territories. The historical presence of Russia and Britain within Chechnya and Northern Ireland respectively, expresses the determination of two colonial powers in asserting their strategic and economic interests within neighbouring territories. Colonialist ideology entailed a belief that powerful nations had a right to rule weaker nations; a 'right' bestowed on them, partially as a consequence of possessing a perceived innate ethnic superiority. Colonialism sought a justification for conquest on ethnic grounds; cultivating the notion that powerful ethnic groups possess a mandate to govern perceived 'weaker' ethnicities – the 'superior' ethnic groups acting as a civilising force on their 'ethnically flawed' counterparts.

An essential feature of this process was the governance of such territories by an ethnic group deemed 'loyal' to the colonial power in question. In Northern Ireland, it was the introduction of Protestant settlers in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries from Scotland and England – involving the confiscation of Irish land – that provided an ethnic presence in the occupied territory that was 'loyal to the crown'. In Chechnya, a similar dynamic was established in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the confiscation of thousands of hectares of fertile Chechen land that was gifted to ethnic Russians, Cossacks and Ossetians to establish a similar 'loyal' presence in the region – a tactic used throughout Russia's 'near abroad' to cement political and economic power. The introduction of ethnic groups in such circumstances, with fervent loyalty to the colonial forces that empowered them, created a permanent ethnic stratification and deep-seated division within the respective territories.

This mutual ethnic animosity and distrust was bolstered in both cases by divergent religious affiliation. The loyalty of what can be described as the dominant ethnicities – the ethnic groups aligned to the colonial powers – was reinforced by the strength of their religious fervour, and by

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<sup>1</sup> Whilst ethnicity can be described as a socially constructed category, it has much relevance in how an individual defines himself and others. Within this analysis the term is used within the context of Ronald Cohen's (1978) definition of ethnicity as a 'set of descent-based cultural identifiers used to assign persons to groupings'. This definition should also serve to explain what is meant by 'ethnic group' and 'ethnic conflict'.

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an ardent distrust and hatred of the religious affiliation embraced by their weaker ethnic counterparts. Religious affiliation undoubtedly played a major role in creating the permanency of division that ensued. It is within these deeply stratified and ethnically polarised environments that each respective conflict developed. Ethnic, nationalist and religious affiliation often evokes powerful emotional attachments that supersede other political considerations and ideological reasoning. It is within environments that the protagonists display all such facets of identity-based politics, that conflict becomes so protracted and irreconcilable.

In such circumstances, the dominant ethnic group aligned to the colonial power will seek to maintain a disproportionate control of economic resources and political power, marginalising and repressing the indigenous ethnic group that questions the legitimacy of colonial rule. Such situations conform to what Christian Scherrer has termed an 'ethnocracy' – forms of authoritarian political control, inevitably involving socio-economic benefits, for the dominant ethnic group, or groups, at the expense of other ethnic groups. 'Ethnocratic' politics invariably results in political violence, as politically disenfranchised and socio-economically disadvantaged ethnic groups will seek to redress their plight through violent means, in the absence of meaningful political channels for reform.

The relevance of colonialism to the contemporary conflicts of Northern Ireland and Chechnya is not confined to a simple continuation of historical conflict based on ethnic allegiance. In both situations, the influence of colonialism has adversely effected the development of more enlightened ideas relating to other key facets of individual identity and ideological outlook; notably in relation to forms of religious adherence, that often retains a traditional, fundamentalist character reinforcing the existing, traditional political position. The colonial history of both Chechnya and Northern Ireland has done much to define how the ethnic groups in each respective conflict view themselves as an entity, and how they view their traditional foe. The influence of colonialism serves to reinforce existing prejudices, distrust and hatred, and can be seen as a central tenet in maintaining a sense of entitlement to a position of dominance amongst ethnic groups traditionally aligned to the colonial power in question; incorporating a widely-held, although far from universal, belief amongst members of dominant ethnic groups within each conflict that they possess an inherent ethnic superiority, that leads to a dismissal of notions of equality. By the same rationale, a colonial past heightens the contemporary belief amongst non-dominant ethnic groups that they are oppressed and disenfranchised.

As evidence within this analysis will hopefully clarify, ideas relating to a belief in ethnic superiority and a dismissal of the principle of equality are reinforced through particular interpretations of religious adherence. A religious justification for political violence, or continued oppression, is an enduring concept. Identity based on amalgamation of ethnic and religious



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loyalty is stubbornly resistant to new ideas and change. The conflicts of Chechnya and Northern Ireland are too complex to be defined purely within the confines of 'competing nationalist aspirations', or 'challenges to a state by an oppressed group seeking political change'. As Stefan Wolff has mentioned, 'there is no automatism that leads from the existence of different ethnic groups to violent conflict between them'<sup>2</sup>. It is how such 'identities' develop that determines whether conflict materialises, and whether such conflict becomes protracted.

It is necessary for the purpose of this study to explain how 'ethnic identity' might be defined. The origin of the word 'ethnicity' originates in Ancient Greece –'ethnos' meaning 'a community of common descent'. Whilst there is universal agreement of the origins of the word, there has been considerable debate as to how 'ethnicity' can be defined politically; what 'ethnicity' means in a contemporary political context. Wolff has condensed this debate into two main schools of thought. Wolff describes the first of these as the 'primordial school' that believes 'ethnicity is so ingrained in human history and experience that it cannot be denied it exists, objectively and subjectively, and that it should therefore be considered a fact of life in the relations between individuals and groups who all have an ethnic identity'<sup>3</sup>. This position is opposed by what Wolff describes as the 'instrumentalist school', that argue that 'ethnicity is by no means an indisputable historical fact' and that 'ethnicity is first and foremost a resource in the hands of leaders to mobilise and organise followers in the pursuit of other interests, such as physical security, economic gain or political power'. It could be argued that a leaders' ability to manipulate the powerful sentiment that ethnic allegiance generates for economic gain or political power, does not make that ethnic identity any less 'real' for those individuals that profess support for that leader.

There is always a division with any political or religious movement between adherents whose involvement is attributable to genuine sentiment and those who do so for personal gain. It is a significant and complex distinction that will be explored throughout the course of this analysis. Both schools of thought, in relation to the political meaning of ethnicity, seem insufficient on its own. Evidence would certainly suggest that for many, each respective conflict is not simply a struggle for land, resources or power. There are clearly a multitude of reasons why an individual may turn to political violence. Ethnic and Nationalist allegiance are two forms of identity that are capable of instilling a militant allegiance to a particular group within an individual, but other cultural, political, social, historical and economic influences may have a greater influence on another individual; motives for political violence are extremely divergent. For many Chechens, the conflict is primarily a religious war, perceived as a reaction to religious persecution and defence against non-Muslim invaders. For many UVF members in Northern Ireland, the

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<sup>2</sup> Wolff, Stefan: *Ethnic Conflict, A Global Perspective* (Oxford University Press, 2006).

<sup>3</sup> Wolff, p 33.

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protection of the Protestant faith was also the primary inspiration behind their violent actions. Many members of the INLA would have undoubtedly stressed that a militant form of socialism was a primary motive behind their use of violent means. For many Russians involved in the Chechen conflict, it is the profits from can be accrued from war that defines their involvement. Nevertheless, a proportion of protagonists from either side of both conflicts justified their involvement in political violence primarily on ethnic grounds; ethnic distrust, hatred, protection, advancement and revenge are all powerful sentiments that have resulted in extreme acts of violence, and all such motives will be explored within this study. Whilst issues relating to ethnic allegiance are pivotal to understanding each conflict, for a full understanding it is necessary to address the broader justifications for violence within each group (and sub-group) that stray beyond ethnic-orientated motivations.

There are a number of theories that have been developed by academics, particularly since the 1990's following the collapse of the Soviet Union, that distinguish ethnic conflict from earlier studies that centre more on Nationalist issues. Such work aimed for a more thorough explanation of the causes of ethnic conflict by attempting to examine such cases through fresh perspectives; Donald Horowitz's 'Ethnic Groups in Conflict' (2000)<sup>4</sup> is often cited as a notable example. Such work incorporates what Karl Cordell has termed 'social-psychologically informed approaches'<sup>5</sup> to understanding political violence within ethnic conflict, placing greater emphasis on the influence of social identity, whilst 'prioratising (in)security as the main explanatory variable'. Further advancement within the field of ethnic conflict studies since the 1990's involves analysis of the economic factors that influence ethnic conflict, of which Paul Collier's<sup>6</sup> work is often cited as of great importance. The exploration of economic factors relevant to ethnic conflict are closely related to the theory first advanced by Karl Deutsch that 'social mobilization' was a key consideration in understanding ethnic conflict, defined as 'an overall process of change, which happens to substantial parts of the population in countries which are moving from traditional to modern ways of life'<sup>7</sup>. Deutsch talked of the insecurities and uncertainties of modernisation producing a need for the 'communal shelter of tribalism' to advance their collective positions to attain maximum benefits. Academics have also attempted to advance understanding, again particularly since the 1990's, of theories relating to ethnic conflict settlement; the relevance, and importance, of international mediation and assistance in solving protracted, violent ethnic disputes. Such analysis involves exploring the possibilities of establishing an institutional framework, a viable international response to ethnic conflict through which 'incentives for co-

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<sup>4</sup> Horowitz, Donald: *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (University of California Press, 2000).

<sup>5</sup> Cordell, Karl: *Ethnic Conflict – Causes, Consequences* (Responses, Polity Press, 2009).

<sup>6</sup> Collier, Paul: *Greed and Grievance in Civil War* (Oxford Economic Papers, Vol 56, 2004).

<sup>7</sup> Deutsch, Karl: *Social Mobilization and Political Development* (American Political Science Review 55, 1953), p493.

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operation and the non-violent pursuit of conflicts of interest through compromise outweigh any benefits that might be expected through violent confrontation<sup>8</sup>.

This analysis, focussing on Chechnya and Northern Ireland, does not centre on one particular area of study relating to ethnic conflict, but attempts to utilise advancements and ideas from numerous schools of thought relating to ethnic conflict to attain a broader understanding of the two conflicts. Ethnic conflict is a worldwide phenomenon that is frequently capable of re-surfacing, often assisted by charismatic political leadership, after decades of peace. Its recurrent nature reflects the depth of sentiment and historical significance that the powerful bonds relating to ethnicity ignite in individuals and groups. In assessing ethnic conflict from a global perspective, it is useful to use as case studies two seemingly diverse examples to emphasise how universal theories relating to ethnic conflict can be applied, and a broader understanding attained, irrespective of geographical location or political circumstances. Historically, Northern Ireland and Chechnya have undoubtedly developed through what can be seen in many ways as very different geo-political, cultural, social and economic circumstances. This makes their many similarities, in regards to the causes and justifications for the ethnic conflict they have endured, all the more poignant. Through analysis relating to the similarities and shared characteristics of ethnic conflict within these two particular case studies, it is hoped that the strengths in drawing on multiple theories and advancements relating to the study of ethnic conflict developed in recent decades, in attaining an accurate and broader understanding of such issues, will be emphasised.

This analysis attempts to seek a re-evaluation of two particular inter-ethnic conflicts that have been almost universally depicted as achieving a permanent cessation of hostilities – albeit by very different means. A permanent cessation of hostilities between two opposing ethnic groups requires a period of introspection, involving an ideological shift away from identity-driven, conflict-orientated politics – the permanent rejection of political violence in favour of a just, mutually acceptable and peaceful form of ‘issue-driven’ governance. It could be claimed that such a process is, in reality, far from complete in Northern Ireland. In Chechnya, such a scenario has not even been considered. Often hailed as a model for conflict resolution, Northern Ireland is touted by many as incorporating the mechanisms and processes through which a successful secession of hostilities can occur. Russia, through an unwavering belief in the use of force to further ethnic-Russian interests, represents an ideological position that insists a permanent end to hostilities can be achieved through other means. Russia aims to convince both ethnic-Russians and the international community that a ‘post-conflict’ situation exists in the Caucasus as a consequence of Russia’s military strength. Furthermore, that the formally separatist Chechen population is now

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<sup>8</sup> Cordell, p18.

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firmly convinced that Russian sovereignty is legitimate and in their best interests<sup>9</sup> – this, as evidence will demonstrate, does not in any way reflect the political reality. It will be argued throughout the course of this analysis that what could be deemed a pre-requisite for permanent peace, a re-evaluation of the ideological justifications for political violence and repression that led to conflict, has yet to be achieved in either conflict situation. This analysis will hopefully demonstrate that the retention of, as yet insufficiently challenged, ‘conflict ideology’ – ideological convictions that stress ethnic division and distrust– can only result in further conflict. Alternative conclusions, stressing the possibility of permanent peace being achieved through other means – either through politics of repression and violence (Chechnya), or through politicians who previously advocated political violence, denouncing violent means whilst retaining politics based on ethnic identity and division (Northern Ireland) – delivers only short-term peace and fails to encompass the ideological re-evaluation and introspection, a permanent rejection of political violence requires.

When a political agreement is reached between two ethnic groups following a protracted phase of violent conflict – when violent means of achieving political change are temporarily rejected by political movements who previously endorsed political violence – it is tempting for political commentators to attach a sense of permanency to the transition to peace. It is equally tempting for politicians to declare a permanency to a peace agreement, as it is a chance for each politician involved to become personally attached to an ‘historical’ moment – a legacy being of central importance to any politician. In Northern Ireland, perhaps in this clamour for closure and within an environment of newfound optimism, the possibility of widespread political violence resurfacing seems remote. If the ideological convictions that led to inter-ethnic violence remain virtually unchallenged, it is arguably the chances for a long-term peace that could be viewed as negligible. The logic of a peace agreement and the tangible benefits that a prolonged period of peace may bring to society can be swiftly forgotten in a sudden outburst of anger and violence, as has so often been the case in the past. This analysis is largely concerned with irrational ideological convictions as a contributor to conflict and its continuation. However logical a peace agreement may be, this by no means guarantees continued popular support – irrational ideological convictions result in irrational actions. Hundreds of years of conflict being consigned to history by the signatures of political leaders will always represent an attractive proposition. Whilst politicians, press and public would certainly want to believe in such a potentially defining moment, such a scenario is rarely realistic. The historical circumstances and complex social, economic and political factors that convinced an ethnic group of the validity in utilising violent means cannot be removed by a signature – however significant the document containing the

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<sup>9</sup> The 2008 Chechen Election Results announced Putin’s United Russia had received 98% of the vote.

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signature professes to be – unless the original ideological justifications for conflict have been fundamentally challenged.

It is the ideological justifications for violence within both respective conflict situations that forms the primary focus for this analysis – how hatred and division between ethnic groups materialised, how patterns of violence and repression were justified by the state and the dominant ethnic group the state represents, and how counter-violence undertaken by ethnic groups who could be seen as the victims of state repression and violence developed – as assessment of such factors leads to a more realistic appraisal of contemporary political developments, through which the chances for lasting peace can be evaluated. A permanent rejection of political violence cannot be achieved without seeking an ideological reappraisal of the justifications for violence that initially precipitated the inter-ethnic hatred and division prevalent within each conflict situation – it could be argued this process has not been completed in Northern Ireland. Whilst unwise to suggest a permanent cessation of hostilities has taken place in Northern Ireland at this juncture, to think, in Chechnya, that a two hundred year struggle to obtain independence can be permanently crushed by twenty years of brutality and repression is deeply misguided. In the case of Russia and the Chechen Conflict, historical evidence consistently exposes the unfounded and destructive belief that inter-ethnic conflict resolution can be achieved through force. Another Chechen war is, as evidence will clarify, clearly inevitable.

The term 'political violence' broadly encompasses any action taken by state or non-state actors that seeks to achieve political aims through violent means. Conventional forms of violence (such as war), semi-conventional forms of violence (such as Guerrilla warfare) and unconventional forms of violence (such as terrorism and assassination) are all forms of political violence – crucially, political violence frequently expresses itself in the form of state repression. All such forms of political violence are observable within the conflicts that form the basis of this analysis, but it is political violence in the form of state repression that is invariably the first form of political violence to emerge. The terms 'conventional' and 'unconventional', used in this case to distinguish forms of political violence that may be perceived as illegitimate or legitimate in the public psyche, provide a major propaganda weapon for states seeking to achieve a desired policy direction through repressive means. For repressive states seeking to use political violence as a tool of control, it is imperative that public support for repressive means is engineered through misinformation and a skewed framework for debate ensuring, as Chomsky highlighted, that 'serious analysis... exists only on the remote margins of discussion'<sup>10</sup>. It is the states' ability to legitimise repression and violence and the process by which such policies can be justified

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<sup>10</sup> Chomsky, Noam: *Language and Politics* (AK Press, 2004), p702.

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within the dominant ethnic group the state represents, that provides one of the most significant obstacles to peaceful reconciliation. As counter-violence is invariably deployed by aggrieved ethnic groups as a response to state violence and repression, prospects for peace are further eroded by increased repression and violence by the state and by the international communities' apathy towards repression of an ethnic group within another states' borders (unless financial/geo-political motives exist for assisting a repressed ethnic group). International reaction to conflicts of this nature often tends to involve condemnation of any violent action by non-state agents, regardless of circumstance.

To use terrorism as an example, few academics stray far in terms of how to define it from the central theme of 'violence for political ends'. Opinion remains divided, however, as to which acts of violence and which perpetrators of violence can be deemed 'terrorist'. Since the vast majority of states have used 'violence for political ends', many commentators on terrorism use the 'terrorist' classification to distinguish so-called legitimate acts of violence from their illegitimate counterparts. Despite a previously almost universally accepted definition, its contemporary usage is almost totally confined to a term used to describe violence by non-state actors and is seldom used to describe violence conducted by a state. New definitions have recently been invented by both Russia and the United States that seek to permanently exclude state actors from being classifiable as 'terrorist'<sup>11</sup>. In deciphering which acts of violence could be deemed legitimate or illegitimate, the public's perception of terrorism, with its muted reaction to acts of violence instigated through conventional channels, ensures the state has considerable advantages over non-state actors in terms of how acts of violence may be debated and interpreted.

Terrorism, within this more limited definition, is often depicted and dismissed as nothing more than irrational acts of barbarity. It is essential – if conflict analysis is conducted to attain a genuine understanding of why violence has emerged and how it might be resolved within a morally justifiable framework – that conflicts such as Northern Ireland and Chechnya are considered within the context of the state-sanctioned violence, intimidation and coercion through which other forms of political violence, such as non-state terrorism, emerged. Whilst it seems increasingly uncommon for politicians or political commentators to express the need for politics to be guided by moral principles and whilst discussion of moral considerations in relation to conflict resolution is often construed as 'naïve', Chomsky's remark to those individuals who would dismiss the relevance of morality to decision-making, or dismiss the term on 'moral relativist' grounds, as being guilty of a 'form of idiocy',<sup>12</sup> expresses his belief that political analysis that fails to recognise morality's significance does not seek 'to change policies that are abhorrent, dangerous and destructive'. To identify foreign policy, or an aggressive domestic policy, that has

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<sup>11</sup> Discussed in chapter five.

<sup>12</sup> Chomsky, p342.

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dispensed with moral considerations and reflects a flawed ethical judgement requires only rational, reasoned assessment. It could be claimed that any political act undertaken where humanitarian principles have been discarded, or seen as peripheral, for the purpose of economic or geo-political gain could be defined as ethically flawed – illegitimate from a moral perspective.

Perhaps one of the clearest, most comprehensive, definition of terrorism is provided by Paul Wilkinson<sup>13</sup>. Wilkinson divides terrorism into three distinct sub-divisions. His first two divisions, Revolutionary Terrorism and Sub-Revolutionary Terrorism, encompass the type of activity that is acknowledged by states as terrorism and widely recognised as terrorism by the general public. Revolutionary Terrorism refers to 'systematic tactics of terrorist violence with the objective of bringing about revolution'. Sub-Revolutionary Terrorism encompasses action taken for 'political motives other than revolution or governmental repression' – aimed at more limited, targeted goals. The third definition, which less people would recognise as terrorism but is far more commonly utilised, Wilkinson categorises as Repressive Terrorism. Repressive Terrorism is the 'systematic use of terrorist acts... for the purpose of suppressing, putting down, quelling or restraining certain groups, individuals or forms of behaviour deemed to be undesirable by the oppressor'. An understanding of Revolutionary Terrorism is impossible without an appreciation of the third definition. It is Repressive Terrorism that provides the singularly most common motive for revolutionary terrorist activity. Political oppression, as Michael Stohl<sup>14</sup> has commented, 'defines the political arena within which repression and terrorism transpire'.

If it is accepted that most revolutionary terrorism is borne out of repressive terrorist activity, it is logical to conclude that revolutionary terrorist activity would be reduced or eliminated by the reduction or elimination of repressive terrorist activity. A state is rarely willing to make such a concession. As Weber argues, the modern state seeks to maintain a monopoly on the legitimate exercise of large-scale coercion within its territory<sup>15</sup> and no modern state will concede the legitimacy of large-scale coercion outside its control. Furthermore, the state will be unwilling to categorise any coercive methods it utilises as in any way illegitimate, as such an admission would bring into question its fundamental legitimacy and its right to govern. Hobbes viewed political violence as attributable to government weakness. A politically repressive environment is an expression of ideological weakness. A politically repressive state is frequently unwilling to reform itself through fear of losing power or because a change in policy would be detrimental to the interests it represents. Internal political violence conducted by a state frequently seeks to quell legitimate grievances that surface as a result of policy-direction reflecting the interests of a

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<sup>13</sup> Wilkinson, Paul: *Political Repression* (Macmillan, 1974).

<sup>14</sup> Stohl, Michael: *The State as Terrorist* (Aldwych, 1984).

<sup>15</sup> Weber, Max: *Sociology of Politics and Government*.

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section of society as opposed to the interests of society as a whole. A state, and the section of society it represents, will seek (false) justifications for its illegitimate actions, attempting to disguise the true nature of its actions behind a cloud of misinformation and propaganda. By limiting rational debate and political dissent, through a reinterpretation of history, events and information, internal and external support for illegitimate means of control against a dissenting section of society or ethnic group can be achieved.

A states' determination to dismiss terrorism as an 'unintelligible, irrational abhorration'<sup>16</sup> does not reflect its ideological or moral stance on political violence, but merely refers to political violence conducted by forces outside of its control. Few states have not utilised forms of terror – utilising violence, intimidation and coercion through the threat of violence – to achieve their desired objectives. Ideologically, such actions can be seen as an expression of Nietzsche's 'will to power' theory – terror being justified as the expediency of the strong. Whilst such a theory seems incompatible with the modern, liberal-democratic values many states that have utilised forms of terror claim to represent<sup>17</sup>, it is a contradiction that is lost, or discarded, in terms of public scrutiny within such states. It is a contradiction that many Russian observers often view with scorn and derision, its state and public being under no illusions as to the reasons and motives behind their political actions – the public being fully supportive of the use of force to further ethnic-Russian interests. As evidence throughout this analysis will hopefully clarify, Russian politics is not hindered by western-liberal moral sensitivities concerning concepts of democracy, justice and human rights – unlike western-liberal states, there is little contradiction between what Russia says and what it does. It is not that the Russian public doesn't utilise false ideological constructs to justify political violence – merely that western-liberal democracies, in their desire to be viewed and view themselves as morally irreprehensible, require more.

A key development within western liberal democracies concerning the internal or external use of state-sanctioned violence has been its ideological repackaging. In order for a state to ensure domestic compliance and support for political violence, a moral justification is required to compliment the material benefits an aggressive foreign policy – or in the case of inter-ethnic conflict an aggressive domestic policy – hopes to ensure. Western-liberal voters must feel vindicated in their support of political violence expressed at the ballot box – free, democratic elections making the public complicit in the policies pursued by their government. Neo-Liberalist mantras of 'freedom' and 'democracy' and the belief in the propagation of a 'just', universal value system within which less enlightened societies will find salvation, provides such a justification. It is revealing that political acts such as the Iraq War, that are in open defiance of International law

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<sup>16</sup> Berman, Paul: *Terror and Liberalism* (W.W. Norton, 2003)

<sup>17</sup> Britain in Northern Ireland, France in Algeria, or the United States throughout Central and South America serve as examples (very few states could be excluded).



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and have utilised 'terror'— the indiscriminate slaughter of civilians<sup>18</sup> and forms of torture<sup>19</sup> — does nothing to alter the voting intention of a public initially opposed to the war, prior to atrocities. The Labour Government in Britain was re-elected with a sizeable majority following such conduct. People's voting intentions centre primarily on domestic policy rather than foreign policy. Self-interest invariably supersedes moral considerations. There is a high degree of apathy if an individuals' private sphere remains unaffected. This acts as a major factor governing the public's acceptance of conventional forms of violence administered by the state, and public revulsion towards unconventional violence administered by non-state actors. There are other forms of government — such as the nationalist-authoritarian Russian administration — that can overtly undertake political violence classifiable as 'state terror' without any significant opposition. Policies of 'state terror' can retain the full support of the majority of the electorate without a state having to gamble on whether its policies may be construed by the Russian public as morally questionable. The unique historical, political, social and economic factors that make this possible in Russia will be explored throughout the course of this analysis.

The general publics' largely apathetic reaction to state terror and conventional forms of violence, provided they are individuals who are not targeted by state-sanctioned political repression and violence, can be attributable to other factors. Berger and Luckman's analysis of the social construction of reality<sup>20</sup> could provide further explanation. Berger and Luckman stress the significance of social order being a totally human product and social reality as a process. Compliance with social structures is always incomplete because people are continually making society; thus society produces social beings. Accordingly, the moral meanings ascribed to people or events are 'situationally dependant'. If society is to be viewed objectively, it is obvious that the process of change is characteristic of modern industrial societies. A state seeks to uphold the status quo — it aims to limit change as it represents the ideological standpoint and elite interests of those who initially empowered it. The public fail to view its institutions and society in this light because they cannot comprehend the institutions and moral code they ascribe to as abstract concepts. Through this process, the state benefits from what Wardlaw<sup>21</sup> describes as 'the inertia that characterises the normal relationship between authority and citizenry' — value neutrality is prevented.

The process described by Berger and Luckman has considerable influence in determining what types of violence may be deemed acceptable, and what forms of violence may be pursued

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<sup>18</sup> The use of cluster bombs, for instance.

<sup>19</sup> Abu Ghraib Prison.

<sup>20</sup> Berger Peter L/ Luckmann Thomas: *The Social Construction of Reality* (Penguin, 1971).

<sup>21</sup> Wardlaw, Grant: *Political Terrorism* (University of Cambridge, 1982).

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with impunity. The process partially determines what forms of political violence the public may view as legitimate and what may be categorised as illegitimate. It may also partially explain the manner by which conventional forms of violence administered by the state are accepted, whilst non-conventional forms of violence administered by non-state actors are often dismissed as being 'largely beyond understanding and beyond treatment'<sup>22</sup>. In wanting to perceive their own sphere as just and irreprehensible, the public attaches unqualified moral value to the state and institutions that govern them, irrespective of policy and actions. The public have identified themselves as being party to such institutions, those institutions as being reflective of their social being. State actions are perceived to be rational because people consider themselves to be rational. Political violence committed by non-state actors is consequently bracketed as inherently irrational and illogical – its destructiveness being beyond the moral boundaries an individual feels is reflected in the institutions (supposedly reflective of our own moral code) that govern them.

Frequently, when avenues of political discourse to address grievances have been closed by states unwilling to reform or compromise, a violent struggle emerges. The often limited military resources which govern the type of action at a non-state actors' disposal, expressed through unconventional forms of violence, further enhances an image of irrationality and amorality. Consequently, debate concerning violent responses to state-sanctioned repression and violence fails to consider what Hobbes described as the 'remote causes', as attention is centred on the act of violence as opposed to the broader considerations the act encompasses – such as the motives for the act. Whilst the violence itself may dominate the headlines, the reasons why such acts are undertaken fail to be significantly addressed. The necessary process of rational dialogue and compromise that seeks to resolve the conflict is often discarded by a state faced with non-state violence, in favour of higher levels of political violence and repression.

As a state claims legitimacy through its institutions and practices, its military claim legitimacy through its role as a servant of the state and its people. Conventional warfare is a largely accepted form of achieving political objectives and is frequently instigated prior to diplomatic channels being exhausted. Public support for political violence can be attained if they can be lead to believe that a genuine threat exists and violence can be tolerated even if the state is subsequently proven to have waged war or partaken in other forms of political violence on false pretences. An acceptance of aggressive, military-led policy direction is sufficiently embedded within society to leave the actions of the state largely unchallenged. Public attention is primarily focused on issues that constitute a direct threat to their livelihood and security, or the enhancement of their material wealth, and this will continue to be reflected in their voting intentions. State accountability, of which electoral accountability is an essential component, does not extend to foreign policy in any real sense whilst self-interest governs voting intention. Apathy, coupled with the inertia that characterises state-citizen interaction, ensures a states' actions will

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<sup>22</sup> Dror, Yehezkel, Professor of Political Science at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem.

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often avoid close scrutiny if the public remains directly unaffected. Non-state actors who resort to violent means do not conform to conventional acceptability, as they seek to challenge such conventions and potentially threaten an individual's private sphere.

When non-state actors instigate acts of violence against a state, the government, media and public rarely engage in rational discussion on why such a deed was perpetrated. Analysis is limited to the act itself, how the perpetrators will be caught and brought to justice, inevitably leading to debate concerning a toughening of laws for improved security with questionable connotations for civil liberties. War, unlike such an act, is a function of foreign policy. An insurgent act of violence will always be lacking a similar institutionalised outlet of so-called legitimate action. By virtue of being outside conventional institutions, non-state actors ensure that every violent act, regardless of motive and circumstance, is unlawful. Given the factors I have suggested contributing to the rational malaise prevalent in our current political climate, 'unlawful' becomes synonymous with 'unjust'. Violent action against a state will always be categorised as unlawful – whether it is justifiable depends on the state in question.

If individuals are already inclined to grant unqualified legitimacy to the state that governs them, it becomes clear how such individuals would be predisposed to ideological convictions that reinforce existing notions of state legitimacy and a continuation of the status quo, disregarding notions of rationality and factual reasoning that validate or disprove their convictions. It is a detailed study of the false ideological constructs a state, and the dominant ethnic group it represents, uses to justify political violence and repression that forms a primary focus for this analysis. Whilst Northern Ireland and Chechnya possess conflict characteristics – justifications for repression, violence and forms of counter-violence – that are unique to their respective regions, there are a number of shared characteristics that are prevalent in both conflicts and are replicated in other similar conflicts around the world. In order to generate the hatred and levels of stratification and division that would 'justify' political violence towards a politically weaker ethnic group by a dominant ethnic group, ideological constructs that stress difference and incompatibility must be deployed. The first such construct discussed within this analysis involves the influence of ethno-supremacist ideology – perhaps the most significant factor contributing to justifying inter-ethnic hatred and division amongst ethnic Russians within the Chechen conflict and of great relevance to stratification and division in Northern Ireland.

In both Chechnya and Northern Ireland, forms of state repression were instigated to establish and maintain political, social and economic advantages for the dominant ethnic groups each

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state sought to represent at the expense of politically marginalised, weaker ethnic groups. Whilst such advantages provide tangible benefits, a motive, for establishing a system of state repression, the justifications for conducting forms of political violence against another ethnicity are often more complex. Many individuals must feel a personal sense of vindication in regards to the acceptance of state repression and violence towards other ethnicities. Members of a dominant ethnic group must establish an ideological premise that can legitimise political violence and remove the moral responsibility to establish and support a system of governance that reflects principles of equality and human rights. Ethno-Supremacist ideology provides the justification for both the stratification of society based on ethnicity and political violence. Whilst violence towards a human being that an individual perceives as his/her equal is likely to evoke feelings of guilt, violence towards an individual perceived as a lower ethnic entity dehumanises such actions and lends, albeit in a barbarous sense, absolution for crimes committed against them. A belief in the ethnic inferiority of Chechens and Irish Catholics within both respective conflicts became a justification for political repression and discrimination. It should be noted that there is evidence to suggest that such feelings – in relation to ethnic hatred - were far from universally held within each respective community. Certainly, as the severity and extent of political violence undertaken supports, levels of ethnic hatred in Chechnya have always been higher than Northern Ireland has ever witnessed. Some evidence, such as Professor Rose's study undertaken in the late 1960's<sup>23</sup>, would contradict suggestions that high levels of ethnic hatred were prevalent within each respective community prior to the outbreak of widespread political violence. Evidence within this study, however, seems to support the notion that a stratification based on ethnicity, effecting political and socio-economic status, was significant in both conflicts prior to the outbreak of widespread political violence.

As evidence within this study will hopefully clarify, the justification of a repressive political framework designed to maintain political, social and economic 'privileges' for the dominant ethnic groups (Ulster Protestant and ethnic-Russian) was partially attributable to the notion of ethnic inferiority. Dominant ethnic groups required a validation for policy decisions that would, within a rational appraisal of legitimate governance incorporating concepts of human rights and justice, not otherwise be deemed acceptable. If a system of governance ensured lower standards of living, poor housing, unemployment and a lack of representation in government – as was the case for both the Chechens and Irish Catholics in Northern Ireland – ideological constructs designed to absolve guilt and legitimise policy decisions are necessary for the collective conscience of the oppressors. If a widely-held belief existed in Northern Ireland that Catholics were inherently lazy, had poor standards of hygiene and couldn't be bothered to vote, slum dwelling was no longer reflective of state policy, Protestant majorities in Catholic areas within government were explained and Protestants had jobs on account of a superior 'Protestant work

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<sup>23</sup> Rose, Richard: *Governing without Consensus* (Faber and Faber 1971)

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ethnic' lacking in their Catholic counterparts. If, as in Russia's case, Chechens were viewed as sinister, untrustworthy gangsters or criminals by the dominant ethnic-Russians, similar socio-economic and political justifications for discrimination could be applied. This justification, based on a notion of ethnic inferiority, was widespread within the dominant ethnic groups. Evidence of institutionalised ethno-supremacist ideology and its application within the dominant ethnic groups will be fully explored within this analysis.

Ethnic discrimination and racist convictions were not confined to ensuring political, social and economic advantage for dominant ethnic groups. For every individual who recognised ethno-supremacist ideology as a tool to retain power and the status quo, there are always numerous others who absorb such doctrine as a genuine conviction. This genuine ethnic hatred led to acts of violence within both conflicts, for which the motive was entirely detached from socio-economic considerations. It is hard to assess the 'genuineness' of such convictions – violence conducted for socio-economic gain as opposed to violence purely conducted as a primitive expression of a primitive ideology – amongst its practitioners. It is natural to assume that a political movement that utilises ethno-supremacist ideology will have more genuine ideological belief amongst its followers than its leadership, as they have less to gain from its ascendancy. Evidence may suggest that ethnic hatred is largely manufactured by a ruling elite, in order to achieve specific political objectives. The extent that ethnic hatred is engineered within societies to create and retain political ascendancy for a particular political movement, as well as an assessment of the 'genuineness' of ethno-supremacist belief amongst its followers, will be explored throughout the course of this analysis.

Assessing the authenticity of religious convictions used to justify state repression and violence towards people of other faiths is equally problematic. Where socio-economic and political incentives exist, it is hard not to believe there is a high degree of self-deception in both ethno-supremacist and theocratic dogma that supports repression and violence, that leads an individual to be convinced of the righteousness of their cause in such circumstances. Whether expressions of genuine belief or otherwise, ethno-supremacist and theocratic ideology provide the foundations for ethnic stratification, division and hatred within both conflicts.

The randomness of violent acts committed against an ethnic group deemed to be an 'enemy' in both conflicts – that seeks no qualification in terms of guilt beyond membership of a particular ethnicity – is symptomatic of societies that have accepted and validated the concept of 'collective guilt'. It is the widespread acceptance of a stratification of human worth according to ethnicity – ethno-supremacist ideology – that makes the acceptance of 'collective guilt' possible. The

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concept of 'collective guilt' achieving popular acceptance within a dominant ethnic group, in turn allows for the introduction of 'collective punishment' against weaker ethnicities who express political dissent and non-compliance towards an 'ethnocratic' system that is weighted against them. Within an 'ethnocratic'<sup>24</sup> state – a state that primarily serves the interests of one ethnic group at the expense of another – it is necessary for the state to impose a system of governance through repressive means, invariably involving violence, or the threat of violence, directed against a non-compliant ethnic minority (or in the case of Chechnya, a non-compliant majority) in order to protect the 'privileges'-socio-economic and political advantages – sought by the dominant ethnic group.

Collective punishment can be seen as a form of repressive state terrorism used to quell political dissent through fear. In Northern Ireland in the 1960's, prior to the formation of the Provisional IRA, the Irish Catholic community were repeatedly attacked by Protestant paramilitaries whose victims were chosen purely on the basis of ethnicity. The purpose of these attacks was primarily to discourage demands for civil rights through fear of violent reprisals – a form of repressive terrorism. The levels of violence directed against the Chechen population in the last two hundred years by ethnic Russians have been higher, in terms of the percentage of victims within the Chechen population, than that endured by virtually any other ethnic group in history. Very few ethnic groups could claim to have had a larger proportion of their people murdered in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In their determination to quell dissent and retain control of Chechnya, the Russians have twice experimented with genocide in the last sixty years. Stalin deported the entire Chechen population to work camps in remote areas of the Soviet Union, resulting in the death of an estimated 40% of the total population<sup>25</sup>. The genocide undertaken by the Russian security services that began in the 1990's has been well documented by independent sources, such as Human Rights Watch, Memorial and the UN, and its impact will be assessed throughout this analysis. Clearly, as the Russians would testify to, these are violent actions justified as collective punishment arising from the notion of 'collective guilt'. Detailed analysis of this phenomenon should reveal how such a notion took hold within state mechanisms and amongst the ethnic-Russian public. The concept of 'collective guilt' and its application in Northern Ireland will also be closely examined.

The perpetuation of false ideological constructs that express racial and theocratic justifications for political violence and the process by which such dogma became enshrined within state mechanisms and policy will be fully explored in this study. It is my intention to

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<sup>24</sup> Scherrer, Christian: *Structural Prevention of Ethnic Violence* (ECOR, 1999).

<sup>25</sup> Most independent sources estimate around 40%, some put the figure as high as two thirds of the total population murdered.

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demonstrate the primacy of such ideas in conflict's continuation, by the manner in which ethnic de-stratification and notions of equality are prevented from evolving within inter-ethnic societies, as a consequence of such irrational notions. In order for a state to maintain this environment of ethnic hatred and distrust, numerous forms of physical and psychological techniques of control must be deployed. George Lopez<sup>26</sup> provides a concise analysis of the numerous techniques that can be deployed by a repressive state – all of which, it could be claimed, have been utilised in both Chechnya and Northern Ireland. Methods of information control, law enforcement, economic coercion and 'life threatening' actions are some of the key forms of repressive control Lopez highlights. 'Information control' is a method that must be fully utilised for the perpetuation of false ideological constructs, such as racial inferiority. When evaluating how individuals have reached their ideological conclusions, the information they have received – and the information denied to them – is of critical importance. As Lopez has discussed, the control of information leads to a process of 'thought reform' – where an individuals' reaction to events and their acceptance of political doctrine has been engineered to correspond and adhere to a predestined ideological outlook. In the case of Northern Ireland, 'thought reform' was facilitated by a Protestant press that reported a purely 'loyalist' interpretation of news and events, seeking to strengthen sectarian divide and increase anti-Catholic vitriol<sup>27</sup>. The British public's knowledge of the Northern Ireland Conflict may have also been affected by a degree of information control – their knowledge of IRA bombings from the newspapers failing to be matched by knowledge relating to Protestant paramilitary atrocities or civil rights issues. Similar anti-Chechen sentiment dominates Russian reporting of the conflict and, crucially, in the years preceding conflict the newspapers increasingly expressed their hatred and distrust of Chechens. Absurdly inaccurate and fictitious reporting of events in Chechnya<sup>28</sup>, coupled with the media depiction of Chechens living in Moscow as 'bandits' and 'criminals', allowed an increasingly skewed depiction of the conflict, and of Chechens, to form in the minds of ordinary Russians. Both ethnic-Russians and, formally, Ulster Protestants have lacked independent, unbiased sources of information that may have led to a greater understanding of the grievances endured by their repressed counterparts. The extent to which information control influences the progression of both conflicts will be closely examined.

A pre-requisite for any viable multi-ethnic state is the establishment of a political system based on a fair distribution of power and representation in government between the various ethnic groups. Both in Chechnya and formally in Northern Ireland, undemocratic electoral systems were used to disenfranchise ethnic groups who were not aligned to the state. The

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<sup>26</sup> Lopez, George: *A Scheme for the Analysis of Government as Terrorist* (Aldwych, 1984) p71.

<sup>27</sup> The recent 'Proud to be Protestant' campaign by the Belfast Telegraph does not suggest that such a concept is wholly applicable to the past.

<sup>28</sup> A famous example being one of Yeltsin's speeches to the nation in 1994. He announced he had called a halt to bombing and the use of artillery on towns whilst TV crews filmed the opposite in the background. Cited in Robert Seely: *Russo-Chechen Conflict* (Cass, 2001), p229.

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Northern Ireland State deployed a practise of 'gerrymandering' to elect Protestant politicians in predominantly Catholic areas – a system that reflected their belief that the Ulster Protestant majority in Northern Ireland entailed a permanent mandate to rule; a 'Protestant parliament for a Protestant state'<sup>29</sup>. From the Northern Ireland State's conception, the government considered itself as representative of purely Protestant political, social and economic interests. Similarly, the Chechen state has always been ruled in accordance with ethnic-Russian interests. Russia has never granted Chechnya free, democratic elections<sup>30</sup> and has always existed, with the exception of brief interludes of independence prior to devastating Russian military campaigns and purges, under a totalitarian system of governance. An absence of democracy and representation in government has always been a major catalyst for violent struggle. The extent to which the aggrieved ethnic groups (Chechen and Irish Catholic) were disenfranchised and the effects of such policy requires close scrutiny – whether political reform could be achieved through peaceful means in either circumstances is highly debatable.

It is the states' reaction to legitimate demands for political reform that the legitimacy of counter-violence against the state must be judged. Few people would fail to sympathise with the actions of the ANC in South Africa during Apartheid; a movement that utilised political violence in the face of an uncompromising and wholly illegitimate ruling power. When it was suggested in the South African Parliament during the 1960's, that the South African government should tighten its levels of state repression in defence of Apartheid, it was Northern Ireland's model of enforcement – incorporating the Special Powers Act – that was suggested for consideration. Vorster, the South African Minister for Justice, commented that he 'would be willing to exchange all the legislation of that sort for one clause of the Northern Ireland Special Powers Act'<sup>31</sup>. This quote is extremely revealing about the repressive nature of the Northern Ireland State, particularly the manner by which compliance with an 'ethnocratic' regime was achieved through force. The severity of punishments for political dissent in Chechnya, as evidence will clarify, remains virtually unmatched in its ferocity. In many ways, it could be said that the Chechen people and the Irish Catholic community in Northern Ireland were faced with a similar choice to South Africa's black population – to fight or permanently concede their democratic rights. Detailed analysis will attempt to establish whether peaceful avenues to political reform had been exhausted within their respective political environments, prior to the emergence of non-state violence. The existence of a state as a legal entity does not legitimise the state or its policy –

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<sup>29</sup> Lord Craigavon, 1934

<sup>30</sup> Free, democratic elections were achieved during Chechnya's brief period of independence following the Chechen victory in the First Chechen War.

<sup>31</sup> Cited in An Phoblacht, 10 April, 1997. The clauses within the Special Powers Act are discussed in chapter three of this study.



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concepts of legality and justice are not inter-changeable. A states' legitimacy must be assessed according to its concept of justice.

Whilst political repression in Chechnya has been more severe, both conflicts display similar characteristics in terms of the forms of repression utilised and the manner in which political repression is justified by the states in question. Whilst factors do exist that could be described as unique to one particular inter-ethnic conflict, even these more 'localised' factors contain global parallels when understood within their wider context. By comparing two seemingly disparate inter-ethnic conflicts, the similarities in terms of the justifications for political violence amongst dominant ethnic groups and non-state counter-violence as a response to political repression and violence can be evaluated with more clarity. By assessing the comparisons between these two conflicts, the smokescreen of localised 'issues' is removed and the broader implications of political action can be gauged. The justification for many Ulster Protestants for the political repression of Catholics is expressed within the culture of Orangism. If South African ministers aimed to replicate this system of governance to maintain Apartheid, political repression justified within the culture of Orangism is removed from its localised ideological justification and seen more clearly for what it is – not truthfully an expression of religious preservation and protection, for instance, but a dominant ethnic group utilising state power to maintain illegitimate governance by coercive means. By comparing two inter-ethnic conflicts that may be perceived to be very different, a broader understanding of key elements relating to inter-ethnic conflict – forms of political repression and their implementation, the reaction of non state-aligned ethnic groups, political violence and counter-violence etc... – can be gleaned and expressed within a broader context. A factor often mentioned by academics and concerned NGO's, as a key contributor to ongoing conflict in Chechnya is the profit that can be extracted from forms of criminality within the Russian authorities and its military from the wars' continuation. The Russian authorities have created an industry of profiteering from the conflict; be it extortion, kidnapping, black market business deals within the oil and gas industry, military promotions and arms deals<sup>32</sup>. Criminality and profiteering from conflict within Northern Ireland – Protestant paramilitary control of the illicit drugs industry within their communities, for instance – suggests that criminality and profiteering may be a conflict contributor that is replicated in inter-ethnic conflicts globally. Inter-ethnic conflict comparisons reveal replicated patterns of behaviour that analysis of one conflict could not divulge.

In Northern Ireland, the culture of Orangism provided the ideological justifications behind the Northern Ireland State – it has often been referred to as 'The Orange State'. As my analysis hopes to demonstrate, the influence of Orangism was a major factor for the continued popular

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<sup>32</sup> These are all common practices that have been confirmed by numerous independent and Russian/Chechen military sources. *Chechnya: The Forgotten War*, Amnesty International Panel Discussion (2003), provides some revealing quotes from Russian officers in this regard. Such practices will be discussed later in this study.

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support relating to ethnic discrimination and political repression within Northern Ireland amongst the dominant ethnic group. Orangism is, of course, unique to the region and could be construed as a variable contributing to conflict with no global equivalent. Alternatively, it could be seen as an expression of ethno-supremacist ideology influenced by theocratic doctrine, similar to the prevailing dominant ideology within Russia and replicated in other inter-ethnic conflicts throughout the world. Orangism in Northern Ireland and Russia's brand of ethno-Nationalism are both ideological constructs that are initiated by a state that seeks to maintain a level of political repression that would, in the absence of such constructs, be considered morally unacceptable and illegitimate. Popular support for irrational dogma that is perceived to 'justify' repressive policy within a state is an essential feature of any repressive state, as political repression is the antithesis of rational political action.

Politically repressive policies can be described as irrational and fundamentally flawed, as any state that pursues such policies against its own people has instigated a policy direction that cannot be rationally validated. The protection of civil liberties, for instance – arguably the primary ideological principle of any civilised society – cannot be achieved by the removal of civil liberties. If a government aims to criminalise all forms of political dissent – the right of peaceful protest, free speech, freedom of movement, the ending of 'habeas corpus' etc... – it has rejected rational governance, as political opponents of such a regime have only political violence left as a tool to influence the state. Any state that demands a violent response from its aggrieved inhabitants instead of peaceful protest and open discussion is inherently irrational. States that utilise repressive means require the deployment of false ideological constructs (that incorporate irrational beliefs) to justify policies that would be deemed unacceptable under rational political debate and scrutiny.

Political leaders of 'ethnocratic' regimes require the use of political violence and repression in order to maintain power. Such leaders are aware that the ideological flaws on which their state was built would become exposed within a fully democratic society possessing peaceful channels for political reform. It could be claimed on this basis that for leaders of repressive regimes it is quite logical, a rational position, to maintain politically repressive policies, as the alternative is to relinquish their power. If a regimes' popular support is based on ethno-supremacist ideology or theocratic principles, to discard such notions, as adhering to the principles of equality and justice demands, would entail a transferral of power either to the forces of democracy or to a new leadership who is willing to maintain the 'ethnocracy'. This argument, claiming the primacy of personal ambition over peaceful ethnic co-existence as representative of rational action, is a further 'form of idiocy'. Egomaniacs willing to sacrifice lives for an ideological position that is

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demonstratively flawed to fulfil their desire for power should never be bracketed as rational human beings. Consequently, political opportunism – a major feature of both inter-ethnic conflicts – must be viewed as another expression of irrationality contributing to protracted conflict, if such actions result in needless political violence. The personal ambitions and political opportunism of political leaders within both conflicts will be evaluated in later chapters of this analysis.

State responses to terrorist activity have led to an upsurge in recent years of increasingly authoritarian policy-making. The modern state has used the threat of terrorism to expand its powers and pursue aggressive foreign policy. Increased levels of state repression can be found in far-reaching 'anti-terrorist' legislation throughout the world. In the case of the UK and the US, this has included detention without trial, the possible criminalisation of peaceful activity such as demonstrations and terrorist-related journalism, harsher conditions of detention (including denying access to lawyers), extradition without human rights guarantees (including extradition to countries with the death penalty), tougher asylum laws, increased powers for the security forces, broader powers of surveillance and powers to demand information, serious human rights violations and the instigation of illegal wars. In Russia, impunity has been granted to the brutal actions of the security forces in Chechnya. Like many other countries, Russia provides a clear example of what Valpy Fitzgerald<sup>33</sup> refers to as an 'undemocratic government exploiting the tide of international anti-terrorism in order to neutralise a popular opposition movement'.

The international community has been largely apathetic to the political repression and genocide suffered by the Chechen people and attributable to the Russian security forces. This, as evidence should clarify, is partially as a consequence of Russia successfully convincing many within the international community that the conflict is between the Russian State and a handful of Wahhabi terrorists. An 'anti-terrorist operation' as opposed to a conflict borne out of a desire to end centuries of human rights abuses and autocratic, neo-colonial Russian rule by achieving Chechen self-determination – as desired by the vast majority of Chechens. Russia has always advocated the use of force to achieve political objectives that advance the interests of ethnic Russians, consistently rejecting meaningful dialogue and repeatedly failing to honour peace agreements. Within such an environment, it is unsurprising that counter-violence is used in response to state violence in the absence of peaceful political channels for reform. Public ignorance and apathy of political events outside their personal sphere grants a state considerable freedom to express the conflict in a manner that is advantageous to them. Whilst it would be highly unlikely any world leader exists whose ignorance leads him to believe the Russian 'anti-terrorist operations' explanation of events, they will recognise the advantages of backing the Russian position, regardless. Within a climate of global fear relating to terrorism and given the limitations of public understanding on such issues, widespread public acceptance of 'anti-terror

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<sup>33</sup> Fitzgerald, Valpy: *Globalisation, Violent Conflict and Self-Determination* (Palgrave, 2006), p13.

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campaigns' and related legislation is not hard to achieve – there would be virtually no public backlash or condemnation by supporting Russian policy. This fulfils a states' desire for non-involvement in conflicts that serve no financial purpose, whilst enabling the state in question to profit from the 'global terror' threat by strengthening their own 'anti-terror' agendas. Global apathy towards the plight of the Chechen people provides further evidence that it is not the death of innocents that triggers widespread anger and revulsion amongst the citizens of the western world; it is only the death of civilians by unconventional forms of violence, administered by non-state actors, which commands widespread condemnation and hysteria. International inaction and a lack of external pressure in forcing Russia to seek a just resolution to the conflict in Chechnya conforms in many ways to Rajesh Venugopal's description of an 'orphaned conflict'<sup>34</sup>, an argument that claims 'conflicts break out and persist when there is a lack of appropriate international political or military involvement due to indifference or ignorance'. International non-involvement or tacit support for both repressive regimes as a contributor to conflict will be evaluated in later chapters.

There is no doubt that public acceptance of what could be construed as irrational policy decisions that justify political repression, is facilitated by perpetuating public fear. Globally, 'Anti-Terror' laws have been introduced, with many more planned, that limit the right to peaceful protest, free speech and freedom of movement. This shift towards a more authoritarian style of governance threatens to partially, in some countries totally, criminalise all forms of political dissent. In order to achieve public acceptance of increasingly authoritarian governance that compromises judicial process and civil liberties, it is necessary to hype the 'terrorist threat' out of all proportion to its capabilities and intentions. The publics' perception of the dangers of terrorism has been artificially heightened by the process described by Lopez as 'thought reform' achieved through 'information control'. Actual terrorist attacks in recent years have been considerably outnumbered by appropriately named 'scares'. In the UK alone, plots to unleash deadly poisons, a plot to blow up Manchester United's football stadium, tanks at Heathrow Airport in response to an imminent airborne attack, all proved completely unfounded. A steady stream of such 'scares' ensures the publics' perception of the threat of terrorism is much higher than it would otherwise be. In this manner, public fear is of critical importance for public acceptance of state policy. The state relies heavily on the public's fear of violence to introduce a more authoritarian direction. Fear replaces rational debate and public scrutiny of state policy, serving as a useful facilitator to the 'prevalence of political illusion' discussed earlier. The propagation and perpetuation of fear amongst the dominant ethnic groups of Chechnya and Northern Ireland was equally instrumental in allowing repressive policies to be pursued unhindered. Its impact will be evaluated within this

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<sup>34</sup> Venugopal, Rajesh: 'Self-Determination in the Global Context', a chapter from FitzGerald, Valpy/ Stewart, Frances/ Venugopal, Rajesh (eds.): *Globalisation, Violent Conflict and Self-Determination* (Palgrave, 2006), p97.

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analysis. There is often a significant difference between how political events are perceived by the public and the political reality, a gap in understanding that is in many ways created and exploited by a ruling elite.

This gap in public understanding is particularly pronounced in relation to terrorist acts. What constitutes a terrorist act and who can be labelled 'terrorist' provides a clear example of state exploitation of terminology in creating a slanted public understanding that is beneficial to their policy direction. Raymond Aron has noted that an act of violence is labelled 'terrorist' when 'its psychological effects are out of proportion to its purely physical result'<sup>95</sup>. Whilst terrorist acts often conform to this definition, such a notion excludes the vast majority of terrorism's practitioners. This common misconception, that a terrorist act must have a disproportionate visual capacity to shock, prevents a wider recognition of the use of terror and an understanding of how frequently it is deployed by state elements. By associating terrorism solely with acts that have greater visual impact, forms of terror committed by non-state actors whose limited resources ensure more unorthodox and consequently more shocking acts, terrorism committed by the state is rarely categorised as such. By suggesting that an act must be an unorthodox, non-state form of violence with the visual impact '9-11' or 'Beslan' to be classifiable as terrorist, terrorist atrocities committed by the state are excluded from the definition and avoid condemnation. The death of civilians can, for example, be excused as 'collateral damage' within a 'military engagement'. As the media fails to correctly classify acts of terror committed by a state, whose levels of destruction may exceed the physical results of the aforementioned acts but successfully bypasses this new definition of terror through its limited psychological impact, the state avoids public criticism and scrutiny of its behaviour.

These factors, serving to reinvent what constitutes terrorism in the public psyche, reinforces the supposed moral polarisation between established regimes and those seeking to overthrow or reform them. An act of violence cannot be defined, in terms of its legitimacy, by its psychological impact. Yet it is the psychological impact, aided by the manner in which such conflicts are presented by a government within the media, that inflates violent action by non-state actors above state-sanctioned terror, in terms of public scrutiny. In truth, it is often more a reflection of a limited military capability that results in unorthodox forms of violence by non-state actors – more a polarisation of resources than morality. The methods of violence deployed by a state or non-state actors are defined by their financial, and consequent military, capabilities, as well as their objectives. If a political group, or state, has the capacity to field a conventional military force capable of achieving their political objective, they will use it. If, as in Vietnam, an insurgent force

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<sup>95</sup> Aron, Raymond (1966)

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may lose by utilising conventional military tactics, it may deploy a guerrilla war. If, as in the case of the IRA in Northern Ireland, an insurgent force has a limited capacity for a guerrilla war, they may deploy increasingly unconventional forms of violence to achieve political objectives. As the Chechens capacity for fighting a large-scale guerrilla war decreased, their willingness to consider increasingly unconventional violent tactics increased.

Public understanding towards unconventional forms of violence is limited within societies that have experienced high levels of personal security, relative peace and limited change. Unorthodox forms of violence become, in the public's mind, a greater evil than any resulting deaths attributable to orthodox, military-led state-sanctioned violence; its 'extraordinary' nature is a challenge to what could ever be accepted as legitimate within their own socio-political experience. International understanding of particular conflicts is often restricted by a failure to understand how unconventional political actions can arise as a consequence of an entirely different socio-political environment. For a community that has suffered state-sanctioned violence and repression for generations, unorthodox methods of counter-violence may seem to be the only alternative to permanently conceding basic human rights. It is unsurprising that so many individuals dismiss all non-state violence as 'inexplicable' and 'immoral' if they have failed to consider the socio-political circumstances that prompted the act. The primacy of self-interest in western societies is also a factor related to a lack of understanding of non-state violence, as egocentric behaviour reduces empathy for others. Low levels of empathy for ethnic groups experiencing violent repression, coupled with insufficient historical and political understanding of the conflict in question, will always result in public condemnation of non-state violence. Value neutrality is further sacrificed whilst a state's actions remain unaccountable by virtue of their conventional form. The ability for a state to conduct violent repression against an ethnic group is greatly assisted by public ignorance and apathy, both internally and externally.

Much of what has been discussed relates to public perceptions of political violence and how this influences the actions of a state. Public perception of political violence conducted by a state is greatly influenced by prevailing ideological beliefs and the numerous psychological and physical means of control a state has at its disposal. A key element of this analysis involves investigation into how inter-ethnic conflicts triggered by repressive terrorism – leading to political dissent and counter-violence by an aggrieved ethnic group – can be ideologically repackaged to ensure blame for resulting conflict can lie, within the minds of the oppressors, solely within the aggrieved ethnic group. Examining how a repressive state avoids public condemnation and achieves active support for the use of political violence in pursuit of illegitimate power structures

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through 'the prevalence of political illusion' is essentially a study of how inter-ethnic conflict can develop and escalate under the influence of irrational and inherently violent ideology.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE INFLUENCE OF ETHNO-SUPREMACIST IDEOLOGY WITHIN CHECHNYA AND NORTHERN IRELAND

Historical ethnic persecution, discrimination and hatred have played a pivotal role in defining the modern day conflicts within Chechnya and Northern Ireland. Both conflicts have been born out of politics of division and segregation, their respective state powers having sought justification for repression through projecting a continued belief in the racial superiority of the dominant ethnic groups, within their respective communities. It is essential to consider the historical persecution and institutionalised ethnic distinctions, through which both Russia and the UK sought advantage for one community through the suppression of another, in order to attain an understanding of why discriminatory state structures evolved, and in Russia's case remain, in a contemporary context. Ethno-supremacist ideology played a primary role in achieving public acceptance, within the dominant communities, of repressive and discriminatory state policies towards the aggrieved ethnic communities within both conflicts. Ethnic hatred and distrust provided a major barrier to reform and power-sharing compromise that would have prevented political violence. Popular support for achieving ethno-supremacist objectives through conflict was established. The states in question exploited and perpetuated existing ethnic prejudices in order to achieve their socio-economic and political ambitions.

A pre-requisite for establishing discriminatory policy based on an unjust and morally indefensible ideology is to limit rational debate. By using false constructs such as racism to justify institutionalised ethnic distinctions, this can be achieved. The unassailable orthodoxies of religion can also be used to circumvent possibilities of inter-ethnic, non-sectarian political co-operation, which rational debate may realise. Issues of religion and ethnicity within politics stress difference; politics that Gafiken<sup>36</sup> has described as 'poverty focussed' – political parties being representative of economic issues affecting the whole of society on a non-sectarian basis – becomes marginalised by the public's emotional responses to ethnic and religious adherence. Institutionalised ethnic distinctions and the perpetuation of fear and segregation through racism and religion are evident within both Chechen and Irish conflicts. The illusion of an immanent threat was created, and manifested itself in a fear that is partially attributable to racist notions of supremacy reflected in the state's political institutions, and partially as a consequence of racist

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<sup>36</sup> Gafiken, Frank (Irish News Archive).



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assumptions regarding the perceived immorality of their suppressed counterparts. Racist ideology played a key role in achieving public acceptance, and militant support within the respective dominant groups, of repressive state policies.

The entrenched separation of communities in Chechnya and Northern Ireland, and the subsequent exclusion of particular ethnic groups from any meaningful role within their respective governments, was assisted by the utilisation of racist ideology. By playing on existing fears and distrust, the most powerful elements within the dominant ethnic groups established states based on principles of segregation and political exclusion. Perceptions of ethno-supremacy provided a barrier to political co-operation between ethnic groups and contributed to the continuation of sectarian politics. Establishing and maintaining high levels of distrust and fear between the respective ethnic groups was, and remains, essential to ruling political elites whose popularity and power rests on politics of division. Crucially, the existence of 'Loyalists' in the north of Ireland and ethnic Russians within Chechnya is reflective of the Imperialist ambitions of Russia and the UK. Their existence as state entities borne out of Imperialism, itself a philosophy based on beliefs of racial supremacy and enforced through the oppression of indigenous inhabitants, defined their political development and provided a highly dubious justification for institutionalised ethnic distinctions and inequality within the mechanisms of state.

Northern Ireland and Chechnya demonstrate the extent to which state repression can act as the primary catalyst for political violence and revolutionary terrorist activity. Repressive Terrorist activity seeks to 'suppress, put down...or restrain certain groups...deemed undesirable by an oppressor'<sup>37</sup>. In Chechnya this involves the suppression of Chechens for the advancement of ethnic Russians and Russian economic interests. In Northern Ireland, this involved the suppression of the Catholic community for the advancement of Ulster Protestants. A state possesses, of course, multiple mechanisms of power and has the ability to influence every facet of society – socio-economic, political and judicial measures can be taken which can either limit or enhance opportunities for a section of the populace, according to the states' desires.

A state's ability to undertake a politically repressive policy direction derives from its level of control and its coercive abilities. The state has instantly recognisable coercive abilities in the form of its army, police force and its legal apparatus, all of which will be analysed at length to discover the legitimacy of its methods and structure. A state's coercive abilities are by no means limited to its formal institutions. There are numerous, less transparent, coercive mechanisms detectable in both Chechnya and Northern Ireland that the state deploys to achieve its aims and retain power. The deployment of paramilitary forces serves as a useful example. Whilst functioning as a

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<sup>37</sup> Wilkinson: cited in *Political Repression* (Macmillan, 1974).

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physical coercive entity it also acts as a psychologically coercive element – a less transparent, but equally effective form of control. The effectiveness of psychologically coercive elements in both Chechnya and Northern Ireland, expressed as support for state policy within the dominant groups, relied heavily on the dominant communities belief that the oppressed groups sought to harm them – these were fears that were exploited from existing racism and supremacist ideology, perpetuated by the state. Paramilitaries can employ both psychological and physical forms of coercion to enforce the ideological position of the state.

Paramilitaries can be defined as 'of, relating to, or being a group of civilians organised in a military fashion, especially to operate in place or assist regular army troops'<sup>38</sup>. Paramilitaries were present in both Chechnya and Northern Ireland prior to their most recent resumption of hostilities. Paramilitaries are a militant expression of ideological support from a section of the civilian population, willing to defend, or oppose, the state through violence. Within ethnic groups aligned to the state, it is reflective of a radically politicised element who are effectively organised to enforce or uphold the status quo, at any cost. Its civilian nature, being a military presence within the community and independent from the regular armed forces, suggests the public is empowered to take any steps necessary to answer a specific and immanent threat to the state and its people; an existing threat which is real and immediate, accounting for the group's formation. It could be said that its existence promotes further violent action independent of the state, a precedent that encourages the formation of other paramilitary forces to 'defend' the dominant group. Its very presence, regardless of its level of activity and the frequency of its deployment, is reflective of a society at war or preparing for conflict. Its presence confirms the public's fear of possible conflict and heightens those fears. The existence of a paramilitary force succeeds in transforming the public's perception of the supposed threat into a tangible reality. The fear expresses itself as distrust, resulting in an increasingly stratified and violent society. The Unionist mantra of 'no surrender' in Northern Ireland is reflective of the concept of perpetual conflict.

Even a prolonged period of relative peace would not dislodge the perceived permanency of the threat if, for instance, your neighbour in Northern Ireland was a B-Special<sup>39</sup>. Paramilitaries act as one of many elements of coercion that can be deployed by a state, or in the interests of a state, that serve to increase the public's fear of an imminent threat; this, in turn, allows the state

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<sup>38</sup> Oxford Dictionary definition

<sup>39</sup> The BBC reported on the disbanding of the B-Specials on October 10th, 1969. It cited that the main reason for its disbandment was that it was 'auxiliary force viewed by many as a Protestant army'. It was used, sometimes brutally, to suppress the numerous Catholic civil rights marches of the 1950's and 1960's. The article was obtained from the BBC online archive.

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to pursue politically repressive policies to 'counter' that threat, having increased and radicalised public support for such policy within the dominant group. Other forms of psychological coercion involve the manipulation of news and media sources, the glorification of past historical conflicts against the other ethnic group to reinforce its enemy status, or misinformation regarding the collective character and values of the ethnic 'enemy', all serve to add a sense of permanency to the division that exists. The political stranglehold of Loyalism in Northern Ireland within the Ulster Protestant community relies on the continuation of sectarian politics – politics of division and perpetual conflict. The stronger the Protestant communities' conviction that conflict was immanent and unavoidable, the more radical Loyalism became. In this sense, paramilitaries can act as both a force created to assist the state in a physically coercive fashion, and as a means to influence and increase ideological support for repressive state measures against a section of the population. The need to 'defend' the Protestant state and culture from an 'enemy within' that was, and would always be, intent on its destruction and a determined approach to retaining the status quo from which any form of compromise would be deemed 'traitorous'<sup>40</sup> were principles enshrined within 'Orangism'. Orangism ensured the permanency of division that Unionism required.

The Cameron Report, produced by a commission appointed by the Northern Ireland Government on the insistence of the UK, provides an insight into the political, economic and social causes leading to the outbreak of violence within Northern Ireland. Of the seven key issues highlighted, one directly relates to the significance of a paramilitary presence in the community:

V) Resentment (amongst Catholics) as to the existence of the B-Specials. A partisan and paramilitary force recruited exclusively from Protestants.

It could be suggested that whilst resentment of physical coercion and a violent response to peaceful demonstration did much to radicalise the Catholic community, the effects of a Paramilitary force within the Protestant community was equally significant. The B-Specials could be seen as a form of psychological coercion by the state to radicalise the Protestant community, by confirming the Protestants' worst fears of imminent conflict and retribution. The Cameron Report, in part seven of its conclusion, seems to confirm such fears, but neglects to associate their fears of losing power with more extreme sentiment – a threat to their existence.

VIII) Fear and apprehensions amongst Protestants of a threat to Unionist domination and control of government by increase of Catholic population and powers.

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<sup>40</sup> 'Traitor' was an accusation levelled at any Unionist who was in favour of even limited reform. O'Neill, a 'moderniser' and leader of the Unionists in the 1960's was called a traitor for visiting a Catholic school and talking to a priest. The Unionist split of the 1960's will be discussed later in this analysis.

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Orangism was not a culture that addressed Protestant supremacy from a purely economic basis. Orangism associated the continuation of Protestant supremacy as necessary for their survival as an ethnic entity. The magnitude of their fears, however misconceived, that such a belief realises, partially accounts for the radicalism within the community in terms of the violence it was willing to accept towards the Catholic community instigated by the state, and the violence a section of the Protestant community were willing to actively participate in.

The level of control a state maintains is partially attributable to how a policy is received amongst its people. As mentioned in reference to paramilitaries, this reaction can be engineered to an extent, especially in an environment of limited rational political debate. Regardless of the physical levels of coercion at a states' disposal, the state must be reflective of ideological principles that a section of the public are sympathetic to. Without popular support from any section of the electorate, a state would have a limited capacity to survive, being reliant solely on force. Assisted by this heightened sense of fear and distrust, the Ulster Protestant community in Northern Ireland fully supported the establishment of a state that suppressed the Irish Catholic community for its own advancement, but the suppression was deemed essential for their protection and security. The majority of ethnic Russians have been equally supportive of the suppression of the Chechen people, both within Chechnya and within the Russian Federation as a whole. Their complicity and support of state repression was repeatedly expressed at the ballot box<sup>41</sup>. Ethnic Russians perceive economic advancement as sufficient reason in itself for repressive means, but whilst the threat to ethnic Russians outside of Chechnya from Chechens was minimal, the need for protection and security for ethnic Russians in Chechnya was very real. Socio-economic and political discrimination cannot be practised without the political radicalisation of its victims.

Due to moral sensitivities and matters of conscience, economic advantage would have been singularly insufficient to provide a basis for justification of discriminatory policy for many Ulster Protestants. Working on the assumption that any form of discriminatory policy is fundamentally flawed and unjust, any ideological justification for discrimination can be discredited and dismissed as false. Discriminatory policy consequently requires, for those who wish to feel morally vindicated, a false ideological construct in order to satisfy the moral implications of its introduction. Orangism provided such a justification. Orangism created the illusion that power sharing would not simply mean an end to 'protestant privilege' but would actually be tantamount to the annihilation of their race and culture within the province. Orangism involved the belief that

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<sup>41</sup> Yeltsin was elected on the basis of a promised hard-line stance towards the Chechen people. There were demonstrations throughout the Russian Federation prior to the election calling for the expulsion of Chechens living in Russia.

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the movement was fighting to prevent the cultural extinction of Protestantism in Ulster that a united Ireland, 'ruled by Rome', would precipitate. Such fears of Protestant annihilation in Ulster might have been comprehensible in a 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century context; the rational basis for such fears within a modern day context is hard to envisage. Yet the protection of the Protestant faith (from the Catholic Church) remains the principle reason for the Orange Order's continued existence.

Orangism claims to exist 'to ensure that civil and religious liberty is maintained in Ulster' and that 'Christian faith, reformed and Protestant, will be preached and taught here'<sup>42</sup>. What seems most apparent from such statements is the massive disparity between the redundant, historical fears the organisation expresses, and the modern reality; there is no threat to Protestantism within Ulster. As David Pion-Berlin stated in his study of counter-insurgency in Argentina, 'growing disparities between old doctrines and modern realities makes it more likely that misperception will occur'<sup>43</sup>. The fact that the culture and principles of Orangism became increasingly incomprehensible to those outside of the community did nothing to diminish its fervour. Such widespread international criticism throughout the 1960's, with an increasingly active civil rights movement within Catholic areas, only served to radicalise the Loyalist movement as the community, whose perceptions were firmly embedded within Orange doctrine, associated all reformist forces as a threat to their existence. The perceived threat, through Orangism, had become firmly entrenched and immovable. It was impossible, after forty-five years of Orangism, for the Protestant community to understand the legitimate grievances of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960's, or acknowledge that the perceived threat, cultural annihilation, did not exist – its perceptions had become embedded within doctrine. For Protestants to question such fundamental principles would be to challenge their own collective morality and accept, as Sarah Nelson expresses, that their 'definitions of themselves'<sup>44</sup> were based on a false ideological construct.

Within the Protestant community, calls for a 'Reformist' approach that sought a more moderate, conciliatory line towards the Catholic community radicalised the Loyalist community still further<sup>45</sup>. A 'reformist' conciliatory line by Yeltsin towards the Chechens prior to the outbreak of the First Chechen War would undoubtedly have cost him the Russian election, as the election coincided with a surge in Russian Nationalism. Politics based on reform and greater levels of

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<sup>42</sup> The Orange Order's Official Mission Statement, explaining why the organisation exists, 2005.

<sup>43</sup> Pion-Berlin, p140.

<sup>44</sup> Nelson, Sarah: *Ulster's Uncertain Defenders* (Syracus University Press, 1987), p79.

<sup>45</sup> O'Neill in the 1960's led a moderate Reformist movement within Unionism that led to his defeat – a reformist stance, however moderate, being rejected by the majority of Protestants within Northern Ireland.

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assimilation and compromise cannot effectively co-exist with 'identity' politics – politics based primarily on ethnic identity and the advancement of a particular ethnic group. Any attempt to reform within societies in which 'identity based' politics is of primary significance, questions immovable, and consequently irrational, convictions. I have used the term 'irrational' on the basis that anyone with peaceful intentions could be considered rational, whilst anyone who would willingly draw themselves into avoidable conflict and violence is not. Furthermore, anyone who dogmatically holds on to ideological convictions despite evidence that would invalidate their stance could also be deemed irrational. Many people seemingly disagree with such a definition. It could be said, for instance, that to cling to irrational ideas that secure economic advancement has a form of logic. If this economic advancement results in the unnecessary suffering and repression of others, it is a form of tyranny and incompatible with enlightened political values – if not irrationality, therefore, certainly an example of short-termist idiocy, as it guarantees violent reprisals. Whenever Ethno-Supremacist ideology is utilised, its adherents consistently seek out a conflict-orientated position, utilising 'evidence' that would be quickly disproved under rational debate. If such a position remains largely unchallenged politically, there will be an increasing propensity towards aggression and violence in the absence of rational dialogue.

It was possible for the Orange State to make the Ulster Protestant Community compliant and supportive of concepts such as Protestant supremacy and repressive measures to ensure its continuation. It was not possible for the state to moderate and control the levels of distrust and fear felt towards the Catholic community, once such beliefs were so firmly entrenched within their perception of reality. Having established a state on such principles, it is unsurprising that elements of the Protestant community engaged in violent or repressive actions that were independent of the state, such as attacking civil rights marches or taking part in the random murder of Catholics that began, in its modern incarnation, in 1966. It is equally unsurprising that such elements, whether independent or operating as a part of state apparatus, were 'immune from effective prosecution'<sup>46</sup>. The state's defining principles encouraged the formation of non-state factions, or elements within the state, prepared to 'defend' the Protestant community through violence and repression. To prosecute such actions or to ban organisations, such as Vanguard, who preached hatred but effectively reflected the founding principles of the state, would either lead to the eventual abandonment of the Unionist state for an ultra-Unionist alternative, or lead to an acknowledgement of the state's founding principles being fundamentally flawed within the dominant community. Both possibilities would lead to a discontinuation of the ruling elites' control.

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<sup>46</sup> Murray, Raymond: *State Violence in Northern Ireland 1969–1987*, (Mercier Press, 1998).

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The conflicts within Northern Ireland and Chechnya must be considered within their 'Imperialist' context. The British presence in Northern Ireland can be attributable to actions of a colonial power, asserting its strategic and economic interests within its sphere of influence, through the introduction of Protestant settlers who were, and are, 'loyal to the crown'. The ascendancy of the Protestants in Ulster was achieved through the confiscation of Irish land; a source of bitter conflict which persists today. Protestants sought to protect their privileged position attained in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries through their continued allegiance to the UK. Like many Imperial conquests, public acceptance of Imperialist policy in both dominant communities, ethnic Russians and the Protestant community within Northern Ireland, was achieved through fostering a belief in the racial inferiority of the sub-ordinate ethnic communities.

The ethnic Russians in Chechnya, and within the Russian Federation, have a similar misconception of their ethnic superiority, creating a barrier to cross-community cooperation and reform. To compromise to a supposedly inferior ethnic group would be deemed illogical and, by 'Imperialist' thinking, fail to account for the right of more powerful nations to rule their weaker counterparts. Yeltsin's decision to go to war in 1994 was, according to Robert Seely<sup>47</sup>, partially attributable to 'an historic mistrust of and contempt for the Chechens on the part of the Russian State'. Presidential directive No.940, issued by Yeltsin in September 1995, makes a clear indication of Russia's continued Imperialist doctrine through his determination to 'create a Russian sphere of influence in the former USSR'. As I have mentioned in regards to Yeltsin's election and epitomised by the Anti-Chechen demonstrations demanding a repatriation of Chechens across the Russian Federation<sup>48</sup>, these are feelings deeply embedded in Russian culture. The 'contempt' felt by Russians towards Chechens is an expression of their supposed ethnic superiority, originating from their Imperialist, and later Soviet, past. Their 'mistrust' suggests that Russians believe the Chechens, as a race, possess innately sinister characteristics and a natural propensity towards treachery. Ethno-supremacist and racist ideology consequently play a major role in the perpetuation of conflict in Chechnya, as in Northern Ireland, through its role as a justification of repressive state activity, and the perceived 'right' to maintain control over weaker ethnicities by virtue of power. Superior strength is often misconceived as racial superiority.

Imperialist notions of a weaker ethnic group being associated with inferiority provide justification for policies reflecting inequality and disproportionate representation in governance. State violence avoids scrutiny within the dominant ethnic group when committed against a supposedly inferior ethnic group. The association of power as reflective of ethnic superiority is a

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<sup>47</sup> Seely, Robert: *Russo-Chechen Conflict, 1800 – 2000: A Deadly Embrace* (Frank Cass Publishers, 2001), p291.

<sup>48</sup> Seely, p186.

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false and dangerous precedent. It encourages the notion of collective guilt based on perceived, innate ethnic flaws and weaknesses – in the case of the Chechens, a perceived predisposed propensity for criminality or treachery on account of ethnicity. The policy of Internment in Northern Ireland in 1972 was reflective of such beliefs, the concept of collective guilt leading to an acceptance and initiation of collective punishment. Random searches and imprisonment of Irish Catholics was deemed justified, as the community as a whole was guilty in the eyes of the state. The policy of Internment was re-introduced to Northern Ireland on August 9<sup>th</sup>, 1969. Despite Brian Faulkner, the Prime Minister for Northern Ireland, claiming that ‘every man arrested was a terrorist’<sup>49</sup>, of the 342 men arrested in the first raid, the vast majority were either members of the non-violent civil rights movement or had no political affiliations whatsoever; many were tortured whilst imprisoned. Despite the European Court of Human Rights finding the British guilty of ‘inhuman and degrading treatment’ and the European Commission finding them ‘guilty of torture’<sup>50</sup>, the policy of Internment continued until December 1975. The policy was tolerated by a Protestant community, who shared the state’s distrust and fear of Catholic intentions and had similarly disassociated itself from the victim population. The Catholic communities’ supposed inferiority had dehumanised the atrocities committed against them, as well as providing the justification for social and economic inequality. Of the 1,981 people detained under internment, only a token number of 107 were Protestant.<sup>51</sup>

A belief in the collective guilt of ethnic groups is clearly expressed in the language used to describe those who feel aggrieved by a lack of political representation or human rights abuses. As Faulkner dismissed all those civilians incarcerated under the policy of internment as ‘terrorists’, the Chechens have been tarred with similar collective terminology, allowing for the dismissal of basic rights. Tsarist generals, Stalin and Yeltsin all utilised the same collective terminology of ‘bandits’ and ‘criminals’ to describe the Chechen people. Yeltsin and later Putin, also dismissed all those in favour of an autonomous, Chechen government – a sizeable majority of the population – as ‘terrorist’. Such a label allows for the introduction of repressive and violent measures that would be deemed unacceptable against a political movement that did not display ‘terrorist’ characteristics, yet the terrorist label was applied to the Chechen people, as an entity, prior to any terrorist action taking place. In the 1990’s, a desire for Chechen autonomy had been expressed by an overwhelming majority of the Chechen people through conventional, democratic political channels. They were willing to defend this democratic mandate by force. Whether such an action can be deemed ‘terrorist’ is highly questionable. Russia’s reaction to Chechnya’s desire for independence is far easier to classify as ‘terrorist’ within the definitional debate.

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<sup>49</sup> Croft, Hazel: Article in the Socialist Worker Archive, August 11, 2001.

<sup>50</sup> West, Chris: Internment; Methods of Interrogation, BBC News Archive, January 2, 2002.

<sup>51</sup> Melaugh, Martin: Internment, CAIN, University of Ulster.



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The Russian authorities have taken the concept of 'collective guilt' to devastating levels. The crimes committed in Chechnya involved 'anti-terrorist' operations that sought no distinction between the 'beoviks', or fighters, and the civilian population. They are 'crimes' because, as Oleg Orlov<sup>52</sup> of Memorial testifies to, 'they are in breach of the laws and constitution of the Russian Federation', as well as international law defined under the Geneva Convention<sup>53</sup>. Memorial has reported that within the area of Chechnya to which they have access, which constitutes approximately a third of Chechen territory, nearly three thousand people have gone 'missing' since 2000<sup>54</sup>. The term 'missing' is used to describe civilians that have been rounded up by the security forces and have never returned to their families. The operations conducted by the security forces are completely indiscriminate and target the local populace of any area that has witnessed separatist military activity.

There is no selectivity in these operations as the Russian military view all Chechens who are not actively working with the Russian security forces as the enemy. The three thousand names listed as 'missing' are only a fraction of the total number for the whole of Chechnya, and constitute a small percentage of the total 'missing' since the 1990's. Tens of thousands of civilians died in the aerial bombardment of Grosny<sup>55</sup> and many more died from the indiscriminate bombing of villages<sup>56</sup>. Summary executions, torture and imprisonment without trial became standard procedure within the numerous 'filtration' camps littered around Chechnya. Human Rights Watch<sup>57</sup> reported that as well as the frequent killings within the camps, there exists 'brutal beatings ... injections, electric shock, beatings to the genitals, beatings on the soles of the feet, and rape of both men and women'. Furthermore, they acknowledged that a chief motivation for the existence of the camps is as a 'money-making exercise' in the form of extortion demands upon prisoner's relatives.

These are not crimes designed to extract information. They are expressions of ethnic hatred and a process of dehumanisation – as well as utilising brutality for financial gain. The crimes display contempt for Chechen lives. Practitioners of violent politics dispense with notions of human rights and selectivity. The extremities of 'identity politics' can be witnessed when the practitioner ceases to consider its ethnic enemy within a humanitarian context. The Chechen

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<sup>52</sup> Orlov, Oleg: War Crimes and Human Rights Violations in Chechnya, Memorial, May 26 , 2000.

<sup>53</sup> Specifically Article 3 of the Geneva Convention.

<sup>54</sup> The Guardian, Tracing a Tragedy, September 30, 2004.

<sup>55</sup> The city of Grosny was bombed for three months between November 1999 to early February 2000. President Yeltsin denied the bombardment was taking place on state television whilst live pictures of the aerial bombardment were playing in the background.

<sup>56</sup> Human Rights Watch confirmed the death of over two hundred civilians from an aerial bombardment on the village of Katyr-Yurt, for example (Human Rights Watch – World Report 2001).

<sup>57</sup> Human Rights Watch World Report 2001.

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people had become a collective enemy that, by virtue of ethnicity, possessed no innocents. This concept is clearly encapsulated by General Viktor Kazantsev in January 2004, who blamed 'groundless trust'<sup>58</sup> in Chechen civilians for setbacks in Russia's military campaign. He stated that 'only children up to ten and men over sixty, and women, will henceforth be regarded as refugees'. This statement is made all the more tragic by the Russian military's failure to adhere even to this warped, redefined concept of military conduct. By combining a willingness to engage in violent politics with 'identity based' ethnic misperceptions, there is a tendency for violence to intensify, as the dominant group seeks to attain its favoured outcome by force, whilst disassociating its actions as being subject to conventional norms and accepted legal practices – conventional forms of conduct and law only being applicable towards their own ethnic group, or 'loyal' groups considered worthy of a status similar to themselves.

In most observable cases of state repression, there exists a desire by the government in question to create an illusion of its actions conforming to conventional, constitutional norms. Political violence and repression, in other words, are unsurprisingly seldom described as such. It is the label of 'bandit', 'criminal' or 'terrorist' that allows a government to deviate from constitutional, conventional politics and initiate policies of state terror. Public acceptance within the dominant ethnic group of such a deviation is dependant on its perception of the ethnic group targeted. Where racism and prejudice exists, acceptance of unconventional, violent repressive policy is high.

Similar patterns of collective punishment are evident in Chechnya throughout the last century, and remain endemic today. The severity of collective punishments in Chechnya can be seen as, in proportion to the total population, one of the worst cases of ethnic genocide in history. In 1944, Stalin sent the entire population of native Chechens to concentration camps in remote areas of Russia. It is estimated that at least a third died<sup>59</sup>. In 1993, 19,000 Caucasian men were rounded up and deported from Moscow solely on account of their ethnicity<sup>60</sup>. Many thousands of innocent Chechens have died in custody since the 1990's, with armed forces and police acting with impunity. Numerous Russian military sources have testified to the indiscriminate killings carried out through 'counter-insurgency' operations. Only politics driven by hatred and fear could sustain such a contradiction of basic human rights. Irrational fears and misperceptions perpetuated by racist myths and reinforced through ethno-supremacist doctrine, assisted in achieving public support within dominant ethnic groups towards immoral, repressive measures within both conflicts, and have done so for many centuries.

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<sup>58</sup> World Report 2001 – The Russian Federation, p4.

<sup>59</sup> Lieven, Anatol: *Chechnya: Tombstone of Russian Power* (Library of Congress, 1998), Introduction.

<sup>60</sup> Seely, p187.

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The importance of retaining ethnic segregation and distrust within such states, to the continuation of policies that serve the advancement of a specific ethnic group or elite loyal to the state, is clearly expressed within the politics of Central America during the 1970's. In his studies of El Salvador and Guatemala, Gurr concluded that 'the greater the heterogeneity and stratification in a society, the greater the likelihood that a regime will use violence as a principle means of social control'<sup>61</sup>. Chechnya, and formally Northern Ireland, are examples of states that possess high levels of heterogeneity and, having utilised and perpetuated racist sentiment, have succeeded in dehumanising the victims of state repression in the minds of the respective dominant groups. The prospects for peace are limited until high levels of stratification are reduced by cross-community political co-operation – such co-operation will be resisted by states that recognise the continuation of policies seeking the advancement of a particular ethnic group, requires the use of violence as a means of control.

Russia serves as an example of an occupying force that relies on high levels of stratification to ensure ethnic Russians, loyal to the state, maintain their distrust of Chechens and accept violent, authoritarian rule as a means to retain the status quo – democracy would have granted the Chechens independence on its first, legitimate introduction. The Russian State remains reliant on ethnic misperceptions amongst Russians to achieve public acceptance of state violence, through harnessing long-held Russian prejudices and fears. As the Northern Ireland State used the myths and pageantry of Orangism to obscure a rational assessment of its history and cement division, the Russian State seeks association with its Imperialist past and politics to ensure contemporary prejudices against particular ethnic groups remains similarly militant. Russian Nationalism, in many ways a resurrection of Russian Imperialism, ensures its people demand that power throughout the region be maintained, as Russians are similarly tied to a doctrine that no longer resembles its modern reality. Ethnic Russians, consistent with past politics, consider themselves a 'great power' and a 'chosen people'<sup>62</sup>. Seventy years of Soviet power, whilst not 'Imperialist' in the traditional sense, only heightened such convictions given Sovietism's power and influence on the world stage. The contemporary political reality, a rapidly diminished level of global influence, remains incompatible with Russian self-perceptions of greatness. A restoration of Russian 'Imperialist' doctrine and 'great power' status is an attempt to consolidate and validate traditional Russian beliefs within contemporary politics, providing unified and militant popular support for the current regime.

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<sup>61</sup> Quoted by Brockett, Charles: *State Terrorism in Rural Central America* (Westview 1991), p70.

<sup>62</sup> A notion that will be fully discussed within the next chapter.

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In the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century, the Russian Empire was deeply concerned about the spread of Islam in the Caucasus and their ability to retain control of the region. The government recognised the advantages of having a percentage of the population who supported Russian control. They encouraged the settlement of ethnic Russians into the region through a similar strategy used by the UK in Ireland – through the redistribution of Chechen land to ‘loyal’ subjects. I have mentioned how the confiscation of Irish land and subsequent redistribution amongst Scots and English settlers in Northern Ireland became a major source of ethnic resentment and hatred. The process in Chechnya had a similar effect as, by 1912, the Terek Cossacks and retired Russian soldiers had been granted hundreds of thousands of hectares of fertile Chechen land. The Chechens, with less than half of their original farmland, were forced further up the mountains<sup>63</sup>. The immigration of Russians to the region resulted in the Chechen people becoming ‘economically destitute’<sup>64</sup>.

The most celebrated Russian military figure of these earlier years of occupation was General Yermalov. General Yermalov’s belief in the ethnic inferiority of Chechens, leading to a consequent determination to ensure Russian domination of the region through brutality, in many ways mirrors Russia’s ideological position today. General Yermalov believed Russians to have a right, as ethnically and culturally superior, to control a region populated by what was perceived to be a lesser race. Such views were reinforced, in a similar manner to Northern Ireland, by the fear of their religion being under threat. Russia viewed Islam as a threat to Russian Orthodoxy in a similar vein to the manner in which Protestant Ulstermen perceived Catholicism. The defence of their respective religions and the continuation of political dominance, an inalienable right by virtue of superior ethnicity, were to be protected at any cost. Political violence and military campaigns that sought no distinction between soldier and civilian was never a controversial tactic against those who were perceived by the majority of the dominant ethnic group as of inferior ethnicity. Such action was demanded, as Russians and Protestant Ulstermen were fully committed to the preservation of the status quo. They shared their respective states’ ideological vision. Russia’s justification of such policies is neatly encapsulated in General Yermalov’s comments at the time: ‘Condescension in the eyes of Asiatics is a sign of weakness and out of pure humanity I am inexorably severe’<sup>65</sup>.

His reference to Russian brutality being a service to humanity gives a clear indication to the ethnic status to which Caucasian Muslims had been reduced, as well as the inflated status, as a civilising force, they awarded themselves. Furthermore, the comment suggests that the only

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<sup>63</sup> Dunlop, John: *Russia Confronts Chechnya* (Cambridge University Press, 1998), p17.

<sup>64</sup> Dunlop, p10.

<sup>65</sup> Dunlop.

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alternative to brutality is perpetual conflict. 'Condescension' being 'a sign of weakness' seems to closely resemble the Protestant Ulsterman's position of power sharing constituting surrender. Both rationales for suppression dismiss the notion of compromise on the basis of ethnic distrust – an immovable distrust demonstrated within the perceived ethnic flaws and religious beliefs of their 'disloyal' counterparts – their innate 'treachery'. Both dominant ethnic groups, convinced of their enemies 'treacherous' characteristics, dismissed negotiation and compromise, choosing to believe their enemies were incapable of honouring negotiated settlement. It is a common refrain from both respective dominant groups in question, that both the Catholic community and Chechen people are 'disloyal' to the states that govern them. Both dominant ethnic groups seemed oblivious to the contradiction of expecting loyalty whilst practising political exclusion, discrimination and repression.

In such circumstances, 'loyalty' can be more accurately termed 'obedience' – a complete and submissive respect for the respective dominant group's 'right' to govern. This 'right' to govern has been assisted by myths of superiority that have mobilised popular support amongst the dominant group for resisting compromise. Beverly Crawford describes the phenomenon in terms of a 'cultural identity that is fixed and non-negotiable' and highlights the 'difficulty of compromise'<sup>66</sup> in such situations. It should be remembered that an inability to compromise such 'rights' invariably expresses itself in violence.

In Northern Ireland, it could be said that the Protestant community misinterpreted the concept of democratic governance. For many, the Protestant majority within Northern Ireland represented more than a majority in government. It was deemed a permanent mandate to govern without any form of 'interference' from the minority group. To suggest that 37%<sup>67</sup> of Northern Ireland should never be granted a meaningful role within government, directly contradicts democratic principles that demand political representation for all. It was, unquestionably, a form of authoritarianism, as an established power believed it had 'absolute right to assert itself' and that its leadership, being representative of only one ethnic group, demanded a 'precondition of consent'<sup>68</sup> at the ballot box – reflective in their practice of 'gerrymandering' and their prevention of 'one man, one vote' that so angered civil rights campaigners. The extent to which democratic principles had been misinterpreted is clearly expressed by William Craig, the leader of Vanguard<sup>69</sup> in 1972. When asked about the Catholic murders carried out by Protestant paramilitaries he replied: 'I am not

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<sup>66</sup> Crawford, Beverly: *The Myth of Ethnic Conflict* (University of California, 1998) p29.

<sup>67</sup> 1971 Census figures.

<sup>68</sup> The definition of Authoritarianism taken from Scruton: *A Dictionary of Political Thought* (Macmillan Press, 1982).

<sup>69</sup> Throughout the early 1970's, Vanguard Progressive Unionists were representative, along with the Democratic Unionist Party, of the radical Unionist position that sought to maintain the founding principles of The Orange State. Any reform was considered tantamount to surrender.

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happy about this sort of thing, but if it is impossible to win our democratic rights, I am prepared to tolerate it'<sup>70</sup>

By 'democratic rights', Craig was referring to reintroducing a system of government that would never consider a legitimate power-sharing agreement – the Protestant majority being, by his definition, representative of a permanent mandate to rule without any interference from over a third of Northern Ireland's population. The Catholic murders he refers to were designed to put pressure on the British government to restore the Orange State and retain the status quo. It should be noted that Vanguard, or the Vanguard Progressive Unionists, were not fringe political organisations. At the UK General Election in February 1974, the Vanguard Progressive Unionists won 3 of the 11 parliamentary seats as the second largest Unionist party. Craig's determination to 'liquidate the enemy'<sup>71</sup> to retain autocratic control had significant popular support amongst the dominant ethnic group. It should also be noted that in the same year, a general strike was organised by the U.D.A. (Ulster Defence Association) and adhered to by the vast majority of the Protestant population. The formation of the U.D.A, a paramilitary force responsible for hundreds of sectarian murders, was orchestrated by individuals with close ties to Vanguard – including Ian Paisley. It highlights the extent to which 'identity' politics is incompatible with democratic principles and how support for 'identity based' ideology, with its associated misperceptions, leads to violence. The rejection of a fully democratic system of governance will often result in conflict, as autocracy can only be sustained through repressive means. Such political systems, as Addison<sup>72</sup> acknowledged, fall between the categories of politics and war in terms of the methods they deploy to retain control, but rely on violence for their continuation.

'Identity' politics is incompatible with democratic principles within multi-ethnic states – 'multi-ethnic' being a category that the vast majority of the world's states could be described as<sup>73</sup> – because the dominant ethnic group will always seek to impose a disproportionate level of control, leading to a distortion of democratic principles, by seeking a state that solely represents the interests of a specific ethnic group at the expense of other ethnicities.

In most countries experiencing a high degree of internal conflict, there is no definitive separation of 'conventional' politics that advocate peace and stability, and 'conflict' politics that

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<sup>70</sup> Cited in Nelson, p123

<sup>71</sup> Nelson, p123

<sup>72</sup> Addison, Michael: *Violent Politics* (Palgrave, 2002).

<sup>73</sup> Iceland and Portugal are rare examples of 'mono-ethnic' states. There are certainly very few that could be described as such.

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utilises heightened tension, fear and political violence to achieve its aims. I have mentioned that states, as opposed to non-state actors who use political violence to demand reform or the collapse of a state, benefit from the prevention of value neutrality that arises from 'citizen-state inertia', where unqualified 'moral' authority is granted to states by virtue of their existence, as opposed to their actions. State actions, regardless of the level of repression or violence deployed, retain a degree of impunity as a consequence of being state-sanctioned. Any predisposed hatred, fear or distrust towards an ethnic group targeted by a state through repressive or violent means, will contribute to this misperception, solidifying the supposed infallibility of the states' political direction.

The conclusion drawn by Crawford, and other academics such as Lipschutz and Roeder, who attempted to create an analytical framework for the assessment of ethnic and sectarian conflict, is that economic discrimination leads to ethnicity-led 'bandwagoning' – ethnic loyalty and violence based on economic advantage. This, for the reasons suggested, seems an oversimplification. It could be said that economic discrimination, whilst a key consideration, is one of many issues that arise out of a long-held belief amongst the dominant group of their ethnic superiority over their weaker counterparts. Protestant Ulstermen referred to their rights as 'Protestant Privileges' – social, political and economic advantages that are bestowed to them by virtue of their cultural identity. There was no secret acknowledgement amongst Protestants in Ulster, that the myths and pageantry of Orangism was purely a smokescreen for economic advancement. Stalin did not attempt to erase the Chechen people from history on the basis of economic advantage for Russians, or on the back of spurious allegations regarding Chechen/Nazi collaboration (as he claimed). Ulster Protestant violence towards Irish Catholics and Stalin's deportations, were heavily influenced by firmly held convictions relating to ethnic hatred and distrust<sup>74</sup>. The perpetuation of ethnic conflict utilising long-held ethno-supremacist or racist ideological convictions is widespread and, in many ways, autonomous from economic considerations. However misguided its principles, its convictions and characteristics are more complex than a simplistic explanation of 'political violence for economic gain' can singularly account for.

Sovietism, for all its faults, provided Russian citizens with a coherent ideological foundation for their actions and behaviour – both in terms of its leadership and amongst the public. Much has been written of the 'moral cesspit'<sup>75</sup> that Russia now finds itself in, having replaced a rigid, authoritarian system with another form of autocracy built on Nationalism, corruption, 'crime pyramids' and oligarchs. The Russian authorities demonstrate to its people, an unyielding faith in

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<sup>74</sup> Stalin used the excuse of Nazi/Chechen collaboration but this had no bearing on reality.

<sup>75</sup> New Statesman, Review of Meier, Andrew: *Chechnya – To the Heart of a Conflict*.

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power through violence, fear and force. The state preaches violent politics to a nation accepting of such values, having witnessed Russia's political strength disintegrate since 1989, and having never experienced a state based on what Addison<sup>76</sup> refers to as the three modes of conventional politics – 'persuasion, shame and reward'. By 'persuasion' he refers to the avoidance of hostilities by peaceful dialogue. By 'shame' he refers to the application of a moral foundation to decision-making and 'reward' is used to describe the tangible benefits of belonging to, and adhering to, a particular state structure. Russians, with their historical experience of autocratic power structures, associate conventional democratic principles with a weak state – the embodiment of the principles that led to the Soviet Union's spectacular collapse.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union came a surge in Nationalism amongst the many states within the Soviet Union with non-Russian ethnic allegiances. Deep-seated ethnic divisions re-surfaced as calls for independence, from ethnic groups whose political and cultural freedoms had long been suppressed under Communism. This coincided with a surge in Russian Nationalism – a determination amongst ethnic Russians to re-assert their dominance, their supposed superiority, over the multitude of ethnic minorities that sensed an historical opportunity to attain complete, or partial, autonomy from Russia.

As Anna Politkovskaya<sup>77</sup> commented, Yeltsin's decision to go to war against Chechnya was entirely 'consistent with his atmosphere of Imperial restoration'. The new neo-liberal elite wanted to detract from the lack of jobs and unpaid wages, from food shortages and widespread corruption, and re-focus the Russian people on fostering a new nationalism that mirrored the Tsarist 'Imperialism' of the past. Russian 'Imperialism' always adhered to a rigid system of ethnic preference, with each ethnicity within Russian control being allocated a specific status, of which the Chechen people were consistently considered the lowliest. The ethnic groups awarded the lowest ethnic status, and consequently afforded the least rights, were those deemed the most disloyal. The numerous Caucasian nationalities, particularly ethnic groups such as the Dagastanis, Azerbaijanis, Chechens and Ingush, have traditionally been branded the most 'disloyal' and rebellious – with the notable exception of Ossetians, who have always been considered loyal and have profited from their 'loyalty'<sup>78</sup>. The distinctive appearance of such ethnic groups has contributed to the widespread discrimination they suffer throughout Russia and the ease in which they are targeted – as this quotation from a Moscow Police Inspector suggests:

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<sup>76</sup> Addison.

<sup>77</sup> Politkovskaya, Anna: *A Small Corner of Hell* (The University of Chicago Press, 2002).

<sup>78</sup> Ossetians are Christian, which automatically accords them higher status than their Muslim neighbours, and have profited in the form of Chechen land and control of Chechen resources. It was no coincidence that the attack in Beslan, attributed to Baseyev, occurred in Ossetia.



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'Most of our crimes are committed by Caucasians. They have dark complexions and long noses, so they are easy to spot and detain...these Caucasians have flooded this city and caused a lot of trouble. There is no doubt Muscovites want them out.'<sup>79</sup>

Possessing a dark complexion and a long nose does not seem to warrant deportation, but such is the logic of collective punishment based on collective guilt, by virtue of ethnicity. Chechens are regularly rounded up and deported from major Russian cities on the basis of their 'innate' criminality. In 1993, 18,000 Caucasians were rounded up and 3,500 deported in just one single operation. Given the frequency of deportations prior to the modern day conflict, they cannot be excused purely on security grounds (even if reasons of security could justify collective punishment). This statement by the police inspector confirms the authorities, and the public's, reasoning. It would be true to suggest that many Chechens are involved in organised crime, but such a statement cannot be levelled without consideration of two key factors. Firstly, there exists a high degree of criminal activity throughout Russia – from the smallest businesses to the highest echelons of political power – and it would be inconceivable if a proportion of any ethnic group were not involved. Furthermore, the confiscation of land, subsequent deportations and ethnic Russian control of the Chechen economy and resources, not to mention the displacements caused by Russia's bloody military campaigns, have all assisted in increasing levels of criminality amongst the Chechens. Many Chechens are forced to provide for themselves and their families through illegitimate means through a lack of legitimate opportunities.

It could be said that Chechen criminality is largely created by Russian political ideology and its associated discriminatory factors, of which 'neo-Imperialism', political violence and ethno-supremacist ideology play a central role. Ethnic Russians are determined to rid Moscow, and all other major cities, of these criminally minded 'foreigners' and remain convinced that, despite labelling them as 'foreigners', they have a legitimate claim to Chechen land. Only 'Neo-Imperialist' convictions regarding race, power and the use of force could support such a contradiction.

Russian society is accepting of political violence, as politically it has been a permanent feature of governance for hundreds of years. After decades of political violence in Northern Ireland, it too became somehow 'normal' to its inhabitants. This is not due to Russians or the people of Northern Ireland being inherently violent, as Chechens do not have an inherently criminal tendency. They are victims of the 'unnatural' circumstances in which they find themselves. As Addison mentions, violent conflict is 'an unnatural act which arises out of

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<sup>79</sup> Quoted from a Moscow Police Inspector, Andrei Schavlev, 1993 in Seely, p186.

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unnatural circumstances'. Addison contends that if one accepts that there are no forms of violence that can be deemed acceptable, violence being representative of irrational and dysfunctional thought, it could be concluded that 'state violence' does not 'differ in principle from violence against the state'<sup>80</sup>. Given the difficulty in convincing a government, or group, who are convinced in their justifications for violence, to renounce violence and commence peaceful dialogue and politics of compromise, it could be said that state violence can often be categorised as the worst offender by being the first offender – by forcing those who would otherwise be in favour of a peaceful reconciliation into violent action. The largest recruitment drive by the IRA was from disenchanted civil rights campaigners in the aftermath of Bloody Sunday<sup>81</sup>.

To understand the 'unnatural' circumstances in which the Chechen people find themselves today, it is necessary to fully consider the massive impact of past crimes committed by the Russians towards the Chechen people. Historical analysis of Tsarist and Soviet crimes of ethnic genocide put current levels of criminality, and a willingness amongst Chechens to embrace political violence, into context. It demonstrates the extent to which current policy can be seen as a continuation of long-held beliefs amongst the Russian authorities and its people that Chechens, as a race, can only be controlled through violence, fear and force. The inferior ethnic status that the Chechen people have consistently been granted eliminates opportunities for a peaceful solution to conflict to materialise through 'conventional' means. As evidence will suggest, the Chechen people have brokered a peaceful settlement to hostilities on numerous occasions, only for the Russian authorities to respond to such agreements with treachery and brutality. For the Russian military, the agreements have served as an element of surprise – a platform from which to launch devastating purges against the Chechen people. The Russians seek no compromise as they refuse to view their adversary as equals. All policy decisions are consequently made within a violent political context.

In the nineteenth century, the Chechen resistance to Russian rule was led by Shamil; the most celebrated Chechen guerrilla leader of all time. His surrender to Tsar Alexander in 1859 was conditional on a pledge made by the Tsar that the Chechens would be granted equality with ethnic Russians<sup>82</sup>. Instead of equality, the Chechens were reduced to conditions of terrible poverty, hunger and military rule. A twentieth century example of Russian treachery towards the Chechens would be the promises made by Lenin to support independence or autonomy in areas that were predominantly non-Russian<sup>83</sup>. Guarantees of autonomy quickly turned to suppression

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<sup>80</sup> Addison, p38.

<sup>81</sup> The murder of 14 unarmed civilians by British paratroopers in Derry, 1972.

<sup>82</sup> Dunlop, p35.

<sup>83</sup> Dunlop, p72.

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of ethnic identity as the 'forced creation of Homo Sovieticus' was established. This policy of cultural, religious and ethno-nationalist suppression was carried out through imprisonment, murder, and later, the mass deportation and genocide by Stalin that I have previously discussed. Issues relating to inequality have been a primary motivation behind continued resistance to both the states in question. The dominant communities in both conflicts resisted the concept of equality, at least partially, by their adherence to notions of ethnic superiority. Acceptance of the principle of equality is essential to brokering a fair and just process of compromise and negotiation.

Russia has always regarded control of the nations surrounding Russia as a 'natural' right, seeing the conquest of other nations in colonial terms – ethnic groups who could be 'civilised' and those who must be permanently suppressed by force. Today's conflict in Chechnya is waged on similar 'neo-colonial' principles. As Brzezinski has commented, 'the Russian ruling elite is still driven by Imperial nostalgia'.<sup>84</sup> The inferior ethnic status granted to the Chechens, manifesting itself within the racist ideology discussed, places Chechens firmly within the perceived category that demands obedience and subservience through violence. Such a classification will ensure indiscriminate violence, as the carpet-bombing of towns and villages during and after both the most recent Chechen wars demonstrate, that primarily targets the civilian population, as they are attempting to seek compliance through fear.

Unlike the Western democracies, Russia does not attempt to smokescreen its willingness to engage in violent politics to achieve its objectives. The sensitivities of public opinion in the west must be considered by western states, and a suitable strategy for attaining public acceptability of violent politics, or war, devised. Many people within western democracies, as the anti-war rallies relating to Iraq in all the major European countries testified to, require a moral justification for the use of force to pursue national interests. It could be said that the aggressive policies pursued by Russia and Western powers, such as the United States and Britain, are not dissimilar in terms of logic or intent. They differ primarily on the methods by which violent politics is justified. Western democracies favour a moral justification for violent action, ousting 'evil' and 'tyrannical' regimes in the hope that they can spread freedom and democracy to the 'oppressed', for instance. They may also choose to suggest an imminent threat exists from a country, or section of a population, that requires immediate violent and aggressive action to counter that threat<sup>85</sup>. The numerous techniques deployed by Western states to justify violent politics will be explored at length later in

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<sup>84</sup> The New York Times, November 18, 1999, cited in Polsky, Yury: Russia During the Period of Radical Change 1992 – 2002 (The Edwin Mellen Press, 2002) P98.

<sup>85</sup> The British government's infamous '45 Minutes' claim in one of two dossiers persuading lawmakers and the British public of the need to go to war in Iraq provides an example of this.

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this study. Their relevance to the Chechen conflict and Russia's political mechanisms is their absence within decision-making. Russia requires less sensitivity in its approach. The ethnic-Russian public is satisfied by the need to defend and strengthen ethnic Russian interests. For most ethnic Russians, the defence of Russian interests provides ample justification for the pursuit of violent politics. Alexei Arbatov, Deputy Chair of the Defence Committee of the Russian State Duma, clearly confirms this in his brutally honest evaluation of the Second Chechen War (1999)<sup>86</sup>.

'The main lesson learned is that the goal justifies the means. The use of force is the most efficient problem solver, if applied decisively and massively. Negotiations are of dubious value and are to be used as a cover for military action. Legality of state actions, observations of laws and legal procedures, and humanitarian suffering are of secondary significance relative to achieving the goal. Limiting one's own troop casualties is worth imposing massive devastation and collateral fatalities on civilian populations. Foreign public opinion and the position of Western governments are to be discounted if Russian interests are at stake. A concentrated and controlled mass media campaign is the key to success.'

The Machiavellian statement at the beginning of this quote is not, by itself, unsurprising. When coupled with the 'counter-terrorist operation' mantras frequently deployed previously by Yeltsin and Putin<sup>87</sup>, it could be concluded that the 'goal' in question is the safety of Russian civilians. The statement that follows quickly dispels any unfounded optimism in terms of what the Russian State's 'goal' might constitute. The statement suggests that the Second Chechen War has reconfirmed the Russian State's commitment to violent repression and war, justified solely by 'Russian interests'. The statement demonstrates complete contempt for non-violent politics of negotiation, compromise and reconciliation. The fact that Arbatov views 'a concentrated and controlled mass media campaign' as the 'key to success' is an interesting admission. The former United States national security advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski, has stated that 'many Russians inflamed by official propaganda, view all Chechens as Terrorists and Islamic fanatics'.<sup>88</sup> This statement would support the notion that states such as Russia, aided by channels of misinformation, exploit existing ethnic hatred and distrust to achieve its policy objectives and establish an 'identity-based' grip on power. Furthermore, it suggests that Arbatov is correct in his assumption – if perpetual conflict and brutality can be defined as 'success'.

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<sup>86</sup> Arbatov, Alexei G: *The Transformation of Russian Military Doctrine* (European Centre for Security Studies, 2000) p20.

<sup>87</sup> As of 2007.

<sup>88</sup> Quoted in Polsky.

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Russia's 'contempt' for the Chechens as a race serves to dehumanise the crimes committed against them. The humanitarian suffering, massive devastation and civilian fatalities that Arbatov dismisses so readily in the name of 'Russian interests' seems reflective of mainstream Russian opinion<sup>89</sup>. Russia's cavalier attitude, expressed by Arbatov, towards the legal implications of such actions, both on a national and international level, clearly demonstrates the failures and shortcomings of the international community in preventing such atrocities. Arbatov is deeply misguided when discussing the use of force as an 'efficient problem solver', as attempts to quell legitimate grievances by force by any regime globally will testify to, as it escalates the militancy of opposition to the regime by reinforcing the validity of opposition and their determination to avenge the atrocities committed against them. Perhaps the strangest admission within this statement is a willingness to use negotiations only 'as a cover' for military action. Apart from the somewhat self-defeating nature of the statement – any Chechen aware of such a policy would be very reluctant to sit down at the negotiating table – it adds weight to the theory that current Russian policy in the Caucasus is a continuation of the tactics and ethno-supremacist ideology of the past.

I have provided 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century examples of Russia dismissing negotiation and reformist, conciliatory politics in favour of violent, military intervention, and have provided each justification for the use of force – each strikingly similar. All demonstrate contempt for legal considerations, basic human rights and notions of equality, displaying a decision-making procedure that consistently dispenses with humanitarian considerations as being of peripheral importance when assessing 'Russian interests'. Public sympathy within Russia for Chechen suffering is virtually non-existent – these are policies the public fully endorses. The continuing hatred and innate distrust of Chechens has only intensified, mirrored by the levels of violence the Russians have been prepared to deploy. The Chechen Wars of the 1990's and the ongoing violence today should be seen as the second attempt by Russia to subject the Chechen nation to a level of violence that aims to permanently extinguish calls for national self-determination in the last sixty years.<sup>90</sup> Like all other attempts, it will prove unsuccessful.

Ultra-nationalist policy direction, such as the 'decisive' and 'massive' use of force to defend the ethnic Russian zone of influence in the former Soviet Union, was an ideological direction that the Russian people firmly supported – as the election of Yeltsin who campaigned on a hard-line military stance proved. The overwhelming support the Russian people retain for such action can

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<sup>89</sup> The election of Yeltsin on the basis of his 'hard-line' pledge towards the Chechens, the popularity of policies of mass deportations of Chechens within Russia and their indifference towards Chechen suffering are a few of the many indicators I have discussed.

<sup>90</sup> Stalin having instigated the first.

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be fully appreciated when the policies of Yeltsin's opposition at the Presidential elections during the 1990's are accessed.

The KPRF<sup>91</sup>, The Communist Party of the Russian Federation, were a major force in Russian politics between 1995-1999. The leader of the KPRF, Gannady Zynganov, was a candidate in the presidential elections in 1996, securing 32% in the first ballot and 40% in the second.<sup>92</sup> The bloc was a strange amalgamation of hard-line Communists, Social Democrats and Russian Nationalists, united in the belief that Yeltsin had 'abandoned such ideas as Russian Patriotism'<sup>93</sup>. The major political bloc on the left, therefore, was in favour of a stronger strain of Ultra-Nationalism. A major figure on the right of the political spectrum in the 1990's was Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, who polled 23% of the vote in 1993. Zhirinovskiy became famous for his extremist Nationalist sentiment<sup>94</sup>, believing he was 'speaking the language of the regular Russian'<sup>95</sup>. His political platform was to 'defend the interests of the ethnically Russian people'<sup>96</sup>. It can be concluded that all major political blocs utilised strong Russian Nationalist sentiment as a cornerstone of electoral campaigning and policy formulation. Strokanov has noted in his study of the Russian elections throughout the 1990's that a 'strong hand' in fighting 'separatists' was a central theme of campaigning amongst all the major parties.<sup>97</sup>

It must be stressed that this rise in Russian Nationalism since the collapse of the Soviet Union has re-asserted 'identity-based' political affiliations and long-held ethnic distrust and hatred. Yury Polsky has highlighted how 'dislike for people of the Caucasus origin became particularly intense'<sup>98</sup> following the collapse of Sovietism. In times of hardship, creating a 'scapegoat' out of an ethnic group that has traditionally played the role of 'the enemy within' is a common phenomenon. Russia's Jewish people have once again become the victims of open anti-Semitism, intimidation and violence since the fall of communism. Open anti-Semitism has also found expression within the speeches of political leaders<sup>99</sup>. That is not to say that such prejudices did not display themselves prior to collapse of the Soviet Union – existing prejudices, formally expressing themselves within the confines of Soviet 'state-sponsored discrimination'<sup>100</sup>, have found new forms of expression within Populist politics and society, combining with long held

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<sup>91</sup> KPRF, The Communist Party of the Russian Federation, considered itself as the successor to the CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union). It retained support amongst the ethnic Russian populations within the Caucasus (Ossetia, 52% of vote in 1995. Dagastan 42% of vote in 1995) – cited in Strokanov, p32.

<sup>92</sup> Strokanov, Alexandre: *The Elections to the State Duma in December 1999 – Russia's Choice at the End of the Twentieth Century* (Edwin Mellen Press, 2003), p33.

<sup>93</sup> Strokanov, p37.

<sup>94</sup> Zhirinovskiy threatened to unleash the Russian Nuclear arsenal on the west if they did not agree with his policy of expansionism.

<sup>95</sup> Strokanov, p37.

<sup>96</sup> Strokanov, p38.

<sup>97</sup> Strokanov, p173.

<sup>98</sup> Polsky, p83.

<sup>99</sup> Zhirinovskiy, in particular, repeatedly expressed anti-Semitic views on the campaign trail.

<sup>100</sup> Polsky, p86. State-sponsored discrimination included the prevention of Jews from working in academia, business and government.

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distrust and fear. Anti-Chechen sentiment is not only prevalent in newspapers. Classic Russian literature – or post-modern Soviet literature such as Tolstoya's 'The Slynx' – uses Chechens as the chosen fictional 'enemy'<sup>101</sup>. Forms of racist sentiment towards Chechens find expression even within children's songs such as the 'Cossack Lullaby' by Lermontov, still sung to Russian children at bedtime:

'Over the rocks the Terek streams,  
Raising a muddy wave,  
Onto the bank the wicked Chechen crawls,  
Sharpening his dagger as he goes;  
But your father is an old warrior  
Forged in many a battle,  
So sleep little one, be calm.'

Endemic and open racist sentiment within Russian society towards the Chechens, expressed in the newspapers, through marches calling for deportation of Chechens or ardent support for the most brutal methods of oppression, have quickly manifested themselves as almost unilateral support for violent politics and military-led 'solutions' within the State Duma.

The state can exploit and encourage racist sentiment to achieve its aims. If political and economic advantages can be gained from instilling within the dominant group a belief in their innate ethnic superiority, as was the case with 'Protestant Privileges' in Northern Ireland, it will often be utilised. Racist sentiment can also be deployed as effectively to deflect blame away from government in periods of uncertainty, as was the case in Russia, by targeting ethnic groups who are already perceived as traditional enemies. 'Identity' politics acts as a barrier to cross-community co-operation and 'poverty-focussed' political discussion. 'Identity' politics requires inter-ethnic fear and distrust to maintain its dominance over more rational alternatives. If the state consists of politicians whose electoral platform is 'identity-based', or Nationalist, it cannot moderate its stance without losing electoral support – O'Neill in Northern Ireland during the 1960's serves as a useful example. O'Neill's half-hearted attempts at reform met with anger and calls of 'traitor' from the Ultra-Unionist heartland, leading to his downfall. Yeltsin would have met with similar electoral disaster had he not played the nationalist card. A dual process seems to exist whereby the state perpetuated racist sentiment and ethnic conflict but to a great extent, the

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<sup>101</sup> Tolstaya, Tatyana: *The Slynx* (New York Review Books, 2003). A mythical community who survive a nuclear holocaust cannot travel away from their compound through fear of the Chechens.

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dominant ethnic groups demanded 'identity based' politics from their political leaders within both conflict situations.

In terms of the ethnic Russians' attitudes towards Chechens and the Protestant majority's perception of Catholics in Northern Ireland, it would probably be accurate to describe ethno-supremacist doctrine as a tool to establish power and initiate a desirable political direction for the ruling elites represented by states in question, that outgrew its original parameters. Tapping into existing distrust and hatred, Ethno-supremacist ideology was exploited by political actors to achieve a unified stance within the dominant communities. Its objectives were achieved, but having established a doctrine based on hatred and distrust, a more extremist form of ultra-nationalism developed and consumed more moderate ethno-nationalist opinion within the respective communities. Hatred, as a somewhat irrational emotion, is very hard to control. Crucially, in both cases, a segment of each dominant community expresses support for the extremities of ethnic hatred and violence in the form of militant, political organisations and paramilitaries that are independent from state mechanisms (Pamyat and The Black Hundreds serve as Russian examples). In a sense, the ruling elites become custodians of a political cause that could result in a violent opposition to their rule from their own ideological heartland, should they choose to deviate from it.

The centrality of historical analysis in attempting to understand both contemporary conflicts is of critical importance. It has been suggested in the introduction to this analysis, that too much emphasis has been placed by political commentators on the latest peace agreement in Northern Ireland, or the last 'successful' bloody suppression of Chechen separatism, that such a preoccupation lends itself to the theory that both conflicts can now be safely described as 'post-conflict', entering a lasting period of peace. Analysis of such conflicts are frequently reduced to the simplistic notion that they were little more than political power games that have been played out and concluded. Historical analysis of conflicts reveal the cyclical resurfacing of ideological convictions, leading to conflict, that consistently remain insufficiently challenged by more enlightened political perspectives. It could be claimed that the tendency to draw short-term conclusions on long-term prospects for peace, ignore and underestimate the genuine ideological fervour among the followers of ethno-supremacist doctrine that is independent of political leaders and a ruling elite – an individuals' devotion to an ethnocratic 'cause' may seek a political entity as their ideological guardian, but will dispense with such parties, or leaders, should they stray too far from the 'cause'.



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Once ethnic distrust and hatred becomes embedded within centuries of conflict, and a sizeable, radical element of a population holds political convictions that are more extremist than the political leadership who claims to represent them, the leadership in question walks a tightrope. Both the DUP and Sinn Fein in Northern Ireland are currently attempting to introduce a non-violent, power-sharing strategy whilst attempting to appear 'true to their cause'. The current Chechen leadership under Kadyrov, known to be puppets of Moscow, are clearly not true to the cause of Chechen separatism that the majority of Chechens have a powerful emotional attachment to. The former relies heavily on rhetoric for its continuation, its language of conflict becoming increasingly disassociated from its conciliatory actions. The latter relies solely on violence, or the threat of violence, for its continuation. The resistance to the puppet regime in Chechnya is plagued by in-fighting, caused by the theocratic extremism of some of its leadership. With neither the puppet regime, nor the resistance, currently representing the genuine political affiliation of the majority of Chechen people, it is only a matter of time before new 'guardians of the cause' emerge. As Northern Ireland's political leaders become increasingly detached from their Loyalist and Republican heartlands, many Loyalists and Republicans will also seek new ideological guardians that genuinely reflect their convictions – new guardians, fresh conflict.

Ethno-supremacist ideology had a considerable influence on both conflicts as both a justification for politically repressive policy and as a primary reason for public acceptance, amongst the respective dominant ethnic groups, of repressive policies. This evidence demonstrates the extent to which reconciliation and compromise is inhibited within Chechnya through a prevailing belief in ethnic-Russian superiority, and how 'identity-based' politics, assisted by ethno-supremacist doctrine, ensures a permanency of conflict and division. Reconciliation and compromise is currently being attempted in Northern Ireland without dispensing with 'identity-based' agendas. Russia, as evidence would suggest, refuses to consider the Chechens as equals. Furthermore, the development of a radical strain of ultra-Nationalism since the collapse of Sovietism, has added fervour to racist Chechen sentiment that existed prior to the Soviet Union's collapse. Northern Ireland's progress to peace has been greatly assisted by the UK governments' public reflection on historical wrongs committed against the Catholic community, and an acknowledgement that 'legitimate' grievances had to be rectified.<sup>102</sup> It is not a period of introspection shared by most within the Ulster Protestant community, who remain largely committed to traditional Unionist ideology, expressed in their reluctance to agree to power-sharing and their continued support of the DUP. No such sentiments of reconciliation and compromise will be forthcoming from a Russian administration that is so firmly entrenched within a neo-Imperialist doctrine – a doctrine of hatred towards the Chechens that remains firmly embedded within the public psyche, through a combination of

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<sup>102</sup> Most recently in a joint press conference with the Irish Taoisich on April 2nd, 2006.

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historical distrust and a determined desire to recapture the levels of power and influence the country once encapsulated.

Arbatov has rightly highlighted the influence of a 'concentrated and controlled media campaign' in achieving support amongst the Russian public for the so-called 'hard-line' stance towards the Chechen conflict. Having established such attitudes, it would be near impossible for a Russian administration, intent on ending conflict and healing divisions, to trigger a reversal of current, ill-conceived convictions – it would lead to militant, popular dissent and a transferral of power to a 'new guardian' of Ultra-Nationalist ideology. The political leaders' inability to reverse established ethno-nationalist doctrine once established, in both conflict situations, highlights the limitations of a political leaders' power in manipulating political outcomes within an ethno-nationalist environment. Such leaders are custodians of a popular movement, whose scope for policy-making cannot significantly deviate from its established ideological path. The level of support within the Ulster Protestant community in Northern Ireland for a rejection of the Good Friday Agreement is reflective of the difficulty in reversing long-held convictions and beliefs, enthused with such rigidity and dogma. By making state policy and its justification reflective of long-held ethnic distrust and division, politics cannot progress to cross-community 'issue-related' solutions, as genuine adherents of 'identity-based' politics are largely intransigent in their convictions. Any lasting peaceful reconciliation must tackle the central questions of how the respective dominant ethnic groups define themselves, and challenge their fundamental perceptions of the aggrieved communities as inferior, disloyal enemies – unworthy, by virtue of ethnicity, of equal rights and status. Any political leader, whose strength derives from 'identity-based' convictions, will be aware that attempting to dispel such notions is politically suicidal.

### **CHAPTER 3**

#### **THE INFLUENCE OF RELIGION WITHIN INTER-ETHNIC CONFLICT – NORTHERN IRELAND AND CHECHNYA**

Within democratic politics, a pluralistic approach to governance is recognised as an essential feature for the peaceful co-existence of diverse ethnic groups within a single state. Within the conflicts of Northern Ireland and Chechnya, pluralistic notions of governance were discarded, as an identity-based model, that sought to preserve and reinforce the interests of particular ethnic groups at the expense of others, took hold. Clearly the influence of ethno-supremacist ideology and a desire to establish and enforce economic advantage over their ethnic counterparts is instrumental in the rejection of pluralistic notions of governance. As is the case with numerous inter-ethnic conflicts currently threatening regional stability throughout the world, the centrality of religious convictions in shaping attitudes and ideology that leads to violent confrontation, contributes enormously to its formulation and the sense of a permanency existing within such division – a resigned acceptance of perpetual conflict that for so long characterised the conflict in Northern Ireland and continues to do so in Chechnya. Whilst policy supporting socio-economic discrimination and political exclusion can be identified and reversed, divisions that have been established on racial or religious foundations are much harder to break down and remove.

Whilst socio-economic factors and historical considerations relating to the conflict in Northern Ireland are widely discussed, religions' role as an incitement to violence seems to receive limited attention. Religious convictions demand, even within the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a peculiar respect amongst many who attempt to assess their contribution to conflict. A reluctance to offend a particular religion produces limited discussion as to where such religious convictions may lead. It could be suggested that if religious convictions stray into the political arena, they must be subject to the same rigorous assessment and evaluation as other variables that may contribute to division, incitement to violence and conflict. Political convictions require factual and reasoned justification for validity – without which, they have no place within the mechanisms of state. Tolerance of religious convictions within the political sphere is the suppression of reason, as it allows unqualified, unscientific discussion to permeate rational debate.

The principle reason for racial and religious divisions cementing such a protracted and insurmountable stranglehold on efforts to build peaceful reconciliation between stratified ethnic

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groups lies, fundamentally, within an absence of reason – more specifically, a willingness amongst a proportion of those involved within the respective conflicts, to form ideological convictions governing their political behaviour that are ‘radically transcendent to all factuality’<sup>103</sup>. Unlike socio-economic discrimination, these political convictions preventing peace entail abstract and, within the boundaries of rational discussion, imaginary lines of division that cannot be rectified – until the protagonists draw a definitive distinction between their personal, religious affiliation and their political affiliation. Within a multi-faith society, an amalgamation of a particular faith and state – state policy reflecting the religious affiliation of a particular group – will result in the alienation of other ethnicities whose faith differs from the religious convictions reflected in state policy. Furthermore, by defining state policy as being reflective of a particular religious affiliation, the ability of all sides to view each other as equal citizens, possessing equal rights, are severely curtailed. Each faith group is convinced of an enlightened and, consequently, superior status bestowed on them by their respective God.

By assimilating religious beliefs with political conviction, any subsequent debate is characterised by a tendency to dismiss the claims of a group that does not share the dominant groups’ religious affiliation on the basis that they have failed to acknowledge the fundamental ‘truth’. The defence of their community is tantamount to the defence of their God. The assimilation leads a group who expresses political ideology through religious convictions to the assumption that to compromise their opposition to another faith is to compromise their beliefs. Their certainty in the righteousness of their faith becomes the unquestionable justification of their cause – a divine right of action. Whilst all monotheistic religions stress the need for peace, love and tolerance, they also stress the righteousness of killing those who fail to accept the revealed ‘truth’. Deuteronomy (13:7-11) suggests you must even kill your children if they speak of another God. The Koran (9:73) is equally committed to the concept of killing non-believers, stating ‘Believers, make war on the infidels who dwell around you. Deal firmly with them. Know that God is with the righteous.’

It must be stressed that for only a proportion of those involved in either conflict, religious convictions shape attitudes and ideological justification for violent action. For many Ulster Protestants, there seems to be considerable evidence that the defence of the Protestant religion remained a central justification for militant action. The need to defend their religion stems, as John Brewer explains, from largely irrational fears:

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<sup>103</sup> Philipse, Herman: *Beyond Conflict and Reduction, The Incompatibility of Science and Religion* (Leuven University Press, 2001), p128.

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'Insecurity was built into the very foundations of the Northern Ireland State. Although Protestants saw Northern Ireland as a sacred entity, watched over by God, the template was Old Testament Israel, which was continually embattled from external threats and internal disaffection'<sup>104</sup>

Evidence would suggest that Protestants choosing Old Testament Israel as a 'template' would have massive repercussions on the development of conflict in Northern Ireland. It may seem ridiculous to a casual observer of The Troubles to suggest that in late 20<sup>th</sup> century Europe, a significant proportion of a community were using the writings of the Old Testament as a justification for violence towards their neighbours. A walk down many of the Protestant streets of Northern Ireland today would confirm just that. Street murals have, for over forty years, adorned both the Protestant and Catholic areas of Northern Ireland. Dr Jonathan McCormick<sup>105</sup> has compiled a fascinating and comprehensive list of murals painted within the last 20 years. The themes of the murals give an indication of political grievances and aspirations of each community. They consequently differ considerably in terms of content, with much of the Republican murals focussing on demands for Civil Rights, a United Ireland and a celebration of key historical Republican events, such as the Easter Rising of 1914. Of the 870 Republican murals listed, there are only four references to religion. Two murals simply state 'may god have mercy on his soul', a reference to those killed in 'The Troubles'. The other two celebrate the end of the Protestant state: 'A Protestant parliament for a Protestant people no more'<sup>106</sup>.

A close inspection of the 1325 Protestant/Loyalist murals listed, naturally displays an emphasis on key historical Loyalist events and a focus on the union with Britain. Perhaps the most informative aspect of the murals, however, is the profound emphasis on the Protestant religion and anti-Catholic sentiment, and the frequency in which references to God, the Bible and the Protestant religion are coupled with an incitement to, and justification for, violence. Unsurprisingly, Deuteronomy receives a mention: 'And when the lord thy God shall deliver them before thee, thou shalt smite them and utterly destroy them, thou shalt make no covenant with them nor show mercy unto them.'<sup>107</sup>

The significance of this quote is that it not only illustrates the tendency amongst militant Loyalists, in this case the Ulster Volunteer Force, for justifying murder by a literalist interpretation of the Old Testament, it also seeks to vindicate an uncompromising stance on the possibility of a

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<sup>104</sup> Brewer, John D: *Anti-Catholicism in Northern Ireland, 1600-1998* (Macmillan Press, 1998), Introduction.

<sup>105</sup> Dr Jonathan McCormick, University of Ulster, Mural Directory available on CAIN (online resources compiled by the University of Ulster on Northern Ireland).

<sup>106</sup> Both of these are found in Belfast.

<sup>107</sup> Quoted from Deuteronomy, UVF mural painted on Blythe Street, Sandy Row, Belfast, August 1999, listed in the collection of photographs of murals compiled by Dr Jonathan McCormick.

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peace agreement through Protestant Fundamentalism. The UVF are effectively using the Old Testament as evidence that compromising their political convictions through a 'covenant', by seeking a power-sharing agreement, would be to compromise their Protestant faith. Given the Rev Ian Paisley's reluctance to join a power-sharing executive – a man who, as leader of the DUP (Democratic Unionist Party), heads the largest Unionist party in Northern Ireland today<sup>108</sup> – it would seem as if this passage from the Bible could be much quoted within his congregation.

The frequency of religious quotations on Unionist murals, such as 'the wicked shall be turned unto hell'<sup>109</sup>, or more modern incarnations of Old Testament sentiment such as 'we are the pilgrims, master; we shall go always a little further'<sup>110</sup> underlines the centrality of religious affiliation to the Protestant community's desire to retain political control, whilst simultaneously providing grounds for violent action. Nationalist demands for civil rights and genuine political representation within this channel of expression display political aspirations based on a rational premise. Given the evidence related to socio-economic discrimination and ethnic discrimination based on supremacist ideology discussed in chapters two and three, there would appear to be considerable reason to suggest such arguments may have foundation. Why then, does there seem to be amongst Loyalists, such a concentrated campaign of anti-Catholic vitriol within this channel of expression? As evidence in this chapter will attempt to demonstrate, Loyalist desires to seek vindication through religious conviction alludes to the fundamental weaknesses of their political convictions within the confines of rational debate. By expressing the primacy of religious convictions as a justification for continued conflict and division, the weaknesses concerning the validity of their political convictions are exposed.

For a proportion of Chechen Separatists, a fundamentalist strain of Islam also acts as justification for terrorist crimes that also fall beyond the boundaries of conventional military, or guerrilla, actions. Many others involved in both the Chechen and Northern Ireland conflicts, such as the majority of Irish Republicans and ethnic-Russians, do not apply their religious convictions as relevant to the conflicts they participate in. This does little to diminish the role religion plays within both conflicts, as the centrality of religious beliefs as a barrier to peace is assured by the ferocity of violent action undertaken, under the banner of religion, by those individuals who believe their religious convictions, a revealed 'truth', cannot be compromised. There is also the historical significance of religion within the conflicts to consider. In the case of ethnic-Russians, their generally moderate contemporary religious convictions, or secularism, does not reduce the

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<sup>108</sup> As of September, 2006.

<sup>109</sup> Psalms 9-17, Mural on Windmill Road, County Down, Jan 2003.

<sup>110</sup> UVF mural painted in 1996, Mersey Street, East Belfast. A quote from *The Journey to Samarkand* by James Elroy Flecker, although the writer of the mural may be more familiar with the quote as an SAS (Special Air Services) motto.

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importance of religious convictions to the conflict, as their long-held fear of Islamic fundamentalism spreading through Russia's 'near abroad' ensures religious hostility and distrust. Furthermore, Russian Nationalism was initially fostered on the perception that it was a defence of the Russian Orthodox Church, further underlining religions' relevance to both sides of the conflict. Russian Orthodox influence within Russia has also reasserted itself considerably since the collapse of the Soviet Union, inevitably reviving historical anti-Muslim sentiment within Russia. As evidence will clarify, the Protestant community in Northern Ireland possessed similar fears towards Catholicism and what 'rule from Rome' may entail. Within these conflicts, a deep-seated fear of the religious convictions of the perceived 'enemy' may be as instrumental to the maintenance of a stratified society as their own religious convictions.

For ethnic Russians in Chechnya, fearing the influence of Islamic Fundamentalism within the proposed separatist state alternative to Russian rule is not unfounded. Any Christian or secular-minded individual would feel distinctly uncomfortable with the concept of Sharia law. Terrorist crimes committed by Chechen separatist forces convince the Russian public that the Islamic fundamentalist presence within the movement would effectively prevent ethnic Russians from living in Chechnya should their separatist struggle be successful. The Jamestown Foundation<sup>111</sup> questioned the former President of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria (separatist leader), A H Sadulayev<sup>112</sup>, on the 9<sup>th</sup> July 2005, to attempt to determine what path a future independent state may take. Sadulayev claimed that the state would be based on the constitution adopted by Mashkadov in 1992. Certainly Mashkadov, whilst bowing to certain fundamentalist demands in attempt to retain a unified separatist stance, was no extremist. He begins the interview by underlining his position in regards to terrorism by claiming that 'terrorist methods are unacceptable' – he highlights the fact there has been no terrorist incident for two years, since Beslan. He feels the state 'should reflect the Islamic essence of the Chechen people' but speaks of embracing all religions-'the main principles of humanity that are found in the Koran, the Gospels and the Torah'.

Sadulayev talked of a pluralistic approach to those with differing religious convictions by stressing that 'people who have such values, such norms, can find a common language'. Within this model for governance, a large section of people, secularists, have been dismissed. When asked what the term 'infidel' means to him, he states that it is a 'person without values' – in other words, a person without faith. It is also highly dubious as to whether a state that reflected the 'essence' of Islam could truly claim to embrace all religions. Furthermore, the state Sadulayev

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<sup>111</sup> The Jamestown Foundation produces a weekly newspaper on issues surrounding the conflict and publishes papers from academics, such as John Dunlop, who specialise in issues relating to the conflict.

<sup>112</sup> Assassinated by pro-Russian forces on 17th June, 2006.

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envisaged clearly rejects those without faith. Within a state that has the 'essence' of Islam as its guiding principle, what would be the fate of the 'infidels' he speaks of? The Koran's suggestion on the treatment of infidels quoted earlier in the chapter should induce apprehension amongst atheists, or secularists, within Chechnya. Sudulayev, who could have been described as relatively moderate in his Islamic political convictions in comparison with some of his associates, fails to consider the construction of a secular state as a positive vision, defining 'values' as being exclusively restricted to those people of particular religious persuasions. There can be no doubt that Islamic values would receive a position of primacy within such proposals and, in order for the 'essence' of Islam to be reflected in the state, it will be reflected in its laws. The Chechen Resistance Defence and Justice Ministries are named the Sharia Council for State Defence and the Supreme Sharia Court of the CRI respectively. This seems to contradict Sadulayev's desire to embrace all religions, as it is impossible to enact Islamic law and claim to be acting in the interests of all. In this respect, Christian Ethnic Russians and, particularly, 'infidels'/secularists of all ethnicities have legitimate concerns and understandable fears.

Attempts to retain a more secular vision for the proposed Chechen state by moderate Muslim leaders within the separatist movement have been consistently undermined by the more radical, fundamentalist elements. The need to unify the Chechen people to resist Russian control and retain a fighting force capable of continuing guerrilla operations against pro-Russian forces has only been achievable through the support of the Chechen highlanders. The deeply religious Chechen highlanders contrast considerably with their urbanised, sovietised, largely secular lowland neighbours<sup>113</sup>. When General Dudayev declared Chechen independence, it was principally to fulfil his Nationalist aspirations for the state. He wanted to repeat the success of the Baltic States in declaring independence, taking advantage of the historical opportunity that seemed to present itself following the collapse of Soviet power. For the largely secular-minded lowlands, a strong Nationalist message was needed. For the more militant and Muslim Chechen Highlanders, whose support was essential in any planned military campaign, Dudayev had to 'play both ethnic and religious cards'<sup>114</sup>.

Aslan Maskhadov, President of Chechnya (1996-99) during its brief period of independence, was also deemed to be a 'moderate' Muslim within the separatist movement. Maskhadov's desires for independence and democratic governance, as his convincing win over Basayev in the 1996 elections for president contends to, was more akin to the desires of the majority of Chechens, than the radical Shariat alternative envisaged by many of his deputies, whose support

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<sup>113</sup> Seely, p115.

<sup>114</sup> Seely, p115.



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was largely confined to the devout Muslim heartlands of the Chechen Highlands. But like Dudayev before him, Maskhadov could not maintain his power without the support of religious radicals and this, in turn, created enemies – Chechens willing to collaborate with pro-Russian forces in the largely secular lowlands. Despite repeatedly condemning the likes of Basayev and Khattab for their terrorist atrocities and attempting to distance himself from the fundamentalist wing responsible, Maskhadov's reliance on radical support ensured they had positions in government<sup>115</sup>. Despite his attempts to implement a constitution that promised to respect all ethnicities, religions and cultural freedoms, Maskhadov was persuaded by his deputies that the application of Shariat law was the only way to restore order in a society of 100,000 unemployed, and armed, young men<sup>116</sup>. Maskhadov's continued attempts to attain international recognition for Chechnya were continually undermined by displays of overt Islamic fundamentalism, such as public executions or enforcing Islamic dress code, by elements of his regime. Dudayev and Maskhadov attempted to unify Chechens with aspirations for independence through the inclusion of the militant Islamic Fundamentalist Chechen minority. Such a policy ensured diminishing influence for the 'moderate' Chechen majority, with the more radical strain of Islam reasserting its political control as crisis levels escalated. Historically, in Chechnya and elsewhere, this has always been the case. Moderate religious-political collusion with Fundamentalist ideology will invariably result in a radicalised policy agenda. There is no rational, reasoned debate that can persuade fundamentalist adherents to deviate from what they perceive to be the divine will, as they have rejected rational objectivity as a concept.

It was the alliance of Khattab and Baseyev that essentially ended the brief period of Chechen independence following Chechen victory in the First Chechen War. The determination of Khattab and Baseyev to act against the wishes of the moderate majority and attempt to escalate the conflict into a region-wide jihad against Russia through military incursions into Daghestan, provided Russia with the perfect excuse to reinvade Chechnya – although Russia's retaliation was always a question of 'when' rather than 'if' they would strike. Having already established Chechen independence, their sole reason for the incursions was to comply with Jihad-inspired doctrine that recognised no borders between Muslims – they were executing what was perceived to be a divine will that contradicted a rational policy direction. The decision to 'take the war to the Russians'<sup>117</sup> was the disastrous position pursued by the fundamentalist minority that led to Russia's 'total war' of 1999, with devastating consequences for the Chechen people and their hopes of national self-determination. It is the clearest demonstration of the impossibility of

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<sup>115</sup> Basayev was Prime Minister under Maskhadov for 6 months and his Commander in Cheif. BBC World Service Archive, Profiles, July 1997.

<sup>116</sup> The Jamestown Foundation: Press Release from Maskhadov on the 3rd September, 1997. This justification was given as a response to the public execution of a couple earlier that week.

<sup>117</sup> Baseyev: Quoted from Baseyev's obituary in The Guardian, written by Johnathan Steele, 2006.

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pursuing a rational political direction whilst attempting to accommodate religious fundamentalists. It was the actions of the Fundamentalists that transformed religion from a source of strength within the separatist movement – the determination of many Chechens to resist derives from their faith – to its biggest weakness.

Some theorists, such as Ahmad Moussalli<sup>118</sup>, have attempted to make a distinction between Moderate and Radical Islamic Fundamentalism and have tried to demonstrate why Islamic rule can reflect both modernism and fundamentalism. Moussalli argues that knowledge, to a fundamentalist, is 'an act of belief' but to a modernist 'belief is an act of knowledge'. It is from this rational foundation that he concludes that 'the absence of either leads to imbalance' but 'any valid modernist reinterpretation must be a modern restatement of authenticity'. By authenticity, he is referring to revelation, not science. In other words, in Moussalli's vision of an ideal Islamic State that has accommodated modernity there remains no human knowledge, no scientific revelation, that could ever redefine the rigid, immutable 'truth' that can be found in the Qu'ran. Christian Fundamentalist insistence in the literal 'truth' of the bible involves a similar rejection of 'modernist' knowledge. The fact that knowledge can only be valid if it is a restatement of belief demonstrates the supremacy of revelation over science within fundamentalist ideology – a supremacy, leading to irrational decision-making, that will re-assert itself within any political arena that attempts to accommodate it, instead of rejecting it.

The influence of religion as a contributor to violent conflict, whilst prevalent in both conflicts, is more prevalent within what could be described as the (formally) state-aligned dominant ethnic group in Northern Ireland but in Chechnya, the opposite is the case – where extreme theocratic, political convictions are held by many of the oppressed, as opposed to the oppressors. Whilst Northern Ireland has never fallen under the category of theocratic governance, prior to 1972 the state displayed elements of what Ayatollah Khomeini described as 'theocratic guardianship'<sup>119</sup> – a desire to 'redirect the political will so as to align it with the will of God'. The creation of a 'Protestant State' must be construed as a form of theocratic guardianship. This would also serve as a more accurate definition for those within the Chechen Separatist movement whose religious convictions shape political direction, as evidence should confirm. The insistence by elements of the Chechen Separatist movement on theocratic influence within government and legal institutions has ensured its incompatibility with Russian demands for centuries. The conflict in the Caucasus originally began with Russia's insistence on a similar form of 'theocratic guardianship' to protect Russian Orthodox values.

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<sup>118</sup> Moussalli, Ahmad S.: *Moderate and Radical Islamic Fundamentalism* (University Press of Florida, 1999), p15.

<sup>119</sup> A position defined within Scruton, Roger: *Dictionary of Political Thought* (Pan Reference, 1983).

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Before embarking on detailed analysis of religion's contribution to conflict within a contemporary context, it would be of value to consider the historical events and movements that have such played such pivotal role, in the development of current religious-political convictions within both conflict situations. Whilst the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church was greatly reduced in Russian society by Sovietism, its historical significance – involving a desire to spread the zone of influence and control of territory under the Russian Orthodox Church and state, and a determination to halt the spread of Islam amongst the southern territories of the Russian Empire's extended borders – was that it initiated a violent struggle with continual tensions and hostilities that have plagued the region for over two hundred years. Nationalist ideologues will rarely question their continued allegiance to a particular movement once it has been firmly established – such is the nature of a mass movement requiring unquestioned loyalty. The fact that within its modern incarnation, the Russian Nationalists have, in many cases, little or no affiliation to the Orthodox church does not restrict the church's influence on the current conflict. As without the initial zealousness and fanaticism provided by the Orthodox Church, Russian aspirations and continued support within the populace to control the Caucasus may never have existed. It was partially the influence of the Orthodox Church that led the majority of ethnic Russians to fear and despise the Muslim ethnic groups within their extended borders.

The 'intoxicating vision'<sup>120</sup> preached to ethnic Russians during the 15<sup>th</sup> century by the Russian Orthodox Church was of a nation with a 'special and exclusive mission to fulfil in the world'<sup>121</sup> – expanding the power and influence of Russia and the Orthodox Church was a divine mission that Russians had to fulfil. The church was an essential feature of Russian Imperialist ambitions – no empire can be built without armies or taxes and the Russian people, instilled with religious zeal, were convinced of the validity of their vocation. Moscow became known as 'The Third Rome'<sup>122</sup> and Russians came to believe that the responsibility for the preservation and expansion of the Christian faith was theirs by God's will. At the same time, Russia clearly identified the greatest threat to their divine mission:

'The ancient city of Rome has broken away from the glory and faith of Christ because of its pride and ambition. In the new Rome, which has been the city of Constantinople, the Christian faith will also perish through the violence of the sons of Hagar (Muslims). In the third Rome, which will be the land of Rus, the grace of the Holy Spirit will shine forth. Know then...that all Christians will finally unite into one Russian realm because of its Orthodoxy.'<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Hosking, Geoffrey: *Russia and the Russians* (Harvard University Press, 2005), p107.

<sup>121</sup> Hosking, p107.

<sup>122</sup> The principle of The Third Rome came from clergymen in Novrograd at the end of the 15th century.

<sup>123</sup> Gerasimov, Legend of the White Cowl, cited in Hosking, p103.

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The geographical position of the Caucasus, as well as being of primary importance in terms of trade, ensured that it effectively became the 'front-line' for this clash of faiths. Expressing Imperialist ambitions as being a defence of the Orthodox faith was a powerful message for the Russian public. The state relied on this, often volatile, alliance with the church to undertake a massive expansion of power into neighbouring territories that, in turn, increased the church's power and influence. For a state that wished to acquire territory that contained such a multitude of ethnicities, a powerful unifying factor was essential. Nationalism cannot grow without mass participation – a shared feeling of belonging through harbouring a collective sense of beliefs and values.

Within a 20<sup>th</sup> century context, the 'intoxicating vision' that was designed to unite all ethnicities under one state was expressed as Sovietism. The traditional enemy of the Russian people, the Muslims in the Caucasus, were once again a target for destruction. As Broxup<sup>124</sup> has commented, the 'predominant role of the Sufi orders' in the political, military, cultural and social life of the country 'set them up as competitors' to the ideology expressed within communism. Sufism in the Caucasus, a form of Islam that involved a rigid clan-based loyalty system that professed allegiance to the local mullah, was incompatible with the form of communism demanded by the Soviet state. Broxup has noted that it was not the principles of communism that were incompatible with the cultural traditions of the Caucasus – the principle of equality already thrived there – but its 'godlessness'<sup>125</sup>. As a consequence of this incompatibility, Russia once again<sup>126</sup> experimented with genocide to fulfil its Imperialist agenda and preservation of control within its extended borders, culminating with Stalin's deportation of the entire Muslim population and one of the largest acts<sup>127</sup> of 'ethnic cleansing' recorded in history. Once again, the failure to adhere to the uniformity required in mass movements induced bloody reprisals on those who fail to conform.

For a strong sense of Nationalism to establish itself, such values must foster powerful emotions, induce mass participation and rigid, unquestioned loyalty. Kecmanovic<sup>128</sup>, in a detailed account of the causes and mechanisms associated with the spread of Nationalism, highlights several characteristics underpinning the successful appropriation of a Nationalist identity. Selecting what could be perceived as the most influential of the characteristics listed<sup>129</sup> – mass

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<sup>124</sup> Broxup, Marie: in *The North Caucasus Barrier: The Russian Advance Towards the Muslim World* (Hurst, 1992), Introduction.

<sup>125</sup> Samurskii, a Muslim National Communist leader in the 1920's before the Soviet Union launched the attack on Islam that was to witness the deportation of the entire population. Cited in Broxup, p7.

<sup>126</sup> Peter the Great provides a former example.

<sup>127</sup> The Holocaust being the largest act of ethnic cleansing in history.

<sup>128</sup> Kecmanovic, Dusan: *The Mass Psychology of Ethno-Nationalism* (Plenum Press, 1996).

<sup>129</sup> Kecmanovic, p102.

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behaviour, a feeling of power, deindividuation<sup>130</sup>, the need of all people forming a crowd to obey a leader, the lowering of mental abilities, 'groupthink' and an intensification of emotional reaction – it becomes clear how effectively, religious convictions can assist such a process. Religious and Nationalist leaders both increase their political power and influence by manipulating humanity's most primitive fears and weaknesses. Religion, like Nationalism, is a mass phenomenon. If a religion failed to be a mass phenomenon, it would have failed to surpass the status of a cult. Kecmanovic centres on the fundamental behavioural characteristics of mass movements and applies them to Nationalism:

'Anti-Individualism, a call for uniformity, a low tolerance level for any different attitude or view, the degradation of the rational, oversimplification, diminished personal responsibility, highly polarised mental energy, a readiness to act out, and so on.'

All such traits can be readily observed within religious practices and institutions. Monotheistic religions begin with the pretence that there is no other God other than the one that has revealed himself within their sacred book, and all other sacred books contain lies or, at best, half-truths. The true acceptance of people of other faiths, or no faith, ends there. An individual who believes the literal truth of any monotheistic religion will have a low tolerance level for any differing belief, as any true believer is convinced of his/her own books' authenticity. The ability to formulate opinions and views that may contradict the tenets 'revealed' within the sacred book is impossible, as the perceived wisdom of a divine entity cannot be questioned. Monotheistic religious practices in their more fundamentalist forms, undoubtedly call for a level of uniformity – the alternative is eternal damnation for those who deviate from such beliefs – that limits rational objectivity. Diminished personal responsibility and deindividuation are by-products of the acceptance of convictions and values that are not a consequence of personal, rational deliberation.

Comparisons between religion and nationalism in terms of a mutual 'degradation of the rational', requires a more detailed explanation. For this, Herman Philipse<sup>131</sup> provides a convincing argument as to why faith 'transcends reason'. Strangely, it is a fact that many religious people are inclined to agree with. Many believers remain content within the notion that their faith does 'transcend rationality' but we, as humans, cannot fathom God's ways. As anyone who has witnessed a devout Christian talk openly of Islam, an acceptance of theories that 'transcend rationality' does not extend to other non-rational elements within alternative faith models – they approach such alternative theories with scorn and derision, dismissing their fantastical notions as

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<sup>130</sup> Deindividuation is the process of losing ones personal identity. Janis, 1982, cited in Kecmanovic, p106.

<sup>131</sup> Philipse, p117.

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'impossible'. Philipse contends that 'within the province of reason', there can only be two 'mutually inclusive fields of procedure'. He terms these procedures 'explanation by justification' and 'justification by explanation', using Christianity to illustrate his theory. 'Explanation by justification' is the method of proving God's invisible nature from the 'things God made'<sup>132</sup>. The second approach, 'justification by explanation', was championed by Luther who rejected Paul's approach by saying that 'the things God made' does not refer to the natural world but to Christ on the Cross and revelations within the Bible. This, Philipse states, is a paradox:

'But, of course, Christ and Revelation cannot provide religiously neutral or 'natural' premises for a proof of God's existence, since, in order to interpret the historical Jesus as Christ, as well as the books of the Bible as revelations, we have to endorse Christian faith in the first place'.

The same is true of any other of the monotheistic religions. Religious belief entails the 'degradation of the rational' by its rejection of the burden of proof. The aspects of religion that 'transcend factuality', such as miracles, virgin births, winged-horses carrying prophets to heaven etc..., cannot fall within the province of reason. For this reason, individuals should express the values that their religion encompasses in purely secularist terminology within the political sphere, accepting that their personal convictions regarding the nature of God are, in the absence of proof, unsubstantiated. The freedom to practice one's personal religious convictions need not be hampered in any way by a secular state. It is preposterous to suggest that, even within a country where the majority hold similar personal religious convictions, the political freedoms of secularists, or those who wish to practice alternative religious convictions, should be curtailed by a set of propositions for which no evidence can exist. An individual can feel inspired by a particular value system incorporated within religious doctrine and aim to live his own life according to such values, but there is no logical tenet within such value systems that cannot be expressed in secular terms politically. It is illogical, considering how much we have come to know through knowledge-based reasoning that dismisses the validity of much of what was once considered immutable religious 'truths'<sup>133</sup>, to contend that religious convictions can still be considered irrefutable, absolute 'truths'. An interpretation of religious values that rejects those people who fail to accept a particular version of a perceived 'revealed truth' and the irrational nature of resulting actions that surpass personal conviction, infecting the public domain by defining political movements, not only assist in creating conflict situations but prolong and intensify them – not least within the two conflicts that form the basis of my analysis.

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<sup>132</sup> He uses Paul's epistle to the Romans (1:20) to illustrate this theory in practice.

<sup>133</sup> The Christian claim that the world was made in seven days serves as an example.

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As Schumpeter, Plato and numerous others have said, a pre-requisite for successful governance is rational discourse. It is impossible to debate rationally if one starts from an irrational premise. The most powerful irrational tendency within religious or ethno-nationalist ideology is to define individuals, who may in the absence of such ideology be similar to the accuser, as an enemy. Even those professing 'moderate' religious or racist convictions will talk of 'tolerance' towards those of a differing religious affiliation or ethnicity. Clearly, in the interests of conflict resolution, it would be beneficial for everyone to consider each other simply as people, within the boundaries of equality. Religious or racial 'toleration' fails to accept such an assumption of equality. Religion or racial toleration may not involve a permanent state of conflict, but it entails a permanent readiness for conflict by stratifying the value of individuals according to faith or ethnicity – 'toleration' involves a permanent state of division. 'Toleration' is not the language of fundamentalist ideology, but an expression of moderate religious discourse. As evidence should suggest, moderate religious affiliation is of primary importance in assessing how a fundamentalist ideology can achieve a position of dominance and how 'toleration' can be interpreted as contributing to conflict and division.

Kecmanovic talks of a 'readiness to act out' amongst mass movements indoctrinated by nationalist sentiment. When religious zeal becomes intertwined with nationalist sentiment, a 'readiness to act out' can rapidly become an obligation to anyone who professes to be active within a particular faith. On the 28<sup>th</sup> of September 1912, Sir Edward Carson<sup>134</sup> signed a Covenant with God on behalf of the Protestant people of Northern Ireland – on a table draped in the Union Jack – stating they would fight for the survival of the Protestant faith in Ulster<sup>135</sup>. Reaffirming Brewster's depiction of Protestants conceiving Ulster as a 'sacred entity' and its protection as their religious vocation, this act symbolises an amalgamation of religious and political convictions – a union of church and state. When the Orange Order talked of the defence of the Protestant faith and culture, it referred, as a consequence of this union of religious and political convictions, to the defence of the Protestant State. A fundamentalist strain of Protestantism had taken a rejection of equality based on religious conviction to the only conclusion that such an assumption of worth could entail – a stratification of an individual's value dictated by perceived enlightenment and God's will. Thus, an abstract, unverifiable, yet insurmountable barrier to conflict resolution had been erected by discarding the principle of equality from the foundations of the Northern Ireland State.

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<sup>134</sup> Carson was the original leader of the Ulster Volunteer Force, amassing a private army of volunteers of over 100,000 men.

<sup>135</sup> This act is still celebrated on street murals throughout Ulster's Protestant areas (particularly the Shankill) today.

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It is the obligation individuals feel to defend a particular faith that Russians have acknowledged as one of the biggest barriers to their control of the Caucasus. Within Northern Ireland, Protestant Fundamentalism provided the zeal and determination to maintain a rigid, uncompromising system of governance. In Chechnya and in much of the surrounding region, the Sufi Tariqat, or 'religious path', has provided the determination to resist ethnic Russian military invasions for over 200 years. As Sebastian Smith has noted, Sufism has greatly contributed to providing the strength to maintain a powerful sense of unity in the face of oppression and overwhelming Russian military might since Tsarist times;

'The tightly knit groups which gather everywhere, and still gather, to perform the Zikr simultaneously reinforced the disciples' feelings of ethnic brotherhood and religious purity. Psychologically, the Sufi disciples practicing the Zikr were perfectly equipped for battle. Many were unafraid to die, because they felt close to Allah, and their training in the brotherhood had prepared them to act as a group, with the discipline vital to fighting. This was true when Mansur<sup>136</sup> launched the Naqshabandi Tariqat...and it was true in the 1990's conflict in Chechnya'.<sup>137</sup>

The greatest source of unity and determination amongst Sufi fighters, their religious devotion, may also provide a major source of willingness amongst other 'godless' Chechens to collaborate with Russian forces. 'La ilaha ill Allah', the prayer at the beginning of the Zikr meaning 'there is no God but Allah', does not suggest a politically inclusive vision for any proposed future state. As Sadulayev's comments earlier in the chapter indicate, most Chechen Separatists fight not only for a Chechen state, but a state that reflects 'the essence of Islam'. It is how 'the essence of Islam' is interpreted politically – how Islam would be reflected within a proposed future state – that remains of central importance for Chechens and Russians alike. Fear relating to the religious implications of conceding political dominance is relevant in both conflicts. It could be claimed that a similar fear of the social implications of Catholicism within a United Ireland – embodied in the slogan 'Home Rule is Rome Rule' – amongst Protestant Ulsterman was not entirely without foundation given the Catholic Church's considerable influence in the Irish Republic. The extent of Islamic influence in a proposed future state also remains of pivotal significance to the international community, influencing how it may respond to future conflict in the region. For those Chechens who are non-religious, a state that reflects the 'essence of Islam' may seem more oppressive than Russian rule. Furthermore, a state that reflects 'the essence of Islam' maybe misconstrued internationally, and within Russia, as something more fanatical than the majority of Chechen separatists envisage – especially if such fears are inflamed by Russian propaganda –

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<sup>136</sup> Mansur was a religious leader and Chechen Separatist fighter in the 1850's.

<sup>137</sup> Smith, Sebastian: *Allah's Mountains – Politics and War in the Russian Caucasus* (I.B. Tauris Publishing, 1998), p40.



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limiting external involvement. Shamil, the greatest Chechen Resistance leader of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, lost popularity among a proportion of the Chechens and people of Daghestan 'because of the severity of his religious prescriptions'<sup>138</sup>. The descendants of Shamil who led the resistance against Soviet rule in the 1920's found themselves pitted against several thousand 'Red Partisans'<sup>139</sup> – Chechens who fought with the Communists, believing its ideology to be a better reflection of their customs and traditions than Islamic fanaticism. There seems little doubt that enthusiasm amongst non-religious or religiously 'moderate' Chechens for the current separatist struggle will be similarly affected, with a proportion of the Chechen population disassociated from Chechen Separatist ideology by elements of its leadership's insistence on an allegiance to theocratic governance.

Many Chechen Muslims would be opposed to the concept of theocratic governance or any form of political Islam as it contradicts the traditionally moderate character of Sufi Islam adhered to by most Muslims in the region. It was only in the late 1980's, when Soviet rule became less oppressive, that the 'Salafis', or fundamentalists, held any significant influence within the region in the modern era, as they received considerable support from abroad and could operate more openly<sup>140</sup>. Naumkin contends that those who wished to establish the 'Saudi school of Sunnism' (Wahhabism) have been largely unsuccessful and that most influential Muslims in the region that he interviewed do not adhere to 'the Saudi books that are based on the idea of a strong link between Islam and power'<sup>141</sup>. It would seem more accurate – and more logical, given Wahhabi adherents consider Sufi mysticism as tantamount to blasphemy – to conclude that radical Islamic teaching in its most modern reincarnation within Chechnya has adherents amongst the younger generation of Chechen separatists but the vast majority of Chechens have retained their traditional Sufi faith – and are consequently unsupportive of theocratic governance. There seems to be considerable debate throughout the region – particularly between traditionalists and younger, more radical elements<sup>142</sup> – as to the relationship between Islam and the state within Sufi teaching. It is consequently hard to predict the proposed states' future ideological direction. The strength of Sufi practices in the region does expose the inaccuracies in Russian claims of all Chechen Separatists being a collection of Wahhabi fanatics (fighting alongside foreign Arabs). This image was made possible by the divisive influence of Khattab (who was a Wahhabi fanatic and a foreign Arab) and Baseyev within the Chechen movement in the late 1990's. The alliance

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<sup>138</sup> Henze, Paul B.: 'Circassian Resistance to Russia' in *The North Caucasus Barrier: The Russian Advance Towards the Muslim World* (Hurst Publications, 1992), p98.

<sup>139</sup> Broxup estimates that there were at least 10,000 Red Partisans fighting for the Soviet forces.

*The Last Ghazawat: The 1920-1921 Uprising in The North Caucasus Barrier: The Russian Advance Towards the Muslim World* (Hurst, 1992) p127.

<sup>140</sup> Naumkin, Vitaly V: *Radical Islam in Central Asia* (Rowan and Littlefield, 2005), p37.

<sup>141</sup> Imam Ibrahim quoted in Naumkin, p57.

<sup>142</sup> Naumkin, Chapter Two.

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of Baseyev and Khattab had disastrous consequences for secular and moderate Muslims within the Chechen Separatist movement, and for the Chechen people as a whole.

Insistence by some Chechen Separatist elements on a theocratic form of future governance not only diminishes hopes for positive political discourse with ethnic Russians – it ensures a permanent division amongst its own people. The amalgamation of religious and political convictions amongst Chechen Separatists creates partisan support for ethnic Russian rule, weakening Chechen Separatist aspirations both militarily and politically. The concept of an Islamic state and the theocratic fanaticism that inspired the most dramatic and barbaric acts against Russian civilians formally advocated within the movement by Chechen leaders such as Baseyev and Khattab, severely limits international sympathy for Chechnya's plight and, consequently, international political involvement. The absence of international pressure for Russia to cease its violent strategy due to claims of 'Al Qaeda-backed' separatists facilitates the puppet regimes' continuation and the perceived legitimacy of massive 'counter-terrorist' operations in the region. The fundamentalist dimension to Chechen Separatism has gifted Russia a valuable propaganda victory, distorting the conflict in the minds of ethnic Russians and the international community. Legitimate demands for Chechen independence and the crimes of the Russian occupying force have been buried under irrational acts of Islamic fanaticism – such as Beslan.

Many of the more fanatical Muslims who have occupied prominent military commands within the Chechen Separatist movement have also expressed a desire to create an Islamic 'Caliph' – an Islamic State uniting all the predominantly Muslim countries of the region. Such desires conflict with widely – held Chechen Nationalist aspirations and create further factionalism and division within the Chechen Separatist movement. Those in favour of the Caliph, who stress the 'Koran is the only constitution'<sup>143</sup> and that 'there can be no borders between Muslims' undermines conciliatory messages that insist there can be a future in Chechnya for non-Muslims, or Moderates who seek a largely secular separatist solution within the resistance movement.

Similarly, the strength and character of Protestant Fundamentalism in Ulster and its relationship with more moderate elements within the Unionist movement is a complex one. Reports indicating the diminishing influence of the Orange Order, expressed in a decline in attendance amongst the Protestant community of traditional Orange events such as the 'Glorious

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<sup>143</sup> Statement from the Jamaat of the Dagestani Mujahideen, 3rd October, 2003, Kavkaz Centre.

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12<sup>th</sup><sup>144</sup>, cannot be dismissed on the basis of a decline in religious adherents, demonstrated by the decline in church attendance within most of the developed world. The results of the World Values Survey<sup>145</sup> conducted by the University of Michigan in 1998 recorded a slight increase in church attendance in Northern Ireland from their previous three surveys; an almost unique occurrence within the developed world. Trends that express a decline in the influence of Orangism<sup>146</sup>, despite a rise in church attendance, should not be interpreted as a community that increasingly disassociates their religious convictions from the political arena, or a decline in radical Unionism. The UUP (Ulster Unionist Party), the traditional political representative of the Orange Order and the party of power during the years of 'The Protestant State' that survived until 1972, has been displaced as the largest party by the more radical alternative of Ian Paisley's DUP (Democratic Unionist Party) – a Protestant fundamentalist responsible, amongst other things, for denouncing Pope John Paul II as 'the anti-Christ' in the EU parliament<sup>147</sup> and playing an integral role in the establishment of the UVF (Ulster Volunteer Force), one of Ulster's largest Protestant paramilitary forces<sup>148</sup>. The DUP is now the largest party in Northern Ireland, gaining 70,000 more votes than its largest rival, Sinn Fein, at the 2005 general elections. As evidence would suggest, however, far from strengthening and unifying the Protestant community, this surge of support for a party that was established on Protestant fundamentalist principles and radical unionism, could forge a permanent division within its own ethnic group through the ideological alienation of moderates. Alternatively, Protestant fundamentalist influence will serve to radicalise 'moderate' convictions and, as in Chechnya, result in the marginalisation of secularist aspirations and ideology – a continued rejection, in other words, of non-sectarian 'issue-driven' politics.

The strongest indication of disillusionment with sectarian politics amongst moderates has been increasing voter apathy within a political environment dominated by sectarian parties. Turnout in the General elections has decreased from 810,000 votes in 2001 to 715,000 votes in 2005<sup>149</sup> – a decline of nearly 12%. Whilst Sinn Fein and the DUP are now the dominant parties, the overall support for sectarian parties has dropped substantially. Should such levels of disillusionment with sectarian politics amongst the Northern Irish electorate continue to increase, voter apathy may eventually give way to significant alternative non-sectarian electoral support. The Alliance party, the only major non-sectarian party in Northern Ireland, has not so far benefited from this trend<sup>150</sup>. In terms of the relationship between 'moderate' and fundamentalist religious convictions, statistics demonstrating a significant drop in electoral turnout following a

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<sup>144</sup> Marching to a Different Drum, The Guardian, July 12th, 2006.

<sup>145</sup> Research led by Ronald Inglehart, Department of Politics, University of Michigan, 1998.

<sup>146</sup> The Orange Order has lost a third of its members since 1965.

<sup>147</sup> 1988.

<sup>148</sup> Hugh Mclean, a member of the newly formed UVF, commented at his trial that he was 'terribly sorry he ever heard of that man Paisley or decided to follow him'. Cited in Farrell, Michael: *The Orange State* (Pluto Press, 1976).

<sup>149</sup> The Belfast Telegraph, May, 2005.

<sup>150</sup> The Alliance Party received only 3% of the vote at the 2005 General Election.

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revival of a party that overtly displays its fundamentalist influence are revealing. Those 'moderates' who may not be radicalised to the extent that they will express open electoral support to a party such as the DUP remain reluctant to oppose it.

A vote for Sinn Fein traditionally embodies a vote for Irish Nationalist, and formally socialist, sympathies as opposed to a 'defence' of Catholicism. Unionism, as evidence has suggested, has traditionally been positioned as the 'defence' of Protestantism in Ulster. The DUP has increased its electoral appeal by limiting the anti-Catholic vitriol that used to spill from its manifestos and rallies. The BNP (British National Party) have used similar tactics of fostering a more mainstream appeal by utilising an outwardly more moderate position. But as the BNP still retains the support of racists and extremists, the DUP continues to foster hatred and distrust through its focus on Protestant fundamentalism and division. The DUP partially draws its electoral strength from historical fears, prejudices and distortions pertaining to the nature of the Catholic Church and its intentions. Ian Paisley, the leader of the DUP, sees the defence of Protestantism as a Cromwellian struggle to stop the Catholic Church from taking over Ulster and Europe<sup>151</sup>. The insistence of the DUP in continuing to define the political division as a religious 'war waged in every sphere'<sup>152</sup> against the 'evil force' of Catholicism, severely restricts cross-community interaction and co-operation. The radical Protestant political dimension suggests that whatever political direction is proposed, the Catholic community will still be viewed as the 'enemy within' by many Ulster Protestants, solely on the basis of scriptural interpretation. The mainstream popularity of the DUP has not been achieved by the moderation of its principles. It is a revivalist movement gaining popularity through irrational religious convictions and fear:

' Let it be carefully noted, that every time the IRA/Sinn Fein has come under pressure, all the energies of the Roman Catholic Church are called into action to pressurise the government and concede more to them and save them...Now the Roman Church has been called once again. The (Catholic) Church sees the rise and renewal of resurrected traditional Unionism as a menace to IRA/Sinn Fein.'<sup>153</sup>

Claims to be a modernised, reformed party from the hate mongering of old are quickly dissipated by an admission that the DUP have 'resurrected' traditional Unionism. Indeed, the contents of this, and other, DUP speeches confirm that their current ideology is merely a 'renewal' of the old, as Paisley himself suggests. The determination to make no distinction

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<sup>151</sup> A position that dominates the essays and sermons available through Paisley's European Institute of Protestantism – [www.ianpaisley.org](http://www.ianpaisley.org)

<sup>152</sup> Paisley, Ian: Ulster Democratic Unionist Party Conference speech, 8th May, 2004

<sup>153</sup> Paisley, Ian: Ulster Democratic Unionist Party Speech, 8th May, 2004

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between the Catholic Church and the IRA leaves no confusion as to who they perceive is their enemy. The Catholic community's depiction as the enemy is not a status that can be removed by political dialogue or negotiation – for Protestant Fundamentalists, only a conversion to Protestantism would suffice. The fundamentalist strain of Protestantism within Ulster that refuses to disassociate political convictions from religious affiliation has parallels with forms of Islamic fundamentalism that can find no validity in any individuals' values that have not been defined within the context of God's 'revealed' direction, as defined by a particular interpretation of a sacred text – a rejection of rational objectivity as determined by independent, 'natural reasoning'. For no amount of political debate will dispel the fact that, for Protestant fundamentalists in Ulster, the Pope is the 'anti-Christ' and the Catholic community will go to hell for their 'unchristian'<sup>154</sup> ways. As the followers of a 'revealed truth', Protestant Fundamentalists in Ulster associate any deviation from the 'covenant' they made with God to protect Ulster from Catholicism as a deep betrayal of their religious convictions. The DUP sees itself as the protector of Carson's Covenant with God of 1912 stating 'The DUP has held firm to the Covenant it has made with you, the Ulster people'<sup>155</sup>.

Having accepted that a political struggle entails the defence, or propagation, of your religious values, it becomes impossible to conduct a political debate, or negotiated peace, independent of such values. Political ideology for the fundamentalist must reflect their chosen revelations and their interpretation of the 'revealed truth'. All monotheistic religions have a proportion of adherents who would refuse to deviate from this position. Naturally, there are more moderate strains of all such religions that, by their interpretation of the scriptures, do not act as a barrier to peaceful negotiation and co-habitation, either by adherents accepting their convictions as a personal choice, or by recognising that diversity of faith demands a separation of religious convictions from state affairs. Numerous modern examples of widespread ideological shifts within ethnic groups from moderate to fundamentalist religious conviction – Iran or Afghanistan serve as examples – demonstrate the extent such views, amongst believers, may be revised.

In Islam, for instance, Hourani<sup>156</sup> has noted that 'the exercise of human ethical judgement independent of revelation is permitted in the Qu'ran'. Muslim countries seeking a separation of religion from the state, such as Turkey, have recognised this interpretation as valid. This position, expressed within the Mu'tazalite approach to Qu'ranic interpretation, that 'God's justice depends

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<sup>154</sup> A prominent area of discussion within Paisley's Protestant Institute is the unchristian practices of Catholics.

<sup>155</sup> DUP Party Manifesto, 1997.

<sup>156</sup> Hourani, cited in Sachedina, Abdulaziz A: *Freedom of Conscience and Religion in the Qu'ran, Human Rights and the Conflict of Cultures* (South Carolina Press, 1988), p54.

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on the objective knowledge of good and evil as determined by reason<sup>157</sup> allows religion to co-exist separately from the state and political ideology, by the inclusion of a form of 'rational objectivism'<sup>158</sup> to belief structures. This interpretation has been widely accepted in many predominantly Sunni Muslim communities – although certainly not all<sup>159</sup>. The alternative to the Mu'tazalite position, according to Sachedina, is represented by the Ash'arite interpretation that rejects the concept of 'rational objectivism' on the following basis:

'Human responsibility is the result of the divine will known through revealed guidance. Values have no foundation but the will of God that imposes them...That means that ethical values are dependant on the determinations of the will of God expressed in the form of revelation, which is both eternal and immutable.'<sup>160</sup>

The Ash'arite position, described by Hourani as 'theistic subjectivism', encourages followers of a particular interpretation of the Qu'ran to consider their ideological positions as rigid and immovable as they view their assumptions as being directly attributable to God himself. An individuals' belief that his/her faith embodies 'eternal and immutable' certainty that reflects the will of God does not lend itself readily to compromise and negotiation with other faiths. As God's will is infallible, their position as a reflection of God's will becomes equally infallible. An extension of the ideological infallibility of divine will through theistic subjective interpretation is to attach a similar level of righteous certainty to actions taken on behalf of the defence of such beliefs – or a divine right of action. By an acceptance that everything happens 'as a result of God's will, without explanation or justification', it is possible for individuals who have embraced forms of theistic subjectivism to claim that their actions undertaken in defence of such beliefs are, like God, similarly unhindered by humanist interpretations of ethical boundaries – as to question their beliefs, and actions taken in respect of such beliefs, is as presumptuous as redefining God's will – God's will transcends human understanding and, consequently, humanitarian ethical conduct. Blowing up a school containing hundreds of children<sup>161</sup> may seem like a despicable act through humanitarian interpretation but if it is God's will, then who are we to question such actions, or those who instigate such actions on God's behalf?

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<sup>157</sup> Sachedina, p55.

<sup>158</sup> Hourani, quoted by Sachedina, p55.

<sup>159</sup> Saudi Arabia serves as an example of a predominantly Sunni Muslim country who have rejected Mu'tazilite Qu'ranic interpretation.

<sup>160</sup> Sachedina, p56.

<sup>161</sup> This relates to Beslan, although who actually blew up the school is open to question. Whilst the bombs surrounding the school were certainly the work of Chechens, their detonation might well have been the Russian Security forces.

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Theistic Subjectivism sets a dangerous precedent, in other words, because it attaches a divine right of action to human interpretations to what a particular sacred text may mean. Furthermore, it attaches unqualified certainty to scriptural interpretation that immediately dismisses alternative opinion as lacking the 'revealed guidance' that is perceived to define the interpretation of the revelations an individual adheres to. Theistic Subjectivism and a rejection of rational objectivity are observable in a proportion of adherents within all monotheistic religions. It undoubtedly contributes to a stratification of human worth that is dependant on an acceptance of a 'revealed truth'. Frequently, the actions of fundamentalists will no longer reflect a desire to convert those people who refute the validity of a particular 'revealed truth', as their sacred text may encourage, but will culminate in violence or death for unbelievers – as their sacred text, by an alternative interpretation, may also endorse.

Peaceful co-existence of divergent faiths demands rational objectivity. Catholic and Protestant confrontation and conflict was a widespread concern up until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century in both Europe and America, where violent confrontation as a result of confessional differences was a common occurrence. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, violent confrontation amongst Catholics and Protestants was confined, largely, to the north of Ireland – although sectarianism related to the conflict continues in parts of Scotland and certain English towns<sup>162</sup>. This reduction in global tensions is largely attributable, as John Wolffe<sup>163</sup> rightly contends, to the 'gradual disentangling of confessional difference from wider cultural and political factors', such as the expression of Nationalist ideology. In Wolffe's analysis of why such antagonisms continue unabated in Northern Ireland, however, it could be contended that he fails to recognise an important distinction between the two communities. Having talked of the ritual and symbolism 'permeated by biblical references' that reaffirms the Protestant communities' refusal to 'compromise with Catholics and Nationalists', and how the Protestant community share a sense of being 'specially favoured by God', he suggests there is a 'parallel Catholic mythology':

'The parallel Catholic mythology is fuelled by selective dwelling on grievances, such as Cromwell's massacres in 1649, and the famine of the 1840's, for which Protestants are held responsible, presenting a vision of Irish history as inherently Catholic.'

The first point to mention is that the respective 'traditions' in terms of the marching, pageantry and outward displays of national-religious loyalty differ enormously, not only in terms of content and what they represent, but also in terms of how long such traditions have been practiced for. Overt displays of Irish identity were illegal in Northern Ireland until the collapse of the Northern

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<sup>162</sup> Liverpool serves as an example.

<sup>163</sup> Wolffe, John: *Contentious Christians: Protestant-Catholic Conflict since the Reformation* (Manchester University Press, 2004).

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Ireland State in 1972, as the attacks by state forces and Protestants acting independently of the state on the peaceful Civil Rights marches of the 1960's, and the forced removal of an Irish Tricolour in Divis street, Belfast in 1964 contends to. The historical concept of two mutually antagonistic marching traditions is consequently inaccurate. When outward displays of Irish Nationalism and demands for Civil Rights began to be tolerated, the Catholic community focussed on the historical grievances of the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century to put their 20<sup>th</sup> century grievances into context – the context of continued oppression. Whilst portraying the Protestant community as oppressive, Irish Nationalism does not present a vision of Irish history as inherently Catholic – Irish Nationalism's most celebrated historical leader, Wolfe Tone, was a Protestant. Far from rejecting the Protestant community as Irish, the Catholic community were incredulous at the time of Carson's formation of UVF regiments in 1912, as to why the Protestant Irish wanted to identify themselves as British. Newspaper archives from Britain in the early 1920's seem similarly confused by the Protestant communities' loyalty to the UK, declaring that 'whether Orange or Green, they are Irish'<sup>164</sup>.

The Catholic marches do not 'symbolise the importance of different readings of religious history' in continued confrontation but symbolise protest, civil rights and Nationalist issues. The Protestant marches and pageantry, on the other hand, certainly symbolise how religious conviction can lead to continued confrontation as they celebrate Protestantism's continued dominance within the region – a political right bestowed on them, as their rituals and symbolism confirm, by God himself. As is the case with street murals, there are very few 'parallels' in terms of content and justification within this expression of sectarian division. The primacy of religious convictions as a justification for continued hostility and division within Northern Ireland is expressed through Protestant fundamentalism and endorsed throughout the wider Protestant community because they are attracted to elements of its ideology – such as the supremacist-racist element discussed in chapter two of this analysis, or because they feel an identity-based political model is most likely to secure socio-economic advantage and defend the interests of the community. The concept of two mutually antagonistic religious positions leads to a distorted portrayal of The Troubles. Only for Protestant fundamentalists could the conflict be described as primarily a 'religious war'. It is the scriptural interpretation of the Protestant Fundamentalists that stresses confessional incompatibility and declares its hatred of the Catholic community on the basis of its alternative interpretation of the scriptures. The two communities were drawn into violent conflict for very different reasons. As one of the most respected political commentators on The Troubles, Eamonn McCann<sup>165</sup>, once remarked:

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<sup>164</sup> The Guardian News Archive, 1921.

<sup>165</sup> McCann, Eamonn: *War and Peace in Northern Ireland* (Hot Press Books, 1998), p222.



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'What pitched the Catholic working class communities in which the (Republican) movement is rooted outside constitutional Nationalist politics and into militant republicanism was not mass conversion to a set of ideas or a conception of history, but more immediate and material considerations – the refusal of the state to concede equal citizenship, RUC and British Army brutality and murder, a corrupt legal system and so on.'

For many Ulster Protestants, their marching traditions represent a celebration of continued dominance and power that they have a sacred duty to defend. For Catholics in Ulster, such traditions represent protest and demands for social justice and equality. The radical transformation of the Catholic community, from peaceful to violent demands for social justice and equality, is directly attributable to the brutal repression and violent intimidation engineered by the state, and Loyalists acting independently of the state, who retained a defiant and unyielding response to legitimate demands.

In Northern Ireland, therefore, a section of the Protestant community undoubtedly maintain genuine religious convictions, interpreting the scriptures in such a way as to conclude that the Catholic community are permanent adversaries as enemies of God's will. Such an assumption, for the reasons suggested, has been championed by the wider community throughout this century to provide justification for discrimination and violence. Within a political environment where Northern Ireland's previous state policy has been exhaustively analysed and its inequality and discriminatory tactics laid bare, it is a testament to religions' ability to bypass rational debate that such exposure fails to transform the Protestant community's political convictions – expressed through an increased support for Paisley's DUP at the 2005 General Election – or lead to many within the community to fundamentally challenge how they wish to define themselves, as a community, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Fear of Sinn Fein becoming the largest party in Ulster played a major contribution to the resurgence of the DUP – the DUP made such fears the focal point of its election campaign in 2005, claiming to be the only party to prevent such a scenario. Continued support for Ian Paisley is unquestionably more about consolidating Unionist power, and anger at the speed of political change, rather than an expression of genuine religious conviction – interpreted by many Unionists as the capitulation of Unionism through concessions, as opposed to a period of transition to peaceful reconciliation. This theory is supported by the fact that roughly half of the Protestant community that regularly attend church belong to mainstream Protestant denominations as opposed to conservative Protestant denominations<sup>166</sup>. Having remained such a central feature of Unionism for so long, however, the psychological influence of Fundamentalist doctrine in perceiving the peaceful transition as capitulation to Nationalism and

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<sup>166</sup> Northern Ireland Social Attitudes Survey, 1992-93, The Third Report.

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Catholicism in the minds of many Unionists must retain significant influence in shaping such perspectives. The capacity for religious 'moderates' to become radicalised must also be considered.

Having established that the DUP received a vastly inflated proportion of the Protestant vote that does not genuinely reflect the levels of Protestant fundamentalism in Northern Ireland, it is tempting to dismiss the occurrence of a sizeable proportion of non-religious or nominal Protestants voting for a fundamentalist as merely a reflection of the communities' fear within a time of accelerated, co-ordinated British/Irish efforts to bring peaceful reconciliation and change. As Moloney and Pollock explained in the 1980's, it appeared the DUP vote had 'become a barometer of Protestant angst'<sup>167</sup>. This would seem an oversimplification. Independent observers have witnessed the destruction of IRA weapons and explosives. The IRA has pledged its support for a permanent end to hostilities – a position confirmed as a genuine stance by both the British and Irish governments. With the threat of violence at its lowest since the mid-1960's and the Nationalist community almost unanimously committed to the democratic process, it could seem inconsistent that the 'barometer of Protestant angst' should have been so significantly higher than at the height of The Troubles. In the elections of October 1974, the DUP managed to win only one seat with 8.5% of the vote. The combined 'radical Unionist' electoral support, including Vanguard, only accounted for 21.6% of the vote in 1974 – the bloodiest year of the conflict.

In 1974, all Unionist parties supported the concept of a 'Protestant State' – the radical Unionist vote advocated the use of, or excused, violent action to achieve this aim. The ideological progression from this previously almost universally accepted ethno-supremacist position within a proportion of Unionist voters is represented by the UUP who, albeit at the cost of over 60,000 votes at the 2005 General Election, acknowledged the need for genuine political representation for both communities to instigate a permanent cessation of hostilities. The DUP fiercely opposed the Anglo-Irish Agreement and the Good Friday Agreement – backed by all other major parties including the UUP. When Paisley talks of a Unionist majority backing the DUP, he expresses such support as 'the majority of Ulster Unionists having given the DUP custodianship of our province'. Such a statement carries connotations of 'majority dictatorship' as opposed to democratic governance. This can be seen as a refusal to discard the principles and ideology of a Protestant State, as it fails to accept democratic principles of a genuine representation in power for the minority ethnic group – as the UUP seemed to advocate by its support of the Good Friday Agreement, and the consequent acceptance of a 'north-south' dimension to governance in Northern Ireland. It could be said that the electoral rise of the DUP is representative of a

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<sup>167</sup> Moloney, Ed/ Pollak, Andy: *Paisley* (Poolbeg, 1986).

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pronounced ideological schism within Unionist mentality that previous political circumstance – a universally supported position of Protestant political dominance and permanent majority rule enforced by the power of the state – prevented from surfacing. Rather than a ‘barometer of angst’ the vote could be seen as, more accurately, a declaration of ideological conviction within a political environment that has reached a definitive crossroad, requiring an unequivocal political stance on the question of whether Northern Ireland must retain a ‘Protestant Parliament for a Protestant people’ and the future form of devolution within the province. The mass migration of UUP voters to DUP at the 2005 General Election largely consists of moderate Protestants who, in a time of relative peace, favoured greater levels of division over reconciliation, compromise and integration. An increasing number of moderate Protestants, through an insistence on a ‘greater emphasis on the East-West dimension’<sup>168</sup>, are advocating a form of devolution that is essentially a repeat of historical Northern Ireland Assemblies – an assembly that is only truly representative of the Protestant majority by a rejection of ‘north-south’ political initiatives. It could be argued that only a devolved government that recognised the validity of ‘north-south’ political initiatives within the Northern Ireland Assembly, as the Good Friday Agreement supports, could claim to be politically inclusive. By increasingly rejecting the position of the UUP, the majority of Unionists refused to concede to this form of devolution. Such a rejection, given the majority of Unionists have a moderate religious affiliation, is primarily motivated by British nationalist, not religious, aspirations.

The language of the party they support – the DUP – continues to express such principles in Protestant Fundamentalist terms. In Paisley’s speech to the DUP conference in 2004, he states ‘the Roman church sees the rise and renewal of resurrected traditional Unionism as a menace to IRA/Sinn Fein’, reiterating his long-held belief in a ‘papal conspiracy’ being central to the conflict – a view that surely cannot be genuinely shared by the majority of his ‘moderate’ Protestant supporters. It would appear to be a relatively common phenomenon, for predominantly moderate religious adherents to lend their political support to what is essentially, being led by Ian Paisley, a ‘Fundamentalist’ political agenda. As in many conflicts around the world that possess a religious dimension, it is the inability of moderate political forces to assert themselves over their often smaller, but fanatical, counterparts that ensures the primacy of religion in conflict – and conflicts’ continuation. An inability amongst ‘moderates’ to assert themselves could also be construed as a lack of will as a consequence of fostering similar ideological sympathies, if not ‘beliefs’, than that of their fundamentalist counterparts. Moderates may also recognise the value in collusion with Fundamentalism as a means to further their cause. As Sam Harris<sup>169</sup> reasons:

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<sup>168</sup> A campaign pledge within the DUP Manifesto, 2005.

<sup>169</sup> Harris, Sam: *The End of Faith, Religion, Terror and the Future of Reason* (The Free Press, 2006), p45.

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'Religious moderates are, in large part, responsible for the religious conflict in our world, because their beliefs provide the context in which scriptural literalism and religious violence can never be adequately opposed.'

Approximately eighty per cent of the world's population claim some form of religious allegiance<sup>170</sup>. With such a significant proportion of the world's population adhering to one religion or another, we should not be greatly surprised that fundamentalist forms of religion continue to re-surface in almost every continent of the globe. It has been noted that the rise of political extremism is often closely linked to negative socio-economic trends such as poverty, wealth disparity, underdevelopment and unemployment. Religious extremism, as its massive popularity amongst many of the richer elements of wealthy countries such as Saudi Arabia and the United States is testament to, is capable of attaining powerful support, irrespective of the socio-economic conditions that prevail. With such a high proportion of the world claiming allegiance to one god or another, the ability for powerful political leaders to manipulate people's faith to attain a position of primacy is high. It could be contended that anyone who will, to varying degrees, entertain the concept of faith transcending rationality is a potential recruit for the total – as opposed to the partial – rejection of rational objectivism. All fundamentalist religious revivals require skilful manipulators of mass hysteria and reactionary agendas to establish a power base. Through a skilful political manipulation of conservative evangelicalism in the United States, Christian 'values' are now synonymous with patriotism and the expansion of American economic interests. As Michael Northcott<sup>171</sup> explains:

'Only by interiorising and privatising the spiritual and social ethic of Christianity, by domesticating it, could the Christian faith be allied with American civil religion and turned toward the service of American neo-liberalism and imperialism and its sacrificial cult.'

The success in the establishment of 'fundamentalist' ideals within such diverse socio-economic structures is testament to the levels of mass manipulation made possible through an absence of rationality in ideological constructs. The House of Saud and its original conquest over the area that is now Saudi Arabia serves as an example of Islamic Fundamentalism being used to manipulate public support for an individual's political ambitions. It could be said the United States serves as an example of Protestant Fundamentalism being used to manipulate public support for the pursuit of aggressive Imperialist ambitions. In both cases, the term

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<sup>170</sup> According to Philipse, p117, who consulted a number of different surveys on the subject.

<sup>171</sup> Northcott, Michael: *An Angel Directs the Storm* (I.B. Taurus, 2004), p101.

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'fundamentalist' is misleading, as the ideologies are detached, given the purpose of their utilisation, from the values that each respective religion originally cherished.

In the case of Christianity, for instance, Macdonald<sup>172</sup> argues that early Christians, 'obeying the explicit commands of Christ', sold their possessions and gave everything to the poor. Macdonald describes the development of Christianity into a 'hierarchical organisation with a monopolistic professional class or priests and clergy' as originating in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century and that it was 'unknown in the New Testament'. Consequently, Christian Fundamentalism seems incompatible with capitalism – its compatibility requires a new interpretation of Christian values, expressed as American values, rather than the original scriptural interpretation that would contradict such values. In his research on Protestant Fundamentalism in the United States and its influence on politics, Laurence Lannacone concluded that it involved a process of 'selective retrieval'<sup>173</sup> that was 'common to all fundamentalisms', highlighting the influence of secular circumstances in dictating what religious interpretation is chosen and how such ideas are expressed. In this sense fundamentalists, like moderates, are expressing an interpretation of scriptures to reflect their existing lifestyle and worldview – it is not, as they would claim, reflective of the religion's founding principles. By attaching religious zeal to political aspirations, they are attempting to establish infallibility in respect to the righteousness of their cause and harness mass support. In the case of Saudi Arabia, Saud's status as a notorious bandit and his stated desire to attain control over the region diminishes the plausibility of his devout Muslim credentials. It would appear that, in these cases, neither ideology has been enacted out of a genuine desire to re-establish a lost religious purity or 'golden age'. It could be contended that the enactment of so-called 'fundamentalist' ideals is based on their value to the propagator, in the manner by which modernity is rejected, as a form of thought that enables individuals to reach conclusions that are partially, or entirely, disassociated from fact – from what can be revealed through rational debate and knowledge-based reasoning.

There is no doubt that many such people that harbour irrational political convictions genuinely believe in the 'truth' of such convictions. Doubt remains, in many cases, as to whether the propagators of such convictions are instilled with a genuine righteous fervour, or simply recognise the power of religion in facilitating unified and radicalised electoral support within an ethnic group. Frequently, the rise in Fundamentalist affiliation seems to reflect a 'bespoke' solution for the political dilemma of how to establish and maintain a power base, resulting in the

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<sup>172</sup> William Macdonald (1990) cited in Zeiden, David: *The Resurgence of Religion, A Comparative Study of Selected Themes in Christian and Islamic Fundamental Discourses*, (Brill, 2003), p202.

<sup>173</sup> Lannacone, Laurence: *The Economics of American Fundamentalists* in in Marty, Martin: *Fundamentalisms and the State* (University of Chicago Press, 1993) p360.

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propagator of such 'ideals' achieving a position of political primacy. Many such fundamentalist leaders, such as Paisley, seem convinced that their ideological position is reflective of genuine conviction and is not in any way a self-serving ploy to establish political control. It is hard to quantify the genuineness of such convictions when, in terms of power, there is clearly so much for fundamentalist leaders to gain from the convictions they espouse. Is it plausible that the propagation of such values that result in a position of leadership and power, given inherent human weaknesses and flaws, can be construed as a selfless act for a divine power? Clearly in every such case where tangible socio-economic benefits or political aspirations can be fulfilled by a particular theocratic stance, the 'purity' of such convictions is questionable. If a religious conviction leads to sacrifice, as with early Christians, as opposed to political or economic benefit, their beliefs may appear more genuine. It could be claimed that an element of self-delusion exists in the minds of both leaders and followers as to their justification for the beliefs and values they espouse.

To consider such a question within the context of the conflicts in Northern Ireland and Chechnya, there seems to be much to gain from the enactment of 'fundamentalist' doctrine in all cases. Russia required Orthodox Fundamentalism to establish political cohesion amongst diverse ethnic groups for the purpose of state building – to further its Imperialist ambitions in the 15<sup>th</sup> century onwards. Chechens turned to Fundamentalist Islamic teaching to establish similar political cohesion and unity to override clan loyalties and resist Russia's Imperialist ambitions under Shamil in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, reviving the movement to attempt to thwart contemporary Russian Imperialist challenges to Chechen sovereignty. Without a shared belief in Russian Orthodoxy, the opportunities to build a strong Nationalist identity in Russia, given the diversity of ethnic groups within its borders, would have been limited. Russia's contemporary struggles to maintain political cohesion and loyalty within its borders in the absence of strong Orthodox sentiment following the collapse of Sovietism are testament to this. Russian Orthodoxy helped establish a Russian Nationalist identity amongst ethnic groups who would otherwise, in the absence of loyalty to their religious convictions or socio-economic rewards, expressed their Nationalist aspirations within the confines of their ethnic group – most probably as opposition to Russian Nationalism. Protestant Fundamentalism in Northern Ireland achieved a similar feat. Protestant Fundamentalism encouraged Irish Protestants to adopt a radical loyalty to a British Nationalist identity that would otherwise have weak foundations. Irish Protestants, in the absence of a perceived loyalty to their religious convictions, would have more readily accepted their shared Irish heritage ensuring peaceful co-existence.

Through the amalgamation of Nationalist and religious convictions, specific ethnic groups who had previously displayed weak Nationalist assimilation – such as Protestant Ulstermen in the 19<sup>th</sup> century or Chechen Highlanders – can be persuaded to offer radicalised and

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uncompromising Nationalist support, provided such a political direction is perceived to be advantageous to the individual, or reflective of his/her beliefs. Those who can claim to be instilled with genuine religious fundamentalist conviction will no doubt be more concerned with seeking advantages in a celestial sense through continued hatred, repression and violence. It can be concluded that the remainder who have embraced a fundamentalist stance that seems to contradict their confessional affiliation – the majority of mainstream Protestants who voted against a power-sharing agreement and have aligned themselves with a party whose leaders are Protestant Fundamentalist – either retain the ethno-supremacist ideology discussed in a previous chapter, preventing a proportion of the Protestant community to view the Catholic community as equals, or have retained support for an ‘identity-based’ model through a pragmatic appraisal of how they feel their socio-economic interests will be best served. It is clear that a sizeable number of Ulster Protestants are supporting a form of British Nationalism whose militancy and justification derives from a Protestant Fundamentalist ideology that they don’t genuinely endorse. The relevance of such ideological convictions to the contemporary political structure in Northern Ireland will be explored in more detail later in this analysis.

The majority of Ulster Protestants will still retain a strong British Nationalist affiliation, fostered through the stronger Protestant Fundamentalist tendencies of their parents and grandparents, but lacking much of its original premise – the most powerful British affiliation within the community traditionally being the perceived defence of the Protestant faith, as the queen is its figurehead. However dubious its contemporary significance, the Protestant communities’ sense of Britishness will not disappear, regardless of confessional influence. The decline in the Russian Orthodox Church’s influence on Russian Nationalism did not precipitate a decline amongst ethnic Russians and ethnic groups ‘loyal’ to Russia in respect to Nationalist affiliation, even though the church’s influence was instrumental in creating it. Nationalism, like religion, remains partially detached from knowledge-based ideological considerations – it derives its strength from enduring emotional attachments, prevalent in mass behaviour, that give the public a feeling of power and belonging.

Once a strong sense of Nationalism has developed, its adherents retain a militarist sense of duty to protect that power. Nationalist leaders cannot compromise their ideological position to any meaningful degree without public accusations of betrayal. Nationalist and religious identity is reinforced by finding expression in every socio-cultural sphere, preventing individuals from identifying themselves with cross-community political issues that can transform the quality of people’s lives – such as education, healthcare and employment. It is essential that political transition in Northern Ireland involve the removal of religious barriers that continue to define the

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region socially, culturally and economically. Eamonn McCann has campaigned since the 1960's for Northern Ireland's working class. McCann insists that the majority of Northern Ireland's population, given the chance, 'would prefer to live in mixed estates, send their children to mixed schools and work in mixed workplaces'<sup>174</sup>. Public recognition of the need for socio-cultural transformation whilst advocating political support for a continued separation of communities seems contradictory. It could be suggested that peoples' emotional attachments are distinct from their knowledge-based assessment of how best to progress politically. Socio-cultural transition that would drastically reduce identity-based political affiliation is considered desirable by the majority of the population, but not by political leaders of identity-based parties. Any political leader who has attained a position of power built on religious or nationalist foundations will be reluctant to seek a re-appraisal of the values to which he owes his popularity – their strength is derived from conflict.

If the majority of people, of any given state, can recognise that the removal of division would be to their benefit but continue to vote for a continuation of an identity-based political system, it could be contended that their emotional attachment to either their religion or nationality is stronger than their rational assessment of political issues. In an age where individuals feel increasingly detached from the powers that govern them – reflected in dwindling electoral turnouts – perhaps the greatest strength for nationalist or religious affiliation within political movements, is the harnessing of mass appeal through utilising the illusion within the public psyche that their strongest emotional attachments are represented in power. As McCann's observation demonstrates, such is the power of their emotional attachments that individuals become unaware that it is purely their emotional attachment that is represented, as opposed to the reasoned, rational appraisal that they would be inclined to agree with, should their emotional attachment be discarded.

The powerful emotional attachment instilled in nationalist ideology through an association with religious convictions cannot be placated or removed by reasoned negotiation as its justification falls beyond the boundaries of rationality. All so-called fundamentalisms – movements that stress the primacy of revelation over knowledge – owe their political direction to religious leaders who have interpreted 'revelations' in a particular way. Only religious leaders with the power to influence how revelations should be interpreted can redirect religions' most destructive tendencies and illogical conclusions. The process of deindividuation that accompanies religious and nationalist sentiment prevents people from acting and thinking independently and thus, from considering political solutions within a non-sectarian, rational

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<sup>174</sup> McCann, p138.



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context. The prospects for progression to a non-identity based, cross-community political system – for peaceful reconciliation – are severely curtailed by radical nationalist and religious influence that seeks to reinforce existing divisions, undermining efforts to achieve greater levels of socio-cultural and political cross-community interaction and co-operation.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **THE ENFORCEMENT OF SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DISCRIMINATION: HOW 'PRIVILEGES' ATTAINED FOR DOMINANT ETHNIC GROUPS BY THE STATE ARE ACHEIVED AND JUSTIFIED**

Evidence within the previous chapter would suggest that racism and ethno-supremacist ideology played a central role in the acceptance of discriminatory policies, as well as frequently violent repression, towards the aggrieved ethnic groups within both conflicts. Ethno-supremacist ideology provided a justification for inequality, albeit a highly dubious one, that enabled the dominant ethnic groups to disassociate the violent actions of the state, and violent action independent of the state, with criminality and injustice. The dominant groups have identified their weaker counterparts as both enemies and, within the political extremities of dominant ethnic groups, ethnically inferior – violent politics reflects such identification and the inferior classification dehumanises the crimes committed against the victim population. The respective dominant groups embraced politics of division that sought to uphold existing inequality and, as the Protestant community in Northern Ireland termed it, 'Privileges' arising from political repression and violence. 'Privileges', in this instance, refers to the socio-economic advantages that violent, 'identity-based' politics can deliver for those ethnic entities aligned within a position of political dominance.

Assessment of discriminatory policies within Northern Ireland has been well documented. There are numerous academic papers, government-sponsored research and evidence, demonstrating the existence of a profound level of discrimination within Northern Ireland's prior legal apparatus, policing, political representation, housing policies, education policies and employment – any facet of government where socio-economic advantage towards the Protestant community could be bestowed and enforced. It is not my intention to regurgitate at length, the overwhelming array of statistics and evidence that conclusively demonstrate the stated aims of the Orange State were successfully implemented for fifty years. Even a casual observer of 'the troubles' is aware of the levels of discrimination utilised by the state. It was the violent response of the state and elements of the Protestant community, acting both in conjunction with and independently of the state, towards legitimate demands for equality and justice within the Catholic community that brought the conflict to the attention of the international community in the

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1960's. It was the necessary defence of the Catholic community from Protestant violence that brought British troops to Northern Ireland.

The aim of this chapter centres on how such 'privileges' took form and led to an increasingly stratified and violent political environment within Northern Ireland, and how similar concepts of 'privileges' are replicated within Chechnya, and throughout the Russian Federation – the beneficiaries, of course, being ethnic Russians and other ethnicities deemed 'loyal' to the Russian Federation, at the expense of those ethnicities deemed 'disloyal' and considered of inferior ethnic status.

A brief summary of the motivations and intentions behind 'Protestant Privileges' in Northern Ireland in the words of the Unionist leaders themselves would probably be of value, as it could serve to highlight the observable parallels with the Russian Federation's ruling structure. From its conception as an autonomous institution in the 1920's, Stormont's<sup>175</sup> mechanisms of power were geared towards a rigid protectionism that ensured the Protestant community would benefit from a patriarchal political framework, working in conjunction with Protestant businesses and landlords, that formed an uncompromising and immovable bloc, resolutely determined to defend Protestant interests and status within the province. The continued political exclusion of the Catholic community, assisted through a process of 'gerrymandering'<sup>176</sup>, and the formulation of policy that secured the socio-economic advancement of the Protestant community, at the expense of the Catholic community, was not a clandestine movement that achieved its objectives through unofficial channels – it was Orangism's publicly stated intention. For fifty years, the government's leaders, all of whom were members of The Orange Order, rallied the Protestant community to assist in ensuring 'Protestant Privilege' within areas beyond government control – such as private business employment. As Lord Craigavon, who led Northern Ireland's government in the 1930's, remarked in 1934, 'We are a Protestant Parliament and a Protestant State'<sup>177</sup>

The government encouraged Ulster Protestants to embark on policies of active discrimination to assist the state in its attempts to ensure the continuation of 'Protestant Privileges'. As Sir Basil Brooke, a member of parliament within Craigavon's government, commented, 'The Catholics are trying to get in everywhere. We appeal to Loyalists, therefore, wherever possible, to employ good Protestant lads and lassies'<sup>178</sup>. Such public sentiments of encouragement by the state towards discriminatory policies were not uncommon throughout the following thirty years, with Unionist

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<sup>175</sup> The Northern Ireland Government.

<sup>176</sup> In July 1922, Proportional Representation was abolished and a new system introduced that would ensure that even in areas with a considerable Catholic majority, Unionists would retain control.

<sup>177</sup> Quoted on BBC Archive.

<sup>178</sup> Cited in Farrell,p97 (originally an interview in the Fermanagh Times).

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MP's as late as the 1960's claiming that 'the loyalists have the first choice of jobs'<sup>179</sup> and 'we should give preference to Unionists'<sup>180</sup>. It was the Civil Rights Movement coming to prominence in the mid 1960's that brought an end to such open declarations of encouragement of discriminatory practises. By which time, international attention on the plight of Irish Catholics was sufficient to ensure that such public utterances would be politically unwise.

The value of such quotes within the context of this analysis is not to prove the discriminatory nature of the regime – that is beyond question. The most revealing aspects of such comments is the manner in which a state, in the absence of international pressure, can openly, and often violently, enforce politically repressive policy without even a pretence of democratic process, or an attempt to outwardly conform to principles of social justice and equality – provided such actions retain the backing of its core public support. For fifty years, The Northern Ireland State was able to openly pursue discriminatory policy without fear of being held to account for its actions, or for public reiterations of state policy of this nature. Furthermore, the limits of overt discrimination in the face of international pressure are also demonstrated by the absence of such public outbursts within Northern Ireland after 1965.

Discrimination in Northern Ireland from 1921 onwards can be broadly summarised as involving the key considerations of electoral practices, public employment, private employment, public housing, regional development and policing. The evidence of discrimination in all of these key areas is overwhelming. For the purpose of this study, given the fact that such discrimination is already so well documented, I will provide a brief summary of each discriminatory factor with some supporting evidence.

Evidence discussed in this chapter demonstrates the manner by which members of parliament and The Orange Order<sup>181</sup> encouraged Protestant-owned businesses to solely employ Protestant workers. Ethnic discrimination in terms of employment was by no means limited to the private sphere. Considerable evidence exists of 'direct' state discrimination within the public sector. The most comprehensive surveys on employment discrimination have, unsurprisingly, been undertaken by individuals within the Nationalist movement, such as the National Council for Civil Liberties. In order to convey the extent of discrimination whilst bypassing the question of sectarian bias within the evidence and statistics utilised, the evidence cited for public

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<sup>179</sup> Robert Babington MP, March 1961, quoted from Bew, Paul: *Political Forces and Social Classes* (Library of Congress 1996), p111.

<sup>180</sup> J.Barnhill MP, 1964, Farrell, p91.

<sup>181</sup> It should be remembered that virtually every Protestant MP was also a member of The Orange Order.

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employment discrimination all derive from Protestant or state sources – from the 1971 Census or from evidence collected from a Protestant government advisor in 1964, Tom Wilson, that was subsequently used by the Campaign for Social Justice in the mid-1960's.

The 1971 Census demonstrated a sizable disparity between the number of Catholic and Protestant appointments within many areas of the public sector. Of the 1,383 senior government officials in 1971 – including ministers, MP's and senior government officers within local authorities, only 11% were Catholic. Of the 10,000 workers at Harland and Wolff's Shipyard, Northern Ireland's largest employer in the 1960's, only 400, less than 5%, were Catholic<sup>182</sup>. Of the 139 medical and surgical consultants appointed by the hospital authority in 1971, only 9% were Catholic. A crucial disparity can be found within the judiciary, where only 6 of the 68 senior judicial appointments were granted to Catholics.

Unionist dismissals of the validity of employment discrimination in the public sector are two-fold. Unionists challenge the evidence on the basis that Catholics did not want the jobs – either for political reasons or because of laziness – or on the basis that there were no suitably qualified Catholics for the positions. The former argument is reflective of Unionist beliefs that Catholics lack a Protestant 'work ethic' – a tired racist stereotype. It would be true to say that many Catholics would have been reluctant to join the police or army on sectarian grounds but to suggest that they would not work for a water, gas or electricity authority, a shipyard or health authority on sectarian grounds is an argument with very little foundation. There is some truth in the latter argument regarding the question of suitably qualified Catholics for the higher positions. Evidence does suggest that the Catholic population did generally receive a lower standard of education and faced discrimination in terms of university entry that, in turn, would limit the amount of Catholics qualified for higher positions. The Lockwood Report of 1965, for instance, controversially recommended the building of Northern Ireland's second university in the staunchly Protestant town of Coleraine, rather than Derry – Northern Ireland's second largest city that possessed a Catholic majority (but a Unionist administration). At best, therefore, the Unionist argument seems to rest on a disproportionately high Protestant workforce being the result of other discriminatory factors rather than 'direct' discrimination from employers – a less than convincing defence.

Ethnic discrimination centred on the allocation of new public housing became a further point of contention in the 1960's. The decline of Northern Ireland's traditional industries in the 1960's heralded a decline in living standards that made Northern Ireland one of the most depressed economic regions in Europe. Socio-economic discrimination against the Catholic communities

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<sup>182</sup> Campaign For Social Justice, February, 1964.

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further exasperated their plight, forcing the majority of Catholics to live in squalid, overcrowded dwellings. The Campaign for Social Justice in 1964 highlighted the extent to which a disproportionate number of new housing was gifted to the Protestant community, whilst only a tiny proportion of new homes were given to Catholic families. In Enniskillen, for instance – the principle town in the county of Fermanagh that had a Catholic majority population – only two of the hundred and seventy-seven new houses built were given to Catholic families. Such blatant cases of ethnic discrimination becoming public knowledge, created a huge amount of resentment and anger towards the administration amongst the aggrieved ethnic minority.

Poverty, in such circumstances, ceases to become an issue capable of uniting two communities who, albeit to a differing degree, were all desperate to alleviate the levels of suffering they endured. Poverty became a major trigger towards social unrest and political extremism within an environment underpinned by a high level of stratification and ethnic division. If levels of poverty are made worse for one particular ethnic group through clearly identifiable mechanisms of socio-economic discrimination – such as those highlighted within employment, education and public housing – and enforced through repressive means, it is unsurprising that issues relating to poverty become a focal point for political activity. For Irish Catholics, Nationalism became synonymous with the only root out of poverty. Ulster Protestants recognised that a continuation of the system of 'Protestant Privilege' prevented the greater levels of poverty endured by their Catholic counterparts from materialising, whilst sympathies for Catholic suffering was limited further by the levels of poverty the Protestant community also endured. Poverty undoubtedly assisted in cementing already deeply entrenched, divisional 'identity based' politics, as the spread and radicalisation of militant Unionism coinciding with the rise of the Nationalist civil rights movement in the 1960's confirms.

It must be remembered that in assessing the extent of socio-economic discrimination within Northern Ireland, there exists considerable debate as to how much discrimination occurred. John Whyte<sup>183</sup> produced an insightful contribution to the question in his research on the subject, highlighting the massive discrepancy between the staunch Unionist position that 'some quite small grievances, or alleged grievances, have been magnified out of all proportion' (Major Chichester Clarke, Unionist Prime Minister, 1969) and the tendency amongst Republicans (Whyte draws attention to McCann and Farrell) to greatly exaggerate the levels of discrimination suffered under the Unionist regime. In assessing the evidence, Whyte contends that 'neither of these extreme views can be sustained. The amount of discrimination proved, or even alleged, to

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<sup>183</sup> Whyte, J.: *How much discrimination under the Unionist rule 1821-68*, Contemporary Irish Studies (Manchester University Press, 1983)

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have existed is insufficient to bear the weight that McCann and Farrell place on it. On the other hand, it is quite sufficient to disprove attempts to dismiss it as unfounded or trifling'. To conclude, Whyte supports Darby's assertion that there was 'a consistent and irrefutable pattern of deliberate discrimination against Catholics', as evidence in this chapter would also seem to support.

There is no doubt, as evidence later in the chapter will hopefully clarify, that poverty played a central role in harnessing mass support amongst Chechens for their separatist struggle, eager to alleviate the poverty, clearly worsened by overt discriminatory practices and enforced through repressive means, by dismantling a state whose purpose was to serve ethnic Russian interests. Ethno-Nationalism, once again, became the only route out of poverty. Chechens today are confronted with similar, if more severe, forms of political exclusion and socio-economic discrimination, enforced through violence. Such forms of discrimination and violent repression are excused by ethnic Russians – and assisted in a similar vein to the Ulster Protestant community within areas such as private employment – by a predisposed distrust and hatred of Chechens, cultivated through racist misconceptions regarding the perceived worth of Chechens as people.

Poverty in today's Russia, as was the case in Northern Ireland, is by no means confined to the ethnic groups that face political, social and economic discrimination. Levels of poverty, those people perceived to be living under the 'minimum poverty line'<sup>184</sup> within Russia, had risen from just two per cent in 1987-88 to fifty per cent in 1993-95<sup>185</sup>. As was the case in Northern Ireland at the time of the rise of the civil rights movement in the 1960's, all ethnic groups within Russia have substantial numbers of people living in sub-standard conditions, with very little money and high unemployment. Rather than inter-ethnic political groups emerging, campaigning on an 'issue-related', non-identity based agenda that attempts to alleviate levels of poverty for society as a whole, Russian politics has been characterised by a massive rise in an identity-based, Nationalist agenda. Perhaps, as was certainly the case with Northern Ireland in terms of the Protestant community's reaction to Catholic campaigns for civil rights, ethnic Russians' reactions to other ethnic groups campaigning for civil rights are less sympathetic to claims of inequality because of their own struggles with poverty. Most ethnic Russians will never see the financial benefits amassed through the discrimination and repression practiced in the Caucasus and, taking into account their own suffering, fail to recognise as valid such claims of intimidation, discrimination and repression and fail to empathise with its victims.

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<sup>184</sup> As defined by the World Bank, 1997.

<sup>185</sup> World Bank figures (1997), quoted in *The Meltdown of the Russian State*, Piroska Nagy, Edward Elgar Publishing, 2000.

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They may recognise, however, that a regime who campaigns politically for the interests of the ethnic Russian – as the major parties from both left and right of the political spectrum undoubtedly do – is more likely to improve ethnic Russian living standards than a party who claims to be working in the interests of all ethnic groups. Poverty, in this sense, not only increases and radicalises levels of ethno-nationalism amongst those ethnic groups who feel aggrieved by discrimination and inequality, but serves to radicalise and increase Nationalist support within dominant ethnic groups, even amongst poorer elements, regardless of whether any tangible financial rewards have been attained for such elements thus far.

Discrimination within Northern Ireland in terms of electoral practices stems from the decision in July 1922, to abolish Proportional Representation in favour of a new system introduced by the Boundary Commission, comprising of non-elected Unionist administrators. The new system, achieved through an administrative process that had dispensed with every democratic process that could claim to legitimise it, including a right of appeal or public inquiry, resulted in a restricted franchise that was to gift areas with a Nationalist majority population permanently into the political control of the Unionists. The NCCL Commission (National Council for Civil Liberties) described the creation of a Unionist state by such methods as ‘under the shadow of the British Constitution, a permanent machine of dictatorship’<sup>186</sup>. In Derry, for instance, the adult population in 1966 was 30,376, of which 20,102 were Catholic and 10,274 were Protestant – the city remained Unionist controlled. In Fermanagh and Tyrone, Unionist controlled councils were elected despite the boroughs having majority Nationalist populations that exceeded Unionist populations by 10,000 and 15,000 respectively<sup>187</sup>. The process, described as gerrymandering, assured that Catholics would never achieve equality in terms of electoral representation on both a local and central governmental level, providing a solid, authoritarian political platform necessary to execute the desired socio-economic measures designed to strengthen the Unionist community – unequal regional development, public housing allocation and public/private employment advantages for the Protestant community.

Having achieved the creation of a political system capable of restricting Catholic influence on policy-making to a minimum – having secured continued Unionist governance even in predominantly Catholic areas – it became necessary to ensure the judicial and policing mechanisms of control were capable of enforcing the system of ‘Protestant Privilege’ that the administration were now empowered to deliver. The Special Powers Act was a wide-reaching, wholly undemocratic form of police empowerment, designed to restrict protest and dissent through repressive means. The Special Powers Act was a set of draconian measures concerning powers of arrest, punishment and the maintenance of order. The first two parts of the act refer to

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<sup>186</sup> Quoted in Farrell, p97.

<sup>187</sup> Figures cited in Farrell, p84.



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curfews. Anyone breaking the curfews (which could be introduced whenever 'order' is deemed threatened) could be subject to two years imprisonment with the option of hard labour. Two years imprisonment could be applicable to any offence 'against the regulations'<sup>188</sup>. The third part of the act inhibits the right of free speech, protest, marches and meetings. It empowered the civil authority to prevent 'the holding or taking part in meetings, assemblies (including fairs and markets), or processions in public places'<sup>189</sup>. Again, any contravention of this regulation could be punishable by two years in prison. Such measures would be unthinkable within any state wishing to conform to fundamentally democratic principles – the right of peaceful protest and assembly being a pre-requisite for any functioning democracy.

That a regulation such as the Special Powers Act was active within a state that ultimately falls under the jurisdiction of the UK is, at best, a shameful display of inaction on the part of Westminster. The lack of any substantial opposition to such regulations within the UK to policies targeting a community who defines itself by its Irishness, as opposed to British ethnicity, undoubtedly contributed to their muted response to such legislation. That the vagueness and ambiguity of the legislations' description of what could constitute a violation of regulations was so all-encompassing, can be described as a criminal disregard for human rights'.

An example of the ambiguity within the regulations can be found in clause four, that states not only people taking part in meetings that 'will give rise to grave disorder' could be guilty of an offence against the act, but any person present at a meeting that will 'promote disaffection'<sup>190</sup>. Such a clause entitled the police to effectively imprison, should they desire, any person who openly disagrees with state policy, regardless of whether their intentions are peaceful. There was a total of thirty-five clauses within the act, and numerous sub-clauses, that ensured Northern Ireland's policing powers could be described as amongst the most repressive, authoritarian legal structures in the world. The clauses were so numerous and all-encompassing that, as clause sixteen actually states, 'any act...calculated or likely to cause...disaffection'<sup>191</sup> was punishable with imprisonment. Unsurprisingly, clauses on press censorship were an essential feature of the regulations – when enacting such repressive measures to target the Irish Catholic community, it was prudent to prevent any criticism of such policies from going to press to curtail any united political platform of opposition from emerging. Clause twenty-five states:

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<sup>188</sup> Special Powers Act, Part Four – Punishment of Offences Against the Regulations.

<sup>189</sup> Special Powers Act, clause four of the third part of the act.

<sup>190</sup> Special Powers Act, Clause four of the regulations.

<sup>191</sup> Special Powers Act, Clause 16 of the regulations.

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'No person shall by word of mouth or in writing, or in any newspaper, periodical, book, circular or other printed publication shall –

(a) Spread false reports or make false statements

or

(b) Spread false reports or false statements intended or likely to cause disaffection.'

The continued use of the word 'disaffection', justifying imprisonment within as many as four of the key clauses of the Special Powers Act, is of great significance. The term 'disaffection' has two meanings. Firstly, it relates to 'a feeling of being alienated from other people'. Secondly, it refers to 'disloyalty to the government or to established authority'<sup>192</sup>. Its continued usage in most key clauses of the Special Powers Act is reflective of a flawed ideological outlook within both the dominant, Ulster Protestant ethnic group represented by Unionism, and within the ideological justifications for repression by ethnic Russians in Chechnya – in the manner by which loyalty to their respective states is demanded without conferring adequate political representation and socio-economic inclusion. Rather than attempting to address the pluralistic political realities of the societies they controlled, looking to accommodate and serve the interests of all ethnic groups equally, both states elected to serve the interests of a single ethnic group and, in seeking to further those interests, reinforced their positions through violence, or the threat of violence.

If a state, as was the case in Northern Ireland, declared itself to be solely representative of a particular ethnic group – as Craigavon's declaration of being a 'Protestant Parliament and a Protestant State'<sup>193</sup> bears witness to – how could the aggrieved ethnic groups that have been denied meaningful representation within the state not develop a 'feeling of alienation' from the state in question? Such groups cannot feel anything but 'disloyalty to the government or established authority' that has rejected them. Both states, through criminalising legitimate channels of protest and reform whilst embracing concepts of inequality and exclusion, have established an authority based on principles of violent politics – precipitating a violent response from the aggrieved ethnic groups.

Such confidence, or arrogance, stemmed from the strength of Orangism within the Protestant community and an absence of internal or external pressure to reform. The strength of Orangism, and the consequent weakness of political and media outlets that expressed a non-identity based philosophy, ensured a limited scope of debate within the Protestant community and a skewed

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<sup>192</sup> Dictionary definition.

<sup>193</sup> Craigavon, 1934.

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perception of reality. The Protestant press reinforced ethno-supremacist notions of division and conflict through the perpetuation of social, historical and racial distortions and myth. An example of this would be Protestant perceptions of Catholic unemployment. High unemployment amongst Catholics would be dismissed as laziness – Catholics lacking the ‘Protestant work ethic’ – or as this popular Protestant rhyme from the 1960’s would have it: ‘And when their babies learn to walk they shout discrimination, their dad just lies in bed all day and lives upon the nation.’

Without a political or media presence seeking a realignment of attitudes and prejudices, myths and distortions continue unabated and such prejudices will invariably intensify. Despite the multitude of political parties in Russia, all parties with significant electoral appeal share a similar commitment to an ultra-Nationalist agenda. The parties of both the extreme left and right of the political spectrum, who often encompass the same political bloc, are firmly in support of a ‘greater Russia’ and the protection of ethnic Russian interests at all costs. Russian media is similarly weighted towards the Nationalist agenda. The Media Sustainability Index (MSI) commissioned by IREX (International Research and Exchanges Board), monitors the strength of independent media throughout Europe and Eurasia. Witnessing the rapid decline of independent media coinciding with the run-up to the presidential elections, the MSI noted that by 2007, ‘political opposition practically disappeared from television screens and newspaper pages’<sup>194</sup>. The MSI panellists also commented on the ‘simplistic’ content of news media and that the current political atmosphere in Russia ‘promoted the restoration of Soviet traditions of propaganda’. A Nationalist agenda must simplify political discussion, as it always represents a profoundly anti-intellectualist position. A Nationalist agenda seeks an emotional response to political issues that is only achievable in a society of limited political knowledge and understanding – people who possess a limited capacity for independent thought are susceptible to simplistic ideals, championed by a mass movement<sup>195</sup>. Without an outlet for politically enlightened ideals to take hold, extreme Nationalist sentiment infects popular opinion and, unopposed, increases in militancy. As rigid control of media by the state silences political opposition, Ultra-Nationalist suppression of independent media silences intelligent discourse. As Ulster Protestants developed ethnic misperceptions of Irish Catholics within a political environment dominated by the culture of Orangism, Russian perceptions of minority rights within its own borders are similarly clouded by the narrow scope of debate within a Nationalist-dominated, Russian society. Identity politics aims to limit rational debate and inter-ethnic co-operation and understanding. The control and manipulation of media, achieved by repressive legal constraints and propaganda, silences political dissent preventing a non-identity based, ‘issue-driven’ political alternative from attaining significant public support.

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<sup>194</sup> Media Sustainability Index (MSI), 2008. Commissioned by IREX (International Research and Exchanges Board)

<sup>195</sup> As discussed in chapter one of this study, in relation to Kecmanovic’s theory of Nationalism and the importance of ‘group-think’.

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The majority of ethnic Russians display a similar level of arrogance towards conciliatory, issue-driven solutions to internal ethnic conflicts. In the face of international apathy and widespread public support of an ultra-Nationalist agenda, Russia's politicians, generals, police chiefs and paramilitary forces can be equally forthcoming in their open advocacy of discrimination and violent methods of repression as Ulster Unionist leaders were, prior to the 1960's. A lack of international pressure greatly increases Russia's ability to pursue their brutal agenda unhindered. Western states, as in Russia, take into consideration their own economic agenda before humanitarian concerns. It is in their interests, given Russia's oil and gas reserves, to retain Russia as an ally – diplomatic pressure on Russia to reform is suitably restrained. Public sympathies within western states concerning the plight of the Chechens is further hindered, by the manner in which the media portrays the conflict as an extension of the 'war on terror' and a fight against Wahhabi fanatics. It is unsurprising that such openly repressive and discriminatory governance continues within an environment of national, and international, apathy and distrust. The social and economic fall-out from such a stance has devastating consequences on the Chechen civilian – for many ethnic Russians, the conflict continues to be extremely profitable. As in Northern Ireland, the freedom to practice repressive, discriminatory practices in the defence of a particular ethnicity's status and power reaps considerable economic dividends for sections of the dominant group in question.

As has been the case in Chechnya for many centuries, Russia is assisted by a 'puppet regime' of Chechens who are willing to collaborate with Moscow. Since 2006, the most powerful figure of the collaborating forces within Chechnya is Ramzan Kadyrov, son of assassinated President Akmad Kadyrov, whose succession to the presidency was only hindered by an age restriction following his father's assassination<sup>196</sup>. A cult of propaganda, enthused with fear, continues to be created around Kadyrov – reflective of Arbatov's comments regarding the need for a 'concentrated and controlled media campaign' being 'the key to success' – and Kadyrov's tactics in dismissing the hardships faced by Chechens who are 'disloyal' to his regime have taken a familiar form. The 60,000 Chechens<sup>197</sup> who remained in refugee camps in 2007 – their homes destroyed, still in fear for their lives, with many of their relatives 'missing' – refused to return to their villages for fear of retribution from the paramilitaries and Russian security forces. Opportunities for employment under such conditions are non-existent. Many Chechens continued to live in the harsh conditions of the camps out of necessity. Kadyrov suggested other reasons for their poverty: 'The majority of the camp residents have kept their homes and can return home; over the past years these people have become idle and do not wish to work and toil'<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> The forces loyal to Kadyrov changed this ruling by decree, as of May, 2006.

<sup>197</sup> Figures provided by Moscow News, April, 2006.

<sup>198</sup> Quoted in Volume 7, Issue 17 (April 27, 2006).

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As was the case in Northern Ireland, repressive policies that have resulted in poverty and unemployment have been repackaged as 'laziness'. Kadyrov, in attempting to stress how the situation in Chechnya has returned to normality, attempts to position the continued existence of the refugee camps as arising from non-political reasons; the 'laziness' of its inhabitants, for instance. Kadyrov's following statement sheds considerable light on his motives for removing these Chechen civilians from the safety of the camps, confirming fears for the fate of camp residents, should they decide to leave. Furthermore, the thinly disguised resolve to commit violent reprisals for 'disloyalty' draws parallels with previous Imperialist policy in the region, where talk of moderation and reconciliation was consistently revealed as a smokescreen for more violent intentions: 'Liquidating the refugee camps will allow us to uncover spies who are working for foreign intelligence services.'<sup>199</sup>. The concept of Chechen refugees working as spies for foreign intelligence agencies would be a preposterous notion in a country with a strong, independent media base. Within Russia and its extended borders, such statements are far from rare. Any problem in Russia, from the Kursk Submarine disaster to Russia's economic difficulties in the 1990's, will induce sections of the media and senior politicians to point the finger at foreign espionage and foul-play. Without rational, independent media analysis, such rumours can quickly become accepted truths among ethnic-Russians. If Kadyrov decided to 'liquidate' the refugee camps, the majority of Muscovites would undoubtedly be supportive.

Repressive Terrorism is never labelled as such by its instigators. It could be said that any state that can be defined within an 'ethnocratic' model – a state that is representative of the interests and advancement of a specific ethnic group – will always seek to reward those deemed 'loyal' to, or are members of, the dominant group they represent. By seeking such 'privileges', a state will undertake discriminatory socio-economic measures to achieve these aims. Such privileges must be protected by force, as victims of discrimination, inequality and a lack of democratic political representation will demand that such a situation be rectified – as is their right. Any regime that pursues the resulting repressive policies has established a permanency of division that seeks no democratic mandate. The state will pursue such an agenda until its eventual collapse. The dissolution of the state will either be achieved through international pressure, or through internal unrest and rebellion – or a combination of the two.

As in Northern Ireland, groups that resist the discriminatory state structure are 'disloyal'. Only through membership of the collaborating regime could a Chechen prove his 'loyalty'. Conventional forms of conduct and law are seldom applied to people who are not members of the regime – members of what could loosely be termed the security apparatus. Civilians, in other words, are all too aware of their enemy status and the re-defined notion of rights that such a status confers. Chechens in the refugee camps have been witnesses to the reality of a legal

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<sup>199</sup> Jamestown Foundation, Chechnya Weekly, Issue 17

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apparatus that should be used to defend the rights and safety of civilians, existing only to protect and serve the interests of collaborators and ethnic Russians, through violence. Kadyrov's fear of 'spies' working in the refugee camps more accurately expresses his fear of witnesses to his atrocities. The ability to administer repressive policies can be greatly hindered, or prevented, by international involvement. The presence of NGO's and international media in Chechnya as witnesses to the atrocities committed and the system of repressive governance, potentially inhibits the regimes' abilities to undertake such policies and, potentially, to survive, if the international community is willing to respond to such behaviour. It is worth noting that both Human Rights Watch and Memorial have expressed concerns for the safety of those still in the camps, given the continued 'disappearances', wrongful imprisonments and torture that continue in the region<sup>200</sup>. Many of those repatriated would not survive the 'filtration' camp that awaits them on their return.

Many observers of the war might well assume that the major 'interests' at stake, the 'interests' that collaborating Chechens defend with such brutality, are chiefly related to the oil industry. Oil and Gas fields and related industries, along with the strategic position of Chechnya and the importance of the larger reserves of its neighbours who may also demand independence should the Chechen Separatists be successful, are undoubtedly a major factor in Russia's continued military involvement. There are, however, numerous other forms of 'interests' that rely heavily on continued hostilities, other industries of war that generate massive profits for the oligarchs involved. As is the case in Iraq, war requires massive reconstruction efforts and an on-going conflict requires constant reconstruction. If money is allocated to reconstruction it does not necessarily mean it will be carried out. In Russia, it often means it is merely paid for.

Since 1997, four departments at the Russian Ministry of Defence were merged into one – The Russian Military Construction Complex (MCC). A subsidiary of this, the MDCI (Main Department of Construction Industry), is responsible for the vast majority of the reconstruction budget for Chechnya. The subsidiary is a private firm with shareholders<sup>201</sup>. The company recorded in 2000, according to the Ministry of Defence report on the 'activity of enterprises and organisations of the MDSC (Main Department of Special Construction)<sup>202</sup>, a staggering 'loss of 1,116 million Rubles'. This 'loss' was resided over by Colonel General Kosovan<sup>203</sup>, who was solely responsible for the budget and all financial transactions associated with the department.

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<sup>200</sup> Memorandum to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, March 18, 2002.

<sup>201</sup> Politkovskaya, Anna: *A Small Corner of Hell* (University of Chicago Press, 2003), p164.

<sup>202</sup> Quoted on Politkovskaya, p162.

<sup>203</sup> As of May, 2006.

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He ensured that these 'losses' incurred through 'artificial and inflated'<sup>204</sup> prices become private gain for selected members of a favoured oligarchy. In short, the more bridges, roads and buildings that are blown up and (sometimes) rebuilt at a grossly inflated price, the more profits are made for the oligarchs. Some observers estimate that 80% of Russian businesses pay regular payments to criminal organisations<sup>205</sup>. Other estimations refer to a suggested 40% of the Russian economy being directly controlled by the Russian mafia<sup>206</sup>. In today's Russia, it is impossible to separate illegitimate business practices from the state, or so-called 'legitimate' private institutions – the state and private institutions, such as banks, have merged with criminality at the highest levels.

The Russian army profits from the Chechen conflict through many other methods. The war provides an opportunity for promotion amongst officers, enabling them to retire on considerably larger pensions than they could otherwise hope for. Selling military hardware to Chechen Separatists, and to other intermediaries within Chechnya to be sold on elsewhere, provides a further source of income for officers of the Russian army. In 1992, it was estimated that the selling of surplus USSR military hardware had generated in the region of 20 billion dollars<sup>207</sup>. A further industry of war, generating profits for people on both sides, is the trade in people. Kidnapping had become a daily event within Chechnya since the start of the war. If a Chechen is killed in custody, it will cost the family of the deceased thousands of dollars to retrieve his body. Chechen fighters frequently obtain money for Russian POW's in a similar fashion:

'...a car containing two Russian conscripts, prisoners of war, awaited the arrival of another car bearing officers of the FSB (federal forces). As soon as the Russian secret servicemen had handed over the cash, the soldiers furtively switched cars. The following day, Rossia, the number two Russian television channel, announced the 'heroic' liberation of these prisoners with no mention of a ransom. For many Chechens, this kind of trade is good proof that those who profit from the war are working hand in hand with a single shared purpose: that the war should not end.'<sup>208</sup>

It is not purely Chechen oil and gas interests that the puppet regime protects for Moscow. It is the industries created by the war itself. In light of the levels of criminality amongst the 'security' apparatus within Chechnya and the Russian military, with its associated business interests,

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<sup>204</sup> p165.

<sup>205</sup> Schleifer, 1996, quoted in Nagy, Piroška: *The Meltdown of the Russian State* (Elgar Publishing, 2000), p46.

<sup>206</sup> Summers, 1997, quoted in Nagy, p46

<sup>207</sup> Temerko, Alexander: Ministry of Defence, May 1992, quoted in Seely, p194.

<sup>208</sup> Quoted from an ex-Beovik (Chechen fighter) in Grozny, 2004, from an article by Anne Nivat, Moscow correspondent of *Le Nouvel Observateur*, *Crimes of War Organisation*, 21st January, 2004

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Russian claims of Chechens as a nation of 'bandits' and 'criminals' reveals a considerable level of hypocrisy. There is no doubt that there is a high level of criminality amongst Chechens – given their historical circumstances and the general moral malaise within contemporary Russia, this comes as no surprise. Also beyond question, is the manner by which ethnic minorities are used as scapegoats for the 'moral cesspit' – the social demise and entrenched criminality – that has followed Sovietism. By exaggerating the criminal power of particular ethnic minorities within Russia's extended borders, criticism of ethnic Russian criminality, that permeates every level within state structures and private enterprise, can be deflected.

In order for such 'scapegoating' to be successful – if the state is able to convince its public that blame for both violence and wealth disparity lies firmly within the inadequacies and ethnic flaws inherent within the non-Russian inhabitants of the Caucasus – the Russian authorities effectively confirm the age-old prejudices and stereotypes that are already accepted amongst the ethnic-Russian populace. For many, as evidence from the previous chapter confirms, such stereotypes depicting the supposed treachery and savagery of the Chechens are indoctrinated from an early age. It is an accepted fact amongst the majority of Russians that Chechens are not to be trusted – an important factor in their support of force over compromise and democracy. Through persistently clinging to such stereotypes, their knowledge and recognition of their own violent history becomes distorted. Their collective conscience can be clear by accepting such generalisations. Within such characterisation, victims of repression become a violent and lawless people being forced to surrender their ancient, brutal ways by a superior, civilising force. They must 'civilise' through violence, as violence is deemed the only language Chechens can understand.

It is a similar ideology espoused by General Yermalov towards the Chechens in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It represents a justification of violence that mirrors the arrogance displayed by all the Colonial powers of that period, every one of them approaching their perceived roles with a 'positivist' zeal, bringing enlightenment and modernity to conquered people who, to use the British Colonial armies' classification, are dismissed as savages and 'brutes'<sup>209</sup>. The classification, suggesting an ethnicity that is almost sub-human, allows for military tactics that would be inconceivable against a European, or white, adversary. The application of such an ideology to the Chechen nation explains the extent to which the local population was excluded from the 'development' of its resources and wealth being unacknowledged or dismissed. A more palatable picture for ethnic Russians developed in which the Chechens are depicted as being to

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<sup>209</sup> Lindquist, Sven: *Exterminate all the Brutes* (Granta, 2002) – provides an interesting account of the attitudes of colonial armies towards the nations they conquer.



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stupid, ignorant or lazy to benefit from 'modernity' – as this quote from an ethnic Russian who fled Grozny following the outbreak of hostilities at the time of the First Chechen War (1993) demonstrates:

'It was the Russians who developed the Republic's economy. No Chechen ever worked at a lathe or in the dangerous conditions of the oil refineries. They consider such jobs degrading. Now everyone is calling the Chechens poor unfortunates. Rackets, Terrorism, counterfeiting, theft and armed robbery are the occupations a real Chechen considers worthy of him. Sewage flows in Grozny's streets, and there is no water, electricity and heat. What can be done about it, when everything was supplied by Russian workers? Grozny is Russia, it is our town built by our ancestors.'<sup>210</sup>

The major industries did employ only Russian workers – and only Russian managers. Grozny was indeed built by Russians, but it was built for Russians. Not unlike the formation of The Orange State in Northern Ireland, the Russians developed the Chechen economy with the aim of establishing a patriarchal system of 'privilege', for the 'loyal' citizens the state positioned itself to represent. The integration of Chechen society into this economy, assimilating the Chechen people within the mechanisms of wealth creation, was never considered. Russian policies of discrimination, enforced by repressive means, were repackaged to reflect an acceptable explanation for inequality and Chechen poverty; an explanation that sat more comfortably on Russia's collective conscience than the reality of neo-colonial theft. For the ethnic-Russians, as in Northern Ireland, wealth disparity and discriminatory policy, engineered through a repressive political structure, was excused through self-deceptive notions of superiority.

The relationship between the businesses that control Chechen oil and the Russian State is a complex one. If the relationship had to be described in Western economic terminology, it would probably fall into the category of a Public-Private enterprise. On closer inspection, the structure is uniquely Russian. Rosneft, the Russian oil company who controls the estimated 5 billion roubles of annual revenue<sup>211</sup> that Chechen oil creates, is controlled through Moscow. Federal Law No.122 puts 'the decision-making authority over the use of natural resources exclusively in the hands of the federal centre'. The state and business interests are further entwined by a complicated system of tax and debt. After Gazprom, Russia's oil companies are the main tax contributors to budgets – they also head the list of budget debtors<sup>212</sup>. Oil companies' debt to the

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<sup>210</sup> Quoted in ASF Chechnya Brief, A paper written by Edward Kline, President of the Andrei Sakharov Foundation, 21/01/04

<sup>211</sup> Pravda, August 11<sup>th</sup> 2004

<sup>212</sup> Jamestown Foundation, Sergei Kolchin: The Tax Situation in Russia's Oil Industry, January 15, 1999.

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federal budget in 1998 was estimated at 2.7 billion roubles<sup>213</sup>. The state has used this 'debt' as a means of increasing state control within the industry – a process of partial re-nationalisation. It is vitally important for the Russian Government to retain the energy supplies and related industries within the former Soviet Union, in order for Russia to project its power abroad and retain the vast financial revenue that derives from it. In Putin's annual speech to the nation<sup>214</sup> in 2006, he described Russia as an 'energy superpower'. With the price of oil high, already selling at over \$70 a barrel<sup>215</sup> in 2006 but by 2008 almost doubling in price, Russia is acquiring a massive amount of mineral wealth and, of vital importance for Russians, a renewed status and leverage in world affairs. Mineral wealth is restoring Russia's damaged national pride and they have no intention of surrendering any of it.

Pro-European political shifts in the Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova were swiftly repulsed with trade embargos and cutting gas supplies. Putin also identified, in his speech to the Russian people, the importance of military regeneration. All such actions and speeches signal a more aggressive approach to foreign policy and to internal conflict within its extended borders. Naturally, this suggests a continuation of hostilities in Chechnya and the surrounding region. Chechen Separatist aspirations involve demands for a return of Chechen resources to its people. Russia's renewed global status and its pursuit of an increasingly Nationalist agenda suggest a growing faith in force over diplomacy, that makes the odds of a peaceful settlement almost non-existent. A rise in Nationalism is effectively an increase in what Georgia's Foreign Minister, Gela Bezhaushvili, described as Russia's 'imperialist mentality'. He states that Russia's imperialist mentality 'means they still see Georgia as a backyard that cannot have its own choice'<sup>216</sup>. Presidential decrees under both Yeltsin and Putin have expressed this sentiment. Presidential Directive No.940 in September 1995 states the importance of the 'creation of a Russian sphere of influence in the former USSR'<sup>217</sup>. Russia's increasing status as an 'energy superpower' will, as Putin has hinted, herald an upsurge in military spending that will facilitate its abilities to re-assert itself within former Soviet states (as Georgia experienced in 2008).

The stronger Russia's position within global politics, and the more dependant economic giants in Europe, China and elsewhere become on Russia's energy resources, the greater the capacity for Russia to undertake repressive political action with impunity. I have mentioned that change in Northern Ireland occurred when international pressure to reform its policies, combined

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<sup>213</sup> State Tax Service Statistics quoted in Jamestown Foundation, Kolchin.

<sup>214</sup> May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2006.

<sup>215</sup> As of May, 2006.

<sup>216</sup> Quoted in *The Russian Bear is Back*, The Guardian, 13th May, 2006.

<sup>217</sup> Cited in Lieven: *Tombstone of Russian Power* (Library of Congress, 1998)

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with high levels of internal violent conflict, made the Northern Ireland state's position of power untenable, leading to its eventual collapse in 1972. The growing global importance of Russia's vast reserves of natural resources limits international criticism of Russia's policies towards aggrieved ethnicities within its extended borders. Restricted international criticism allows for a more violent, repressive approach to counter internal conflict. From a humanitarian perspective, the outlook is extremely bleak. Concepts of free, democratic, political representation and human rights are likely to be further eroded. Hopes for a just solution to internal conflicts within the former Soviet Union diminish as the revival in Russia's economic fortunes gathers pace.

Whilst profits from continued conflict line the pockets of the security apparatus and army within Chechnya, the economic stagnation induced by continued conflict continues to have a devastating effect on the Chechen civilian. Reports from the NGO's and United Nations staff within Chechnya directly contradict Kadyrov's depiction of a 'post-war' revival in which only the 'idle' choose not to work and provide for their families. Unemployment amongst Chechens was estimated to be between 70-80% in 2002<sup>218</sup>. Given that in 2003, 2004 and 2005, there was an increase in refugees forced to return to Chechnya after the camps in which they sought safety were closed, a marked increase in 'disappearances' in 2004<sup>219</sup> and still only limited water, gas and food supplies reaching the vast majority of Chechen inhabitants, the situation shows little signs of improvement and several signs of worsening – beyond the showpiece projects the authorities show to western journalists to convince them of Chechnya's 'post-conflict recovery'. The vast proportion of money set aside by the Russian state for reconstruction in the region was never received. In 2002, it was estimated that 'only 0.1% of the federal budget (for the restoration of Chechnya had been implemented'<sup>220</sup>. In 2008, shootings and lootings within the province were still a daily occurrence, with civilians continuing to live in fear. Despite this, Russia, and its puppet regime within Chechnya, claims that the region has stabilised. This is precisely what the international community, determined to avoid open condemnation of Russia to protect its economic interests, want to hear.

As ethnic Russians are accepting of state propaganda that blames Chechens and other ethnicities for rampant levels of criminality within the former Soviet Union and are supportive of an ultra-Nationalist agenda that protects ethnic Russian interests, the international community have their own agenda for accepting Russia's claims that the situation in Chechnya has

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<sup>218</sup> The Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe estimated that 80% of people in Grozny were unemployed with no means of subsistence. Cited in an article by John Dunlop, *The Situation of IDPs from Chechnya*, May 2002

<sup>219</sup> According to research conducted by Memorial. The Chechen Ministry of Internal Affairs has also confirmed the 'disappearance' of 400 people in the first half of 2004 alone.

<sup>220</sup> Amnat Batyzheva, Deputy Head of the Chechen Administration (Pro-Moscow), quoted in Dunlop, p10, May, 2002.

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'normalised'. Rachel Denber, in an article for Human Rights Watch, described the international community as taking a 'path of self-deception'<sup>221</sup> and highlights 'energy security' as a major contributor to international inaction. By accepting Russian propagandist notions of a 'normalised' Chechnya, the international community bypasses the moral imperative to act and attempt to prevent the daily humanitarian abuses that occur. They recognise the long-term political and economic risks associated with a firm stance against Russia's policy in the Caucasus.

As is certainly the case with Britain and the U.S., they may also have been fearful of Russia's reaction, as a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, towards their own foreign policy agenda. If Russia is placed under the microscope, Russia will ensure that the aggressive actions of western states, particularly in the Middle East, will not avoid similar scrutiny. Humanitarian issues are of secondary importance to securing national, economic interests. It is inconceivable that the world's most powerful countries were unaware of Chechen suffering given the information provided by NGO's. Political and economic interests provide the motive for shameful inaction but, once again, not the justification. The political reality of western democracies becomes increasingly incompatible with the ideological values they claim to represent. The self-deception practiced by ethnic Russians to excuse atrocities and, from an economic perspective, ethnic Russian control of Chechen industry, is replicated by the international community in its response to Chechen suffering.

International inaction towards the Chechen crisis cannot purely be defined as economic pragmatism. Western governments rely on electoral support, after all, and if public pressure was forthcoming, inaction would certainly be more difficult. Perhaps, as the majority of ethnic Russians view Chechen suffering with a cold detachment by associating the Chechen people, as an entity, as responsible for the desperate and violent atrocities committed in their towns, the international community excuses its inaction on a similar basis. There is little doubt that attacks on Russian civilians, attacks with an association to Wahhabi militants that has been consistently stressed and exaggerated by the Russian media in respect of its influence within the Chechen Separatist movement, has decreased western sympathies for the Chechen population, limiting the pressure on western governments to call Russia to account for its continued atrocities. Within an environment of fear and pre-occupation concerning the threat of terrorism in the name of Jihad, many in the west may sympathise with ethnic-Russian notions of collective Chechen guilt. Indeed, many may share Putin's, and formally Yeltsin's, assessment that the innate criminality of

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<sup>221</sup> Glad to be Deceived – The International Community and Chechnya, Rachel Denber, January 2004, Human Rights Watch

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the Chechen people restricts Russia's response, forcing Russia to act within the confines of violent politics.

What is certain is that those who seek an end to Chechen suffering and sympathise with Chechen calls for national self-determination, and those who view Russia's actions in Chechnya as a legitimate extension of the defence of the 'civilised' world against an evil that fundamentally threatens our existence – a 'front-line' in the 'war on terror' – are vastly outnumbered by those people who simply don't care, or know virtually nothing about Chechnya. That is not to say that the majority of people within western societies are incapable of feeling outrage, revulsion and anger towards individuals or governments that commit terrorist acts, or that the majority of such people cannot find empathy for its victims in certain cases. Public sympathies in the west following 9-11 testify to the fact that they can. Chechnya demonstrates that, as is the case with ethnic Russians, the international community display selectivity in their emotional reactions to atrocities. Mass attention and public sympathy depends on who are being killed and the manner in which they are killed. Their civilian status by no means guarantees either sympathy or aid.

The multitude of variables that contribute to the nature of public reactions to atrocities ensures that the influence of ethnicity – as support for the perpetrators, as an inducement for apathy, or as a trigger for anger towards the perpetrators and empathy with its victims – is immensely hard to quantify. As was mentioned in the first chapter, the psychological impact of a terrorist act undoubtedly influences the level of public response towards both the perpetrator and its victims, as does the relation between the act and its proximity to the public's personal sphere. By 'personal sphere', I refer to the physical proximity of the act, whether the act can be replicated by the perpetrators within the public's own locality, or whether the perpetrators or targets have an ethnic, cultural, political or religious affiliation that an individual may associate, or disassociate, with themselves.

The apathy and inaction that characterised the international communities' reaction to the Rwandan genocide, or Darfur, for instance, can be seen as being at least partially attributable to an emotional detachment and disassociation from its victims within the western populace. There was also political detachment and disassociation in the absence of economic incentive for intervention. Similar factors govern the inaction of western states towards Chechnya but other factors, primarily concerning the detrimental economic consequences of the proposed intervention and anti-Islamic sentiment, also influence. The public's reaction to the conflict frequently surpasses apathy and becomes active hostility to Chechens, governed by emotional responses to terrorist incidents without consideration of why such events occurred, further limiting international impetus to respond to Chechen suffering.

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Whilst external factors, such as international economic issues, prolong the conflict between Russia and Chechnya through international inaction, it was the internal economic issues that formed and shaped the course of events leading to conflict – instilled, of course, as in Northern Ireland, with ethno-supremacist ideology. There is undoubtedly a strong bond between capitalism, poverty and the survival of racial stereotypes and prejudices. Capitalism, as a system based on competition and exploitation, creates losers. Capitalism encourages everyone, as the suburban middle-class of England demonstrates in its often desperate desire to ‘keep up with the Joneses’, to consider success and social standing in terms of material wealth. Capitalism fosters a desire for people to be able to perceive themselves as better than others around them. For many individuals, such a desire is their primary motivation for attaining financial reward and, in terms of self-justification, provides their greatest comfort.

It is no coincidence that intense racial prejudices often survive strongest within the poorer elements of any given society. Anyone who has visited the poorest white areas within the southern states of the USA will be immediately shocked at the frequency to which black people are referred to as ‘niggers’ and the number of KKK stickers and confederate memorabilia on car bumpers. Poor areas of the former East Germany, suffering from high levels of unemployment, have seen the NPD, an openly racist party, poll over 20% in certain constituencies<sup>222</sup>. Within Northern Ireland, this chapter discussed the extreme levels of poverty that both ethnic groups in Northern Ireland, albeit to differing degrees, found themselves in the 1950’s and 1960’s, and its affects on cross-community relations. This period saw the decline of traditional industries, such as textiles and shipbuilding. Many individuals who had previously sought comfort and self-respect in their clearly defined, traditional trades, no longer possessed such recourse for self-worth. I have also discussed the alarming increase in the levels of poverty in the 1990’s presided over by Chechens and Ethnic Russians following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Ethnic Russian anger towards their poverty was further fuelled, and channelled towards Chechens, by media depictions of an ethnic group growing rich, collectively, on the back of organised crime. As this article in Pravda<sup>223</sup> on the Chechen problem states: ‘Russia has become a hostage to criminals. At this rate will we ever reach the bright future promised by the market?’

Protestant Ulstermen displayed a similar anger towards the Catholic civil rights protesters in the 1960’s. Both dominant ethnic groups resorted to the racial distinction that they, the ethnic Russians and Ulster Protestants, were willing to apply an ‘honest’, hard-working mentality to alleviate their financial problems that their racially flawed ethnic counterparts lacked. Racism

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<sup>222</sup> Saxony provides an example. In the 2006 General Election, the NPD polled 22%.

<sup>223</sup> Pravda, 19th May, 1992, *The Mafiosa’s Brutal Hobby*, cited in Seely, p186.

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empowered such individuals to feel less worthless, through unfounded moral righteousness, in the absence of material wealth. Racist ideology and, as will be discussed in the following chapter, religion, provided irrational, surrogate mediums of comfort in the absence of Capitalist expressions of self-worth. In this manner, poverty and economic interests play an active role in the perpetuation of ethno-supremacist justifications for state repression within the dominant ethnic groups that form the basis of this analysis. Global inaction towards Chechen suffering is also partially attributable to international economic concerns, that ensure policy decisions will reflect the primacy of 'national interests' over humanitarian intervention.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **INTER-ETHNIC CONFLICT, 'TERRORISM' AND THE STATE**

This analysis attempts to understand the prejudices, mythologization and artificially constructed reasoning that is expressed within all inter-ethnic conflicts to varying degrees. Evidence thus far, has highlighted the process by which the influence of such false constructs leads to emotional, irrational and reactionary responses on behalf of dominant ethnic groups, that are devoid of knowledge-based reasoning. Within such an environment, an acceptance of the perceived necessity in pursuing repressive state policies can be fostered through unfounded justifications. State repression develops deep-seated hostility and a determination to rectify the resulting injustice amongst the victim population –the ethnic group who are targeted by repressive state policy. If grievances cannot be solved through existing democratic, legal means and if a state, regardless of political pressure, will not yield to legitimate demands for reform, state repression will frequently initiate a violent response from an aggrieved ethnic group. A repressive state, possessing the electoral support of the dominant ethnic group, is unwilling to concede its position of dominance – the states' dominance having been established on inflexible ideological principles and possessing the mechanisms of power to enforce their position through violence, if necessary. The aggrieved ethnic group will be equally unwilling to concede what is perceived to be their basic rights, leading to an entrenched and seemingly immovable pattern of violence and conflict. By playing on existing prejudices and fears, repressive states establish a high level of impunity to instigate violent action, or increasingly repressive forms of governance, whilst maintaining significant public support.

A lack of rational objectivity amongst an ethnic group, or groups, who have sacrificed value neutrality in favour of existing prejudices, places significant emphasis on the international community to assist in resolving protracted internal conflicts where such a political environment exists. The international community can thus be seen as essential in providing neutral, rational channels for conflict resolution that eludes internal political structures once political violence has taken hold. Frequently, crucial international humanitarian intervention capable of ending a cycle of violence, particularly within violent inter-ethnic conflict involving a single state, is not forthcoming. This chapter attempts to clarify the justifications for international inaction, as well as justifications by non-state actors concerning the use of violence to achieve political change. Furthermore, the chapter will examine the process by which the protection of 'privileges' may be incorrectly categorised by the dominant ethnic group as a justification for violence on the grounds



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of protecting their own 'rights'. How particular ideological convictions can remove the moral imperative to respond to humanitarian crisis will also be discussed.

Historical experience in reaching a mutually acceptable negotiated settlement to end inter-ethnic conflict, or indeed any form of violent conflict, has stressed the crucial role of third-party mediation in conflict resolution. Bercovitch<sup>224</sup> and Billing<sup>225</sup>, who attempted to analyse what percentage of conflicts in the post-war period had resulted in a cessation of violence through third-party peace initiatives, recorded a success rate of between a fifth and a quarter of all cases. In cases that involved a substantial input of resources, a positive result was achieved in forty per cent of cases<sup>226</sup>. Such statistics highlight the positive impact of third-party mediation within conflict situations, particularly when such involvement displays genuine commitment and a determination to succeed. Bercovitch and Billing have also acknowledged that most of the positive results, involving in most cases the input of substantial resources, have been achieved in classical dispute cases (territorial disputes between two nation-states) as opposed to cases of inter-ethnic conflict. The discrepancy between successful mediation of inter-state conflicts and a lack of progress in preventing the escalation and continuation of inter-ethnic conflicts involving a single state can be attributed to a number of factors.

Perhaps the most widely used justification for inaction, in terms of an international response to inter-ethnic conflict involving a single state, is the principle of state sovereignty – more precisely, an unwillingness to compromise the principle of state sovereignty, regardless of circumstance, through intervention in what are perceived to be the 'internal' disputes of other states. The second, an increasingly common justification for inaction amongst the international community and providing a justification for greater levels of repressive state policies globally, involves the perceived illegitimacy of violent action against a state. Increasingly, any violent action against a state will be condemned and dismissed, regardless of circumstance, as 'terrorism'. An artificially constructed ideological defence of state repression is not limited to dominant ethnic groups within inter-ethnic conflicts. Powerful states, assisted by an ambiguous international legal framework governing such issues, diminish the moral imperative to respond to humanitarian crisis resulting from state repression through a deceptive articulation of conflict issues.

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<sup>224</sup> Bercovitch, 1991 – studied 79 cases of conflict between 1945 and 1990. Cited in Scherrer, Christian P: *Structural Prevention of Ethnic Violence* (ECOR, 1999), p54.

<sup>225</sup> Billing, Research concluded in 1992, studied 278 cases of conflict between 1945 and 1990, Scherrer, p54.

<sup>226</sup> It should be noted that a much higher success rate was recorded in classical dispute cases (territorial/border disputes between two nation-states) than in the type of inter-ethnic conflict that constitutes the basis of this analysis.

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Any state that has utilised mechanisms of state repression will categorise any violent response by the aggrieved community as a 'threat to national sovereignty'. Increasingly repressive measures towards the aggrieved community will be enacted by the state to counter violent reactions to repressive state policy. Fearing deteriorating economic and strategic relations with the state in question, looking to restrict attention and criticism of their own repressive tendencies that would inevitably surface should a state choose to criticise others, and wishing to avoid armed confrontation and involvement that can bring no discernable strategic or economic benefit for themselves, the international community evokes similar 'state sovereignty' justifications for inaction. The internal affairs of a state are portrayed as their own concern and the legal restrictions on an external states' involvement are highlighted. In the case of Chechnya, Russia's freedom to pursue repressive state policies without international condemnation is bolstered by its position as an energy superpower (Germany is heavily reliant on Russian energy, for instance), by other major powers who have limited moral foundations for criticism through their own use of repressive measures (China) or through other serious human rights abuses whilst undertaking illegal wars (Britain and USA). Added to which, any international peace initiative for Chechnya would be a costly and potentially risky exercise with no financial or strategic reward. The protection of a states' national interests would be a more honest appraisal of why the international community is reluctant to involve itself in inter-ethnic conflicts, regardless of the level of humanitarian crisis that results from such conflict. The reality, as Scherrer<sup>227</sup> contends, that 'Ethno-Nationalist conflicts can only be solved politically, not militarily' is ignored and the conflict is positioned in the public's mind to be an illegitimate challenge to a legitimate states' authority – or in Chechnya's case, that the conflict no longer exists<sup>228</sup>. Scherrer highlights such cases as the tendency for states to make 'deliberate, directed attempts to mislead'. Such deception prevents accurate clarification of why a conflict exists and what should be done to resolve it.

Within international law, there is no clear framework for the recognition of minority rights or how states should respond to humanitarian crisis. Protocols that attempted to classify 'the principle of self-determination of peoples' were added to the Geneva Convention in 1977 as a result of the National Liberation movements of the 1950's and 1960's but stipulate that they must be classified 'as international conflicts to which the humanitarian law of armed conflict should be applied', not inter-ethnic conflicts involving a single state. Aside from the international dimension that protects state sovereignty, Article 85 (3) of Protocol 1 states that 'launching an indiscriminate attack affecting the civilian population or causing damage to civilian objects'<sup>229</sup> is strictly

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<sup>227</sup> Scherrer, p49.

<sup>228</sup> Putin declared many years ago that the conflict in Chechnya was over despite daily fighting.

<sup>229</sup> Article 85 (3), Protocol 1, Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States, 1977.

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prohibited, immediately discounting any violent action in urban areas against a state, by a movement that defines itself within a 'national liberation' model, as ever being legitimate within international law. Laws that govern issues of state sovereignty only afford protection, recognition and justice for the dominant ethnic group, leading to what Scherrer has termed an 'ethnocracy' – a dominant ethnic group having a disproportionate amount of resources and power. 'Ethnocratic' rule can often mean, and has been the case in Northern Ireland, dictatorial control for the dominant ethnic group under the respectable guise of 'democracy', even though such a political framework does not in any way satisfy the credentials for legitimate democratic governance. Other ethnocracies, such as Chechnya, do not claim to be democratic but overtly enforce ethnocratic rule by force. It could be said that the protection afforded to states to undertake policies of violent repression to counter 'threats to national sovereignty' constitutes legal immunity from human rights abuses. Scherrer contends that current international law 'tacitly concedes existing states the de facto right to use violence against non-dominant minorities'<sup>230</sup>.

Following tragic cases of international inaction towards inter-ethnic violence in recent years, such as Rwanda, there have been some useful suggestions as to what an international legal framework for the protection of minority rights should consist of, and how similar humanitarian catastrophes can be avoided through international intervention in the future. If a state undertakes policies of violent repression against particular ethnicities and is unwilling to reform itself, there is a strong case for establishing criteria for legitimate secession from the state for an aggrieved ethnic group. Ropers and Schlotter<sup>231</sup> have suggested the following criteria for legitimate secession:

- 1) Where there is massive and prolonged violation of human rights with no prospects for change.
- 2) Where there are gross structural inequalities in living standards based on ethnic discrimination.
- 3) Where one state has been annexed by another and this has to be reversed.

Evidence in earlier chapters of this analysis has clearly defined the 'massive and prolonged violation of human rights' that existed in Northern Ireland and continues to exist in Chechnya today. Evidence also clearly emphasises 'gross structural inequalities in living standards based on ethnic discrimination' within both regions. Whilst Ropers and Schlotter have provided what could be described as reasonable criteria for legitimate secessionist claims, Chechnya and

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<sup>230</sup> Scherrer, p33.

<sup>231</sup> Ropers, Peter/ Schlotter, Volker: *Verhaltensregeln bei Sezession, Staatzerfall, und Staatenneubildung* (ECOR, 1993).

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Northern Ireland are by no means isolated cases in satisfying such guidelines. Ethnocracies – cases of marginalised minority ethnic groups who are denied equal rights by a dominant ethnicity – exist throughout the world. The frequency of human rights violations on account of ethnicity by states ensures the majority of states will continue to oppose any legislation that aims at the rectification of such injustice. If a state does not actively participate in serious human rights abuses towards an aggrieved ethnic group, or practice ethnic discrimination to attain economic advantages for the dominant ethnic group it represents, it will have an ally, or several allies, that do.

There have been isolated efforts by certain states to push for a related legal framework that, whilst less specific in regards to inter-ethnic conflict, at least attempts to encompass similar criteria to Ropers and Schlotter's model for the purpose of international intervention in the event of a humanitarian crisis. The British Government<sup>232</sup>, in recent years, has been active in its support for an international legal framework governing the use of force on humanitarian grounds, providing it satisfies the following criteria:

- 1) There must be a serious humanitarian crisis.
- 2) The territorial government is unable or unwilling to take effective measures to tackle it.
- 3) Non-forceable remedies have proved ineffectual or are not available.
- 4) The military means deployed are proportionate

It should be noted that this is not specifically a framework for inter-ethnic conflict or establishing principles for what constitutes a right to secession from a repressive state for an aggrieved minority, but at least suggests a model for action that could be utilised for such purposes – 'massive prolonged human rights abuses' could constitute a serious humanitarian crisis and the second clause in the proposals, that the territorial government should be 'unable or unwilling' to tackle the crisis, satisfies Roper and Schlotter's suggestion that there should be 'no prospects for change'. The reaction to the British government's proposals amongst the international community was one of almost universal rejection – the most common reservation being, predictably, a fear that their endorsement would 'undermine the principle of state sovereignty'<sup>233</sup>. At present, states that intervene militarily to end a humanitarian crisis do so illegally and, 'for reasons of morality or legitimacy'<sup>234</sup> expect the international community to accept their actions. Such an ambiguous framework for intervention exposes the weaknesses of international political and legal entities when any form of military action is undertaken by a

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<sup>232</sup> Proposals announced to the House of Commons, 2nd May, 2001, Hansard.

<sup>233</sup> House of Commons, 2nd May, 2001.

<sup>234</sup> Gazzini, *The Changing Rules on the use of Force in International Law* (Manchester University Press, 1998), p178.

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powerful state, either within its internal borders or in respect of inter-state conflict. The existence of international laws governing the behaviour of nation-states does not by any means ensure they are adhered to. It is highly questionable whether an international framework regarding minority rights and rules of secession for repressed ethnic minorities would make any significant difference in reality, unless international political institutions are strengthened and the consequences of non-compliance are more severe.

Establishing a framework for action within the principles outlined by Roper and Schlotter would, at least, establish a new precedent, challenging accepted international norms relating to the use of force. If it is accepted that secessionist claims that satisfy Roper and Schlotter's principles of secession are legitimate, this has far-reaching implications in terms of the legitimacy of violent action as a response to a state's refusal to act on removing illegitimate aspects of governance. Whilst very few (pacifists) would reject outright the concept of violence as a means to achieve a 'just' solution to political conflict in every circumstance, many contend that legitimate violence can only be undertaken by a state – in other words, the state has a monopoly on the legitimate use of violent means. Roper and Schlotter challenge that assumption by seeking a legal acknowledgment that not all states can be viewed as legitimate, simply because they exist – a fact few people could possibly disagree with. If one accepts that violence, as a force for change, is acceptable in specific circumstances, it is the nature of these circumstances that must be examined, such as the levels of repression and the chances for change through peaceful means, in order to assess the legitimacy of the violent action undertaken.

As R G Frey<sup>235</sup> rightly contends, the goal for terrorists is invariably 'the rectification and elimination of injustice'. Invariably, violent resistance to injustice arises as a by-product of exclusion from the political process and from grievances remaining unanswered through peaceful channels of resistance. In Northern Ireland, we witnessed a progression from peaceful demonstrations to violent demonstrations, and from violent demonstrations to guerrilla war and terrorism. It is the addressing of grievances and policies of political inclusion that would have prevented this escalation, not greater levels of repression and violence towards the aggrieved community. The Provisional IRA received its greatest surge of public support and recruitment of new members following the massacre of civilians on Bloody Sunday. As Annette Bair has stated, 'the best response is the removal of the grounds for the deepest resentment'<sup>236</sup>. Both the state and the international community must consider what violation of rights has occurred and support a process that seeks to end ethnic discrimination and disenfranchisement. Such actions restore

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<sup>235</sup> Frey, Raymond Gillespie/ Morris, Christopher W.: *Violence, Terrorism and Justice* (Cambridge University Press, 1991), p4.

<sup>236</sup> Bair, Annette C: *Violent Demonstrations, Violence, Terrorism and Justice* (Cambridge University Press, 1991), p54.

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faith within the aggrieved ethnic community that demands for change had been heard. Conciliatory steps towards an acknowledgement of discrimination by the state and a programme for change, would convince the aggrieved community that a solution can be found within existing state channels, or rather reformed state channels, through peaceful negotiation. It must be remembered that the 'rectification of injustice' will only be sought by a state whose political ideology seeks to adhere to humanitarian principles.

Clearly not every violent action undertaken by an aggrieved ethnic community will necessarily be legitimate, nor would every demand have to be met to the fullest degree. It would seem reasonable to suggest that if violent demands for political change receive considerable support within the aggrieved ethnic community, if a sizable proportion of a particular ethnic group are willing to aid and show solidarity with such desperate measures to achieve change, it can be concluded that a high level of injustice exists and their demands have some legitimate foundation. A process of open debate and negotiation could lead to a mutually agreeable compromise based on power-sharing principles – as we have seen in Northern Ireland<sup>237</sup>. To dismiss such a process only radicalises support for greater levels of violence – violence being the only alternative to peaceful negotiation, other than the aggrieved community permanently conceding their basic rights. To consider violence as a tool of an aggrieved ethnic group to deny rights to the dominant ethnic group that is resolutely opposed to the fulfilment of their own rights, has some foundation. Virginia Held<sup>238</sup>, in considering the characteristics of terrorism and common problems in clarification associated with it, concluded:

'Terrorism, depending on the severity and extent of rights violations in an existing situation, is a transition involving a sharing of rights violations. If this, and only this, can be expected to lead to a situation in which rights are more adequately respected, it may well be less morally unjustifiable than continued acceptance of on-going rights violations.'

This seems a more realistic proposition than a sanctimonious rejection of violent means by non-state actors, regardless of circumstances, as it considers the legitimacy, or illegitimacy, of a state's actions through a consequentiality perspective. It acknowledges that serious rights abuses by a state will provoke a response, and that the nature of the response is governed by the options the aggrieved community feels are open to them and the severity of injustice administered by the state. The escalation and severity of violent means utilised by an aggrieved community is often a reflection of the severity of violent actions an aggrieved community has

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<sup>237</sup> Whilst we have witnessed the formation of a power-sharing executive in Northern Ireland the peace process, for reasons already suggested and due to the reasons suggested in later chapters of this analysis, is far from complete.  
<sup>238</sup> Held, Virginia: *Terrorism, Rights and Political Goals* cited in Frey/ Morris, p13.

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endured. It is often a process of community-wide brutalisation over many years. A survey by Medicine Sans Frontiers in 2004 revealed that in Chechnya, 90% of Chechens had lost someone close to them from state violence – more than one in six had witnessed their death. Independent Chechen Media sources<sup>239</sup> spoke to the families of the hostage-takers at Beslan. It was revealed that all had relatives, many of which who were children, who had been brutally killed by Russian Security Forces. Rustam Ateyev took part in the raid on Beslan with his two surviving brothers. His younger brother, who was twelve years old, had been found naked with his skull split open. It is impossible to assess terrorist actions without consideration of the level of brutalisation that has occurred within the aggrieved ethnic community. It is partially the absence of such assessment that leads to the acceptance of false perceptions pertaining to the 'randomness' or 'inexplicable' nature of counter-violence towards a state.

Amnesty International has stated that the situation in Chechnya is 'one of the effects of a government policy that only pays lip-service to human rights principles'<sup>240</sup>. The anger and resentment of such injustices being continually ignored by the international community cannot be underestimated, as a contributor to counter-violence as a response to state violence. As Diederik Lohman<sup>241</sup>, the father of a Beslan hostage-taker, exclaimed, 'where was the world when our children were dying under Russian bombs?' The desire for revenge and the instigation of a campaign of brutal retaliation on the Chechen people, expressed by the majority of the Russian public following Beslan, replicates the emotions that drove Chechen Terrorists to commit the act. The Russian reaction to such an atrocity is not inexplicable. It is a reactionary response based on anger and frustration, an emotional reaction that seeks no rational appraisal and understanding of why such an event transpired, and how best to avoid a repetition of such violence. As levels of violence, and levels of brutalisation, increase amongst the protagonists, a pattern of retaliatory, cyclical violence emerges of which the primary motive is to satisfy mutual demands for revenge.

Reactionary responses to violence, lead by a thirst for revenge and a desire to punish 'the enemy', assist in discarding principles of proportionality and broaden definitions governing who can be considered a legitimate target. Brutalisation of a conflict will encourage the notion that an ethnic group, as a whole, carries responsibility for any violent crimes committed, as the desire to seek revenge for a brutal act of violence will not be limited to the individuals responsible for the act. The act is perceived as indecipherable from the cause, despite the fact that it is the act itself that constitutes terrorism, not the cause. If a terrorist act is carried out in the name of a cause,

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<sup>239</sup> Kavkaz Centre, September 2nd, 2005.

<sup>240</sup> Victoria Webb, Amnesty International, 1st September, 2005, quoted from a BBC Article, Injustice Fuels Chechen Fires, BBC Archive.

<sup>241</sup> Kavkaz Centre, September 2nd, 2005.

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and the cause has the backing of an ethnic group, a reactionary response will dictate that the ethnic group, as a whole, have expressed support for the act. The crimes that have been committed against the aggrieved ethnic community may prevent open condemnation of the terrorist act within that community, increasingly implicating the ethnic group's tacit involvement in the eyes of the dominant ethnic group. Hence, moderate politics is, once again, drawn into a more radical political framework by such an association. The concept of collective guilt is an essential component in the justification of terrorist crimes for both state and non-state actors, as it implies the criminal complicity of civilians in terrorist acts that have been committed. Principles of collective guilt escalate a conflict by implicating individuals with moderate political affiliations with extreme acts – people who may be victims of injustice and consequently wish to see the rectification of such injustices, but who have no involvement with terrorist acts. Collective punishment for such acts will encourage those who previously held 'moderate' positions to adopt a more extremist stance as an expression of revenge for collective punishment. Collective punishment may dispel any hope amongst 'moderates' that injustice may be rectified through existing state channels. Retaliatory acts of counter-terrorism will convince a state and the dominant group it represents, of the necessity of continued collective punishment, further acts of state terrorism, fostering a mutual determination to reject a negotiated settlement of hostilities. A key component of this process is the dominant ethnic groups' refusal to acknowledge acts of collective punishment as terrorist crimes.

The refusal of dominant ethnicities to acknowledge that acts of collective punishment by their state constitute a form of criminality and intent that can be classified as 'terrorist' is facilitated through linguistic and ideological misperceptions. Firstly, there is the question of how terrorism is defined by a state. There is no universally accepted definition of what constitutes a terrorist act. The ambiguity that surrounds the terminology assists repressive states in redefining its linguistic meaning, utilising the fear and revulsion the terminology conjures up in the minds of the general public to pursue repressive policies and distance their own actions from association with terrorism, despite the fact that such actions constitute violent forms of coercion on a civilian population to achieve political ends. As Helen Fein<sup>242</sup> has noted in her psychological evaluation of the Jonestown Massacre, a fear of Terrorism causes people to 'repress their intuitive perceptions, discredit disbelief and to collaborate in acts of cruelty'. Fear becomes another irrational foundation to facilitate artificially constructed justifications for state repression assisting existing ideological constructs, such as ethno-supremacist ideology and a religious stratification of human worth, in perceiving an ethnic group as an enemy. The repression of the public's 'intuitive perceptions' involves factors that lead an individual away from rational decision-making,

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<sup>242</sup> Fein, Helen: *The Politics of Paranoia: Jonestown and Twentieth Century Totalitarianism* in Bushell, Timothy: *State-Organised Terror* (Westview Press, 1991), p276.



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encouraging unsubstantiated emotional responses to decision-making. A state will redefine what constitutes terrorism to distance its own violent actions from non-state actions, as a more accurate clarification would dispel its perceived legitimacy in the public psyche. The dominant ethnic group, represented by the state, does not want to feel that they are 'collaborators in acts of cruelty' – it would be harder to maintain the illusion of self-righteous indignation.

Examples of 'tailored' terrorist definitions are numerous. The CIA, and consequently the US government, are 'guided' by the principle that the term 'terrorist' means 'premeditated, politically-motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience'<sup>243</sup>. Such a definition conveniently excludes political violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by a state. It has been reported that the war in Iraq has now claimed over 600,000 civilian victims, or 2.5% of the total population<sup>244</sup>. Such figures are only available from non-governmental sources as the US government deem it unnecessary to undertake a body count of civilian deaths. If it is a willingness to perpetrate politically-motivated violence against non-combatants that constitute a terrorist act, what percentage of victims of violent action, including war, who are non-combatants would allow states to qualify as engaged in terrorist acts? If civilian deaths caused by military action are disregarded to the point where the vast majority of victims are civilian and no body count is deemed necessary, it could be argued that such actions satisfy the criteria of a terrorist act. Attempting to clarify the number of civilian deaths in Chechnya is problematic, as information is conflicting. There is a tendency for Russian State sources to vastly underestimate the number of civilian deaths caused from bombing and 'disappearances' (state-sanctioned murder) and a tendency for Chechen Separatists to exaggerate the figures. Having analysed all available information, the International Federation for Human Rights<sup>245</sup> concluded, as a conservative estimate, the number of civilians to die at the hands of the security forces and Russian army from 1994 to 2003 to be between 150,000 and 200,000. It has been estimated that up to 40,000 civilians died in the carpet-bombing of Grozny during the Second Chechen War – three times the number of deaths inflicted on the Russian army over the whole nine-year period<sup>246</sup>. Such figures, when compared to the several hundred civilian deaths incurred through non-state terrorism, should lend perspective to what constitutes a terrorist act and to the level of criminality a state is willing to deploy against an ethnic group it claims to represent. Furthermore, the figures confirm the virtual impunity of powerful states to inflict mass terror on civilians within its own borders – impunity assisted by misconceptions governing what constitutes the legitimate use of violence.

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<sup>243</sup> Title 22 of the US Code, Section 2656F (a), [www.CIA.gov](http://www.CIA.gov).

<sup>244</sup> Figures on Iraqi death toll provided by Lancet.

<sup>245</sup> International Federation of Human Rights Report, January, 2003.

<sup>246</sup> Estimates are from the Soldiers' Mothers of Russia Group whose figures are accepted as the most accurate on Russian Military deaths. Figures are based on deaths from 1994 to August, 2003.

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President Putin's claim to be a partner with the west in the 'war on terror', having committed one of the largest terrorist crimes of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, reveals the extent of impunity (and hypocrisy) that perceived state legitimacy and principles of state sovereignty confers. On September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2001, Putin declared that 'America and Russia had a common foe' because 'Bin Laden's people are connected to the events currently taking place in Chechnya'. On September 24<sup>th</sup>, Putin stated that events in Chechnya 'could not be considered outside the context of counter-terrorism'<sup>247</sup>. The response of Russia's 'energy partners', Italy and Germany, to Putin's position was that the world should not be critical of Russian policy. Chancellor Schröder (who is now on the board of Russian Energy giant, Gazprom<sup>248</sup>) stated 'there must be a more differentiated evaluation of world opinion' (in light of September 11<sup>th</sup>) towards Russia. Prime Minister Berlusconi concurred, stating 'we'll probably have to judge things differently than we have done until now regarding Chechnya'<sup>249</sup>. Endorsement of Russian policy in the Caucasus by the international community demonstrates a prioritisation of national interests over humanitarian concerns. It also demonstrates the manner in which public fear and revulsion towards September 11<sup>th</sup> has assisted states in extending what may be perceived as legitimate action, when faced with internal challenges to state legitimacy, under the premise of 'threats to national sovereignty'. International endorsement of Russian policy in the Caucasus serves as an example of the willingness of other states in perpetuating false perceptions of humanitarian crisis to protect national interests.

It is the Russian state that seeks the broadest universally recognised definition of what constitutes Terrorism. The broadest definition, that is, for non-state actors. In a similar manner to the United States, they seek to erase the possibility that the violent actions of a state could ever be construed as terrorist crimes. More than any other state, Russia seeks international recognition for a definition of Terrorism that could be seen as a reinvention of what the terminology originally set out to encompass. Encouraged by the United States in Iraq, who describe insurgent attacks on its military as Terrorist actions despite being an illegal occupying force, Russia seeks a universally-accepted definition of Terrorism that includes any challenge to the legitimacy of a state, regardless of circumstance. Russia seeks to extend the definition of terrorism to include, as the United States has done, insurgent attacks on its military forces. The goal for the Russian State is to define every separatist opposed to Russian Imperialism as terrorist. The state is seeking to redefine the terminology to be reflective of a cause, as opposed to an act. Russia seeks international legal validation for pursuing policies of violent repression on the premise of collective guilt. As the Russian military and politicians have often been quoted in

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<sup>247</sup> In the Name of Counter-Terrorism – Human Rights Abuses Worldwide – Briefing Paper for the 59th Session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, March 25th, 2003. Human Rights Watch.

<sup>248</sup> Schroeder was employed by Gazprom in 2006 following electoral defeat.

<sup>249</sup> Human Rights Watch – Briefing Paper, March 25th, 2003.

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remarking, every male Chechen is a 'potential terrorist'<sup>250</sup>. As Sergay Ivanov, the Russian Minister of Defence, expressed at the Munich Conference on Security when discussing 'double standards' in the evaluation of a terrorist threat:

'The attacks on military personnel in Iraq are still unequivocally defined as a display of Terrorism, and similar actions of militants in Russia are quite often presented as a display of the struggle of the Chechen people for their freedom and independence.'<sup>251</sup>

Whilst Ivanov could be correct in that there may be 'double standards' in defining Terrorism, he seems to have bypassed the biggest 'double standards' that exists – how the actions of state and non-state actors are perceived. The 'double standards' that Ivanov would like to see erased refer to Russia's inability to fully adopt the United States' reinvention of the terminology of what constitutes terrorism. Not only would Russia wish to adopt it, they would like to see it ratified by international law. For Russia, any cause that poses a challenge to (their) state legitimacy is terrorist, and anyone who supports such a cause is a terrorist, regardless of the actions of that individual, by virtue of religious, ideological or ethnic affiliation. Russia condemns other states for failing to 'bind themselves to a firm formula' because 'they are all criminals and our attitude to them must be the same'<sup>252</sup> (South Ossetians are clearly excused from this definition on account of their loyalty to Russia). All Russia really seeks is a ratification for a policy that most powerful nations are, to varying degrees, already pursuing. The Russian public holds no value in western sensibilities that force its governments to maintain a veneer of respect for principles of human rights and freedom of speech. Consequently, the Russian Government expresses its political ideology more openly, without fear of electoral consequences. Western governments must maintain a degree of ideological deception in regards to their actions to maintain its perceived legitimacy and electoral support – hence its reliance on 'double standards'. A repressive state's perceived legitimacy is strengthened, by preventing a rational appraisal of conflict issues. A tool for achieving a limited rational appraisal of conflict issues is to redefine the associated terminology, such as what constitutes a 'terrorist'.

It is necessary to clarify the nature of violent action the Russian government, and formally elements of the Northern Ireland State, deemed legitimate. The deaths of civilians have not occurred solely from so-called 'collateral' damage – civilians that have died as a result of 'counter-insurgency' operations. In both cases, overwhelming evidence exists of state-sanctioned

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<sup>250</sup> After 1999, Russian Generals decided that any male over the age of 12 was a 'potential terrorist', cited in an article by Boris Kagarlitsky, *The Moscow Times*, 10th December, 2002.

<sup>251</sup> 42nd Munich Conference on Security, May 2nd, 2006.

<sup>252</sup> Sergey B. Ivanov, Minister of Defence, Russian Federation, 38th Munich Conference on Security, 3rd February, 2002.

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torture and murder of civilians – violent action that specifically targets civilians and whose death cannot be attributed to 'accidental' involvement within military exercises. The widespread 'disappearances' of Chechens who have failed to return from 'filtration' camps throughout Chechnya, and the killing of civilians in raids on villages by the Russian Security Forces that continue unabated, have been fully documented in earlier chapters. In Northern Ireland, there has recently been official recognition, widely acknowledged within the Republican movement for decades, of a covert system of state-sanctioned murder by the British State in the form of collusion between elements of the British Security Services and Loyalist Paramilitary death squads<sup>253</sup>. In both conflict situations, the state has challenged the notion that the legitimate use of violence must involve adherence to the rule of law, as both have circumvented existing legal and political channels to pursue violent agendas. Russia claims that 'crisis management'—circumventing legal and political institutions in times of crisis – necessitates such actions. The police force in the UK has claimed a similar justification for illegal violent means in Northern Ireland, stressing the seriousness of the crisis that led to such actions. Both states have established criteria for the use of violence that does not define its legitimacy as being dependant on existing laws, institutions and practices. By doing so, violence by non-state actors could be legitimised by the same rationale, provided the 'crisis' faced by a community is considered grave enough to warrant bypassing existing laws, institutions and practices. If respect for the principles enshrined in law – human rights, judicial process etc...– are only applicable in times of peace, what is their true value within society and state and are the supposedly polarised values of liberal-democratic and autocratic states essentially an illusion? If one accepts that the use of violence may be excusable by state or non-state actors in specific circumstances, the legitimacy of the action undertaken could be viewed as largely dependant on the proportionality of the level of violence utilised and whether those targeted and killed can be viewed as terrorists or agents of violent repression.

Eamonn McCann<sup>254</sup> has noted that, in terms of support for violent action amongst the Republican community, 'it was Bloody Sunday which made the IRA campaign viable, Omagh which forced activists to see it as futile'. The slaughter of innocent people in the bombing of Omagh whilst the peace process was firmly underway, clearly carrying the potential to redress previous grievances through peaceful means, severely reduced Republican support for armed struggle within the community. The violence was recognised as no longer displaying proportionality, as many grievances were being addressed and violent repression by the British

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<sup>253</sup> Sir John Stevens' 15 year inquiry confirmed collusion between Special Branch and Protestant Paramilitaries to murder Republican civilians. Under agreements reached as part of the Good Friday Agreement, no police officers will be prosecuted as it is declared 'not in the public's interest'. Police Officers have threatened to 'out' Republican informers if further investigations go ahead. Reported in *The Observer*, Sunday 11th February, 2007, Henry Macdonald.

<sup>254</sup> McCann, Eamonn: '*Omagh, The War is Over*' (Hot Press Article, 2nd September, 1998) in *War and Peace in Northern Ireland* (Hot Press Books, 1998), p264.

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Security Services had dramatically decreased. Given a large number of Unionists had supported the peace process, the bombing was rightly condemned for the targeting of innocents. The Real IRA could not claim, as the Provisional IRA had claimed three decades earlier, that the Protestant community were almost universally opposed to seeking a compromise and a 'rectification of injustice' – nor could it claim significant support within the Republican community.

The vast majority of the Republican community perceived the Real IRA as wholly illegitimate agents for change as its victims were rightly perceived as innocents. It could be contended that given the actions of the British Security Services in Northern Ireland in the late 1960's, 70's and 80's, including the wrongful imprisonment, torture and murder of innocents, discredited the foundations of state legitimacy to such an extent that the state was forced to reform<sup>255</sup>, in the same way the actions of dissident Republican groups were viewed as illegitimate within the Republican community. Their actions had been almost universally accepted as unjustifiable. Russia, as has been noted, does not seek legitimacy in a 'western liberal-democratic' ideological sense. A form of Russian Ultra-Nationalism has developed since Sovietism that can accommodate the most aggressive forms of violent action on those perceived to be enemies of 'Greater Russia'. Far from discrediting the state's legitimacy amongst the Russian public, violent repression towards Chechens is viewed as necessary and deserved. This can be described as a major variable between the two conflicts. Extra-judicial killings and illegitimate state actions contributed to strengthening the perceived legitimacy of Republican demands for reform, thus weakening the position of the state. In Russia, violent repressive policies merely satisfy the Russian public's demands that its leadership demonstrate strength, resolve and power in its pursuit of its Nationalist ambitions.

The reaction of Putin's 'energy partners' to Russia's dismissal of the killing of 150,000 civilians as legitimate 'counter-terrorist' operations provides an insight into why there is so little external pressure for Russia to reform its aggressive policies. It is a populist ultra-Nationalist agenda that prevents reform from within. Chechen Separatists have stressed, for hundreds of years, Russia's 'godlessness' as a major obstacle to negotiated peace and a workable compromise in the region. It could be argued that it is not their 'godlessness' that prevents political reform and peaceful negotiation, but underdeveloped humanitarian principles as a consequence of historical circumstance. Russia's political leadership has historically involved differing forms of Totalitarian governance. From Tsarist autocratic leadership to Sovietism, humanitarian principles and liberal-democratic values held no ideological influence or relevance.

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<sup>255</sup> I refer to the British State – the Northern Ireland State collapsed in 1972. The Anglo-Irish Agreement can be viewed as a process of reform in exchange for a secession of violence. The disbandment of the RUC can be seen as an example of reform within the state.

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It is unsurprising that less than two decades after the end of Sovietism, this remains true within Russia's contemporary ideological position. Totalitarian systems of governance, regardless of their form, embrace principles relating to 'the purposeful act or threat of violence to create fear and or compliant behaviour in a victim/or audience'<sup>256</sup>. From Tsarist forces machine-gunning peaceful demonstrators outside the Winter Palace to Stalin's purges, Russia's government has always sought public compliance through violence. The Russian government's contemporary foe is no longer elements of the ethnic-Russian people that desire regime change – the vast majority of ethnic Russians have embraced the Ultra-Nationalist ideology the regime represents – but Russia's myriad of ethnic minorities that are excluded from ultra-Nationalist ideology by virtue of ethnicity.

As we have witnessed from the Northern Ireland Peace Process, the successful transition from inter-ethnic conflict to a negotiated peace requires, primarily, an acknowledgement from the state that represents the dominant ethnic group that fundamental rights have been impeded and a desire to rectify legitimate grievances through political inclusion and reform. Such principles can only establish themselves within a political environment that seeks to adhere to humanitarian notions of justice and moral accountability – principles that are enshrined in the liberal or social democratic, as opposed to the totalitarian, tradition. Whilst the Northern Ireland State that collapsed in 1972 never adhered to liberal-democratic principles it was, after 1972, governed by a state (U.K.) that claims to retain liberal-democratic principles. Within a fully functioning liberal democracy, which demands 'the full range of civil rights and liberties', violent protest should never be necessary and cannot be justified, as peaceful channels of reform are not curtailed. Crucially, humanitarian principles must be safeguarded by a robust, independent judiciary. Legal institutions must possess the resources and political framework to restrict state actions when necessary, to ensure the 'full range of civil rights and liberties' are protected. Peter Stavrakis<sup>257</sup> has suggested that the failure to limit the actions of 'oligarchic' capitalists with effective legal institutions has meant 'undermining the principles that would have moderated the evolution of a new type of unrestrained power in Russia'<sup>258</sup>. The manner by which international involvement in Russian politics during the period of transition has been clearly weighted towards satisfying short-term national, economic interests, as opposed to safeguarding the long-term political future of the Russian people, constitutes a criminal neglect. The west chose to support an autocratic system of governance to speedily introduce neo-liberal economics to Russia, neglecting to support and strengthen its democratic, political institutions, naively believing the autocratic power

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<sup>256</sup> Stohl, Michael: *The State as Terrorist: The Dynamics of Governmental Violence and Repression* (Greenwood Press, 1984), p43.

<sup>257</sup> Stavrakis, Peter: *Russia and the Recomposition of Power: The Paradigm beyond the Dream of the 'Good State'*, Kennan Institute (Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars, April 2000)

<sup>258</sup> Stavrakis, p4.

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base would give way to democracy once a neo-liberal economy was established. As Stavrakis contends, the west 'left little doubt that it was committed first to defending the architecture of economic reform in preference to the consolidation of democratic political institutions'<sup>259</sup>. This provides another example of the international community prioritising national interests over humanitarian concerns, resulting in greater levels of impunity for a state to undertake repressive and violent action against its people.

In order for a state to claim to be a liberal democracy it must, as Wilkinson contends, include 'the full range of civil rights and liberties'<sup>260</sup> under the rule of law. Naturally this includes principles of equal rights and the freedom to protest, should such rights be impinged. Protest is seen as an essential feature of a functioning liberal democracy, as it provides a 'valuable mode of political communication, criticism and democratic consultation'<sup>261</sup>. Having established such principles, there is a responsibility within governments to respond appropriately to such protests. To deny a proportion of its citizens 'the full range' of civil rights and liberties and their freedom to protest against perceived injustice relating to their civil rights, would be to sacrifice the legitimacy of the states' institutions and practices. As chapter one of this analysis suggested, non-state violence appears inherently immoral because it embodies the antithesis of our accepted social/political norms – the adoption of non-democratic means to achieve political objectives that challenge the rule of law. Frequently, Terrorism can be seen as a response to a state whose actions no longer adhere to liberal democratic principles as the state has sought to respond to legitimate protest through repressive means, denying both civil rights and the freedom to protest to its citizens. Public anger and determination to punish 'terrorists' for violently contravening the rule of law and challenging the values we feel are enshrined in our existing institutions and practices, is not dissimilar to a 'terrorists' determination to hold a state to account for its contravention of such values. If it the threat to the public's fundamental values that triggers such indignation, why are such feelings restricted to non-state actors, by-passing the states' refusal to adhere to the same values? If public responses were consistent, public pressure within a liberal democracy would be channelled towards the rectification of injustices before terrorism occurs. It is a legitimate states' responsibility to ensure that all available channels of communication and democratic consultation are deployed before non-democratic, violent means of control are utilised, as to deviate from such values will weaken its claim of legitimacy and invariably result in the adoption of non-democratic, violent means by the aggrieved community.

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<sup>259</sup> Stavakis, p9.

<sup>260</sup> Wilkinson, Paul: *Terrorism and the Liberal State* (New York University Press, 1986), p29.

<sup>261</sup> Wilkinson, p29.

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When political violence has erupted in such circumstances, issues relating to what contravention of rights has occurred become clouded by reactionary public condemnation and revulsion towards particular acts of violence. Reactionary responses towards acts of violence against the state prevent the realisation that the states' institutions and practices are no longer reflective, or have never been reflective, of liberal-democratic values. It is less clear what hinders an accurate perception of state repression prior to the outbreak of terrorism, when forms of peaceful protest are violently quelled and serious human rights abuses are observable. It seems logical to assume that such righteous indignation can only legitimately be the reaction of a state, and public, that has rejected all forms of violent repression prior to an outbreak of hostilities. Therefore, individuals who support violent state repression as a response to legitimate protest, but are filled with moral indignation by resulting terrorist actions are either unaware of the consequences of state repression, unable to ideologically categorise the actions of the state that represents them correctly, or hold hypocritical views that claim to adhere to liberal-democratic values but are, in all honesty, totalitarian. In the case of the British public's reaction to political violence in Northern Ireland, it could be suggested that their indignation at the level of non-state violence witnessed, was partially attributable to a lack of knowledge in terms of the ideological nature of the Northern Ireland State. There could well have been a general assumption that Northern Ireland's citizens all received similar rights to citizens within mainland Britain. Having made such an assumption, any resulting political violence would appear to have no legitimate foundation as justifications for political violence within a fully functioning liberal democracy have limited credibility. Northern Ireland's Protestant community, being fully aware and supportive of the repressive means utilised, cannot claim ignorance of the political nature of the state they elected – neither can the British State. Evidence would seem to support the notion that, within both conflicts, a failure to acknowledge legitimate grievances and rectify profound injustices within the regions was a primary catalyst for violent conflict.

The failure to acknowledge legitimate grievances of marginalised ethnic groups within a state's borders and a desire to utilise violent means to ensure their continuation, reflects the ideological principles and values of ethnocratic governance. When a state displays totalitarian tendencies, it is tempting to define such governance as essentially a state-led enterprise, a form of power that is enforced on its populace. Within a liberal-democratic model of governance, repressive tendencies are associated with a weak state that lacks popular support – a state that is only capable of retaining its power base through repressive means. As in Zimbabwe under Robert Mugabe's rule in the 2000's, the use of force to retain power will intensify according to the level of open condemnation of the regime its opponents dare to display. Such regimes require limited public support as its existence requires, primarily, the complicity of its army and police and their willingness to violently quell dissenting elements. Within an ethnocratic model of



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governance, a desire to enforce ethnocratic rule through violent repression is often demanded by mass popular sentiment. The distinction between state-led repression and forms of repression endorsed through popular sentiment can be established through analysis of the ideological demands of the populace.

Clearly, as evidence in chapter three of this analysis has demonstrated, an ultra-nationalist consensus has emerged in the post-Soviet era, within which the overwhelming majority of ethnic Russians consider the advancement of ethnic Russian interests as their primary motive for political allegiance towards a particular party. By the 1990's, all major Russian political parties had to be reflective of ultra-nationalist sentiment to attract mass support. As advancement of ethnic-Russian interests is fundamentally at odds with minority ethnic demands<sup>262</sup>, ranging from calls for an end to discriminatory social and economic policies to demands for independence, an ultra-nationalist ethnic Russian agenda must be considered a popular endorsement of ethnocratic rule. The ideological values encapsulated within an ultra-nationalist agenda were not built primarily around a cult of personality, nor could they be described as new ideas conveyed by embryonic political factions that took hold and became dominant within popular sentiment. The speed in which ultra-nationalism became the dominant ideology within Russian politics following the collapse of the Soviet Union reflects the opportunism of political parties in drawing on existing public fears, resentment and aspirations.

The deep-seated resentment and humiliation felt by the Russian public, discussed in chapter three, at the perceived capitulation of Soviet power to the west, coupled with fears of further capitulations and reduced global influence, undoubtedly provided a breeding ground for staunch nationalist ideology, present within public sentiment, to express itself politically. The consensus amongst the Russian public towards policies towards an ideology 'inevitably gravitating towards imperialism'<sup>263</sup> requires a more detailed explanation. It could be argued that the uniformity of ultra-nationalist support amongst ethnic Russians since the 1990's, expressed within every major political party, could not have been possible without the innate Russian political characteristics expressed within 'nauka' – the Russian tradition of viewing geo-politics as 'a logical and all-encompassing science' that 'satisfies the predilection of the Russian culture for a central idea'<sup>264</sup>. The justifications for Nationalist ideology embody much of the ideals expressed within Sovietism – particularly geo-strategic concerns and the primacy of the use of force to achieve political

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<sup>262</sup> Ethnic groups that hold minority status within the Russian Federation as a whole, but may form the majority within their respective regions.

<sup>263</sup> Tsypkin, Mikhail: *Russian Security Policy, State Building and Military Power in Russia* (M. E. Sharpe, 1995) p12.

<sup>264</sup> Tsypkin, p30.

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objectives. Nationalism can be seen as the 'logical and all-encompassing' continuation of these central themes, expressed within a single, central ideal.

The nostalgia for Soviet times that quickly expressed itself within a significant proportion of the ethnic-Russian population can only be partially attributable to economic factors. Spiralling poverty levels since the early 1990's, never experienced in the Soviet Union, clearly strengthened the Communist vote but cannot account for its newfound Nationalist/Imperialist character. This is more likely to be attributable to other forms of social cohesion expressed within the all-encompassing political ideal of communism. Throughout the history of the Soviet Union, there was consensus amongst civil and military elements of the political structure – and ethnic Russians generally – that heavy defence spending and a highly militarised state was a necessity. Russia's global influence and internal security demanded it. The perceived capitulation by reformists at the end of Sovietism was deemed by many as a betrayal of this central political ideal that had been the source of the Soviet Union's global power. Staunch Nationalism was the ideology that best expressed the desire for a renewal of military strength and global stature, for which ethnic Russians feel a profound source of pride. The electoral success of the Communists – such as Zhinovsky – in the 1990's, is chiefly attributable to 'skilfully playing the card of Russian Nationalism'<sup>265</sup>. The Communists were drawing on public support for the new ideological consensus that was emerging that encapsulated much, in terms of geo-strategic direction or 'nauka', of the former central idea of Sovietism that dominated public sentiment.

The extreme poverty that the majority of ethnic Russians now experience is unlikely to result in a form of 'nauka' that will dispense with a central idea that is perceived to encompass the principles that claim credit for Sovietism's global dominance and power. Increased poverty is more likely, as historical evidence contends to<sup>266</sup>, to result in increased electoral support for a more ruthless brand of Nationalism – poverty has always fostered political extremism. The influence of the ethnic Russian population having a predisposed tendency to unite behind a central idea, currently manifested within a staunch nationalist framework, has grave repercussions for the ethnic minorities within the Russian Federation's extended borders who are excluded from such ideology. The uniformity of political opinion and discussion, assisted by political repression, ensures the marginalisation of dissent and alternative ideological direction. A form of 'nauka' that primarily satisfies emotional attachment and reactionary political responses reduces the capacity to evaluate political decisions based on a rational appraisal of relevant political, social and economic factors, so often contradicted by populist political expression.

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<sup>265</sup> Tsyarkin, p11.

<sup>266</sup> Poverty has consistently resulted in higher levels of political extremism throughout history.

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It is a form of 'nauka' that rejects western interference, with its connotations of capitulation, limiting possibilities for international influence and mediation towards internal ethnic conflicts, such as Chechnya. The current central idea incorporates the notion of restoring Soviet power, expressed in Imperialist terms, through the use of force. Crucially, political negotiation within such ideology is based on the threat of force, rather than the non-violent and just determination of diverse interests. All such ideological conclusions increase the violently repressive nature of the Russian State, as demanded by the ethnic-Russian electorate. The ideological values that ethnic Russians associate with western states (liberal-democratic) are rejected by the ethnic Russian electorate, as they embody principles of political accountability, democratic consensus and negotiation/compromise over force. These are principles that most ethnic Russians associate with a weak state.

As evidence relating to the psychological effects of Nationalist ideology<sup>267</sup> in chapter four confirm – such as mass behaviour, a feeling of power, deindividuation etc... – it becomes clear how a predisposed tendency for ethnic Russians to unite behind a central idea could facilitate the establishment of a political framework based on Nationalist principles. The influence of 'nauka' may also explain how consensus amongst ethnic Russians on political direction was attained so soon after the Soviet Union's demise, preventing the emergence of alternative political models that reject a violent Imperialist agenda. It was, naively, thought by many in the west that Soviet values 'would peel off to reveal a nascent capitalist democracy'<sup>268</sup>. As the war in Iraq demonstrates, it is impossible to transplant the values and ideology that has developed over a hundreds of years in the west, to countries whose historical experiences have resulted in the development of an alternative value system. Any international mediation that attempts to assist in the resolution of inter-ethnic conflicts within the Russian Federation must take into account the 'non-westernised' political considerations, the inherently Russian political characteristics that affect the conflict, for it to be effective. For instance, for the international community to demand an end to Chechen suffering on humanitarian grounds would be ineffective, as the Russian State has already prioritised ethnic-Russian interests over 'secondary'<sup>269</sup> considerations such as legality and humanitarian concerns. It could be suggested that successful mediation would have to involve ethnic Russian interests, or a threat to such interests – in the form of economic incentive, or economic sanctions – in order for any meaningful change to occur.

Whilst Sovietism justified vast military spending and repressive internal security measures to counter external threats to Russian power, evidence suggests that the majority of Russians now see internal conflicts as the greatest threat to the restoration of Russia's power and influence.

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<sup>267</sup> Kecmanovic, Dusan: *The Mass Psychology of Ethno-Nationalism* (Plenum Press, 1996).

<sup>268</sup> Handelman, Stephen: *Comrade Criminal* (Yale University Press, 1995), Post-Soviet Man, p130.

<sup>269</sup> Arbatov, deputy speaker of the Duma, described Russia's priorities as such in *The Transformation of Russian Military Doctrine* on p20.

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Research has shown that ethnic Russians increasingly view challenges from within its own borders as being the greatest threat to Russian security, as opposed to external challenges from other states<sup>270</sup> (in 1994, 68% of respondents to 13% respectively – up from 53% in 1991). An uncompromising, powerful political response to this perceived internal 'crisis', expressed as autocratic rule, is consequently reflective of ethnic Russian fears and aspirations. Fears relating to internal security facilitate the states' desire to maintain and strengthen autocratic systems of governance, allowing the state to circumvent legal institutions, repress or outlaw pro-democracy opposition parties and associated media, ban public protest and pursue a violent agenda unhindered. The most frequently used vehicle for the introduction of autocratic rule is the notion of 'crisis management' – that in times of crisis, governments must act quickly and decisively, unconstrained by legal institutions or political processes.

The alleged abuses of the rights of ethnic Russians that form minorities in disputed territories (territories in which an ethnic group is seeking autonomy or independence from Russian control) can be seen as an example of the justifications that provide the basis for the implementation of a neo-Imperialist agenda. Russian military presence in Moldova since 1992, siding with the pro-Moscow separatists against the central government, cited the 'protection of ethnic Russian rights to self-determination' as their justification for military intervention<sup>271</sup>. Clearly these particular separatists, being pro-Moscow, do not fall under the all-encompassing 'terrorist criminals' definition reserved for separatists who seek autonomy or independence from Moscow. This is a further example of the hypocrisy prevalent within the Russian state in respect of such issues. Economic sanctions, in the form of cutting energy supplies to countries such as the Ukraine and Baltic States, has also been justified under the banner of protecting ethnic Russian minority rights. There are an estimated 25-30 million ethnic Russians living within what has been termed the 'near abroad' countries such as Estonia, Latvia, Ukraine and the Caucasus. Their existence in such territories is a direct result of the Soviet policy of resettling ethnic Russians throughout the former Soviet Union as a form of control. Social and economic advantages were naturally bestowed on these migrant populations. The neo-Imperialist strategy implemented by the current administration aims for a continuation of Soviet policy in this regard, providing a justification for continued Russian military and economic presence and control. This satisfies ethnic Russian nationalist demands for a renewal of Russia's power, global status and retention of empire.

As Aldred and Smith have highlighted, over 250,000 ethnic Russians returned from such territories in 1994 alone. As well as providing 'evidence' for Russian policy-makers of the

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<sup>270</sup> Cited in Tsypkin, p34.

<sup>271</sup> Aldred, Ken/ Smith, Martin A.: *Imperial Ambition or Humanitarian Concern? Russia and its 'Near Abroad'* (University of Bradford, 1997)

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perceived discrimination against ethnic Russians within such territories – a justification for economic and military intervention – these figures also shed some light on Russia's genuine fears. Mass migration from the border regions weakens Russia's political foothold and Imperialist ambitions. It should be noted that a primary reason for mass migration of ethnic Russians from such territories does not stem from a lack of equality or discriminatory practices, but from the ending of inequality and previous discriminatory policies, 'legislative and administrative policies that seek either to reduce or eliminate the advantages that ethnic Russians has enjoyed previously'<sup>272</sup> (housing and employment are highlighted as key areas of ethnic Russian 'privileges'). Given the historical injustices that occurred under the Soviet Union that have been previously discussed – such as the process of 'Russification' (cultural and religious persecution), ethnic cleansing and forced relocation of ethnic groups – a process of 'decolonisation' and a desire amongst many ethnic groups to return to their homeland, as well as an end to ethnic Russian 'privileges', can be seen as a natural process engineered to 'right an enormous historical wrong'<sup>273</sup>. As in all aspects of Russian policy-making, the rectification of legitimate grievances does not figure highly on its list of priorities, as it directly contradicts its central political theme, established on the 'ethnocratic' aspirations of the ethnic Russian public. The advancement of ethnic Russian interests will always marginalise the rights of other ethnicities, as any 'privileges' attained will be at the expense of other ethnicities. The primacy of Nationalist ideology ensures the Russian State could never concede to the demands of other ethnic groups to the detriment of the ethnic group it represents, regardless of moral imperative.

As was witnessed in Northern Ireland within the Protestant community, perhaps the biggest myth associated with a Nationalist agenda is the feeling of empowerment that an ethnic community feels as a consequence of having primary emotional affiliations represented in government. Evidence in chapter four demonstrated the manner by which this representation of emotional affiliation involves sacrificing political representation within a rational context, leading to disenfranchisement amongst the populace in terms of meaningful representation in government. When complex political, social and economic decisions are all expressed within an all-encompassing central ideal of Nationalism, the public have a vastly diminished personal capacity and responsibility to express opinion and contribute to policy formulation. By demanding a government that displays uncompromising strength and the capacity to act and pursue an ethnocratic policy agenda through force, the public have effectively vetoed political debate and personal responsibility (deindividuation). An abstract, emotional attachment to nationalist aspirations remains the sole vehicle of public political expression in power. In regards to every

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<sup>272</sup> Dr. Demetrios Papadimitriou, Senior Associate and Co-Director of the International Migration Policy Programme, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, quoted from *Migration Trends in Russia and the CIS* (International Migration, 2007).

<sup>273</sup> Papadimitriou, Dr. Demetrios: *Migration Trends in Russia and the CIS*.

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singular policy decision, the public have nominated the state to think and act on their behalf. The public have voted for the state to act decisively and forcefully in the national interest, but have no input as to how the state chooses to define what such 'interests' consist of. Consensus on the Nationalist 'character' of governance in Russia is consistent with their historical rejection of liberal-democratic ideals and an acceptance of autocratic power systems, reflecting 'a substantial recomposition of traditional forms of Russian power in contemporary setting'<sup>274</sup>.

Opposition to the Kremlin, those who could still be described as opposing Putin's leadership in April, 2007, stood at between four and five MP's among the country's 447 deputies represented in the Duma<sup>275</sup>. What little opposition to the Nationalist consensus that exists was forcibly silenced through new legal restrictions redefining electoral law<sup>276</sup>, opposition media<sup>277</sup> and public protest<sup>278</sup>. Whilst the violent dispersal of protestors may prevent some members of the public from attending, one of the largest pro-democracy rallies in 2007 had only 5000 attendees. For a government that was introducing laws that make the formation of opposition parties illegal, such limited public outcry demonstrates the strength of the nationalist consensus and almost total indifference, or opposition, to democratic forms of governance. Evidence relating to electoral behaviour confirms this conclusion. The voting behaviour of young people who would only remember the post-Soviet years provides some revealing indicators. As unemployment and poverty is rife, political radicalism in the form of ultra-Nationalism is increasing whilst overall, political apathy is also increasing dramatically. Surveys have revealed that only 8% of students show any interest in politics. An alarming figure of 70% of young people expressed at the turn of the century that they 'would not interfere if democracy was in jeopardy'<sup>279</sup>. The survey also confirms that voter turnout is lower amongst supporters of democracy-orientated, non-Nationalist parties, having recognised the futility of their position in the face of such widespread support for ultra-nationalist, autocratic political governance. Overall, electoral turnout dropped by 7% (from 76% to 69%) from 1990 to 2000. As the already limited support for democratic values within Russia continues to fall away, 'internal' security considerations and policy decisions will be reflective of this ideological shift. An absence of popular pressure to adhere to humanitarian principles enshrined in liberal-democratic values is likely to result in greater levels of repression for any dissenting channel of political expression – from pro-democracy political parties and associated media, to ethnic groups campaigning on a platform of equal rights and political recognition.

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<sup>274</sup> Stavrakis, p19.

<sup>275</sup> The Guardian Newspaper, Supreme Court Ban on Liberal Party Wipes Out Opposition to Putin, March 24th, 2007.

<sup>276</sup> Parties with less than 50,000 members are banned as of 2007.

<sup>277</sup> The interior ministry is seizing opposition newspapers and closing down their operations.

<sup>278</sup> Protests are violently dispersed and key protestors arrested. New laws in 2007 aim to limit the legality of public protest.

<sup>279</sup> Sergei Lounev, *Voter Turnout Since 1945 – A Global Report* (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2002).

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Public indifference towards the creation of an undemocratic, dictatorial regime is not so much a rejection of democratic ideals, as an expression of continued faith in autocratic power systems. Genuinely democratic, or humanitarian, values and principles have simply never established themselves within Russian politics. Democratic ideals are as alien to their historical experiences as autocratic models of governance are, or perhaps were, to liberal democracies. It could be claimed that the behaviour of key liberal democracies in recent years has done little to encourage the gradual adoption of liberal-democratic values within Russia or elsewhere. Western liberal democracies, stressing the existence of an increasingly dangerous international political climate, seem determined to establish forms of governance that compromise the liberal-democratic values they were founded on. The abandonment of liberal-democratic values can be seen as a global trend. Shahwar Junaid<sup>280</sup> has highlighted two divergent global trends within the 1990's: 'continued growth in electoral democracy and the stagnation of liberal-democracy, an indication of the decline in freedom'. The number of formal or electoral democracies in the world grew from 76 in 1990 to 117 in 1995 but the percentage of liberal democracies declined from 85% to 65% of the total during the same period<sup>281</sup>. Globally, the 'threat' of terrorism is being countered by new laws that restrict civil liberties and seek to circumvent established legal practices under the pretext of 'crisis management'. Russia rightly acknowledges that the west is adopting similar methods and justifications for autocratic rule and demonstrating renewed faith in the use of force to achieve advantageous political/economic outcomes. The adoption of increasingly repressive internal security measures by Western democracies provides, as has been discussed, a justification for 'counter-Terrorist' repressive measures within Russia. If the chief justification, amongst all of the world's most powerful countries, for abandoning liberal-democratic values is the threat of 'terror', the actual, as opposed to imagined, impact of 'terror' on civilians in terms of risk must be evaluated.

The U.S. Department of State published a report on global deaths attributable to Terrorism throughout the 1990's<sup>282</sup>. As a U.S. Government study, this does not include those individuals killed through state terrorism, but refers to violence undertaken by non-state actors. The highest figure – in 1998 – was 6,694 global deaths from Terrorism. In 1999, the figure was 939 deaths, with only 917 in 1997. For a four-year period between 1996-2000, a total of 10,833 deaths were recorded. The vast majority of these incidents occurred in Africa or Asia. In the established market economies<sup>283</sup>, there were 3,035 recorded deaths from non-state Terrorism between 1994-2003<sup>284</sup> (2,970 deaths attributable to 9-11). In Russia, there were 256 deaths<sup>285</sup> in the same

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<sup>280</sup> Junaid, Shahwar: *Terrorism and Global Power Systems* (Oxford University Press, 2005), p89.

<sup>281</sup> Junaid, p90.

<sup>282</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2001*, May 21st, 2002.

<sup>283</sup> Western Europe, Japan and North America.

<sup>284</sup> U.S. State Department figures, cited in Global Health, 2005 (December 15th) to illustrate the difference between tobacco and International Terrorist fatalities. George Thompson, Department of Health, Wellington, New Zealand.

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period, whilst over 100,000 civilians died in Chechnya alone within this decade from Russian 'counter-terrorist' operations. It can be concluded from these figures that the risk from dying from a non-state 'terrorist' attack, regardless of where you live but particularly in the developed world, is still very low. Certainly the risks from terrorism within most countries were far higher in the 1970's and 1980's. Yonah Alexander<sup>286</sup>, editor of 'Terrorism-An International Journal', claims that a total of 25,436 terrorist attacks occurred between 1970 and 1985, with a total of 45,906 people killed. Again, such figures do not attempt to quantify the amount of deaths attributable to state terrorism (the figure would be many million more, purely with the inclusion of Pol Pot). Naturally, such figures cannot be taken as conclusive, given there is no universally accepted definition of what constitutes terrorism and, consequently, what constitutes a 'terrorist' fatality. However, the figures do provide a broad indication of whether there has been an increase in 'terrorist' fatalities in recent years and such statistics would strongly refute such a claim. The 'new threat' from 'global terror' claimed by governments around the world seems unsubstantiated by such data.

It is not purely fear relating to internal security concerns that encourages the public to accept the largely imagined 'threat' of terrorism in established market economies as a reality. The public is also influenced by preconceived notions of good and evil discussed in the first chapter within the context of the 'moral community', believing their own nation-state to consistently encapsulate 'good' values, regardless of circumstance. The ability to bracket state-sanctioned violence as the defence of a 'moral community' to which they perceive they belong, does much to distance such actions from non-state violence within mainstream opinion. The 'moral community' can be described as an ability to attach moral certainty to the actions of the state an individual feels representative of, by virtue of the unsubstantiated certainty an individual feels is encapsulated within his or her own moral values.

The attachment of moral infallibility is unqualified, as it is not an ideological position that has been reached through a rational appraisal of events. It is an ideological position founded largely on abstract membership of other abstract communities expressed as 'nationalist', 'religious' or 'ethnic' allegiance. Susan Reynolds, in her study of the history of the nation and its associated power structures, highlights the need for states to utilise the 'imagined community' of the nation in achieving the 'voluntary submission'<sup>287</sup> of its inhabitants. A 'submission' to Nationalist ideology is not merely a submission to authority, but also a partial, or total, abandonment of independent

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<sup>285</sup> U.S. State Department, 2005

<sup>286</sup> Yonah Alexander, cited in Keenan, John P.: *Terrorism-Wave of the Future, A Strategic Management Study and Evaluation*, 2000

<sup>287</sup> Reynolds, Susan: 'The Idea of the Nation as a Political Community' in Scales, Len/ Zimmern, Oliver, (eds.): *Power and the Nation in European History* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), p56.



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thought<sup>288</sup>. The extent to which the moral righteousness of a state built on Nationalist ideology can remain unchallenged is demonstrated by the 'moral enlightenment' that British Colonial rule inferred on its global subjects. Despite the brutality, slavery and exploitation that allowed Britain to amass enormous wealth throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the 'achievements' of the British Empire remains a source of great pride for most British people today. Factual evidence, in this case of brutality, slavery and exploitation, does little to weaken the supposed moral infallibility of our abstract identity.

Naturally, for historians or political scientists who require factual confirmation of events to reach ideological conclusions, the concept of colonialism bringing 'moral enlightenment' to savages can be dismissed as a jingoistic by-product of ignorance. Similarly, those individuals who seek answers to questions regarding the existence of terrorism, both within and outside contemporary state structures, based on a factual appraisal of events will reach very different conclusions to those who are predisposed towards a dogmatic rejection of value neutrality. An acceptance amongst the public of a clearly exaggerated 'threat' to internal security posed by terrorism can be attributable to the same process that allows a state such impunity when undertaking state-terrorist activity. Mainstream political convictions, being primarily driven by abstract, unqualified moral absolutes expressed within the confines of the 'imaginary' communities discussed, confer on their respective states a moral infallibility that seeks no clarification through factual reasoning. It is as hard to convince some individuals of the immorality of their nation's past, or present, than it is to convince many believers of monotheistic religions that it is possible they might be mistaken.

Discussed throughout the course of this chapter are diverse internal and external factors contributing to the virtual impunity of a state to act without any genuine accountability. International involvement in 'internal' state conflicts is weighted towards non-intervention, both in terms of legal restraints governing issues of state sovereignty and the tendency for all states to place issues of national interest above humanitarian concerns, allowing a state a high level of impunity for violent action against its own people. Even if the state is weak<sup>289</sup>, it is hard for powerful nations to take meaningful action that would prevent such aggression. A powerful state responsible for human rights abuses will rarely be challenged, as other states would fear the political and economic consequences of interference. The polarised public perception of violence that grants legitimacy to state actions, whilst maintaining a revulsion for any act of violence

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<sup>288</sup> As discussed in Chapter Two when analysing the characteristics of Nationalist ideology.

<sup>289</sup> Sudan provides a good example of a weak state who has been able to carry out ethnic cleansing with virtual impunity over a prolonged period.

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attributable to non-state actors, also encourages a state to commit forms of illegitimate violent action and human rights abuses.

In the case of Russia, and formally Northern Ireland, violent and repressive action has been actively supported by the respective dominant ethnic groups, its respective governments were required to maintain their 'hard-line' stance against the weaker ethnic groups to maintain their electoral dominance. Much of what contributes to state impunity in undertaking illegitimate violent action is driven by the electoral demands of the dominant ethnic group. It could also be concluded that the electoral demands of the respective dominant ethnic groups has been influenced by the language, terminology and character of justification for violent action the respective states have instigated. The utilisation of 'crisis management' justifications for illegitimate violent action has been prominent in both conflict situations. Rational debate on what constitutes the legitimate use of violence has been silenced through a redefinition of associated terminology. Through evoking powerful nationalist public sentiment, constructive, intellectual debate has been strangled. Having achieved a Nationalist consensus amongst the dominant ethnic group, the instigation of legal restraints on opposition forces in the form of detention without trial, a ban on peaceful protest, restricted media and other forms of repression have, inexorably, followed. As was the case in Northern Ireland, principles of democratic rule and liberal-democratic values in Russia have been rejected once more, in favour of 'ethnocracy' – autocracy instigated by a dominant ethnic group – resulting in state impunity to instigate illegitimate acts of violence and repression.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **TECHNIQUES AND MOTIVES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ETHNO-NATIONALIST MOVEMENTS**

At the heart of most ethno-nationalist movements lies strong, charismatic leadership. Strong leadership is essential to the process of transforming existing fears and prejudices within an ethnic group into a coherent and unified political strategy and ideology. Leaders of radicalised ethno-nationalist movements must display and project a position of strength – an uncompromising alternative to the ethnic groups' existing leadership, stressing defiance of a mainstream political environment that encapsulates notions of reform, reconciliation or compromise. A radicalised ethno-nationalist movement will associate cross-community initiatives by mainstream political entities as being synonymous with weakness and betrayal. Whilst the first five chapters of this analysis have centred primarily on ideological justifications for repressive state activity – chapters one to four focussing on justifications within the dominant ethnic groups, chapter five on justifications within the mechanisms of state and the international community – this chapter explores the techniques deployed by the leadership of ethno-nationalist movements in establishing and maintaining support within their ethnic communities. Evidence would suggest that not only are many of the techniques deployed by dominant ethnic groups in both conflict situations – Northern Ireland and Chechnya – strikingly similar, there also exists numerous observable parallels between dominant and non-dominant ethno-nationalist leaders in terms of the techniques deployed to establish and maintain ideological support.

The previous chapter examined, amongst other aspects of inter-ethnic conflict, the question of whether it was the state or its people who can be perceived as the primary catalyst for the ensuing repression and violence that has been witnessed in Chechnya and Northern Ireland. It was concluded that whilst the respective states had exploited existing prejudices within the dominant ethnic groups to establish and maintain power, the states in question were also reacting to what the population demanded. Related to this scenario is the question of whether such existing prejudices related to ethnicity or religion would be able to channel itself into becoming the prevailing ideology without resolute and charismatic leadership, capable of effectively transforming existing fears and hatred into an electoral strategy. Without strong leadership, such 'identity-based' movements could never attain clarity of direction, purpose and mass electoral appeal – this applies to both dominant ethnic groups seeking ethnocratic governance, and non-dominant ethnic groups seeking to challenge ethnocratic governance.

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Frequently, political commentators on Northern Ireland have cited a lack of charismatic leadership as a major reason for the civil rights movement within the Catholic community failing to become a significant political entity until the 1960's. Without strong leadership, inter-ethnic hatred and distrust would be limited to disorganised and chaotic displays of sporadic violence – there would be no unified approach capable of challenging representatives of established forms of governance. Yeltsin's legacy was to leave Putin a populace, largely unified behind the concept of ultra-Nationalist ideology, who were strongly supportive of autocratic, violent means to restore Russia's power. Edward Carson had established a similar foundation for ethnocratic rule by the 1920's within Protestant Ulster by building a popular consensus in support of autocratic, repressive measures to protect an ethnocracy. Yeltsin, under pressure from Nationalist political opponents, had adopted Ultra-Nationalist ideology to maintain power for his 'family' – his political clique and chosen successor. The populist ideology of ultra-Nationalism expressed itself primarily through charismatic leadership, as opposed to a party-orientated movement. In Northern Ireland, the Protestant majority undoubtedly rallied around Paisley and to what he, as an individual, represented in making the DUP the largest party in Northern Ireland. The cult of personality has been of primary importance in the popular acceptance of ethno-nationalist political movements in both conflict situations.

Crucial to establishing a system of political allegiance based on the hatred and distrust of other ethnic groups, coupled with a determination to seek advancement and advantage for the ethnic group to which an individual belongs, is the existence of individuals who are skilled in expressing existing fears and aspirations within a political movement – conveying to the public how such fears and aspirations can be expressed as a unified political stance. The willingness of particular individuals to position themselves as uncompromising defenders of ethnic interests, unhindered by an adherence to democratic and legal process in their determination to achieve ethnocratic dominance, is an essential feature of ethnic 'identity-based' politics achieving ascendancy, allowing for the continuation of inter-ethnic conflict and repression. It has been suggested in chapter four of this analysis that the motivation for such leaders, in their willingness to evoke ethno-supremacist or religious justifications for division to gain power, may be more about personal advancement than a genuine belief in the ideology they espouse. That they may be aware of the fallacies of their dogma but use it, and the people who follow it, as a stepping-stone to power. The evidence for such a proposition will be fully explored within this chapter.

At a time when the final trappings of autocratic rule, the silencing of opposition parties and its media, are applied to the Russian Federation, a joint power-sharing Assembly has been formed in Northern Ireland whose leadership consists of the very same individuals responsible for

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propelling the two communities towards sustained political violence lasting over 30 years. In terms of power, the 'men of violence' are the resounding winners within both conflict situations. In the 1950's, Ian Paisley was a fringe-extremist with little community-wide support. In 2007, he was the First Minister and the leader of the largest party in Northern Ireland. Sinn Fein's rise to power mirrors that of the DUP, becoming the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest political party in Ulster under the leadership of Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness, Northern Ireland's Deputy Leader<sup>290</sup> in 2007 and Chief of Staff of the IRA since 2001<sup>291</sup>. The 2007 elections for the Northern Ireland Assembly gave the DUP and Sinn Fein a total of 64 of the 108 seats available. The 'end of hostilities' is often presented as a victory for democratic politics over political violence by Westminster. If that were truly the case, new parties would have emerged to reflect a shift to non-sectarian political alignment within the populace. A genuine end to hostilities in Northern Ireland would involve a rejection of the politics of division that brought so many years of suffering – the ideology that stratifies the value of individuals according to ethnic or religious affiliation. It could be contended that the emergence of the DUP and Sinn Fein as the largest parties in Northern Ireland is reflective of a very different political reality, inconsistent with the necessary components for lasting peace. It could be argued that only a rejection of 'identity-based' politics could produce the stable, 'issue-driven' political environment that could break down existing distrust and ethnic division.

For political leaders that have based their political influence and support on division and conflict, it is impossible to display the levels of compromise and cross-community co-operation that a permanent cessation of violence demands. To do so, would mean the implementation of a strategy that risks the alienation of the respective leaders' core electoral support. A position of compromise by parties whose support derives from politics of division could herald a significant drop in electoral support, reminiscent of the mass defection from Official Unionism in the 1960's – triggered by the reformism of O'Neill – that led to the surge in support for a more ultra-radical alternative championed by Ian Paisley. Regardless of future developments, it was the strategy of aligning a violent rejection of democratic governance and the perpetuation of existing fears and distrust prior to their current position that has established both the DUP and Sinn Fein as the dominant parties of Northern Ireland. United Russia's political strength derived, in many ways, from similar sources. This chapter will assess the contribution of key individuals in shaping the development of each conflict and the methods deployed to establish their positions of primacy.

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<sup>290</sup> As of May, 2007.

<sup>291</sup> Martin McGuinness took over from Tom 'Slab' Murphy on September 27th, 2001 following a meeting of the 7-man Army Council in Dundalk (of which Gerry Adams was a member). McGuinness Made IRA Chief of Staff in Gun Ploy, The Observer Newspaper, Henry Macdonald, October 7th, 2001.

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Whilst a cessation of hostilities has brought the 'men of violence' electoral success within both of Northern Ireland's ethnic communities, any significant negotiated compromise with aggrieved ethnic groups within Russia's extended borders would undoubtedly weaken the administration's standing with the Russian people. As has been discussed, there is nothing to indicate that the Russian government has any intention of pursuing such policies. An ultra-nationalist power base in Russia is as temporarily secure as the ethnocracy established in Northern Ireland in 1922, in terms of the minimal levels of alternative political direction and dissent within the dominant ethnicity. Legal restrictions on opposition parties, media and protest are firmly in place and support amongst ethnic Russians for an ultra-nationalist agenda is very high. Not unlike the Orange State, an ethnocratic power base has been established that cannot be challenged by democratic means, due to the intransigent ideological convictions of the dominant ethnic group, and the autocratic nature of governance that such convictions entailed. This chapter will attempt to dissect the strategies of the respective leaders within each conflict situation, from both dominant ethnic groups (Ethnic Russians and Ulster Protestant) as well as leaders emerging from aggrieved ethnic communities, in attaining positions of political dominance.

In 1981, the SDLP leader, Seamus Mallon, was fully aware of how Sinn Fein and the DUP were able to increase their influence and popularity in their respective communities. Mallon stated that 'Paisley and the Provos (Provisional IRA) were simply feeding off each other'<sup>292</sup>. Whilst Mallon had accurately surmised the method by which violent politics can increase its popularity at the expense of less radical, mainstream political entities, he may have been surprised as to how far such tactics could take them 26 years later. Mallon's comment came the day after Ian Paisley's 'Day of Action', one of Paisley's many forays into the organisation of paramilitary forces willing to take the law into their own hands in this case the 'Third Force', consisting of 5,500 men marching under the UVF slogan 'For God and Ulster' under Paisley's leadership. Whilst Paisley was organising his 'Day of Action', the Republican prisoners of Long Kesh embarked on a mass hunger strike to obtain 'political status', culminating in the death of ten hunger strikers and the attention, and sympathy, of media from all over the world. The most successful weapon within the arsenal of both 'Paisley and the Provos' was the harnessing of deep-seated emotions within their communities, to establish themselves as the voice of people's anger and fears. For leaders such as Seamus Mallon, and every other Northern Ireland politician before and after them who attempted to express their hopes for the future within a rational, non-sectarian context, the 'men of violence' had defeated them through powerful rhetoric and the association of politics of peace with ethnic betrayal and weakness.

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<sup>292</sup> Time Magazine Archive, Unleashing the Third Force, 1981.

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The 'men of violence' in Northern Ireland have always held significant advantages over politicians who favoured an end to the conflict through democratic, legal means. Compare the complex process of negotiation and compromise, of open discussion on long-held disagreements spanning generations that take time, effort and application to reach any form of progress. The act of examining and questioning historical circumstances for conflict, challenging perceived 'truths' relating to the moral foundations for political convictions and actions attributable to an individuals' parents and grandparents. The process, as Sarah Nelson once commented, of 'challenging the fundamental definition of yourself' – of an individual questioning the validity of his or her core values – in comparison to the simple, powerful rhetoric of slogans such as 'Never. Never. Never' or 'No Surrender'<sup>293</sup>, that seeks no reappraisal of values. The populist appeal of leaders who rely on conflict and violence to attain mass support requires, not unlike their message, no complex explanation. The skilful manipulation of political events, deployed by the 'men of violence' behind the slogans reveal far more about the character and motivations of the leaders involved. It has been suggested throughout the course of this study that there are individuals, within the dominant ethnic communities that form the basis of this analysis, that genuinely accept the ethno-supremacist, or religious, justifications for violence and repression inflicted on other ethnic groups that have the misfortune to be excluded from the ethnocratic state that governs them. It has also been contended that there exists a significant proportion of individuals who do not buy in to such ideological justifications, but nevertheless lend their support through recognition of the potential advantages that can be gleaned from an ethnocratic system of governance. Clearly no greater motivation exists for advocating an ethnocratic regime than becoming the leader of such a system.

Leaders of political organisations who position themselves as an uncompromising defender of ethnic interests rely heavily on the perception of strength. Such leaders must give the impression that they will go to any lengths to protect and further the interests of the ethnic group they represent. Frequently utilising the threat of political violence, or the adoption of actual political violence, projects a position of strength within the political movement. The leader in question must first perpetuate fear within the ethnic community that a real and growing threat to their existence demands higher levels of protection and security from the administration that governs them. As was discussed in the previous chapter, a rejection of democratic forms of governance and legal framework for action requires the clever manipulation of real, or imagined, 'crisis' situations – providing a radical, uncompromising stance that necessitates the suspension of democratic rule and legal procedure, so that a leader and his party can respond effectively to the perceived threat that is deemed to endanger the ethnic group in question. Capitalisation on political events to foster popular support, by tapping into existing fears and prejudices, is

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<sup>293</sup> Two of Radical Unionism's favourite slogans, repeatedly used throughout Paisley's career.

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undoubtedly a key component of this process. Given the prime importance of perpetuating public fear, deriving from existing prejudices, to foster an acceptance of the need for political violence and repressive policies, the extent to which individuals have 'engineered' crisis situations – as a form of political opportunism – must be considered within the context of both case studies.

Historical continuity and the use of symbolism is also a key consideration when evaluating the techniques deployed in establishing support for ethno-nationalist movements in both conflict situations, featuring prominently in both dominant and non-dominant radical ethno-nationalist movements. Through associating an ethno-nationalist movement with popular historical figures who were representative of an ethnic group, by placing a contemporary 'struggle' within an historical context, a public perception of validity and legitimacy can be associated with the respective movement. Such an association elevates the status of contemporary ethno-nationalist leaders to that of legitimate heirs of a seamless, honourable ideological tradition.

All such factors, or techniques, associated with the establishment of ethno-nationalist ideology – strong charismatic leadership, political opportunism, historical continuity and the use of symbolism, the rejection of a democratic, legal political framework and the threat or use of violence to achieve objectives – require the skilful manipulation of the media and propaganda to be successful. In chapter one of this analysis, it was suggested that the process George Lopez<sup>294</sup> described as 'information control' leading to 'thought reform', was a major feature of 'ethnocratic' governance. This involves the suppression of rational/factual interpretations of events in order for irrational ideology to gain public acceptance. The manner in which information is distorted and suppressed reveals much in terms of how seemingly illogical conclusions can become accepted 'truths'. The value of propaganda to an ethno-nationalist movement in perpetuating fear within a community, in convincing an ethnic group that a real and immediate threat to their community exists, cannot be underestimated.

A projection of strength fostered through a willingness to utilise the threat or use of political violence can be seen as a cornerstone of ethnic-Russian ultra-Nationalist philosophy and an essential feature in garnering popular support. Significant support for political entities that advocate the use of violent means, invariably require an existing environment of fear and uncertainty in order for such radical tendencies to take hold within the respective communities. The rise of ultra-nationalism in Russia occurred at a time of great uncertainty and upheaval. The collapse of Sovietism led to a surge of ethno-nationalist political movements demanding self-

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<sup>294</sup> Lopez, George: *A Scheme for the Analysis of Government as Terrorist* (Aldwych, 1984), p71



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determination and full independence. As chapter five confirmed, Cold War fears relating to global conflict, that had previously satisfied ethnic-Russian acceptance of Totalitarian, military-led solutions to governance, had given way to new fears relating to internal strife and threats from within their extended borders<sup>295</sup>. An ethnic-Russian ultra-Nationalist movement had grown, in other words, partially as a response to the growth of other ethno-nationalist movements that were perceived as threatening and within a climate of fear. The Ulster Protestant community in the north of Ireland had experienced similar heightened levels of anxiety following the Home Rule<sup>296</sup> debate of the 1880's.

As with any political issue that creates anxiety amongst the populace, however, such fears can either be dispelled or lessened through a rational appraisal of events and sound political or economic initiatives, or they can be seized upon and increased, as a form of political opportunism, for the purpose of harnessing popular support for specific political objectives and leaders. In response to opposition parties who, in 1992, had 'accused the government of abandoning Russian interests in its near abroad'<sup>297</sup>, Yeltsin chose the latter option. Having sensed the uneasiness in which Yeltsin's 'wait and see' policy was greeted by ethnic Russians, who feared that the break-up of the former Soviet states would lead to alliances of hostile states on their own doorstep, political opposition to Yeltsin capitalised on his policy of 'withdrawal and confusion'<sup>298</sup> with a Nationalist agenda, positioning themselves as the defenders of ethnic-Russian interests. Yeltsin's political circle could only retain power by proving its hard-line Nationalist credentials. Positioning complex political issues – such as political and economic relations and strategy within Central Asia and the Caucasus – within a Nationalist agenda requires a process of simplification and aggressive, immediate responses to perceived 'dangers'. An ethnic Russian populace instilled with ultra-Nationalist ideology is not interested in agreements governing economic integration and political development leading to long-term regional stabilisation<sup>299</sup>. Such attempts did nothing to dispel fear within an environment of heightened anxiety. In its place, the 'Great Power rhetoric'<sup>300</sup> of 1993-95 developed and complex issues relating to the political and economic integration of former Soviet states in Central Asia was expressed to the electorate as a 'fight against political and religious extremism' and an attempt to halt 'the spread of religious extremism and terrorism'<sup>301</sup>.

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<sup>295</sup> In 1994, 68% of ethnic Russians saw 'challenges within their own borders' as the greatest threat to Russian security, as opposed to 13% in 1991, cited in Tsytkin, p30.

<sup>296</sup> Gladstone's government being the first to debate the possibility of Home Rule for Ireland in the House of Commons.

<sup>297</sup> Jonson, Lena: *Vladimir Putin and Central Asia – The Shaping of Russian Foreign Policy* (IB Taurus, 2004), p44.

<sup>298</sup> Jonson, p44.

<sup>299</sup> As was hoped in 1991, prior to opposition forces adopting a fiercely nationalistic position.

<sup>300</sup> Jonson, p44.

<sup>301</sup> Joint Communique between President Yeltsin and President Karimov (Uzbekistan) in May, 1998.

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This process demonstrates the principle that once an opposition party, or a political movement outside traditional party allegiance, has achieved considerable electoral appeal through the instigation of ethno-Nationalist ideology within an environment of heightened anxiety, the instinctive reaction of any ruling elite would be to retain its position of power through ideological accommodation. It is much easier for a ruling power to accommodate ethno-Nationalist ideology once such a movement has gathered momentum within an ethnic group whose electoral support they rely on, than to attempt to question its validity. To question the validity of radicalised ethno-Nationalism would be an invitation to political opponents to question the governments' patriotism. In terms of mass electoral appeal within an environment of heightened anxiety, insecurities and fears can only be placated through a promise of protection – a form of protection that embodies principles of strength and decisiveness. The accommodation of mass populist sentiment in governance involves a simplification of strategy and ethos that renders a complex interpretation of political issues untenable. Once a government has accommodated ethno-Nationalist ideology the position of a government's opponents is weakened, as its ideological stance does not differ radically from the government they are attempting to replace. In Russia, political opposition to the ruling oligarch in the form of radicalised ethno-Nationalist sentiment hastened the end of electoral accountability and any effective form of opposition to the regime. By forcing the ruling oligarch to ideologically transform, the opposition had ushered in a process of rapid transformation towards autocratic rule. Radicalised Nationalist sentiment will invariably lead to dictatorial control for the leader in question, as a position of strength and decisiveness is not reflective of consensual, democratic process. Individuals instilled with radicalised Nationalist sentiment require only that a government will be staunchly representative of that ideology – beyond which, that individual desires to be lead, not consulted. If a genuine political opposition was to exist in Russia tomorrow, only an opposition that successfully articulated doubts regarding the regimes' commitment to radicalised ethno-Nationalist ideology, presenting a more staunchly radical alternative, could achieve significant support. Evidence would suggest that pro-democracy, non-Nationalist parties would be representative of only a small fraction of the ethnic-Russian populace, even without autocratic mechanisms of political repression. It would seem more likely, based on evidence discussed in previous chapters, that only a party advocating an ever more radicalised Nationalist variant would attract mass electoral appeal. It is precisely this dynamic that has shaped the nature of political opposition within the Ulster Protestant community for much of the Northern Ireland States' turbulent history.

Since the foundation of the Northern Ireland State in the 1920's, parties advocating a political vision that rejects ethno-Nationalist ideology as a foundation for governance have rarely

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achieved significant electoral appeal<sup>302</sup>. The only major 'cross-community', non-sectarian party in Northern Ireland is the Alliance Party<sup>303</sup>. The Alliance Party has received a share of the vote that has generally fluctuated between 2-8% in recent years, only once achieving more than 10% since its formation in 1970<sup>304</sup>. It is the parties that have advocated a more radical variant of ethno-Nationalist ideology that have formed the major bloc of opposition to Official Unionism within the Ulster Protestant community. Being a 'cross-community' party, it must also be remembered that a sizeable proportion of those voting for Alliance are Catholic, meaning that the amount of Protestants voting for a party that is not a more radical strain of ethno-Nationalist ideology is even smaller than the figures suggested. In every decade since 'The Troubles' began, 'radical' Unionism has polled between double and four times that of the combined Catholic/Protestant vote for the Alliance party<sup>305</sup>.

The most significant of these 'radical' Unionist alternatives to Official Unionism throughout 'The Troubles' were William Craig's Vanguard Party and Ian Paisley's DUP. Both parties, under charismatic leadership, sought support for a more militant, uncompromising form of governance and recognised that their support derived from creating as much political instability as possible. It was hoped that through political violence, provocation and opportunism, the support for Ultra-Loyalism, Protestant Fundamentalism and their leadership would increase at the expense of mainstream or 'reformist' Official Unionism. Tragically for Northern Ireland, such tactics proved successful. A central feature of both radical ethno-Nationalist variants in each respective conflict was a readiness to abandon democratic, judicial process if their ideological vision was in any way compromised. This is expressed within Russia's current autocratic regime, having adopted the ideological position of its opposition, and expressed consistently as the intention of the DUP in Northern Ireland throughout 'The Troubles', should the government refuse to adopt its own ideological position. As Paisley commented on his 'Day of Action' mentioned earlier in this chapter, 'my men are ready to be recruited under the crown to destroy the vermin of the IRA. But if the crown refuses to recruit them, we will destroy the IRA ourselves'<sup>306</sup>. It is consistently a loyalty to 'the crown' Paisley espouses, as opposed to any loyalties directed towards democratic governance in the form of the British Parliament or Northern Ireland Assembly. Loyalty towards the purely symbolic authority of the Queen is consistent with other aspects of Paisley's ideology.

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<sup>302</sup> It should be mentioned that the cross-community NILP (Northern Ireland Labour Party) managed to win a seat in 1943, and had significant Catholic support until the party conference voted in favour of the union with Great Britain in 1949. After the party conference, but prior to The Troubles, it won three more seats although it is debatable whether it could be considered a cross-community party at this point.

<sup>303</sup> Originally a pressure group within the Official Unionist Party, they maintain close ties with the Liberal Party in the UK.

<sup>304</sup> The Alliance Party achieved 11.9% in 1979. Figures obtained from ARK, a Northern Ireland Social and Political Archive.

<sup>305</sup> 1997 – Combined Radical Unionist vote (DUP/ UKUP) – 16.6% Alliance Party – 8%

1982 – Combined Radical Unionist vote (UUUP/DUP/UPUP) – 27.8% Alliance Party – 9.3%

1974(Oct) – Combined Radical Unionist vote (Vanguard/DUP/UPNI) – 25.4% Alliance-6.4%

<sup>306</sup> Times Magazine Archive, Monday 7th Dec, 1981.

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Loyalty to the queen incorporates an emphasis on traditionalism and stresses the historical continuity of the movement, whilst positioning the movement outside the mechanisms of state, displaying a willingness to abandon democratic, legal avenues of protest and political action. Appealing to the public's emotional affiliation to symbolic, or abstract, authorities – such as the Queen, or God – serves to reduce their loyalty and respect for actual authorities, such as the government and judiciary, and the 'mainstream' parties that are reflective of state authority.

Ian Paisley's strategy of strengthening his own movement, through the clever manipulation of political events to engineer conflict and division, can be clearly observed in the manner by which he established his religious Fundamentalist movement, the Free Presbyterian Church. The techniques deployed also give a clear indication of how his theological principles, in a similar vein to his political principles, were of secondary importance to the fulfilment of personal ambition – ideological vehicles to achieve a position of power. The establishment and expansion of his new church, as Ed Maloney<sup>307</sup> acknowledges, was not achieved through the espousal of theological principles. Paisley targeted existing churches whose Pastors had personal problems, 'seizing opportunities presented by sexual scandal and marital division'<sup>308</sup>. He would picket with his supporters outside the churches<sup>309</sup> with noisy and often unfounded accusations of extra-marital children and affairs attributed to the Pastor, causing a split in the congregation. It was a ruthlessness that was not lost on his colleagues in the 1950's, who recognised his prioritisation of expansion over principle. As one NUP (National Union of Protestants) colleague commented, 'Paisley would find an issue in those days, it didn't matter what the principle was, if it gave him an opening he was in. He was shrewd enough'<sup>310</sup>. Norman Porter, a leading figure in the Evangelical Movement, expressed a similar view admitting 'he wanted to build a congregation and it didn't matter what price or issue'<sup>311</sup>. Such tactics proved to be very successful. It was from this foundation in the 1950's, Paisley's skill in deriving support through exploiting an individual's emotional affiliations through a clever manipulation of events, that facilitated the rise of a radical political movement; an extremist variant to the existing 'ethnocratic' government.

It has been commented that there is a 'well-observed connection between political instability and religious revival, if the culture is already religious'<sup>312</sup>. Ulster remains one of the most deeply religious provinces in Europe. There is no doubt that in pursuing his political ambition, Paisley hoped to fulfil his theological 'calling'. Paisley realised that the greater the levels of political

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<sup>307</sup> Maloney, Ed/ Pollack, Andy: *Paisley* (Poolbeg, 1986).

<sup>308</sup> Maloney/ Pollack, p44.

<sup>309</sup> Cabra and Rastarkin are two examples given. Two of his first three churches.

<sup>310</sup> Maloney/ Pollack, p47.

<sup>311</sup> Maloney/ Pollack, p49.

<sup>312</sup> Bruce, Steve: *God Save Ulster!: Religion and Politics of Paisleyism* (Oxford University Press, 1992), p92.

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instability through actions of provocation, the more people of a religious inclination would be 'rallied to the old paths in perilous times'<sup>313</sup>. At every stage, his staunch ultra-Loyalism was coupled with a virulent anti-Catholicism that sought to make Unionism indistinguishable from Protestant Fundamentalist survival. As evidence in chapter four of this study indicated, it was the association of his movement with the defence of Protestant Fundamentalism that legitimised the extremist political views and actions that would otherwise have been rejected by many of the deeply religious individuals that chose to follow him. Incitements to violence would not have been heeded by so many within the Ulster Protestant community, had his political movement expressed its position within a purely ethno-Nationalist context. The prospects of a 'Papist conspiracy' inflamed more anger and fear than an 'Irish Republican Conspiracy' for many of his more devoutly religious followers – a 'Papist Conspiracy', for many, provided a greater motive for murder.

Billy Wright, a lay preacher and leader of the LVF (Loyalist Volunteer Force), committed some of the most horrendous acts of violence in Northern Ireland. He was responsible for the murder, amongst others, of teenage girls in a sweet shop<sup>314</sup> and pensioners in their homes, purely on the basis of them being Catholic. At Billy Wright's funeral, his followers described his assassination as 'Ulster's Loss, Heaven's Gain' and those present at his graveside all used religious proclamations of 'Halleluiah' and 'Praise be to God' rather than more nationalist-orientated declarations of 'No Surrender'<sup>315</sup>. Billy Wright had banned swearing and other 'unchristian practices' on his wing in the Maze prison prior to his death. A literalist interpretation of Old Testament doctrine allowed, given its ambiguity and innate contradictions, for absolution of any crime. Far from providing a moral restraint, by positioning the conflict as a religious struggle, radical Unionism was capable of broadening both its appeal and its perceived 'right of action'. Ian Paisley's powerful rhetoric was essential in ensuring the centrality of Protestant Fundamentalism in the adoption of a more violent, radical strain of Unionism within the Ulster Protestant community. As chapter four of this analysis confirmed, Chechen Separatist strategy, initiated by Dudyev, was dependent on a similar dynamic. In a similar vein to the Ulster Protestant community, many Chechens – specifically the Chechen Highlanders – did not consider Nationalist ideology as their primary emotional attachment; their faith remained their primary emotional affiliation within the Separatist movement. Radical Unionism also required the use of both 'nationalist and religious cards'<sup>316</sup> to appeal to a broader section of the ethnic group.

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<sup>313</sup> Bruce, p92.

<sup>314</sup> Eileen Duffy, 19 years old and Katrina Renny, who was 16.

<sup>315</sup> McCann, Eamonn: Billy Wright was a Real Christian, Hot Press Magazine, 4th Feb 1998.

<sup>316</sup> Seely's description of Dudyev's tactics in *Russo-Chechen Conflict, 1800-2000 – A Deadly Embrace*.

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It was not until the 1960's that the influence of Ian Paisley and other radical Unionists began to exert any real political significance. Prior to the 1960's, Paisley had made liberal Protestantism his chief enemy, raising support for his brand of fundamentalism in the process. The rise of the Civil Rights Movement within the Catholic Irish community, coupled with a more 'reformist' approach to governance by O'Neill, provided the levels of anxiety and fear within the Protestant community for Paisley's tactics to gain credence with a larger percentage of Ulster Protestants, enabling him to position himself as the 'saviour' of militant Loyalism in the face of dual 'threats'; both within the Loyalist community and from a politically resurgent Catholic minority. With their power and status seemingly 'threatened', a high degree of distrust existed amongst Ulster Protestants regarding the intentions of their government and the intentions of the Civil Rights Movement. It was the fear and uncertainty within the Protestant community that hard-line Loyalists were quick to capitalise on. As Clifford Smyth<sup>317</sup> commented:

'Right-wing Loyalists, including the Unionist Minister for Home Affairs at that time, William Craig, the dissident Desmond Boal, and Paisley's Protestant Unionists, all interpreted the Civil Rights Campaign as an attack on the constitution of Northern Ireland and as an Irish Republican conspiracy.'

It is appropriate that Clifford Smith uses the term 'right-wing Loyalists' to describe the position of William Craig and Ian Paisley's supporters during the 1960's. For those individuals opposed to radical Unionism, it seemed quite clear that the ideology they were advocating as an alternative to Official Unionism was a form of Fascism. As early as 1960, Dr Fulton warned after being picketed by one of Paisley's Free Presbyterian protests during a lecture (he was deemed too liberal) that a 'fascist type movement' in Northern Ireland had emerged, led by 'manipulators whose interest is power, and who are skilled in rousing passion and inculcating hatred in the name of religion'<sup>318</sup>. It could be said that ideologically, 'passion' is fascism's major ingredient in the absence of any concrete doctrine; but fascism does encompass certain tendencies. Nationalism, a hostility towards democracy, hostility towards enlightened, liberal ideals (anti-intellectualism), the cult of a leader, an acceptance of violence to achieve aims, a love of symbolism, parades and marches – all these Fascist traits can be found within Paisley's movement. Of particular significance to Paisley's movement was the emphasis on traditionalism and close moral ties between people and leadership. Paisley also strongly advocated a fundamental unity between the Protestant church and the state. The movement was, in other words, in many ways a Protestant version of the 'Falange Espanola' (Spanish Falangists of the

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<sup>317</sup> Smyth, Clifford: *Ian Paisley* (Scottish Academic Press, 1987), p21. Clifford Smyth was formally a member of the DUP.

<sup>318</sup> Maloney/ Pollak, p107.

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1930's) – a 'synthesis of fascism and traditionalism'<sup>319</sup>. When analysing the type of techniques deployed to establish and maintain ideological support for radical ethno-Nationalist ideology within the Ulster Protestant community, it is consistently action that reflects this 'synthesis'. Traditional allegiances, Protestant Fundamentalism and the culture of Orangism, were expressed within a Fascist framework for action. To Protestant Ulstermen with more liberal, 'reformist' tendencies – such as O'Neill – Paisley and his supporters were 'a fascist organisation, masquerading under the cloak of religion...deluding a lot of sincere people...hell bent on provoking religious strife in Northern Ireland'. In the Chamber at Stormont on the 15<sup>th</sup> June 1966, Terence O'Neill went even further in his Paisley/Fascist comparisons, declaring:

'To those of us who remember the 1930's, the pattern is horribly familiar. The contempt for established authority, the crude and unthinking intolerance; the emphasis on monster processions and rallies; the appeal to a perverted form of patriotism – each and every one of these has its parallel in the rise of the Nazis to power.'

Rational appeals for liberal-democratic principles in Russia went largely unheard because there is a natural correlation between the rejection of established democratic/judicial process and an acceptance of ultra-Nationalist ideology. In contemporary Russia, it could be claimed a similar 'synthesis of fascism and traditionalism' exists. Since the end of Sovietism, the Orthodox Church in Russia has rapidly grown in popularity as a result of the ideological void created by the demise of Marxism-Leninism, attaining a status of what Parland describes as 'unparalleled political prominence'<sup>320</sup>. In the early 1990's, The Orthodox Church was quick to align itself, and provide public endorsements to, the newly established right-wing parties and movements – a process that became known as 'clerical fascism'<sup>321</sup>. The Orthodox Church was just one of many elements of traditionalist Russian thought, that found expression within right-wing political organisations. Existing anti-Semitism, a rejection of western liberal-democratic values, a belief that Russians are a 'chosen people'<sup>322</sup> and a desire for strong leadership and order, are all traits that facilitate the acceptance of fascist-based ideology and methods. The 'new' Nationalism in Russia is in many ways an expression of traditional Russian beliefs.

Once ultra-Nationalist ideology has attained a position of primacy, consensual, democratic governance and established judicial process are rejected by the majority of its adherents.

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<sup>319</sup> Thomas, Hugh: *The Spanish Civil War* (Penguin Books, 1986).

<sup>320</sup> Parland, Thomas: *The Rejection in Russia of Totalitarian Socialism and Liberal Democracy – A study of the New Right* (Helsinki, 1993), p177.

<sup>321</sup> Parland, p177.

<sup>322</sup> Ethnic Russian status as a 'chosen people' has been discussed in chapter two in reference to the formation of the Russian state.

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Nationalism, as we have mentioned, is an ideology based largely on emotional responses. Nationalism's popularity relies on an exponents' ability to ignite 'passion' over 'logic'. Emotional, impassioned responses in an environment of fear will invariably lead to the acceptance of a more radicalised, militant agenda. Terence O'Neill was attempting to placate people's inflamed passions with a reasoned argument, devoid of ugly bigotry and rabble-rousing vitriol. In doing so, his political opponents capitalised on his inability to connect with his community in a language they understood. As Smyth commented, Paisley's message was 'crude and unsophisticated' but 'conveyed the Loyalists innate fear of the future'. O'Neill, having been brought up in England, underestimated the simmering hatred of Catholicism within his own community. O'Neill was further disadvantaged by the fact that in order to accept a 'reformist' agenda, Protestants would have to acknowledge that the Catholic community had been wronged in the past. This contradicted existing justifications for social and economic inequality, such as racial inferiority. Having lived outside of Northern Ireland for much of his life, his views reflected a need to place politics within a rational context. In doing so, he displayed a naivety in his appraisal of ideological extremism within the Protestant community, grossly underestimating the Fundamentalist and Radical Unionist influence both within Official Unionism and outside it. O'Neill vastly underestimated the power of symbolism within the province, in which every gesture of friendship or involvement with the Catholic community would be tantamount to a betrayal of both the community and Protestantism itself. His subsequent political isolation and defeat would have provided him with a clear indication of just how many 'sincere people' were 'deluded' within his own community. Once again, this process demonstrates the difficulties in establishing public understanding for complex, reasoned political thought within an environment where political opposition utilises an anti-rationalist and anti-intellectualist 'philosophy of action'<sup>323</sup>.

Paisley's 'philosophy of action' was to incite violence through every means at his disposal. His strategy was to convince his supporters that a 'betrayal' by Official Unionism that would lead to an annihilation of Protestants in Ulster was imminent. By describing the Irish Republican and Civil Rights Movement in terms of a 'papist conspiracy', he managed to perpetuate the concept of collective guilt, or Sippenhaft, of the Catholic community in terms of community-wide complicity in the 'plot'. Loyalist journals, such as *Loyalist News*, used a similar argument to express community-wide guilt as a justification for the random murder of Catholics at the start of 'The Troubles'<sup>324</sup>:

'The victims were IRA men. Some of them were IRA men. If they were not active members they were supporters of the IRA. If they were not supporters of the IRA, then at the very least

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<sup>323</sup> Mussolini advocated a 'philosophy of action, a pragmatic philosophy', quoted in Gregor, A. James: *The Ideology of Fascism* (The Free Press, 1969), p124.

<sup>324</sup> Quoted in Bruce, Steve: *The Edge of the Union* (Oxford University Press, 1994), p45.



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they had silently acquiesced in IRA atrocities in that they did nothing to root out the IRA out of their areas. And, even if they were not guilty of that crime, they were Nationalists who were willing to benefit politically from the actions of the IRA and were thus almost as responsible as the IRA. Therefore, all Catholics are equally responsible for IRA violence’.

Paisley’s philosophy was to engineer a justification for violence that could not be permissible within a liberal-democratic context. Steve Bruce rightly contends that ‘judging people as individuals is the logic of the liberal democracy’<sup>325</sup>. Radical Unionism rejected the distinction between ‘guilty’ or ‘innocent’ individuals by establishing a basis for collective guilt – a collective guilt made possible through existing racist, and religious, ideology. Paisley’s skill was to transform existing racist sentiment into a brand of ‘Fascist racism’.

Racism can be understood as ‘any system of propositions concerned with collective or individual human behaviour that employs racial provenience or phenotypic racial traits as significant explanatory variables’<sup>326</sup> – discrimination on the basis of racial classification. Forms of discrimination based on racial classification within Northern Ireland and Chechnya have been documented in chapters two and three of this study. ‘Fascist racism’ puts racial classification in a different context by emphasising the necessity of racial pride and, crucially, racial protection. ‘Fascist racism’ goes beyond seeking advantages for a particular ethnic group on racial grounds by suggesting that the survival of a particular race depends on a ‘politically inadmissible affiliation’ with other races and a conception of race as a ‘politically defined population’<sup>327</sup>. By this rationale, concepts of ‘race’ and ‘nation’ are inter-changeable, referring only to a single ethnic group. It is the concept fascist theoreticians advanced as ‘natio-races’. This ideology positions other races as permanent adversaries and renders any involvement by other races within governance as detrimental to the survival of their nation. In 1928, Mussolini talked of the peril posed by the ‘coloured races’ as a consequence of their higher fertility rate in the same manner as radical Loyalists talked of the ‘threat’ of a higher fertility rate amongst Catholics. Mussolini and, of course, other fascist leaders also made constant references to ‘the Jewish conspiracy’ that mirrored Paisley’s ‘Papal conspiracy’, both stressing the impossibility of political inclusion of other races within a state that defines itself as the protectorate of a single ethnic entity. Other races being defined as ‘enemies within’ who seek to weaken and destroy this politically defined ethnic element. Radical Loyalist desires to seek social-economic advancement were always expressed as ‘protection’ from Catholic conspiracies whilst advocating the advancement of a Protestant Ulster ‘natio-race’, as this speech by Paisley in the 1940’s demonstrates:

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<sup>325</sup> Bruce, p45.

<sup>326</sup> Gregor, p245.

<sup>327</sup> Gregor, p256.

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'Roman Catholics in Ireland are demanding a United Irish Roman Catholic Republic. Roman Catholics in Northern Ireland are buying up Protestant farms, houses, land and property in their efforts to establish the papacy in Ulster. The NUP (National Union of Protestants) has helped Protestant employers to obtain Protestant employees...the NUP has pledged its determination to maintain allegiance to the Protestant throne...and has opened the door to a Protestant way of life for every true loyalist who wants to see in Northern Ireland a Protestant country for a Protestant people.'<sup>328</sup>

Paisley encouraged ideological justifications and actions that rejected liberal-democratic values, including judging people as individuals, as a means of further disassociating Ulster Protestants' interests from that of the Catholic Irish community. He wanted to establish loyalty to an ideology, encompassed in the values of a Protestant state, as opposed to what he presented as the diluted ideological values of the existing state, represented by Official Unionism. Paisleyites harassed and attacked non-violent Civil Rights demonstrations, pushing through the message that the Civil Rights Movement was a 'front' for the IRA – many, for instance, carried banners stating CRA (Civil Rights Association)= IRA. The desired result of such activity was that by attacking peaceful Civil Rights marches, a violent response would be triggered that would turn the Catholic Irish community away from utilising peaceful means – political instability being the favourable environment for political extremism to thrive. Radical Loyalists were aware that a violent response from the Catholic Irish community would convince a larger proportion of their own community that 'reform' would be tantamount to 'surrender' – in other words, violence would serve to confirm concepts of 'politically inadmissible affiliation' and the need for racial protectionism to be perceived as valid, and any attempts at power-sharing would be rejected. Political instability was a means to push through an extreme right-wing agenda and establish a position of power. Official Unionism was forced to maintain a right-wing agenda, demonstrated by the collapse of the more 'reformist' O'Neill, in order to maintain their support base within a community increasingly influenced by extreme right-wing sentiment.

The influence of racist ideology in Russian Nationalism has been discussed at length in previous chapters, but it should be noted that ethnic Russian rejections of liberal democratic values and the belief in the need to safeguard ethnic Russians from 'foreign elements' derive from similar 'natio-racial' ideological reasoning. Ethnic Russian Nationalists, in a similar vein to Ulster Protestants throughout 'The Troubles', cannot entertain the notion that they are responsible for any political instability or crisis that befalls them. As Thomas Parland has commented in his appraisal of the Russian 'New Right', in the period of political uncertainty in the

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<sup>328</sup> 1942 NUP (Ireland) Convention. The NUP was formed to 'combat Romanism'.

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early 1990's, 'only the most pro-Western of the liberal democrats pleaded for anything approaching national soul-searching. For the Russian nationalists this was, and remains, completely unthinkable'<sup>329</sup>. The 'search for culprits' is essentially limited to assessing the guilt of 'certain alien and foreign elements' within Russia and the 'near abroad'. The influence of the west – represented by liberal-democratic values and corrupted individualism – took partial responsibility for the events of the early 1990's within Russia, and conspiracies related to western powers continued to be touted by the Russian administration. Foreign intrigue has long been a tool for the deflection of criticism within Russia. An example would be the Kursk submarine tragedy<sup>330</sup>, blamed by Defence Minister Sergeev, Russian military circles and elements of the Russian media on a 'foreign submarine'<sup>331</sup> in order to avoid accusations of under-funding and negligence. Further blame, relating to the rampant criminality within Russia, fell on the ethnic Russians' traditional 'enemies within' – the Jewish and Caucasian ethnic groups. Existing racism aids the acceptance of 'conspiracy-based' theories within Russian society. A recent example would be Aleksandr Ignatov's<sup>332</sup> conclusions concerning Russia's limited progress in profiting from Globalisation, insisting Russia has been 'blocked' by a 'Hasidic/Para-Masonic group' who intended to utilise Russia's natural resources for 'the New World Order'<sup>333</sup>. Parland, like other academics such as Robert Seely, had recognised a distinct increase in anti-Caucasian sentiment in 1992. Parland also acknowledges that the notion of 'conspiracies' by other races within Russia and its extended borders has been a feature of Russian Nationalism for 'well over a century'. Existing racism also leaves many ethnic Russians predisposed to accept state interpretations of political events, such as the Chechen Wars, when such events involve an ethnic group that has long been categorised as an 'enemy within'. The perpetuation of 'foreign conspiracy' theories increases the perceived need for ethnic protection and strengthens support for violent, pre-emptive measures in 'defence' of ethnic Russians – a feature of 'natio-race' philosophy. Naturally, such ideology facilitates the acceptance of military action and repression against Chechens, as violent action against Catholics was accepted amongst many Ulster Protestants.

A technique consistently utilised by Paisley to distance his ideology from that of Official Unionism was his willingness to break the law. His regular stints in prison for civil disturbances in the 1960's, sentences he could have avoided simply by paying his fines, boosted his popularity enormously amongst the Protestant community, enhancing his reputation as a 'martyr to the cause'. Steve Bruce has noted that as a result of his prison sentences, the size of his church, in terms of number of churches and congregation, doubled. As in Chechnya, with Dudeyev's dual

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<sup>329</sup> Parland: *The Rejection in Russia of Totalitarian Socialism and Liberal Democracy – A Study of the Russian New Right*.

<sup>330</sup> 12th August, 2000.

<sup>331</sup> Black, J. L.: *Vladimir Putin and the New World Order* (Library of Congress, 2004), p79.

<sup>332</sup> Director-General of the Presidential Business Management Department.

<sup>333</sup> Black, p85.

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appeal to Chechen Highlanders on religious grounds and urban support deriving from Nationalist sentiment, urban Loyalists were attracted to his hard-line political stance whilst his hard-line religious stance increased his standing in rural areas<sup>334</sup>. His ability to orchestrate such widespread civil disturbances derived from his connections with Protestant paramilitary forces that he helped create.

In 1966, Paisley was responsible for the formation of the Ulster Constitution Defence Committee (UCDC) – a body of 12 Loyalists chaired by Paisley known as the '12 disciples', reflecting his desire to express the violent 'defence' of the Ulster Protestant community in biblical terms. Linked to the UCDC was the Ulster Protestant Volunteers (UPV), a province-wide structure for rank and file supporters who, in turn, maintained links with the Shankill Road Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF). It was members of the UPV that were found guilty of the 1969 Bombing Campaigns, a campaign that the Protestant press had blamed on the IRA, that were designed to destabilise and weaken the 'reformist' government by claiming Ulster was under attack. This incident, a Protestant bombing campaign engineered to induce a heightened fear of the IRA within the Protestant community, also provides a clear example of the 'information control' and 'thought reform' discussed earlier in the chapter.

There has been considerable debate concerning Ian Paisley's 'direct' involvement with paramilitary activity and murder. It could be argued that whether a leader of a movement that provides the ideological justification and incitement for violent activity actually commits the act itself is of little consequence. Given Paisley's central role in the organisation and leadership of such groups, his responsibility for violent action undertaken by members of his organisations amounts to direct responsibility for violent acts. Paisley seems to draw a distinction between his incitements and organisation of violent action and the acts themselves, however. In one demonstration on the Shankill Road, Paisley listed all the addresses of Catholics living on the Shankill, urging the crowd to take action, shouting; 'You people of the Shankill Road, What's wrong with you? Number 425 Shankill Road, do you know who lives there? Pope's Men, that's who' (he was an Italian Ice-Cream man). The crowd headed for their homes, smashing their windows and shops. When Paisley was asked if he was responsible for the violence he said 'not me, I was in the car on the way home'. The hypocrisy of such tactics, in gaining political, and theocratic, capital from violence whilst accepting no responsibility for it, was not lost on everyone within the hard-line Loyalist movement. As the Ulster Defence Association commented in the 1970's;

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<sup>334</sup> Bruce: *God Save Ulster*, p88.

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'No body established by the two parties will do anything outside the law to halt any sell-out; what they will do is to engineer situations and emotions that lead other people to break the law...Thousands of Ulster citizens have taken the law into their own hands to save their country. Many of these people were encouraged by the speeches of their 'leaders'; many were frustrated that speeches were all they made'<sup>335</sup>.

Further evidence of Paisley's strategy of establishing support through positioning himself as a radical, uncompromising alternative to the existing administration, can be found in his consistent reluctance to forge an alliance with Official Unionism, even when there was no discernable difference in their political aims. In 1982, for instance, Clifford Smyth described it as 'incomprehensible' that no alliance was sought despite both Paisleyites and Official Unionism being 'right-wing parties, both opposing power-sharing, and both apparently wanting devolution within the UK framework'<sup>336</sup>. It could be suggested that Paisley rejected the political logic of a united Loyalist movement to further his personal ambition, being aware that by aligning himself with Official Unionism his much repeated mantras of 'betrayal' and 'sell-outs' would no longer instil the same passionate response from his supporters. Paisley could have been accused, by those followers intoxicated with the 'passions' he helped create, of a similar 'betrayal'. When Paisley did align his movement with Official Unionism for specific objectives, such as tactical voting agreements with the UUP at general elections, the level of support he held within the community was adversely affected<sup>337</sup>. Paisley's consistent reluctance to form an alliance with the UUP and his willingness to form a power-sharing government with Sinn Fein, gives a clear indication that his personal ambition takes precedent over any ideological principles. Political opportunism has always been Paisley's driving principle. It could be claimed that his willingness to join a power-sharing government with Sinn Fein in 2007 is not a decision based on political or theological principle, but is reflective of the fact that he could now, as the largest party in Northern Ireland, lead it.

The influence of politicised ethnic distrust and hatred has been explored, in terms of a justification for repression and a technique for establishing a more radical strain of ethno-nationalism, from the perspective of Ulster Protestantism, Ethnic Russian Nationalism and Chechen Separatism. Within the Irish Republican movement, there are elements of contradiction in regards to race issues – as their propaganda demonstrates. The Provisional IRA defines the conflict in Northern Ireland as a national liberation struggle against British colonial rule. In terms

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<sup>335</sup> Quoted from the UDA's magazine 'Ulster', cited in Bruce, p138.

<sup>336</sup> Smyth, Clifford: *Ian Paisley – Voice of Protestant Ulster* (Scottish Academic Press), p183.

<sup>337</sup> This is reflected in the 1997 General Election results. The DUP vote slipped to 13%, 3% less than Sinn Fein, after tactical voting with the UUP.

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of race, the Provisional IRA would define the Ulster Protestant community as Irish and repeatedly stress their desire for a unified stance against 'English propaganda' – utilising 'colonial tactics of divide and conquer'<sup>338</sup> – that describes Irish Republicanism as a 'popish plot' and ignores their shared history of struggle against the English. The words of Protestant Republican leader, Wolfe Tone, who fought the British under the banner of the United Irishmen, is mentioned in many of their public announcements and speeches, urging all 'Irish people to be masters of their own destinies', stressing Tone's desire that 'all Protestant and Catholic dissenters have equal rights'<sup>339</sup>. Far from viewing Ulster Protestants as enemies by virtue of race, the Provisional IRA feel that the 'duty of challenging a foreign oppressive army of occupation'<sup>340</sup> extends to the Protestant Irish community as much as the Catholic Irish community claiming 'the Protestant and Presbyterian peoples of the north have as much a birthright to the twenty-six (counties of Ireland) as have any Catholic. It is our dearest wish that they would go claim that birthright'<sup>341</sup>. The concept of 'duty' in 'challenging a foreign army of occupation' echoes the philosophy suggested by Virginia Held in the previous chapter, who claimed it could be less morally unjustifiable to use violent means to achieve basic rights rather than to permanently concede such rights. The statement also puts forward a non-sectarian vision for the future – sectarianism being incompatible with the 'socialist democratic Republic' they envisaged.

There are other statements within the same literature, however, that define the conflict in terms that suggest a collective ethnic guilt exists within the Protestant community and seems to stress an innate aggressive tendency within Protestantism as a collective trait. Whilst primarily using the term 'colonial oppressor', this is often expressed within propaganda as the 'Saxon oppressor'<sup>342</sup>. They refer to atrocities, such as Hiroshima and Vietnam, as being committed by a 'white Anglo-Saxon Protestant military elite'<sup>343</sup> and include references to 'WASP's' bombing 'mightily and indiscriminately' – the British being an example of the 'white Anglo-Saxon Protestant military elite'. It would seem contradictory to claim an inclusive vision for a United Ireland and seemingly attempt to attract Protestant support for the Republican struggle, whilst using references that define the enemy as 'Protestant'. Such comments suggest that Irish Republicanism held little hope of convincing Ulster Protestants to abandon their ethnic allegiance to the British crown, but merely used 'conciliatory' messages of a shared history to indicate the manner in which Protestants can be viewed as collaborators in the 'puppet regime' of 'occupied Ireland'<sup>344</sup>. The Provisional IRA also wished to emphasise the extent to which Republicans feel

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<sup>338</sup> First Easter Address of the PIRA, 1970.

<sup>339</sup> Provisional IRA: *Freedom Struggle* (Irish Republican Publicity Bureau, 1973), p13.

<sup>340</sup> Provisional IRA, Opening Statement

<sup>341</sup> First Easter Address of the PIRA

<sup>342</sup> Provisional IRA, p1.

<sup>343</sup> Provisional IRA, p11.

<sup>344</sup> A reference to Stormont, Northern Ireland's Parliament.

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the 'Protestant Irish' have been duped, as an ethnic group, in their British affiliation. By emphasising a shared ethnicity, the Provisional IRA are highlighting those elements they feel are responsible for 'an act of betrayal' – those supportive of the partition of Ireland and who are not 'loyal to the principles and the constitution of the Irish Republican Army'. The question of 'loyalty' to the original 'principles and the constitution of the Irish Republican Army' defines their line of division within this context, not ethnicity or religion. The Irish political parties in the Irish Free State are also viewed as 'collaborators', as are the Official IRA for their 'recognition of Westminster, Stormont and Leinster House'<sup>345</sup>. Anti-Colonialism and Anti-Capitalism were the central features of Irish Republicanism at the time of the Provisional IRA's conception, and their enemies are those who are supportive of 'colonial' and 'capitalist' forces, as this statement by the PIRA following the collapse of Stormont indicates:

'We, therefore, call upon all Irish people, irrespective of class or creed, to unite in opposition...we appeal especially to our fellow countrymen of the Protestant faith to refrain from any action which could assist England in imposing direct rule.'<sup>346</sup>

It could be claimed that the manner by which elements of the core ideology of both Sinn Fein and the DUP was swiftly dropped by its leaders exposes such ideology, within the context of Northern Ireland, as principally a technique to establish power. Not unlike the DUP, Sinn Fein's<sup>347</sup> hard-line ideological principles that separated them from the more mainstream politics of the SDLP – the principles that established them as a political force and allowed them to finally eclipse the support base of the more moderate mainstream – have been, at least temporarily, discarded. It is hard, in such circumstances, not to view hard-line, violent ideology within Northern Ireland as primarily a technique for establishing a position of power, rather than depict such leaders as acting on ideological principle. Undoubtedly, the sentiment felt by the majority of supporters of both radical Loyalism and Irish Republicanism is genuine, but what of its 'radical' leaders? Both parties attracted mass support through their affiliation with paramilitaries, their willingness to associate themselves with non-democratic, violent politics to represent an uncompromising, radical alternative to the established regime. Both used impassioned pleas not to 'betray' their fellow countrymen – although differing on which ethnicities could be defined as 'countrymen' – and both adamantly opposed power-sharing agreements. Until such a time, that the support they had secured within their respective communities had exceeded that of their mainstream opposition and both parties could lead a power-sharing government.

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<sup>345</sup> Leinster House is the name of the building housing the national parliament of Ireland.

<sup>346</sup> PIRA, 1973.

<sup>347</sup> Sinn Fein being the political wing of the Provisional IRA.

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It could be contended that the ideological principles of such parties would never have been discarded for peace, unless ideological capitulation guaranteed the protagonists political power. Whilst the Provisional IRA was formed on the principle that it refused to, and swore never to, recognise the authority of a Northern Ireland Assembly<sup>348</sup>, non-violent Irish Republicanism, represented by the SDLP (Social Democratic and Labour Party) has been ideologically consistent in its political vision for Northern Ireland. In its 1972 policy document, 'Towards a New Ireland'<sup>349</sup>, the SDLP pressed for an agreement that addressed the three core sets of relationships: 'between Nationalists and Unionists in the North, between North and South, and between Britain and Ireland'. The principles enshrined in non-violent, democratic Nationalism in the early 1970's became the basis of the Good Friday Agreement – an agreement that entirely contradicts the founding principles of Sinn Fein and to which the DUP were passionately opposed. It is testament to the power of inflamed 'passions' over logic, and the threat of violence, that such political entities could still secure a democratic mandate to govern in such circumstances. The traditionally radical political elements on both sides of the ethnic divide have seemingly abandoned many of the mainstays on which their popularity was built, not least that of historical, ideological continuity with previous radical movements and much of what was perceived to be symbolic of betrayal and capitulation. Perhaps, as a consequence, more radical alternatives to the now mainstream DUP and Sinn Fein could emerge in the future and threaten their position of dominance through similar means. They may alternatively be forced to strengthen their radical credentials to maintain popular support, leaving a power-sharing executive in deadlock.

As virtually every parade, march, speech or pamphlet produced by radical political parties throughout 'The Troubles' contains references to past historical 'heroes' of each respective ethnic group, the importance of historical continuity and symbolism in establishing more radical strains of ethno-Nationalism as political forces is all too clear and already well-documented. Paisleyites considered themselves the successors to Edward Carson's UVF – an example would be the 2000 strong mob armed with cudgels that Paisley assembled to confront a civil rights demonstration on 30<sup>th</sup> November, 1969, all wearing badges saying 'Save the Clyde Valley'. The Clyde Valley was the steamboat Carson had used to smuggle arms and ammunition from Germany in 1914 for the expected fight against Home Rule<sup>350</sup>. For radical Irish Republicanism, supporters positioned themselves as the 'true successors of the men of 1916 and 1919'<sup>351</sup> – those individuals involved in the Easter Rising. Historical association with past 'defenders' of

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<sup>348</sup> Their propaganda states that one of the primary reasons for the split with the Official IRA was their 'recognition of Westminster, Leinster and Stormont' (Freedom Struggle).

<sup>349</sup> Available on the SDLP official website.

<sup>350</sup> Maloney, p164.

<sup>351</sup> Freedom Struggle, p21.



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each ethnic group triggered powerful emotional attachment to contemporary causes and campaigns.

If historical continuity between contemporary leaders and past 'heroes' can be seen as a central feature in the establishment and growth of radical ethno-Nationalist movements, how can the abandonment of historically-grounded ideological principles be accepted by such movements' followers? How can the powerful, emotional affiliation with historical movements be reconciled with continued support for leaders that seem to be breaking that historical link with the past? In chapter four of this analysis, it was concluded that religious or Nationalist emotional attachment – once expressed as an individuals' primary political affiliation – becomes a more powerful influence than an individuals' rational assessment of political issues. This factor provides radical leaders with a degree of electoral protection in regards to potential criticism of fundamental policy changes, as emotional affiliation can be skilfully manipulated. Policy decisions can be clouded by the familiarly charged, emotional rhetoric that originally convinced radical Loyalists and Irish Republicans to lend their support to such leaders. A skilful manipulation or interpretation of political events can quickly turn 'capitulation' into 'victory'.

The abandonment of key policy areas within 'radical' parties – such as the recognition of Stormont by Sinn Fein, or the DUP agreeing to share power with Sinn Fein – seem less important to supporters who primarily follow an emotional affiliation with the past, and the leaders who they think best encompass that emotional affiliation. In the decade since the formation of the power-sharing executive in 1998, there seemed a greater popular affiliation with the language used than with the fundamentally revisionist policies expressed under this façade. There is a central tenet of each 'radical' party that cannot be discarded by either leadership without major repercussions in terms of continued public support. Sinn Fein consistently express power-sharing as part of a transition to a United Ireland. Unionists, on the other hand, consider power-sharing a painful process of compromise in order to retain the union with Britain. Much as those who desire a permanent secession of hostilities would like to see this question disappear, it won't. For both parties' supporters, toleration of concessions is entirely dependent on retaining this core principle. If either party attempted to sacrifice this fundamental political aim, their respective supporters would desert en masse. It could be said that power-sharing will only last as long as its key players are able to dance around this issue. It seems logical to suggest the issue cannot be avoided indefinitely, and that power-sharing could collapse, and political violence ensue, as a consequence of either party's non-negotiable, core principle being threatened or discarded in the minds of supporters.

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The strategies used by Sinn Fein and the DUP have many similarities. Firstly, in respect to their rival parties, who under the leadership of John Hume (SDLP) and David Trimble (UUP) were responsible for much of the implementation and negotiation leading to a peace agreement, described by both their more radical counterparts as weak – lacking political direction and purpose. Gerry Adams described the SDLP in 2006 as a party who ‘proclaim their republicanism but have no strategy or political will to achieve it’<sup>352</sup>. Adams urges his representatives to ‘remember that our mandate and the rights of our electorate were won on the sacrifices of others and their families’, with a reference to Bobby Sands, the IRA hunger striker. Ian Paisley’s language to describe the UUP is predictably more colourful, stating ‘a newer and stronger spirit came down upon the Unionist cause which had been so blatantly and barefacedly betrayed by one David Trimble’. Other references within Paisley’s speech<sup>353</sup> refer to the ‘Trimbleite slaves in the tent of Republicanism’, the ‘Trimble Conspiracy’ and the ‘spineless’ UUP. The message from both radical parties is that they are the only parties capable of ‘defending’ their ethnic group. Adams uses the armed struggle of the IRA as proof of his uncompromising credentials, Paisley his resistance to the IRA and to ‘betrayals’ by Official Unionism. Having dismissed their political opponents as fraudulent representatives of their communities, they strengthen their own credentials as the successors to each communities’ historical ‘heroes’. Paisley refers to ‘one flag, one covenant and one aim’, a reference to the 1912 Covenant with God, Edward Carson signed on behalf of the Protestant people for the protection of Ulster from Catholicism. Adams’ historical equivalent, The Easter Rising, is mentioned repeatedly with Adams declaring ‘The Proclamation of Easter 1916 is the rock on which modern republicanism is built’.

Having established their credentials as modern day ‘heroes’ of historical movements, they reserve much of their respective speeches to the dangers posed by each other, and their willingness to halt negotiations should their traditional enemy not meet their demands. Gerry Adams, in his speech to Sinn Fein representatives, refers only to the position of the DUP in reference to current negotiations, with no mention of any other party. For Paisley, talk of current negotiations is dominated by references to ‘IRA-Sinn Fein’. This underlines their respective centrality to the peace process and pushes more moderate parties further to the periphery. Their obsession with each other’s position, and the dangers each other poses to the success of the peace process, serves to convince each respective community that failure to lend support to a ‘radical’ party would be tantamount to gifting your ‘enemy’ the upper hand in negotiations. From Gerry Adam’s perspective, ‘Sinn Fein resolutely opposed any half-way house, in-between, transitional, interim or shadow Assembly...there is no future in the governments tampering with the Good Friday Agreement to facilitate the DUP’. Adams refused to support ‘some notion that

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<sup>352</sup> Speech by Gerry Adams, then President of Sinn Fein, to Sinn Fein’s Elected Representatives Forum, Dublin (25 March, 2006)

<sup>353</sup> DUP Conference Speech, 2004.

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Ian Paisley has conjured up'. Ian Paisley devotes much of his conference speech to 'Gerry Adams and his murder organisation' stating, 'Let me tell you that as long as I lead this party...it will not be entering any talks, negotiations, pow-wows or socialisations with IRA-Sinn Fein'.

In terms of substance therefore, the language and techniques deployed to attract community support are much the same as they have always been. Both parties' language is that of standing firm to its historical position and principles, a position they both describe as one of 'enormous political responsibility' (Adams) and a 'solemn and terrifying responsibility' (Paisley). What their rhetoric fails to express is that having obtained their positions of primacy from their steadfast refusal to compromise, there is virtually no difference between the SDLP and UUP's 'sell-out' strategy throughout 1998-2008 than with that of their own. Both parties (Sinn Fein and DUP) being willing to enter government with each other once minor political details had been addressed<sup>354</sup>. The major differences between the 'moderate' and 'radical' parties at the point of negotiation on the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement was the threat of violence that each politically 'radical' camp could potentially deploy, and the combative language designed to distance themselves from 'mainstream' political parties whilst pursuing similar policy direction. Sinn Fein was willing to enter government in a power-sharing assembly under British Sovereignty and the DUP agreed to the development of 'north-south' all-Ireland political institutions. The IRA agreed to decommission its weapons and the DUP agreed to share power with the Chief of Staff of the IRA. Sinn Fein has largely sacrificed its socialist vision to bolster mainstream appeal. For most 'radical' leaders, Ideological principles will always be secondary to obtaining power, but for the maintenance of power – for the continuation of popular support – there will undoubtedly be limits to the levels of perceived 'capitulation' that either side will stomach.

It can be concluded that a key component that facilitated the establishment of more radical ethno-Nationalist ideology in Northern Ireland amongst the Ulster Protestant community included the application of 'natio-racial' ideology, expressed within the political violence and repression endured by Irish Catholics who were excluded from this 'politically defined' national entity. The primacy of ethno-Nationalist ideology cannot be achieved without defining other ethnicities as 'enemies' – adversaries who are, by virtue of ethnicity, determined to weaken or destroy the 'natio-race' in question through political violence. Whilst no violent action has been instigated by ethnic adversaries, it is necessary for such movements to encourage ethnic conflict through political action that will provoke a violent response from the ethnic adversaries of the 'natio-race', or convince the ethnic group in question that, in the absence of political violence, that an

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<sup>354</sup> Such issues included the manner by which decommissioning of weapons was carried out, re-organisation of the police force and issues relating to equality.

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imminent threat from other ethnicities exists. The use of ethnicity-orientated 'conspiracy' theories, an emphasis on innate racial and religious 'flaws' or a supposed propensity for violence by virtue of ethnicity, achieves the desired impression of an imminent threat. Such techniques have been utilised by the dominant ethnic groups in both conflict situations.

Evidence also reveals how emotional appeals for ethnic 'loyalty', that serve to limit a rational political appraisal of events and policy, weakens the position of 'issue-driven' political alternatives to ethno-nationalist movements. In an emotionally charged atmosphere of ethnic tension and distrust, it becomes increasingly hard for leaders of non-radical parties to express a rational, peaceful alternative to conflict. The silencing of political parties that represent a multi-ethnic, issue-driven political vision can also be achieved through repressive state activity. In Russia, this process has been facilitated by 'information control' – state restrictions and repression of the media. Without independent sources of information, it is hard for individuals to maintain any form of value neutrality. Popular opinion will increasingly reflect the state's position, as there is no independent source of information to counter the propaganda the public are subjected to. This process of deindividuation serves a dual purpose, also convincing an ethnic group to consider action taken against individuals belonging to ethnic groups outside their concept of a 'natio-race' to be evaluated on the basis of collective ethnic guilt for 'crimes' they, as a race, have committed or are 'conspiring' to commit. Deindividuation is essential for popular acceptance within one ethnic group of political violence against another ethnic group. Historical continuity and association with past 'heroes' of ethno-Nationalist movements also plays a central role within Northern Ireland in the establishment of ethno-Nationalist movements, although evidence suggests that in 2008, it is more an impression of historical continuity that is evident in speeches rather than policy – rhetoric stressing historical continuity that is largely disassociated from actual policy direction. Again, the emotionally charged language of such speeches prevents realisation within the ethno-Nationalist community in question that a fundamental ideological break with historically grounded doctrine has occurred, but the central question of national allegiance cannot be ignored, or circumvented through rhetoric, indefinitely – there is likely to be a breaking point.

Much of what is evident in terms of tactics and techniques in the establishment of radical ethno-Nationalist movements in Northern Ireland is observable within Russia since the fall of Sovietism. The importance of historical continuity and association with past 'heroes' of Russia and the Soviet Union to Putin's administration has been of pivotal importance to his continued popularity with ethnic Russians. As in Northern Ireland, this historical emphasis and association with powerful figures and ideology of the past is high on emotion but lacking in substance. Putin's continued emphasis on Russia as a 'Great Power' and the restoration of Russia's 'Great Power'

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status reveals itself to be largely rhetorical when claims within his sabre-rattling speeches so sharply contrast with factual information. The Maks-2007 International Air Show was the biggest display of Russia's military might since the collapse of the Soviet Union. It was designed to convince Russians of the resurgence of Russia's military power. Coupled with resumed 'combat missions' by its fleet of bombers near Western airspace, restoring the red star to military vehicles and tearing up arms agreements with NATO<sup>355</sup>, such action signifies a return to Soviet anti-Western liberal policies and, for the Russian people, a return to Soviet levels of global influence through military power. The political reality is very different. Russia's military 'might' consists of 5,000 tanks, many of which are from the 1970's and 1980's (formally 60,000 in the Cold War years), 12 nuclear submarines armed with obsolete missile systems (formally 61 pre-1991) and a total defence budget that has been reduced to just \$32 billion, roughly 7% of the US defence budget<sup>356</sup>. Everything else, such as their Sukhoi and MIG Fighter aircraft is 'a relic from the Soviet era'<sup>357</sup> whose technology has long been surpassed. The purpose of such posturing is not primarily to convince the international community of Russia's renewed power status but to convince its own people of its status, to perpetuate the concept of national pride. Through the perpetuation of national pride a desire to 'protect' national interests is fostered. The 'protection' of national interests is only a powerful orator away from public acceptance of pre-emptive attacks on ethnic groups deemed to 'threaten' national interests – such actions have a direct effect on how 'internal' conflicts, such as Chechnya, are viewed by ethnic Russians. International posturing to instil a renewed sense of national pride amongst ethnic-Russians will foster an acceptance of military-focussed political aggression in the 'near abroad'.

Despite Russia's insistence that the Chechen conflict is over, almost daily insurgent attacks continue in Chechnya and, crucially for Russia, the surrounding region. In 2007 and 2008, escalating separatist insurgencies had been reported in Kabardino-Balkaria, Dagestan and Ingushetia. In Kabardino-Balkaria, the rebel leader Anzor Astemirov (Emir Seyfullah) claimed large-scale military operations are planned against Russian forces and local forces aligned with Russia, such as police and local officials. Astemirov claims many more people in the region, particularly students and workers, are joining the insurgency as a consequence of state repression.<sup>358</sup> This is confirmed by Irina Babich, an expert on the region and a member of the Russian Academy of Sciences. In 2007, she estimated that insurgent supporters in the region could number up to 10,000, confirming an increasing popularity amongst the younger generation of Balkars and Kabardinians towards insurgent commanders – particularly Mukoshev, the

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<sup>355</sup> All such actions occurred in 2007.

<sup>356</sup> Figures from Russian Defence experts quoted in The Guardian Newspaper, Saturday, August 25th, 2007.

<sup>357</sup> Robert Hewson, Editor of Janes Air-Launched Weapons, quoted in The Guardian Newspaper, 25th August, 2007.

<sup>358</sup> Astemirov's speech reported in The Jamestown Foundation, Chechnya Weekly, October 20th, 2007.

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spiritual leader of the insurgency, who has 'thousands of disciples'<sup>359</sup>. The Russian leadership demonstrated its usual reluctance to express the reality of violence within the region with a statement from General Yedelev, the commander of the Russian 'anti-terrorist' forces, who claimed 'until Astemirov and Mukoshev are caught, there is a possibility of terrorist attacks and extremist raids in Kabardino-Balkaria'. This is reflective of Russian reluctance to admit raids had already become a reality. As previously discussed, the control of information and propaganda is key to the continued success of ethno-Nationalist movements. The statement expressing the 'possibility' of attacks came a few weeks after the assassination of district police chief and a colonel was blown up in a car bomb. The statement also displays a certain naivety in assessing how conflicts deriving from ethnic and religious repression may be solved. The assassination of insurgency leaders, as Chechnya has proven, does little to dim the determination of insurgency supporters to continue armed struggle. The 'martyrdom' of leaders seems to galvanise support, rather than reduce it.

Russia's attempted media black-out on insurgent attacks throughout the region can be seen as a technique in limiting ethnic-Russian security concerns in the 'near abroad'. A further technique in controlling the separatist insurgencies is the assassination of its leadership<sup>360</sup>. Russia hopes that through the assassination of its leadership, separatist insurgents will be limited to fragmented, small-scale operations that can continue to go unreported in the media. There are limits, even within the authoritarian Russian state, to maintaining a media blackout in the face of renewed insurgent activity. Perhaps much of the military posturing in recent years<sup>361</sup> is part of a broader realisation that large-scale military operations in the Caucasus in the near future are inevitable. For political observers of the region, the only truly surprising aspect of the 2008 Georgian Conflict was that it did not occur earlier. Political analysis of other territories in the region reveals the potential for conflict on a much greater scale than recently witnessed in South Ossetia. Russia may well find itself fighting multiple guerrilla wars simultaneously throughout the region. A realistic appraisal of Russia's current military capabilities suggests this may be far more problematic than a concentrated military campaign limited to a small area (South Ossetia). Maintaining an environment of extreme nationalist sentiment would ensure ethnic-Russians are more supportive of large-scale military action when the time comes, but it could also signal the current regimes' end should Russia fall victim to 'overstretch'. Russian Nationalists demand military victories and will not tolerate military failure.

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<sup>359</sup> Irina Babich, quoted in The Jamestown Foundation, Chechnya Weekly, October 20th, 2007.

<sup>360</sup> Mashkadov, Kattab and Beseyev are three prominent examples.

<sup>361</sup> Throughout 2007, in the manner discussed throughout this chapter.

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Dagestan and Ingushetia witnessed a dramatic rise in insurgent activity throughout 2006, 2007 and 2008. Large-scale corruption and violent repression committed by the 300,000-strong 'anti-terrorist forces' deployed in the region and by the puppet-leaderships aligned with Moscow have increased insurgent support in recent years<sup>362</sup>. In Ingushetia, 'almost daily gun battles and ambushes on police vehicles'<sup>363</sup> occurred throughout 2007 and in late July, 2007, Moscow tripled the number of Special Forces in Ingushetia<sup>364</sup>. In Dagestan, 2006 and 2007 witnessed a massive rise in insurgent activity under the leadership of Dokka Umarov<sup>365</sup>. All such increased insurgent activity exposes the limitations of attempting to control inter-ethnic and religious conflict through deploying ever more violent forms of repressive state activity. Such brutal techniques of control – including police raids, beatings and large-scale 'disappearances' amongst the civilian population – have been cited by all the journalist sources utilised above, as a principal contributor to the continued rise in support for separatist movements throughout the region.

In Northern Ireland we have witnessed the electoral success of 'radical' parties who have had to sacrifice much of their violent ideological principles and tactics – having used such tactics to establish political movements – in order to cross over to the mainstream and establish power. In Russia, power derives from maintaining the 'Great Power' rhetoric and ultra-Nationalist doctrine to reflect the popular consensus that has been engineered to establish autocratic governance. Having established the principle of maintaining the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation and its zone of influence in the 'near abroad' by force, and utilising Russian Nationalist principles as a justification for continued state repression to achieve this aim, Russia finds itself in a position that offers very little scope for negotiations and concessions to prevent inter-ethnic conflict. As Bobo Lo has commented, 'as an advocate of a strong state it is psychologically and politically awkward for Putin to make territorial concessions without obtaining clear dividends'<sup>366</sup>. Lo defines the issue of territorial integrity as a 'peripheral' issue, however, as he cites the fall of the Taliban in Afghanistan as having removed 'even the theoretical possibility of a radicalised Islam sweeping through Central Asia'. Evidence of escalating insurgent activity throughout the region would suggest that whilst radicalised Islam could remain 'peripheral', a unified multi-ethnic stance (with Islam influencing as a unifying factor) against Russian Imperialism could well challenge Russia's 'territorial integrity'. Bobo Lo is defining the regional conflicts in the Caucasus as Russia vs. Radical Islam, as if the Taleban and Chechen Separatism were inter-changeable

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<sup>362</sup> As reported in *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, quoted on Kavkaz Centre, August, 2007.

<sup>363</sup> Reuters, 30th August, 2007.

<sup>364</sup> Reuters, 30th August, 2007. An additional 2,500 Special Forces deployed.

<sup>365</sup> Mayrbek Vachagaev, Umarov Starts to Show his Teeth, *The Jamestown Foundation, Chechnya Weekly*, August 2nd, 2007.

<sup>366</sup> Lo, Bobo: *Vladimir Putin and the Evolution of Russian Foreign Policy* (Chatham House Papers, Blackwell Publishing, 2003).

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or the same entity – whilst consistent with Russian propaganda, there is very little truth in such an interpretation.

A key development in the insurgencies of Chechnya, Kabardino-Balkaria, Dagestan and Ingushetia in recent years has been the reduction of ethnic/clan rivalries and distrust amongst the myriad of insurgency groups within the region. The increasingly unified focus for resistance amongst Caucasus insurgents has resulted in a more co-ordinated resistance to Kremlin-aligned regimes from a region-wide perspective. To use Kabardino-Balkaria as an example, the Kabardinian rebel leader Anzor Astemirov has a personal bodyguard made up entirely of Balkars<sup>367</sup>. The popularity of Mukozhev, the spiritual leader, is also not limited to his own ethnicity, attracting thousands of 'disciples' from the younger generation of Balkars and Kabardinians. All such leaders are known as 'Amirs of the Caucasian Mujahideen' and Dokka Umarov was recognised as the leader of the Mujahideen in Chechnya, Dagestan and Ingushetia<sup>368</sup>. This demonstrates the extent to which separatists perceive their movement to be a region-wide struggle against Russia and its 'puppet regimes'. Dokka Umarov's presidential decree 149<sup>369</sup> also refers to a new consultative body, the Sharia Committee of General Representation, as being representative of the 'peoples of the Caucasus', further highlighting the radicalised, unified Islamic nature of the struggle and the extent of his control of separatist forces outside of Chechnya. It is important to consider the Kremlin-backed state repression of Islam as a major factor for this newfound unity. By attempting to retain Islamic institutions and Mosques under state control, a more radical, independent Islamic movement has developed – in much the same way as the Chechen rebel leader Shamil attracted thousands of followers in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

The term 'Jihad' is used by both Russian and Western commentators, as proof of separatists being solely affiliated to Wahhabism and the philosophy and influence of Al Qaeda. This, whilst conveniently categorising Chechnya as an extension of the 'War on Terror', is not an accurate classification. As Shamil, as a Sufi adherent, declared 'Jihad' in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and championed the pan-Caucasus movement, many insurgents within the contemporary conflict are supportive of a pan-Caucasus movement but reject Wahhabism, continuing to practice their traditional form of Islam. There are also a broad range of Nationalist groups who do not support the concept of a Caliphate but would like to rid their nations of Russian control<sup>370</sup>. There are signs that the high

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<sup>367</sup> Kabardino-Balkaria Rebels Vow to Renew Attacks, The Jamestown Foundation, Chechnya Weekly, October 20th, 2006.

<sup>368</sup> As of November, 2007.

<sup>369</sup> September 4th, 2007. Presidential decrees from Umarov are published on the Kavkaz Centre website.

<sup>370</sup> McGregor lists the Kasi-Kumaukh, Tsubars, Sadval, Tsadesh, Birlik and Tenglit as examples of Nationalist groups in Dagestan alone.



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degree of conflict that formally existed between the Salafist (Wahhabi) military Jama'ats<sup>371</sup> and Sufi 'Lodges' is decreasing. In his study of insurgency in Dagestan, Mcgregor has highlighted 'efforts to incorporate Sufist Muslims into the communities (Jama'ats)' and states that the 'current Jama'ats tend to be more inclusive'. Such a trend, should it continue, could have major repercussions for Russia's 'territorial integrity'.

The control of most active military units throughout the region by Salafist commanders ensures the secular separatists continue to be marginalised. The largely secular or moderate Islamic separatist majority in Chechnya currently have limited influence and military capability, as has previously been mentioned. Evidence of diminishing ethnic and religious rivalries between anti-Russian insurgent groups suggests that region-wide military action against Russian forces may be more viable in the near future. Perhaps those seeking an Islamic Caliphate for the region might be forced to compromise their strategy in a similar way to Dudayev's Nationalists during the 1990's. Without the support of more secular-orientated separatists, it is unlikely that any form of military confrontation would succeed in defeating Russian forces. Active military units continue to have the capacity to launch attacks from their mountain strongholds, but greater numbers and military/ financial resources would be needed to launch any real threat to Russia's position. As Dudeyev was forced from his secular position to incorporate Islamic fundamentalists out of military necessity, it could be said that Islamic militants would have to compromise their ideology for similar reasons to secure military success beyond continued resistance. Whether leaders such as Dokka Umarov would be willing to make such a concession, given the rigidity of his theocratic adherence, seems unlikely – but leaders can be replaced or, more commonly in Chechnya, assassinated. The anti-Russian Imperialist, Sufi majority throughout the region require renewed strength in leadership to challenge Russia militarily and must re-define the ideological nature of the struggle internally.

It is a common misconception, driven by Western governments and media, that all radical Islamic movements can be conveniently lumped together under the banner of 'Islamic terrorists', 'Al-Qaeda inspired' or 'Al-Qaeda backed' political violence. To place all militant movements within the Islamic world under one 'catch-all' category is deeply misleading and simplistic. The ideological chasm between the left-wing Shia movement of Hizbollah and the 'Islamofascist' movement of the Taleban provide an example of divergent doctrine. Each conflict, be it in the Islamic world or elsewhere, must be considered with due consideration of the unique historical, social and political factors that have shaped its progression. Salafists are a small yet powerful

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<sup>371</sup> A Jama'at is an Islamic community organisation. They are usually peaceful organisations but provide the method for organisation in times of war.

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presence within the separatist movement that cannot be confused with the moderate form of Islam (Sufism) that is practiced by the vast majority of people within the region. The presence of Salafists in the Caucasus has confused the international community in terms of how the conflict is perceived, with its associated connotations of Al Qaeda. Sufi Separatists must reclaim leadership in resistance to Russian rule. The contemporary separatist movements in Chechnya, Ingushetia, Dagestan, Kabardino-Balkaria and elsewhere require a unified stance and a greater degree of inclusiveness, reflecting their shared historical experiences of Russian Imperialist brutality and simultaneously rejecting the negative influence of Salafists within its leadership. Ingush and Dagestani were also rounded up by Stalin and deported to work camps – like the Chechens, roughly a third never returned. The vast majority of all such nations are Sufi, they share the same tragic history of continual repression, yet they remain factionalised. A more unified, inclusive approach to resistance within the separatist movement would prompt a regeneration of popular, militant support.

Terms such as 'Jihad' or 'Sharia' contain numerous contesting theological interpretations that have very different political consequences, depending on which interpretation is applied. Whilst the concept of 'Jihad' has extremist connotations in the Western world, it must be remembered that it is not uncommon for believers of many faiths to invoke 'God's will' as their primary motivation for political violence, as this quote from George Bush<sup>372</sup> illustrates: 'The freedom you defend is the right of every person and the future of every nation. The liberty we prize is not America's gift to the world; it is God's gift to humanity'.

The concept of an Islamic Caliphate supported by Umarov, for instance, is often highlighted as evidence of Wahhabi fanaticism, but a Caliphate can take many forms. An Islamic government 'may be categorised as anything – a theocracy, because it is required to function as a tool to ensure the Quranic 'dos and don'ts' are implemented; or as a democracy because the Qur'an lays stress on administration by mutual consultation<sup>373</sup>. It was an Islamic movement that ushered in democracy in Indonesia, for instance. A federation of small Caucasian states that operated on democratic principles of 'mutual consultation' could bring positive economic and political benefits for its people – far removed from what many observers would expect an Islamic Caliphate to involve. It is also deeply misleading to suggest that the more radical Islamic elements of the separatist movement that continue to fight the Russians are the only Chechens who oppose Kadyrov's rule.

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<sup>372</sup> Speech to troops at Macdill Airbase, Florida. Quoted in Northcott, p8.

<sup>373</sup> A quote from The Daily Muslim, from an article on what an Islamic Caliphate could consist of, published on Kavkaz Centre, 2007.

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The majority of Chechens, as expressed in the general elections during the 1990's, would not support a Kremlin-backed regime or more radicalised Islamic rule. A largely secular, independent state would receive the backing of the majority of Chechens<sup>374</sup>. Whilst the accommodation of more radical Islamic elements within the Chechen Separatist movement has temporarily resulted in their control over active military units, it could be claimed that the larger 'moderate', more secular-minded separatist bloc is likely to reassert its influence in the future. The Russian government has been successful in convincing the international community that such a bloc, incorporating the majority of Chechens, doesn't exist – that Chechens are either pro-Kadyrov or Wahhabi fanatics. It would be safe to assume that the subsequent years of war and brutal repression following Maskhadov's democratically elected leadership in the 1990's has not resulted in increased pro-Moscow (pro-Kadyrov) sentiment – despite the derisive 99% vote for United Russia in Chechnya at the 2007 General Elections. The decision for United Russia to award itself 99% of the vote can be seen as an expression of total disregard for international criticism, and reflects a realisation that there are no international constraints on the regimes' behaviour. Western leaders, such as Nicolas Sarkozy, who were quick to congratulate Medvedev on his election 'success', must have confirmed this belief within Russia. Western governments and their media's insistence on dismissing any Islamic movement as 'terrorist', or any popular opposition movement – such as Chechen Separatism – that has accommodated a more radical element out of necessity as 'terrorist', prevents discussion and understanding of the political realities of such conflicts. Such a situation favours many governments whose policies are hard to justify when subjected to close scrutiny. In Russia and elsewhere, open discussion and a genuine understanding of conflicts is often detrimental to the perpetuation of a state's ideology and political direction. Control of information and the spreading of false information related to the Chechen conflict is a major weapon in Russia's armoury in regards to acceptance of state repression, both internationally and amongst ethnic Russians.

The Caucasian Mujahideen's ability to continue and escalate a region-wide separatist struggle is further enhanced by other factors. Whilst the development of the insurgencies in the region continue to display a more unified position than previously, the power structure of the Kremlin-backed regimes have been severely weakened by increased in-fighting, with rival paramilitaries and clan leaders competing for power. Tensions between rival camps, particularly in Ingushetia and Chechnya, regularly explode into open warfare in the streets. The existence of disunity amongst Chechens or Ingush willing to work for the Kremlin is self-explanatory – they are primarily motivated by a desire for power and money, not ideological convictions. Closely related to this issue are the motivations of the 300,000 strong, mainly conscripted Russian

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<sup>374</sup> As previously mentioned, the highly populated, urban areas of Chechnya are much less religious than more rural areas.

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soldiers in the region. The high level of mass desertions<sup>375</sup> and suicides amongst conscripted Russian soldiers gives an indication of the trauma endured by young recruits, many of whom are still teenagers, who find themselves forced to fight in a war zone after only six months training. A willingness amongst Caucasian Mujahideen to die for their cause – the fact that they fight out of ideological conviction – constitutes a major advantage and the primary reason for their continued existence despite being overwhelmingly outnumbered. The Mujahideen in Afghanistan had previously demonstrated to Russia the power of ideological conviction in warfare. There are countless examples of conflicts throughout history that demonstrate the difficulties in winning a guerrilla war against an insurgent force that has the backing of the vast majority of the local population.<sup>376</sup> Moderate Muslim or secular separatists might not currently hold positions of power within many insurgent groups, but their anti-Russian, pro-separatist ideological sympathies will remain strong. Whilst future power struggles involving the ideological direction that national self-determination should encompass are unavoidable, collusion between moderate Muslim and more fundamentalist elements was necessary for victory against Moscow before<sup>377</sup> and will be in the future.

For genuine Russian Nationalists, an inability to wipe out insurgent activity can only be a source of great embarrassment that severely weakens Russia's credibility as a 'great power', creating doubts concerning the competency of its leadership. Russian Nationalist demands for victory through force ignore the political realities of inter-ethnic conflict in the Caucasus – no such conflict can be 'won' through violent means, as they will never convince the indigenous ethnic groups that their presence is in any way legitimate. Negotiated settlement and politics of compromise, the only form of conflict resolution that could deliver peace, cannot be attempted by United Russia without jeopardising their position of power. In Chechnya and the surrounding region, only a high degree of autonomy and an end to 'puppet' regimes will prevent future violence. The techniques utilised by radical leaders to gain power in Northern Ireland included the abandonment of violent politics at a time when political ascendancy could be achieved through peaceful means. Continued popular support for Putin and any future Putin-backed ultra-Nationalist government, necessitates the continuation of the use of force to attempt to achieve political compliance in the 'near abroad' – the use of force being the only policy reflective of Ultra-Nationalist ideology in such circumstances. Policies of continued state repression and political violence within the 'near abroad' are consequently the only genuine option that the Russian

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<sup>375</sup> The BBC reported 40,000 cases of desertion from Russian regiments in 2002. Brutality Sparks Flood of Russian Desertions, BBC Archive, 17th September, 2002.

<sup>376</sup> In Chechnya, this was confirmed by the vote for independence prior to the Russian invasion.

<sup>377</sup> First Chechen War.

## THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ETHNO-NATIONALIST MOVEMENTS

Nationalist administration can undertake to prevent a more powerful radical Russian Nationalist element from emerging<sup>378</sup> internally, as a result of populist sentiment being ignored.

In Northern Ireland, it could be maintained that both ethnic communities were accepting of 'radical' leaders abandoning violent politics out of a genuine desire for peace and reconciliation. It could be claimed that, whilst conscious of the ideological contradictions between their leader's words and actions, the continued emotionally charged rhetoric of such leaders was a more attractive proposition than their mainstream counterparts, as each community was able to convince themselves that, through continued support for such parties, they had not abandoned or 'betrayed' the ideological principles they supported throughout 'The Troubles'. The continuation of the 'trappings' of inter-ethnic conflict – epitomised by the ethnic distrust within the inflammatory language that is prevalent in the speeches of Paisley and Adams – prevents the need for uncomfortable, introspective soul-searching and acknowledgement of past errors. The desire for peace and an end to conflict through a re-assertion of liberal-democratic principles of governance within both ethnic communities allowed for ideological compromise, albeit soaked in the rhetoric of the previous respective ideological positions, to emerge.

As previously discussed in this chapter, there is no room for 'soul-searching' and an acknowledgement of past mistakes in ethnic Russian culture either. Crucially, there is no desire for peace through compromise. The clarity of Russian Nationalist ideology and the absence of liberal-democratic values – with its abject dismissal of negotiated peace through an unwavering faith in the use of force to achieve objectives, a desire for its leaders to project positions of strength and decisiveness through military might, and the need for leaders to position themselves as uncompromising defenders of ethnic Russian interests – prevents any possible dilution of such ideology. Ethnic Russians, and the insurgents of various ethnicities that oppose them, possess a desire for victory through force, not for peaceful reconciliation. Hence, the techniques used to establish ultra-Nationalist ideology in Russia must remain consistent in regards to inter-ethnic conflict in the 'near abroad', if the Russian administration is to retain its popular appeal.

The imperative for leaders to retain popular support within an ethno-Nationalist political environment has severely curtailed opportunities to position political debate within a rational context within both conflict situations. Freedom to embark on policies that seek to dismantle the rigid, ethno-Nationalist decision-making framework remains limited; particularly when more

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<sup>378</sup> The rise of the far-right in Russia has been well documented in recent years. It can be seen as an inevitable by-product of a Nationalist administration.

## THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ETHNO-NATIONALIST MOVEMENTS

radical political opposition has exerted influence within the respective communities. The existence of more radicalised political opposition elements commanding significant popular support, as was the case in Northern Ireland throughout 'the troubles' and in Russia during the early 1990's following the fall of Sovietism, discourages ruling administrations from taking a conciliatory path that would deviate from Nationalist philosophy from fear of losing power. Yeltsin's belated embrace of 'Great Power rhetoric' in the face of radically Nationalist opposition, provides evidence of rational restrictions on policy decisions in such circumstances.

Having established a power base of popular support on principles of ethnic protection and advancement ('natio-racial' philosophy), an administration's continuation requires a firm commitment to such principles to avoid more radicalised political entities from eclipsing their popular support. In Northern Ireland, 'radical' ethno-Nationalist movements eclipsed mainstream party support despite abandoning some of its key principles, but they have not abandoned politics of division and ethnic distrust. The key players, DUP and Sinn Fein, still speak the language of conflict. This demonstrates the primacy of emotional affiliation within ethno-Nationalist political environments, encouraging an electorate to form political affiliations based on 'passion over logic'. Such an environment can lead to, as both conflict situations have demonstrated, the marginalisation of political entities who reject this dynamic<sup>379</sup>. Since lasting peace requires the rejection of political ideology that seeks to stratify society and initiate policies of socio-economic advancement according to ethnic or religious affiliation, inter-ethnic distrust and the possibility of future conflict will remain.

In Russia the use of Repressive Terrorism, as ultra-Nationalism demands, to quell what could be perceived as legitimate demands for self-determination and human rights in the Caucasus, ensures a situation of perpetual conflict. An escalation of region-wide conflict in the Caucasus in the near future seems a certainty. The size of the conflict will be dependant on the insurgent's military resources and its inclusiveness – the level of unity and collusion between moderate and fundamentalist Muslim separatists. The insurgency will continue to attract thousands of young recruits eager to avenge and alleviate the repression their communities have endured. Whilst the cult of personality is instrumental in the establishment of ethno-Nationalist movement, such leaders have a limited capacity to dismantle such movements, once they have achieved a dominant ideological position within their respective ethnic group. In Northern Ireland, Paisley and Adams have attempted to retract their ideological positions through the continuation of ethno-Nationalist rhetoric as a smokescreen for the abandonment of policy. Such attempts remain a fragile foundation for lasting conflict resolution. More radicalised political movements

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<sup>379</sup> Parties for whom logic dictates a path of reconciliation and compromise to achieve conflict resolution.

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could re-emerge that could leave the increasingly 'mainstream' DUP and Sinn Fein beaten by their own game. Another rise in radicalised ethno-Nationalism within either community, easily triggered by an event or an individuals' actions given the levels of ethnic distrust that remain by both sides maintaining ethno-Nationalist rhetoric within the political framework, could alternatively push the existing dominant political parties to reclaim much of the ideology they recently discarded to maintain popular support.

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **FUTURE IMPLICATIONS FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

This analysis has attempted to demonstrate how the justification of state repression is achieved within dominant ethnic groups who seek political and economic advantages through the formation of an 'ethnocratic' state. Evidence has highlighted the manner by which existing ethnic and religious distrust had been channelled into institutionalised ethnic discrimination and disenfranchisement, resulting in popular support and endorsement within the respective dominant ethnic groups for repressive state action to maintain an 'ethnocratic' state. The ideology used to express ethnic hatred, distrust and division as a politically defined entity, within the two conflicts discussed, takes the form of autocratic, ethnicity-orientated Nationalism – or 'natio-race' theory. By defining a nation or state as being solely representative of one ethnic group, and positioning other ethnic groups within the jurisdiction of the state as permanent adversaries of the 'natio-race' in question, state repression can be repackaged as necessary for 'defence' and 'protection' from ethnic groups perceived to be the 'enemy within'.

Within the introduction of this analysis, it was suggested that the development of each respective conflict can be assessed according to key, shared conflict contributors – similar cycles of violence, or patterns of political behaviour - that have prevented any meaningful reconciliation between the ethnic groups in question and assured protracted conflict remains embedded within the regions. Evidence throughout this analysis has confirmed the existence of numerous observable parallels between each conflict, but has also revealed the extent to which the two respective conflicts differ. A key variable between these two conflicts is the divergent level of political violence witnessed; much higher levels of political violence, repeatedly escalating to total war, have been observable in Chechnya's history. As evidence in this analysis has confirmed, the factors, such as religious and nationalist adherence, that instil justification for political violence amongst the protagonists have consistently incorporated more extremist ideological positions and greater levels of ethnic stratification within Chechnya than Northern Ireland. This provides an insight into why such high levels of political violence persist within Chechnya, and why political violence in Northern Ireland remained at a lower destructive level.

To take the influence of religion as an example, the militant brand of Islam championed by many Chechens reinforces a determined, fervent and uncompromising separatism that ensures continued violent opposition to Russia's presence in Chechnya – its political extremism ensures extreme acts of violence in its name. The levels of repression and violence endured by Chechens at the hands of ethnic Russians also far exceeds the levels of repression and violence endured by Irish Catholics. Levels of political disenfranchisement within each region amongst repressed



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ethnicities also differ considerably, as does the possibilities for political compromise and reform within the two regions. All such factors affect the levels of political violence witnessed in each respective conflict – the extremities of violent action each side is willing to deploy. Political violence undertaken by Irish Republicanism has never been associated with religious adherence. Irish Republicans have not historically suffered the same levels of repression and violence that Chechens have endured. Consequently the types, and levels, of violence deployed in defense of their political cause differ accordingly.

The ability for politically repressive states to undertake 'natio-race' agendas is aided by contemporary attitudes to international relations relating to the primacy of state sovereignty and a determination to act in the 'national interest'. Within contemporary politics, humanitarian issues are peripheral to decision-making. Human rights abuses, resulting from 'ethnocratic' state structures, are frequently ignored by the international community. A state's ability to enforce an 'ethnocracy' and instigate politically repressive measures against excluded ethnicities, is assisted by the international community's reluctance to interfere in the internal affairs of another state. Principles of state sovereignty, as evidence in chapter five of this analysis confirmed, grants a state virtual impunity to take repressive, often violent, action against the ethnic groups it excludes within its own borders. The international community's determination to act according to 'the national interest' can be seen as the primary factor that influences why such a principle is upheld, regardless of circumstance.

The term 'national interest' is not easy to define. The terms' ambiguity is one reason it is so often deployed by politicians who seek to initiate foreign policy that may be subject to popular condemnation, should that foreign policy decision be subject to closer scrutiny. The defence of 'national interests' justifies inaction by a state unwilling to embroil itself in the affairs of another nation where little or no financial incentive exists. Whilst 'interest' could be defined as any individual or group with a specific objective, the term 'national interest' specifically implies that the individual or group belonging to a particular nation-state have collective interests that are all best served through a particular course of action – through the collective objective of advancing the interests of a nation-state's members. For such a notion to have any validity, a uniformity of political opinion amongst the public must exist in regard to the policy decisions taken in the name of 'national interest'. Alternatively, if public dissent towards decisions taken in the 'national interest' exists, the state would declare that dissenters have failed to understand why a particular policy decision is in their interests and, subject to the level of dissent the state receives, most likely pursue the policy despite objections. The state and its economic 'interests' define what our 'national interests' consist of. In most western liberal-democracies, the uniformity of political opinion that could validate the term 'national interest' doesn't exist in reality. The public

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encompasses a range of divergent group, or individual, 'interests' that cannot all be accommodated within a singular policy direction. 'National interest' within such an environment merely expresses the will of the state, as opposed to its people as a whole. The emotional attachment of the public to the concept of the nation is used to deflect criticism from sections of the public whose values do not conform to the ideological direction the state has positioned as reflective of everyone, but merely reflect the interests and ambitions of the powerful. As E D Weinstein has commented, 'slogans like the 'national interest' mask the inner agitations of the body politic by obscuring and concealing the ideas, motives and interests of those who occupy the seats of power'<sup>360</sup>. In other words, in the absence of a uniformity of 'interests' amongst the ideologically diverse individuals who make up society, the concept of a 'national interest' is a form of deception. Whilst appearing to be representative of the peoples' (national) interests, it is a form of political disenfranchisement.

The considerable number of individuals who would invariably be opposed to contemporary policy decisions taken in the 'national interest', include citizens who retain an understanding of ethical foreign policy and identify with the concept of acting for 'the common good'. The concept of 'national interest' and ethical, enlightened international decision-making are conflicting value systems. By positioning the interests of a single nation above all other nations, the moral imperative to make policy decisions that are in the 'global interest' is lost. In this sense, the principles of ethnocentric governance that seek advantage for a particular ethnicity within a multi-ethnic state are replicated and applied within international relations and foreign policy.

Furthermore, the concept of the 'national interest' ignores the levels of interdependency and mutual interests that the process of globalisation has created. The 'national interest' philosophy, it could be said, is reflective of an age where business interests could be categorised as belonging to a specific country – where supporting business interests ensured jobs and prosperity for society as a whole. In the contemporary world, the design of a product could be in one country, its marketing in another, whilst the product would be manufactured elsewhere. As labour is increasingly outsourced to developing countries, the employment benefits that large corporations previously bestowed on their countries of origin is rarely applicable. This trend makes private business interests less and less reflective of a 'national interest' and more reflective of elite business interests. It is the process of globalisation that makes the deception in regards to what 'the national interest' genuinely entails more visible. National governments serve the interests of multi-national corporations. It is these multi-national corporations' interests that a

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<sup>360</sup> Weinstein, E D: *The Ignoble Lie – National Interest Ideology in American Civilisation* (1967), quoted in Clinton: *The Two Faces of National Interest* (Louisiana State University, 1994).

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government seeks to advance through an aggressive foreign policy, not the interests of the public as a whole. The primacy of business interests in international decision-making ensures the marginalisation of humanitarian concerns. As David Clinton has commented, the 'national interest' is 'an undesirable and even dangerous guide to thought and action, because it fails to reflect accurately the contending voices of a pluralistic society, and because it encourages an attitude of narrow Nationalism that is unsuited to an interdependent world and is morally unsupportable when judged by a broader standard of ethics'.

In a similar manner by which a nationalist ideology in the domestic political arena disenfranchises the public from active participation in policy decisions – nationalism being representative, for the reasons suggested in earlier chapters, of autocratic decision-making – by applying nationalist philosophy to foreign policy, a state extends an undemocratic form of decision-making to global issues. An Ethno-Nationalist political system suppresses the political and economic interests of ethnic groups who are excluded from a meaningful role in government as a consequence of their lower ethnic status. Applying the notion of 'national interest' to foreign policy decisions, not only introduces a wider scope for discriminatory practices through unethical, aggressive expansion of specific business interests, but also serves to reinforce an 'ethnocratic' states' abilities to pursue policies of discrimination and repression domestically. It is rarely in any states' 'national interest' to intervene in the internal affairs of another powerful state for humanitarian reasons. The principle of state sovereignty ensures 'only violent territorial change is outlawed, not the violent preservation of borders'<sup>381</sup>. The concept of 'national interest' ensures this principle is adhered to, as economic 'interests' have usurped former international moral obligations to respond to humanitarian crisis. It may be claimed that economic 'interests' (the 'national interest') have always held a position of primacy in global affairs. It seems logical to suggest that as ever more powerful corporations exert a greater influence on governance, the international moral obligation to act against a repressive state and respond to humanitarian crisis diminishes accordingly. Perhaps in a consumer society driven by 'self interest', the contradiction between pursuing policies in the 'national interest' and the liberal-democratic values that Western societies believe they encompass (full democratic rights and range of liberties etc...) is barely acknowledged. Certainly, the realisation of 'national interest' leading to the neglect of the 'broader good' seems more prominent in the words of past politicians than within our contemporary breed. As Woodrow Wilson once said, 'it is a perilous thing to determine the foreign policy of a nation in the terms of material interest. It not only is unfair to those with whom you are dealing, but it is degrading as regards your own actions'<sup>382</sup>. It is impossible to imagine such a statement being uttered by the current President of the United States, or any other leader

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<sup>381</sup> Braumüller: *Borders, Ethnicity and National Self-Determination*, (ECOR, 1999), p2.

<sup>382</sup> Clinton, David: *The Two Faces of National Interest* (Louisiana State University, 1994), p18.

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of a nation that claims to be a liberal democracy in the world today. Such a comparison suggests that 'determining the foreign policy of a nation in terms of material interest' is not as degrading as it once was considered.

In determining how this ideological shift occurred – how humanitarian concerns and the concept of the 'broader good' have been sidelined through the primacy of 'material interest' in decision-making – the influence of the United States and the historical factors affecting its political development must be considered. The Cold War ushered in a virulent form of anti-Communist sentiment in the United States, epitomised by the McCarthy 'witch-hunts' of the 1950's, targeting anyone with leftist sympathies. The left of the political spectrum, including the Trade Union movement and intellectuals, were considered unpatriotic and a danger to America, were hounded out of their jobs and frequently imprisoned. McCarthyism ensured that the politics of the left became synonymous with anti-Americanism, in the same way faculty members of American universities today are monitored by conservative groups and the religious right for 'anti-American' remarks whilst teaching. An example would be The American Council of Trustees and Alumni, a 'conservative non-profit group devoted to curing liberal tendencies in academia'.<sup>383</sup> This process has assisted in producing the 'narrow Nationalism' that David Clinton described in his description of what 'national interest' means in the contemporary world. A form of Nationalism has developed in the United States that is inextricably linked to the protection and advancement of material 'interests'. Any criticism of this doctrine is considered unpatriotic, anti-American and, through the strange alliance<sup>384</sup> of religion and consumerism in the U.S., unchristian. It is an ideology that stresses the importance of charity, but not state intervention on humanitarian grounds – reflective of a non-obligation to act on humanitarian criteria. The impact of this ideology on the rest of the world in recent years has been considerable. The gradual erosion of 'welfare state' principles in Europe as it continues to embrace unfettered Capitalist principles serves as an example of American influence. The impact of such ideology in regards to how nations respond to humanitarian crisis and issues of national self-determination is also significant, as it discourages positive international intervention and mediation. The primacy of material, or national, 'interests' (as defined within their current ideological context) also limits understanding and respect for those with divergent interests (such as other states or internal opposition to policy decisions taken in the 'national interest'). Through silencing internal criticism of the 'national interest' by labelling it as unpatriotic, the free expression of divergent political opinions – and opposing national 'interests' – become increasingly elevated to 'enemy status'. Political dissent can be bracketed as a form of 'enemy within' – the label attributed to non-dominant ethnicities discussed in the previous chapter. If limited criticism or debate as to what

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<sup>383</sup> Bufano, Alexandra: No Place For Radical Politics: Universities, The Globalisation Movement and a Return to Praxis, a paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, 2006.

<sup>384</sup> It is a strange alliance because it is a reversal of original Christian doctrine.

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constitutes the 'national interest' is permitted, the public's interest being predetermined by the state within the 'material interest', the state in question may pursue any policy under the banner of patriotism. The limited foundation for debate and criticism encourages a greater level of acceptance amongst the public for right-wing 'material interest' orientated, ideological direction. As Robert Tucker commented:

'It must be understood, that once we deny the binding character of international moral obligations and assert the moral supremacy of the national interest, no action on the part of the state can be considered – from the viewpoint, of course, of that particular states' national interest – to be immoral. Thus the logical consequence of asserting the moral supremacy of the national interest is to assert the moral inferiority of all other national interests'.<sup>385</sup>

In an interdependent world, where business interests transcend multiple states, political dissent against a particular ruling elite can have direct financial implications for a business elite based in another country. Unrest in Saudi Arabia, for instance, will have financial implications for powerful financial or energy firms within the western world. It is in the interests of all such business elites to quell political dissent from agents who are not aligned to such 'material interests', regardless of the validity of the agents' demands or the political environment that triggered political dissent. The repression of political dissent in one state is often in the 'material interests' of multiple states. States that represent the interests of business elites whose material interests converge will provide support – in the form of financial/military assistance or public condemnation of political dissenters – should such interests be threatened. In this manner, the silencing of political dissent through repressive means is actively encouraged within international politics.

The false ideological constructs that ratify the stratification of human worth within inter-ethnic conflicts are replicated within international affairs. As ethnicity and religion define which individuals may be deemed 'loyal' to a state internally, both ethnicity and religion assist in defining who may be considered allies within the international system, and whom should be bracketed as 'morally inferior' by virtue of divergent 'national interests' – divergent 'national interests' are expressed as divergent 'values'. In accordance with a blurring of distinction between 'material' and 'national' interests, by expressing material interests within 'national' ideological parameters, only states that express an ideology that encompasses shared components that define 'national values' can hope to be treated as equals, not adversaries, unless 'material interests' and the strength of a particular national power with divergent doctrine

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<sup>385</sup> Tucker, Robert W.: *Political Science Review*, (1952), quoted on Clinton, p46.

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necessitates partnership without control<sup>366</sup>. The national 'character' of states – its ethnic and religious structure – will influence who can be deemed partners in the advancement of 'material interests' and help define which states are deemed detrimental to the advancement of 'material interests' – whose power must be curtailed through aggressive means. If divergent 'material interests' exist between two states, they are likely to call into question each others 'national values'. If shared 'material interests' exist, the states in question will stress their 'shared values'. Again, the true meaning of 'values' has been discarded. The use of the term 'shared values' becomes, not unlike the concept of 'national interest', a form of discourse that 'obscures and conceals' a state's material 'motives and interest'.

When National Security Advisor, Stephen Hadley, talked in a briefing following the Bush-Putin meeting of May 9, 2005, of the 'common interests and common values' between the U.S. and Russia, which 'values' was he referring to? The U.S. repeatedly stresses its core values are 'freedom and democracy'. The Russian Administration, as every Russian government has done before it, overtly rejects such doctrine in favour of an autocracy. As discussed in chapter five, the enthusiasm and financial assistance with which the United States approached the liberalisation of the Russian economy following the collapse of communism was not matched by encouragement to develop its democratic and independent, judicial foundations. This gives an indication of the centrality of 'material interests' within the bi-lateral relationship, the manner in which all other political considerations are of peripheral concern when 'material interests' are at stake, but also the extent to which the terms 'values' and 'interests' are inter-changeable in contemporary politics.

Whilst it can be expected that politicians within liberal democracies seek to conceal the true nature of international relations and attempt to use terminology that is capable of re-positioning policy taken in support of 'material interest' in a more favourable light, it is surely the responsibility of academics or journalists to decode such techniques of deception for the public to retain a realistic appraisal of the nature of foreign policy. Perhaps the primacy of 'material interest' within these important fields affecting government accountability, frequently prevents a more honest depiction of a particular states' actions from emerging. The role of Putin in Russia was discussed in 2007 at a conference of senior academics in the United States entitled, *The Putin Era in Historical Perspective*<sup>367</sup>. It was attended by senior academics, amongst others, from Harvard, Princeton and the London School of Economics. The academics present were in 'broad agreement' that Putin was 'a state-builder, not a nation-builder' who 'aspired to regain great

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<sup>366</sup> The relationship between Saudi Arabia and the United States could be seen as an example of two states with divergent national 'values' that must be tolerated for shared 'material interests'.

<sup>367</sup> National Intelligence Council, February, 2007.

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power status, but has decided to work within the existing international system'. All those present were in agreement that Putin 'is a patriot, not a Nationalist'. The conference's only reference to his policies in the 'near abroad' was that 'Russia retains imperial pretensions in some areas, but its 'near abroad' policy mostly reflects a desire to remain the dominant power in the region'. There is no reference to human rights abuses committed by the Putin Administration and no mention of the violent repression of ethnic groups.

The genuine distinction between 'patriot' and 'nationalist' is extremely limited. Patriotism is a love of one's country, as is Nationalism. Its usage, in this regard, is to distinguish between positive nationalism and negative nationalism – to provide a positive spin on Putin. The term 'patriotism' implies a more enlightened variant of Nationalist thinking – a less destructive version. Given the level of atrocities and brutality against ethnic groups in the 'near abroad' under Putin's administration, it is hard to surmise the intentions behind this positive 'spin' on the death of over 100,000 civilians<sup>388</sup> – actions that apparently conform to 'working within the existing international system'. It is disappointing when academic and media sources fail to speak out against political injustice, but it is tragic that such sources frequently abuse their positions to become tools of injustice and misinformation. The vague reference to 'imperial pretensions' is quickly dampened by an insistence that its policy in the 'near abroad' is an acceptable continuation of their control of the region – a legitimate 'desire to remain the dominant power'. Repressive and violent forms of control are not legitimised by their longevity. An acceptance of legitimacy in regards to the 'violent preservation of borders' instigated by powerful states to retain their dominance, disregards the central question of whether legitimacy can be bestowed on Russia's control of these extended borders without the popular support of indigenous ethnic groups who seek national self-determination or an end to political disenfranchisement. As Margaret Moore<sup>389</sup> once commented:

'In many cases, national minorities are correct to point out that administrative boundaries have no moral basis themselves, or that they were often drawn in accordance with a moral or political conception that is irrelevant in the current political situation, or drawn by the central state in order to facilitate assimilation of the minority or its control by the dominant group. It is therefore hard to see why these boundaries should be cast in stone, as the only unit in which self-determination can take place.'

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<sup>388</sup> Estimation based on Chechen civilians alone since the early 1990's. More detailed figures in this regard can be found in chapter five.

<sup>389</sup> Margeret Moore, quoted in Wellman, Christopher: *A Theory of Secession* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), p54.

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In this context, issues of 'national interest' and the primacy of 'material interest' become of central importance to conflict resolution, through its impact on third-party mediation and international involvement in inter-ethnic conflict. The tendency for powerful states to seek to maintain the status quo in terms of territorial disputes, and to lend support to other powerful nations should issues of national self-determination arise on their extended borders, results from a determination to protect existing 'material interests' at the expense of humanitarian and moral concerns. The critical influence of third-party mediation and international involvement in resolving protracted conflict situations, as discussed in chapter five of this study, remains severely restricted. Furthermore, within contemporary international relations, powerful states affect policy that not only sidelines humanitarian and ethical concerns through a non-interventionist position but actively endorse another states' right to 'violently preserve their borders'. State repression and violence towards weaker, disenfranchised ethnic groups is facilitated by international condemnation of separatist political activity – condemnation that disregards the validity of their respective cases for national self-determination, regardless of circumstance. Condemnation often involves the use of false propaganda by powerful states to discredit the validity of movements seeking national self-determination. The United States and British Governments both supported Russia in claiming that 'fanatical Chechen Jihadists' were fighting at the front line in Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan<sup>390</sup> – a preposterous notion, given the size and funding of the Chechen guerrilla army. No Chechen has ever been discovered fighting in any of the countries listed.<sup>391</sup>

It is tempting to suggest, as many academics have, that the confusion and uncertainty that surrounds issues of national self-determination and rights for non-dominant ethnic groups in conflict situations, such as the two that form the basis of this analysis, could be alleviated by international clarification of the right to self-determination and the legality of intervention should the rights of non-dominant ethnic groups be violently suppressed. Ropers and Schlotter<sup>392</sup> provide a sound argument for the circumstances that international intervention to assist legitimate calls for secession should be considered. There is, as chapter five of this analysis discussed, no clear legal framework for international intervention in such circumstances – conflict resolution is undoubtedly hindered by the legal ambiguity surrounding such issues. There are, however, other deficiencies within contemporary politics that must first be addressed before any such criteria for intervention, however logical the reasoning, could be effective and adhered to.

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<sup>390</sup> Macgregor, Dr. Andrew: *Khan of the Kremlin – Charm and Murder in the Middle East* (The Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 2004) p3.

<sup>391</sup> As reported in *Terrorist Monitor*, Vol 2, Global Terrorism Analysis, University of Massachusetts, 2007.

<sup>392</sup> Ropers and Schlotter's criteria for legitimate secession was discussed in chapter five.



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Whilst international legal criteria for legitimate secession may be applicable in a world that accepts 'the binding character of international moral obligations', it could be argued that its relevance in contemporary politics is limited. This is not simply because of the limitations of international political entities in controlling and influencing the actions of powerful states, or a consequence of international acceptance of principles of state sovereignty and a desire to act in the 'national interest'. All factors discussed throughout the course of this analysis that adversely affect conflict resolution – including public acceptance of repressive state policies amongst dominant ethnic groups, the primacy of political violence and the use of force to achieve political objectives, the use of ethno-supremacist and religious doctrine to justify violence against other ethnic groups, political opportunism, propaganda and the use of linguistic/ideological misinterpretations to achieve public support – can be construed as deceptive forms of public manipulation that contribute to a situation of perpetual conflict. All such factors serve to limit rational, reasoned discussion and negotiation – the only course of action within Ethno-Nationalist conflicts, as Scherrer<sup>393</sup> contends, that can lead to a permanent end to hostilities. It is, primarily, the rejection within the political sphere of false ideological constructs and irrational beliefs prevalent in ethno-supremacist and theocratic doctrine that would facilitate the de-stratification of human worth – the central pre-requisite for peaceful co-existence of ethnic groups. It is through such ideology that the justification for violence and repression is achieved. It is through the suffocation of rational debate, aided by such ideology, that propaganda and accompanying linguistic/ideological misinterpretations are accepted in the public sphere.

Thus far, this chapter has focussed primarily on external factors – ideological beliefs and resulting policy decisions prevalent within the international community – affecting conflict resolution. It has been suggested that the public, through deceptive notions tied in to the concept of 'the national interest', are predisposed to accept irrational policy directions that legitimise political violence and dismiss the moral criteria for humanitarian intervention. Whether discussing an external power seeking non-involvement within a conflict despite a humanitarian duty to intervene, or a dominant ethnic group utilising repression and violence to maintain socio-economic advantages and autocratic power within a state, politics of deception feature prominently – public acceptance of rationally unjustifiable policies achieved through deliberate attempts to mislead and misinform, constitute a major feature of both Northern Ireland and Chechen Conflicts. A state's ability to mislead is enhanced by skilful manipulation of emotional and largely irrational popular sentiment that often overrides an individuals' rational judgement.

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<sup>393</sup> Scherrer, as quoted in Chapter Five: 'Ethno-nationalist conflict can only be solved politically, not militarily'. Scherrer also highlights 'deliberate, directed attempts to mislead' by states as relevant in the continuation of Ethno-Nationalist conflict.

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The presence of irrational ideological beliefs and their effects on negotiation and governance are easily observable. Chapter six highlighted the fragility that accompanies peace negotiation within a political environment dominated by political forces intent on retaining the ideological and linguistic rhetoric of conflict. It was suggested that a lasting peace settlement could only be found by a rejection of political parties that seek to emphasise the lines of division that led to inter-ethnic hostility and conflict. Evidence supported the theory that if the parties who traditionally embody radical agendas attempted to reform themselves – straying too far politically from the ‘extreme’ ideology that their core support derives from – newly established, more radical political variants are likely to fill the ideological void. For this reason, meaningful political change undertaken by the same political actors who initiated conflict is problematic. The situation is further exasperated by a reluctance to fundamentally challenge the ideological errors of the past by such political parties and their followers. In Northern Ireland, this expresses itself as a negotiation process and a form of governance that retains its ethnic/religious distrust and lines of division. In Russia, negotiation is rejected and governance involves an unfaltering belief in the use of force to achieve national objectives.

Negotiation and governance within both circumstances becomes a continuation of conflict by other means. In Northern Ireland, the primacy of ethnocratic or theocratic validations for political direction and decision-making prevents agreement based on the validity of factual reasoning. In Russia, Nationalist ideology and a rejection of the principle of equality ensures that rational communication is compromised in a similar way. Hiroshi Kimura<sup>394</sup> analysed the main historical problems faced by western negotiators when attempting to find agreement with their Russian counterparts. Consistent with Alexei Arbatov’s<sup>395</sup> claim that from a Russian perspective ‘negotiations are of dubious value’ and are ‘to be used as a cover for military action’, Kimura suggests that Russia rejects the concept of equality, hence ‘debate amongst equals’ was ‘entirely alien to Tsarist and Soviet negotiators’. Furthermore, Kimura states that ‘Russian negotiators regularly exasperated their western counterparts by remaining ‘virtually immune to reasoned argument’ and rejected ‘all attempts at persuasion’. Similar obstacles to constructive negotiations imposed by negotiations that reject rational forms of communication have been cited by other sources. Nadir Bekir<sup>396</sup> was a representative of the Crimean Tatar Mejlis at the United Nations Human Rights Commission (Geneva, 1996). Whilst stressing that the Crimean Tatars only sought equality with other ethnicities (such as ethnic Russians) and were committed to peaceful negotiation, Bekir stated that ‘our political opponents think that only force and only majority is

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<sup>394</sup> Hiroshi Kimura, quoted in Steffek, Jens: *The Power of Rational Discourse and the Legitimacy of International Governance*, (EUI Working Paper, 2000), p16.

<sup>395</sup> Alexei Arbatov was Deputy Chair of the Defence Committee, Russian State Duma, 1999. His comments on negotiation are discussed in Chapter Two of this analysis.

<sup>396</sup> Nadir Bekir, quoted in Scherrer, Christian P.: *Struggle for Survival in the Decade for the World’s Indigenous Peoples – Analysis and Reports from the Frontiers* (IRECOR, 1998), p74.

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decisive'. Bekir also acknowledges that Russia's vision of negotiation as a form of conflict is embedded within a 'very old Imperialist tradition moved from the Tsarist structure, through the Soviet Empire, and this is their way of thought'.

Chapter two provided evidence of 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century examples of Russia's approach to negotiations towards Chechens<sup>397</sup> – all such examples display a consistency of belief in negotiation as a form of conflict and a dismissal of 'debate amongst equals'. By demonstrating the existence and consistency within Russia of similar negotiation tactics with other ethnic groups and nations – regardless of the power such groups possess – it becomes clear that the ideology that governs such actions is not purely reflective of the Chechen peoples' traditional role as Russia's treacherous and bloodthirsty Muslim enemy. Their consistent approach to all international negotiation, regardless of ethnicity or levels of power that their 'adversary' possesses, reveals the primacy of 'nation-race' theory within Russian political thought. Their self-proclaimed status as a 'chosen people' restricts all other ethnicities to an inferior status. Whilst ethnic minorities within Russia and the 'near abroad' have, as has been previously mentioned in this analysis, differing levels of status dictated by their religion and their 'loyalty' to Russia, no ethnic group or nation will be awarded a level of parity in negotiation. Even 'negotiations' with the world's most powerful nations are reduced to vehicles to achieve specific, predetermined objectives that cannot be revised by factual reasoning and discussion. The outcome of Russia conducting negotiations and international relations in such a manner can only be an eventual deterioration of relations with other nations, as without rational dialogue there can be no trust.

A clear example of Russia's flawed approach to negotiations would be its attempts to improve its relations with Saudi Arabia and the Muslim world. Having previously insisted that Russia was 'on the verge of being engulfed by a new Islamic Caliphate', Putin took Ahmad Kadyrov<sup>398</sup> to the OIC<sup>399</sup> (Organisation of the Islamic Conference) in Kuala Lumpur (2003). Putin stressed at the conference that 'Russian Muslims are an integral part of a multi-ethnic Russia' living in 'inter-religious harmony', that 'terrorism has nothing to do with religions and nationality' and that 'anyone who equates Muslims with terrorism is an instigator'<sup>400</sup>. Putin followed this conference speech with an interview on Al-Jazeera to 'remind the Muslim world that Russia was still capable of striking its enemies well beyond its borders'. Russia further enhanced their reputation in Saudi Arabia with a statement from Russia's deputy prosecutor general, describing Wahhabism as a 'cannibal ideology'<sup>401</sup> whose adherents deserve 'prison terms'. It is unsurprising

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<sup>397</sup> Evidence can be found on pages 31-33, Chapter Two.

<sup>398</sup> The assassinated president of Chechnya and father of the current president (as of 2008).

<sup>399</sup> The Islamic world's premier assembly.

<sup>400</sup> Putin, OIC Summit, 2003 (quoted from Macgregor, p1).

<sup>401</sup> Macgregor, p5.

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that hostility in the Muslim world towards Russia continues to grow. If the Russian Administration uses the distrust and hatred of other nations and religions – be it the United States, Britain or the Muslim world – to strengthen its Nationalist-Orthodox credentials internally and to pursue violent politics within its extended borders, international distrust and hostility towards Russia will increase.

Russia's 'reminder' to the Muslim world that it retains the capacity and the will to launch pre-emptive strikes on countries that financially support Islamic separatist movements within its extended borders, can be seen as an attempt to encourage countries to comply with Russian demands by the threat or use of force. An agreement solely attributable to the threat or use of force that would result from non-agreement – the weaker party, seeking a temporary reprieve from military or economic pressure to conform – is never a lasting or binding agreement. Only negotiations that have been settled by all parties on the basis of consensus of opinion and factual validity will deliver long-term solutions. As the weaker party becomes more powerful, or the more powerful becomes weaker, the aggrieved party will seek to 'right' any injustices that resulted from coercive negotiations. Coercive negotiations lay the foundations for future conflict.

It could be claimed that legitimate governance demands a concerted attempt to seek political solutions that involve a rational consensus of opinion based on factual validity, as such decisions are most favourable for both long-term peace and productive partnerships with other nations. Legitimate governance, therefore, requires rational communication. Alan Hamlin<sup>402</sup> has analysed the relationship between virtue and rationality within his discussions of the rational foundations of democratic politics. Hamlin supports the 'standard Humean notion of rationality' seen as a 'relationship among desires, beliefs and actions'. Hamlin described a rational action as 'that action of those actions available that best satisfies the agents desires, given the agents beliefs'. Within such a definition of rational decision-making, a suicide bombing on a crowded bus could be construed as a rational action, provided it conforms to the bombers' theocratic interpretation of what his God demands of him. For this reason, it could be argued that rationality cannot be judged according to the consistency of an agents' actions and beliefs, but must be assessed on the basis of whether rationality is expressed within the agents' beliefs, prior to action. The relevance of this to the two inter-ethnic conflicts discussed in this analysis, is the fact that any political input that seeks to end political violence between two ethnic groups through both internal and external channels of intervention, must attempt to expose exponents of fraudulent, violent ideology that attempts to stratify human worth according to an individuals' religion or ethnicity, not

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<sup>402</sup> Hamlin, Alan: *Democratic Resilience and Virtue – Rational Foundations of Democratic Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), p108.

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seek solutions that accommodate them. For Northern Ireland, for instance, steps to encourage the desegregation of schools and communities, extra funding for cross-community initiatives and the encouragement of non-sectarian media through financial 'start-up' incentives, would all constitute positive steps towards more rational channels of communication that could reduce the damaging influence of sectarianism.

Earlier in this chapter, it was suggested that the core principle of both Sinn Fein and DUP was not currently negotiable due to the entrenched principles surrounding the 'national question'—whether Northern Ireland will remain part of the UK, or become part of a United Ireland. It seems an unavoidable source of future conflict unless popular opinion, currently polarised, is moderated. It could be claimed that a permanent cessation of hostilities requires a form of joint-sovereignty, rather than the permanent suspension of the central 'national' question that the current power-sharing agreement seems to rely on. In the current political environment, any referendum regarding joint sovereignty would be rejected. In what could be seen as a protracted lull in violent conflict, every effort must be made to attempt to marginalise political extremism within the region through opening rational channels of communication and greater levels of integration – such as the initiatives suggested – in order to make the province, as a whole, more accepting of the greater, future levels of compromise needed for lasting peace.

There are a number of issues that are negotiated within Northern Ireland's current political climate that demonstrate a consistency between 'beliefs' and 'actions', but to which consensus on resolution is prevented by the influence of what could be deemed 'irrational' ideology on decision-making. The province suffered an outbreak of serious violence in 2005 from a Unionist insistence on retaining their 'right to march' through Republican areas of Northern Ireland. The timing of this violent outbreak, coinciding with the London Tube Bombings, ensured that the issue received barely a mention in the news outside of Northern Ireland. The 'right to march' remains a central issue affecting peaceful cross-community relations, demonstrating in 2005 its capacity to provide the spark that can propel Northern Ireland back to a situation of violent conflict. The establishment of the Parades Commission in 1997<sup>403</sup> was designed to create an independent body capable of preventing the most contentious of Orange Order marches, such as Drumcree, that were likely to result in violence. The Parades Commission, consisting of a chairman and six members from both communities, had two main aims:

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<sup>403</sup> The Parades Commission took on full powers in 1998 through the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) 1988 Act. (information provided from the Northern Ireland Office).

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- 1) To facilitate mediation between the parties to particular disputes concerning proposed public processions and to take other steps as appear appropriate to the commission for resolving such disputes.
- 2) To issue determinations in respect of particular proposed public processions.

Given the violent history of Orange Order marches in Republican areas, the prevention of such marches was undoubtedly a significant step towards repairing community relations that have suffered as a result of what could be seen as senseless acts of provocation. The Parades Commission's decision not to let the Portadown District LOL no.1 from marching down the Republican Gavarghy Road has been in effect for ten years. Ten years of non-confrontational, peaceful marches down a redirected route has resulted in 'a new mood of optimism'<sup>404</sup> in the area, with Nationalist Resident Groups and the Orange Lodge involved in peaceful dialogue and open discussion. Such policy can be seen as encouraging rational communication through a factual evaluation of the relevant issues. It was a policy that was fiercely resisted within both major Unionist parties. Unionist 'beliefs' involved a very different interpretation of what such restrictions on the 'right to march' mean. Any restrictions on marching were viewed by many Unionists, as tantamount to surrendering their civil and religious liberties. The 'capitulation' of the Parades Commission in preventing the 1998 Drumcree March after years of serious rioting was seen by Paisley and his followers as an effort to 'completely destroy the Union and the British identity in Northern Ireland'<sup>405</sup>. Paisley describes the Parades Commission, Dublin, the IRA and the British Government as a 'Pan-Nationalist Front to finally brow-beat the Unionist majority into submission'. Such a statement is consistent with 'the agents desires, given the agents beliefs' but can it be considered a rational response in the circumstances? Does the prevention of a provocative march through Nationalist neighbourhoods that can only end in violence really equate to 'the British and Unionist identity being sold on the altar of political expediency'? The language used by Paisley to express the Unionist position, with references to 'capitulation', 'submission' and 'destruction of the Union', is firmly embedded within conflict. It is impossible to consistently express the ideological 'beliefs' Paisley holds without emphasis on the 'threat' from Unionisms' 'enemies'. The central ideological justification for Unionism is the defence of the Protestant religion and cultural identity within Northern Ireland – without an enemy, there is no imminent requirement for a defence and Unionism would fail to have any contemporary relevance. The language of conflict can be seen as essential to the survival of radical Unionism and of pivotal importance in achieving a consistency between 'beliefs' and 'actions' within Unionism, whilst simultaneously providing a barrier to rational communication and peaceful co-existence.

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<sup>404</sup> As described by the Belfast Telegraph, 2007.

<sup>405</sup> Statement by Ian Paisley concerning the Parades Commissions' decision on Drumcree, 1998.

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Rational communication continues to be hindered by the 'conflict politics' practiced on both sides of the political spectrum. Sinn Fein's determination to continue 'the struggle' within Stormont can be seen as equally detrimental to cross-community relations and long-term peace. The Irish Language Bill debates in the Northern Ireland Assembly provide a good example of how negotiation is often conducted since the latest settlement was initiated<sup>406</sup>. It is clear how the necessity of maintaining the consistency between a party's actions and beliefs becomes a barrier to rational debate and constructive cross-community relations.

The political process and cross-party negotiations regarding funding for indigenous languages is not conducted in a manner that benefits the promotion of language and culture, but is dominated by what Dr Farry<sup>407</sup> has termed a 'rights-based approach'. In 2007, Sinn Fein pushed hard for more extensive financial provision to cover the 'right' to have court proceedings, official documentation and public service information in Irish Gaelic. Sinn Fein is also campaigning hard for the 'right' to speak Irish in the Northern Ireland Assembly, Committee meetings and to conduct written consultation between ministers in Irish Gaelic. At a time when many in Northern Ireland are attempting to improve cross-community relations and create a stable, constructive political environment, such behaviour has been viewed by some as an 'uncompromising and adversarial way to conduct government business'<sup>408</sup>. Unionist, as well as many Nationalist, MLA's are not able to understand Irish Gaelic. Whenever Sinn Fein or SDLP MLA's choose to speak in Irish Gaelic, they must follow the speech with a full translation in English. Given the limited understanding of Irish Gaelic on both sides of the house, this would seem a pointless exercise, serving only to appease Sinn Fein supporters who worry that their party may have abandoned its 'revolutionary' ideology. As well as angering the Unionist community and Unionist MLA's – many of whom have received written replies and requests relating to government business in Irish Gaelic<sup>409</sup> – it also serves to limit the time issues can be debated in the chamber, as members of the Assembly must wait for translations. The majority of Sinn Fein delegates and Sinn Fein voters have little or no knowledge of Irish Gaelic. Only 4.7%<sup>410</sup> of the people of Northern Ireland claim to speak, write and read Irish Gaelic. It is widely believed that actual fluency in the language may be considerably lower.

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<sup>406</sup> As of 2008.

<sup>407</sup> Dr. Farry is an MLA for the Alliance Party.

<sup>408</sup> Speech in Northern Ireland Assembly by David McNarry, DUP MLA, Nov, 2007, Hansard.

<sup>409</sup> David McNarry used his correspondence with the Sinn Fein Education Minister as an example to the Northern Ireland Assembly, Nov 2007, Hansard.

<sup>410</sup> 75,125 people, UK Census, 2001.

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The CAL Committee on Indigenous Languages<sup>411</sup> has estimated that the total government expenditure on Irish language commitments will already be over 291 million pounds over 10 years. At a time when rural state schools are having to close through lack of funds, and given that a proportion of this funding is for specialist Irish Language Schools, it is understandable that Sinn Fein's demands for greater levels of funding are greeted with an angry response from many Unionists. It is undoubtedly an enormous financial commitment that could only benefit a small minority of people. As David McNarry was quick to point out in the Assembly, the money will have to be found from other departments; 'What about the cost? How will the avalanche of Irish-Language strangulation be paid for? Will the funding come from cuts in hospitals or school closures?'<sup>412</sup>. Many of these 'rights-based' objectives that Sinn Fein has cited as to be covered by legislation will do little to enhance the Irish Gaelic language and associated culture. Putting all official documentation and public service information in Irish Gaelic will not increase the amount of people who can understand it. Sinn Fein's approach could be construed as an attempt to manufacture conflict through political 'point-scoring' on what should be a non-sectarian issue. Sinn Fein's insistence on pursuing a 'rights-based' agenda encourages reciprocal 'rights-based' demands from the other side. Many on the Unionist side of the Assembly are now insisting on equal money being spent on the Ulster-Scots Language – a language that UK census figures from 2001 estimate that only 2% (30,000) of the population of Northern Ireland have some knowledge of. To put it in perspective, there are as many fluent speakers of Chinese in Northern Ireland<sup>413</sup> as Ulster-Scots speakers. If parity is achieved, nearly 600 million pounds will be redirected from social services towards dubious methods of language promotion – languages which 92% of the people of Northern Ireland have little or no knowledge of – to satisfy absurd political demands.

The Language debate in Northern Ireland serves as an example of how negotiations conceived within the entrenched dogmatism of conflict ideology leads to what John Woods describes as 'procedural inconsistency'<sup>414</sup> suggesting 'the abandonment...of the method of analytical intuitions'. A dogmatic process of pursuing a particular argument or policy direction that can, through factual evidence and analysis, be disproved as the actor in question 'is unable or unwilling to apply in a principled way the distinction between a proof of something counter-intuitive and a valid reductio argument'. The 'barrier to peace', in this sense, is expressed as the dogmatism that accompanies irrational ideological constructs relating to ethnicity<sup>415</sup> and

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<sup>411</sup> Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, Northern Ireland Government, 2007.

<sup>412</sup> McNarry, NIA, Nov 2007, Hansard.

<sup>413</sup> 8,500 fluent Chinese speakers, UK Census 2001 figures.

<sup>414</sup> Woods, John: *Paradox and Paraconsistency – Conflict Resolution in the Abstract Sciences* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), p78.

<sup>415</sup> I have used the 'rights-based' language debate as an example of irrational negotiation stemming from flawed, ethnicity-based reasoning.



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religion<sup>416</sup>. Analysis and reasoned debate that relies on factual validity as a basis for decision-making has been discarded. The result is frequently an illogical and divisive policy direction that has no rational premise. When the European Union was attempting to establish principles relating to a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), the first principle it sought to encompass related to 'consensus on the goal of conflict prevention'<sup>417</sup> – that all member states were committed to policy that sought to prevent conflict. This can be seen as an attempt to apply a sound methodological foundation for future policy-making that would best 'preserve peace and international security'. There is little evidence that the principle political actors in Northern Ireland have sought to initiate policy that reflects this fundamental principle. Whilst political actors insist on pursuing 'rights-based' agendas that focus principally on one community, no broad cross-community consensus on any contentious issue can be achieved. An inability to apply and adhere to sound methodological principles involving a consensus on how best peace can be preserved – with policy that reflects this guiding principle – exposes the limitations of academic attempts to establish 'best practice' conflict resolution guidelines. Such principles can only be applied by rational political actors and not by individuals who view negotiation and democratic politics as 'the latest phase in the struggle.'<sup>418</sup>

The necessity, in electoral terms, of Sinn Fein retaining their 'conflict ideology' leads to many other political decisions and aspects of policy that create barriers to peaceful reconciliation and cross-community understanding. Sinn Fein's refusal to abolish the IRA's Army Council is reflective of an inability to discard the 'conflict ideology' of the past through fear of alienating their core electoral support. Their party's spokesman on Policing in the Northern Ireland Assembly, Alex Maskey, described calls to disband the Army Council as a 'distraction from important issues'<sup>419</sup>. If Northern Ireland is to permanently establish a democratic, lawful alternative to the political violence and power of the paramilitaries within both communities, it is essential that those working within the Northern Ireland Assembly as democratically elected representatives have disbanded the paramilitary structures that exercise unlawful control over their respective communities. The continued existence of paramilitary structures, such as the Army Council, deeply undermines the progression and co-operation of those attempting to work within democratic, legal means. It is unsurprising that the continued existence and influence of paramilitary organisations is seen as more than merely a 'distraction' by those attempting to confine 'conflict politics' to the past.

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<sup>416</sup> The evidence relating to 'the right to march' as a religious freedom provides a religion-orientated example.

<sup>417</sup> Van de Goor, Luc/ Huber, Martina: *Mainstreaming Conflict Prevention – Concept and Practice* (Conflict Prevention Network SWP-CPN, Baden-Baden, 2002), p108.

<sup>418</sup> Gerry Adams.

<sup>419</sup> Alex Maskey, Interview with Ulster TV, Monday, 11th February, 2008.

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Republican insistence on retaining its paramilitary organisational structures – publicly ratified by Sinn Fein on numerous occasions since the Good Friday Agreement came into effect by Gerry Adams speaking at Republican rallies flanked by men in combat fatigues and berets<sup>420</sup> (an IRA ‘colour party’) – demonstrates a continued reliance on an implicit threat of violence to push through their ‘United Ireland’ agenda and for the retention of popular support. This, in a similar vein to the other examples given, are ‘actions’ that conform to the ideological ‘beliefs’ of the Republican movement but remain incompatible with what could be described as a rational approach to ‘post-conflict’ politics. Democratic political structures cannot successfully co-exist with alternative paramilitary power-bases. Furthermore, the continued existence and influence of paramilitaries renders any usage of terminology referring to a ‘post-conflict’ Northern Ireland as misleading and premature. It may be more accurate to term the existing political situation in Northern Ireland, for the reasons suggested, as a protracted lull in violent politics that will inevitably resume its more destructive course in the future. It is a form of peace – not unlike the so-called ‘normalisation’ of Chechnya that is feted by the Russian Administration as a post-conflict political settlement, but enforced by a 300,000 strong ‘counter-terrorist’ force – that can only be preceded by further conflict.

A central theme throughout this study, particularly chapter six, has involved discussion regarding the difficulties in attracting popular electoral support for rational political objectives within an environment dominated by entrenched ethno-nationalist agendas. Evidence supported the theory that if radical ethno-nationalist parties attempt a less radical agenda that attempts to encompass more conciliatory, rational objectives and break the cycle of perpetual conflict that ethno-nationalist agendas entail, there is a high possibility of new, more radical parties emerging as a consequence of a softened stance – politics of reconciliation and compromise being incompatible with ethno-nationalist ideology. The alternative to such a scenario is no less a path to further conflict. Formally radical ethno-nationalist political entities will attempt to reclaim popular support lost through conciliatory policy-making by reasserting their radical credentials. Either traditional political entities will re-stratify ethnic groups within long-established criteria – that of ethno-Nationalist/religious allegiance – or new political entities will seek to usurp former radical political entities using similar conflict-orientated ideology.

It could be claimed that a major threat to United Russia’s hold on Russian political power lies within emerging extreme-Nationalist political entities. It is conceivable that rival oligarchs will

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<sup>420</sup> A Republican rally at Strabane, February 2005, serves as an example. As reported by David Aaronovitch in *The Guardian*, February 22nd, 2005.

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attempt to harness the growing extreme Nationalist sentiment amongst the Russian public to launch a bid for power. There are both economic and political factors that make a regime change towards a more extreme variant of ultra-nationalist ideology possible. Russia is a patrimonial state whose power has recently shifted back from the private sector to the state, but an estimated 60% of Russia's national product is still in the hands of 10-12 people. In Russia, an ability to maintain wealth is dependant on positions of power. Putin's enemies, either abroad, in prison or under investigation, will contest to the speed in which formally powerful men can lose not only their jobs, but their homes, bank accounts and liberty. Former Prime Minister Kasyanov, having surrendered his house, paid a four million dollar fine and currently facing charges of corruption serves as one of many examples<sup>421</sup>. As Donald Jenson has commented, the relationship between the state and oligarchs is 'permeable'. The blurred lines between public and private ownership means that 'it doesn't matter whether the balance is towards the oligarchs, as it is in the Putin era, the point is that the balance shifts back and forth'<sup>422</sup>. This emphasises how rapidly power structures can change in Russia and how precarious a position of power, however high one is positioned within the chain, can be. Tapping in to existing extreme Nationalist sentiment in Russia could be the vehicle for such a shift in power.

Putin's position of power was cemented by popular support attributable to nationalist rhetoric, his image as a strong leader and man of action, and promises of returning Russia to its 'rightful' position as a great global power. It should not need to be clarified, but President Medvedev's recent election 'victory'<sup>423</sup> is a continuation of Putin's leadership in Russia and control of the Kremlin. This 'hyper-Nationalist, statist ideology', with its 'hyper-masculine cult of a supreme leader'<sup>424</sup> received enthusiastic support from ethnic Russians angered by Russia's post-Soviet capitulation in the early 1990's. As Motyl acknowledges, traits such as these, whilst identifiable as fascist, represent a move towards fascism that is incomplete. Putin's political party, United Russia, 'does not dominate Russian society and lacks a coherent ideology beyond promoting the glory of the Russian state and its people'. An aggressive stance towards foreign policy and internal security is an essential feature of Putin's nationalist Russia – it is demanded by the Russian people. Motyl rightly highlights the fragility of such a position, suggesting 'aggressive responses from a fascist Russia to its neighbours' defensive stances would likely lead to an overreach on Russia's part, resulting in foreign policy disasters that would expose the regimes' relative weakness'. Motyl suggests this would lead to 'popular dissatisfaction' and a 'post-fascist

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<sup>421</sup> *Russia, Inc.: Power, Politics and Money in Putin's Kremlin*, Event March 19th, 2007, Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars.

<sup>422</sup> Donald Jenson, Director of Communications, Radio Liberty. Quoted from *Power, Politics and Money in Putin's Kremlin*.

<sup>423</sup> March, 2008. Without wishing to patronise the reader, there are those who debate whether Medvedev will usher in a new Russia. For that reason, this clarification seemed necessary.

<sup>424</sup> Alexander J. Motyl, Professor of Political Science, Deputy Director, Division of Global Affairs, Rutgers University, Presentation to the Kennen Institute, February 11th, 2008

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Russia'. Whilst foreign policy, or internal security, disasters may lead to 'popular dissatisfaction', there are significant factors that suggest that rather resulting in a 'post-fascist' Russia, it is possible this will provide the trigger for a more extreme variant of fascism to establish itself.

Given the limitations of Russia's current military capacity discussed in the previous chapter of this analysis, with a military budget that is roughly the same as the UK but expected to support and maintain a much larger force, there is a distinct possibility that Russia's aggressive posturing will not be matched by its military performance in conflict situations – 'overreach' and military disasters are a likely scenario. It should be remembered that no amount of foreign policy disasters would dampen the Russian public's desire for strong leadership, neo-Imperialist ideology and an unwavering faith in strength through force. It is the leadership that will be called into question should Russia succumb to foreign policy disasters, not the ideology itself. Traditional, entrenched ideological adherence to strong leadership and authoritarian power structures make the Russian public predisposed to a more extreme variant of Putin's Nationalism should his 'successor's' policies, particularly in regard to the military, fail. Rather than resulting in an end to Russia's surge towards fascism, foreign policy failures, be it in the 'near abroad' or beyond, may well initiate the emergence of a new regime that embraces a more complete, extreme variant of the current system. Putin has many powerful enemies amongst the oligarchs who would have the will and the financial capacity to fund and support such a change. The 'permeable' nature of state and oligarch power shifts, make such a scenario all the more feasible. For the Chechen people, therefore, the outlook is very bleak. A more radically Nationalist variant of the current administration would sanction the use of more repressive forms of control.

Political developments in Northern Ireland since the Northern Ireland Assembly's most recent incarnation in 1998, already provide indications as to what power shifts may occur in the future. Chapter six of this analysis included discussion on the nature of negotiations in reaching a peace agreement. Evidence demonstrated the manner by which the more traditionally radical political entities – Sinn Fein and the DUP – were able to capitalise on their violent pasts by harnessing the deep-seated fear within each respective community of each other, leading to the marginalisation of other parties (UUP and SDLP) who were characterised as too weak to negotiate a peace agreement with 'the enemy'. Evidence in this chapter has highlighted the continuation of 'conflict politics' within the assembly, and the difficulties – some would say impossibility – of resigning conflict to the past when the major political actors are determined to pursue 'identity-based' agendas. Political agendas that accentuate cultural, social and political divisions instead of fostering an 'issue-driven', non-sectarian environment can only result in further conflict.

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As the ideological principles that initiated and perpetuated violent conflict have not been challenged by the major parties, popular sentiment still expresses itself within traditional sectarian lines of division. Evidence within this analysis has suggested that within such a political environment, the opportunities for lasting cross-community reconciliation are extremely limited, as each side must not be seen as capitulating to the demands of the other for fear of losing popular support. The rise of the radical parties (Sinn Fein and DUP) throughout 'the troubles' was at least partially attributable to projecting a position of strength through a refusal to compromise. This was, and continues to be, a source of popular support responsible for their continued dominance over their political rivals – the UUP and SDLP. Such a position is incompatible with policies that can be seen as pre-requisites for peace, as no lasting peace has ever been achieved without significant compromises on both sides in ethno-nationalist conflicts of this nature. No amount of rhetoric can hide the fact that an end to conflict requires the rejection of 'conflict ideology'. It has been suggested in this analysis that a continued refusal by the DUP and Sinn Fein to reject the ideological positions of the past will lead to a stagnated, and eventually unworkable, democratic process – as has so often been the case in the past. Popular dissatisfaction with policies of compromise will inevitably lead to the traditionally 'radical' parties reclaiming the more extreme ideological ground they discarded for peace for fear of losing popular support. The alternative is to be challenged by new, more radical political movements that are willing to employ a similar ideological position and tactics – the projection of a position of strength through a refusal to compromise – to which the success of the DUP and Sinn Fein in attaining a position of primacy is largely attributable.

For traditional, radical Unionists, perhaps the bitterest pill to swallow in relation to the peace process has been the inclusion of Sinn Fein – the political wing of the IRA – in government. It is unsurprising that the DUP's decision to share power with Sinn Fein has already initiated a popular backlash against the current Assembly and the terms of the Peace Agreement. The DUP is already being challenged by a new, more radical political movement within its own heartland. Traditional Unionist Voice was launched on the 7<sup>th</sup> December, 2007, by former DUP MEP Jim Allister. Jim Allister, joined by an increasingly long list of disaffected DUP councillors, states that the purpose of Traditional Unionist Voice is to 'occupy the traditional Unionist ground so wantonly abandoned by others for the sake of office'<sup>425</sup>. At the launch of his movement, Jim Allister expressed his disgust of the betrayal of Unionism by the decision of the DUP to share power with Sinn Fein; 'Tens of thousands of Unionists feel sickened and deflated by the spectacle of IRA-

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<sup>425</sup> Traditional Unionist Voice launch pamphlet distributed in Protestant newspapers, such as the Belfast Telegraph, on the 7th December, 2007.

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Sinn Fein at the heart of our government, having been put there by those they trusted in the past'. Traditional Unionist Voice has four founding principles:

- 1) Wholly committed to the Union
- 2) To make decisions of devolution compatible with democratic principles and precedents prevailing elsewhere in the UK, thus causing us to reject the present undemocratic mandatory coalition model, which puts Sinn Fein in government.
- 3) Adamant that the rule of law must prevail in every part of Northern Ireland
- 4) Supportive of traditional family values.

The formation of a traditional Unionist movement in the wake of power-sharing, was an inevitable consequence of the DUP's concessions to Republicanism – as was the adoption of the language and ideology of Paisleyism by Allister to promote and expand the movement's influence. The allegations of a sell-out and betrayal of mainstream Unionism were fundamental in establishing Paisley's own movement and will retain considerable popular support in a political environment that has never adequately challenged the ideological convictions that led to conflict. Allister repeatedly labels Sinn Fein as 'unrepentant' for the crimes of the past. This, whilst true, expresses the inability of traditional Unionism to apply any meaningful level of introspection to its own crimes over the last fifty years. What Allister is proposing in his second 'founding principle' is the form of 'democracy' that permanently excludes the republican minority from government – permanent Unionist majority rule enforced by founding principle number three, the rule of law. It was the permanent exclusion of the Republican minority from government for fifty years and the associated discrimination, enforced by the 'rule of law' that provided the major catalyst for thirty years of violence. It is the continued refusal by the majority of Unionists to acknowledge any guilt within its own ideological outlook that is likely to result in considerable support for political movements such as Traditional Unionist Voice, or alternative movements echoing similar sentiments. Closely linked to mainstream<sup>426</sup> Unionisms' betrayal of Unionist ideology is the perceived need to 'defend' the Unionist community from Sinn Fein's ministers, currently 'driving through an all-Ireland agenda with impunity'<sup>427</sup>. One of the biggest fears within the Unionist community is that the steps towards all-Ireland economic union that is currently being pushed through by Sinn Fein will inevitably lead to political union. Allister, who has served as an MEP, used the EU to illustrate this possibility. Paisley's skill in establishing his movement was based on harnessing deep-seated fears within his community, positioning himself as the community's staunch guardian who will do anything to prevent such fears from being realised. There exists a strong possibility that in the future, Paisley's major weapon could be turned on his own party by a

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<sup>426</sup> A category that radical Unionists now associate with the DUP, as well as the UUP.

<sup>427</sup> Allister, Jim: 'All-Ireland Fusion is Underway' quoted from an article on his website, 8th December, 2007.

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larger proportion of increasingly disaffected traditional Unionists. Such a backlash could also express itself as political violence.

For the majority of 'the troubles', Paisley was not able to command the necessary support to usurp the Official Unionists from power. Paisley did, however, retain sufficient support to prevent Official Unionism from embarking on the road to reconciliation and compromise. Any meaningful efforts by Official Unionism to initiate reconciliation were thwarted by the threat or instigation of violent action, often led by Paisley, forcing Official Unionism to climb down or concede popular support to more radical political elements. The threat of angering more radical Unionists within the community consistently prevented cross-community co-operation and reform initiatives. Whether Traditional Unionist Voice, or an alternative movement driven by similar ideology, will eventually replace the DUP as the major Unionist party remains to be seen. There will be reluctance amongst many Unionists to split the Unionist vote once more, leaving Sinn Fein in a stronger position. What is certain is that its existence will restrict the capacity for the DUP to instigate policies that are not reflective of traditional Unionist ideology, in the same manner that the DUP restricted the policy direction of Official Unionism. Fear and uncertainty within the Unionist community regarding its sovereign future will intensify as Sinn Fein demand greater political power vested in 'all-Ireland' institutions. The continued existence of the IRA and Republican groups opposed to the Belfast Agreement, such as the Real IRA and Continuity IRA, will also heighten fears that the Republican movement is achieving its goals by stealth. Pressure on the DUP to be ideologically reflective of its core support or face losing its popular mandate will increase accordingly.

These fears provide the basis for a perceived continued need to 'defend' the Protestant community. Whilst the language of Traditional Unionist Voice is less vociferous than Paisley's past movement, the sentiment and message remains the same. One of Traditional Unionist Voice's first statements expressed strong opposition to the PSNI (Police Service of Northern Ireland) decision not to renew gun licences for ex-servicemen within the Protestant community (many of whom, as countless inquiries have proved, have links to protestant paramilitaries), campaigning for a continuation of weapons being held within the Protestant community for 'personal protection'. Allister describes this as a 'retrograde and premature step' with 'Republicans still active'<sup>428</sup>. This is reminiscent of Paisley's campaigning for the necessity of Protestants defending their own community outside of the protection afforded by the state – it is a tacit concession to the perceived necessity of a paramilitary force that seems to contradict 'founding principle no.3'. Positioning the movement as independent from, and unrestricted by, the

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<sup>428</sup> 14th December, 2007.

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mechanisms of state will strengthen its credentials as an alternative to the current state and the political parties responsible for the 'betrayal' – a tactic perfected by former radical movements within Northern Ireland.

The final 'founding principle' of Traditional Unionist Voice refers to being 'supportive of traditional family values'. This may sound unusual given the other aims of the movement but its inclusion has much relevance. TUV's support of traditional family values can be more accurately described as opposition to practices deemed unchristian within traditional Unionist values – Catholicism<sup>429</sup> and homosexuality being their primary concerns. With the DUP largely silenced on such issues through the legal constraints brought about by their participation in the NI Assembly, questioning the morality of those within the chamber provides an additional weapon for those outside. As Paisley benefited in popularity by appealing to both a patriotic and religious sense of duty, the growing opposition to 'mainstream' Unionism seeks to do the same: 'Following an offensive display of placards against Christians, Paisley and Poots decision to fund the Gay Parade is criticised by both their own church and party. But still Paisley and Poots choose to ignore the issue.'<sup>430</sup>

Whilst the traditionalist Unionist backlash against the negotiated settlement in Northern Ireland is still in its embryonic phase, it is clear that it will campaign on an ideological position that is largely unchanged since the beginning of 'the troubles'. Their slogan, 'nothing that is morally wrong can be politically right'<sup>431</sup>, suggests a form of thinking guided by theocratic certainty in the 'truth' of their political position, their morality being firmly placed within a Protestant tradition that views anyone outside of their faith as permanent enemies, intent on their destruction. Traditional Unionism expresses a worldview that is almost as rigid and unaccommodating as it was in the 1950's. Crucially, the major parties may publicly display a more moderate stance, but the foundations for such beliefs have never been challenged – ideologically it is a position that retains broad popular appeal. As evidence relating to religion within this analysis has suggested, political events that heighten uncertainty and fear can quickly turn many moderate adherents of theocratic or ethno-nationalist doctrine towards a more fundamentalist stance. The majority of the Nationalist community, in a similar vein, do not look upon their contribution to the death and destruction of 'the troubles' with regret, but with pride for 'the volunteers' (PIRA) who gave their lives – as the plaques, statues and commemorations bears witness to. Northern Ireland remains two divided communities, largely unrepentant and unforgiving, seeking no ideological re-appraisal of their guiding political principles.

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<sup>429</sup> Chapter two discusses the perceived 'unchristian' nature of Catholicism in Unionist culture.

<sup>430</sup> Quoted on the Voice4Democracy website – set up in 2006 to oppose the St Andrews Agreement and strong supporter of TUV.

<sup>431</sup> The slogan used on the TUV's launch pamphlet.



## **FUTURE IMPLICATIONS FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

Many commentators look to Northern Ireland in 2008, as an example of a post-conflict situation where the threat of violence and civil unrest has been permanently removed through negotiated settlement and a steadfast commitment from both politicians and their respective communities to confine violent politics to the past. What evidence relating to the manner in which democratic politics is conducted and continued allegiance to political positions that reflect division and distrust demonstrates, is a dogmatic refusal on both sides to challenge the ideological validity of the political parties that led each community into a situation of violent conflict. It could be claimed that without such introspection, a return to a situation of sporadic, or intensive, political violence is unavoidable.

Chechnya is similarly described by the Russian Administration, aided by a largely complicit international media, as a country that is in the process of rebuilding itself after 15 years of conflict. As is the case with Northern Ireland, the relative 'peace' that the majority of the country currently experiences is not a reflective of a genuine post-conflict situation. 'Peace' in Chechnya is enforced, as has been the case for hundreds of years, through brutally repressive means. Evidence throughout this analysis has demonstrated the impossibility of achieving a lasting peace through political repression and violence, and the impossibility of establishing 'post-conflict' politics whilst retaining popular support for an ideological position that is reflective of conflict. Russia's determination to maintain its control over Chechnya through violence, intimidation and fear remains unchallenged. As evidence within this analysis has demonstrated, Russia's faith in the use of force to achieve compliance in the 'near abroad' will not change. Rather than witnessing positive political change, Russia's ultra-Nationalist ideology is far more likely to evolve into a more extreme variant of its current form. Discussion within this, and the previous chapter, should leave no doubt as to whether international pressure to end Russia's repressive occupation will be forthcoming – the politics of 'national interest' will ensure inaction from other powerful nations on the continued human rights abuses within the region – mere verbal condemnation of aggressive military action, as we have seen in 2008 in regard to Georgia, will not change Russian policy direction. Issues relating to the right of national self-determination will remain unaddressed, or bracketed within the all-encompassing 'terrorist' label – the category for any movement that threatens the material interests of powerful states. As a genuine, negotiated peace is impossible, the Chechens, Ingush and other repressed peoples throughout the region will continue to be forced to attempt to end their suffering through violent means. The Chechen conflict did not begin in the 1990's. It has persisted for as long as Russia has been guided by its belief that they represent 'a chosen people', whose ethnic superiority grants them

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the right to subjugate 'lesser ethnicities' by force. Conflict will continue to persist until such ideological convictions are abandoned.

There are a multitude of factors that convince individuals to utilise political violence as a means to protect or advance an ethnic groups' desired objectives. Discussion within this analysis has acknowledged and explored numerous factors that contribute to the continuation and escalation of ethnic conflict, drawing on various existing theories and schools of thought relating to ethnic conflict. Many of these diverse ideas relating to the causes and contributing factors influencing the continuation of ethnic conflict have been formally bracketed by some commentators as competing theories – the debate between the 'primordial' and 'instrumentalist' approaches to understanding ethnic conflict served as an example of this in the introduction to this study. It was suggested that these two seemingly divergent theories could, and should, co-exist in further analysis of ethnic conflict as both schools of thought – 'instrumentalism' stressing ethnicity as a resource or tool in the hands of leaders to mobilise and organise followers in the pursuit of economic gain or political power, 'primordialism' stressing ethnic allegiance as a genuine, historically-grounded 'reality' ingrained in its followers through centuries of, often painful, experience – hold much relevance. Evidence within this study has hopefully demonstrated the significance of both schools of thought, whilst dismissing the notion that academics must choose between them. A broader understanding of ethnic conflict, of which Northern Ireland and Chechnya have in this analysis served as examples, can be achieved by increasing the scope of debate and discussion. By placing too much emphasis on definitional 'certainties' and the primacy of one school of thought, the most rational and comprehensive explanations pertaining to the causes and justifications behind ethnic conflict may be clouded.

It was not an intention of this analysis to frame these two, in many ways divergent, conflicts as following wholly identical patterns of behaviour and conflict characteristics. It was an intention to focus on characteristics between the two conflicts that displayed similarities, as these convergent factors are areas of study that hold great relevance to the assessment of ethnic conflict as a global phenomenon. Whilst, as evidence in this study has indicated, Northern Ireland should not be seen as a perfect model in achieving conflict resolution, its progression towards peace has incorporated theories of conflict resolution - notably the importance of international mediation and assistance, the primacy of compromise, dialogue and genuine political representation in achieving conflict resolution, the limitations of coercive politics and the use of force in achieving lasting peace – that have most definitely not been applied in Chechnya. An effective aspect in using these two particular case studies for analysis has been to highlight what can be perceived as conflict resolution cul-de-sacs – political directions that are destined to fail in

## FUTURE IMPLICATIONS FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION

terms of achieving a permanent end to ethnic hostilities. In this sense, divergent conflict characteristics relating to the case studies have also been revealing; they too, aid understanding of ethnic conflict from a global perspective in terms of assessing what an effective political environment for conflict resolution consists of, and what political directions can be viewed as detrimental to peaceful reconciliation.

Perhaps one of the most significant observations of the conflicts that evidence in each chapter of this analysis supports, is the manner by which both contemporary conflicts - in terms of causes, justifications and influences - can be viewed as a recurrence of past events. Contemporary conflict contributors mirror their historical equivalents. This historical continuity, partially engineered by charismatic leadership of political movements, is one of the most striking parallels between the two respective conflicts. International assistance and mediation aims to break this historical cycle of violence through stressing the universal interest and benefits that peaceful co-existence can bring to all parties. A successful conclusion to a peace agreement leading to peaceful co-existence must be guided by principles of compromise, equality and genuine political representation. Historical analysis of both conflicts demonstrates how precarious the successful instigation of such principles remains, whilst the 'communal shelter of tribalism' retains such a powerful hold on the collective psyche. Ethnic conflict can be swiftly re-ignited by a single event, or series of events, leading to a re-escalation of political violence or full-scale war. A protracted period of peace will not guarantee that a renewed period of inter-ethnic violence

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