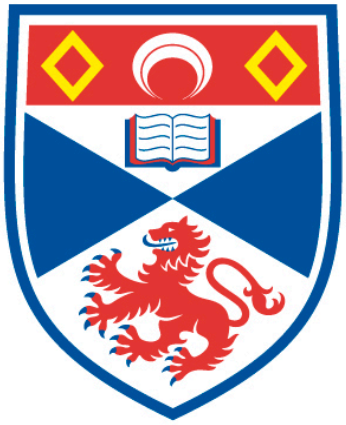
Security through separation: violence, fear and negotiation on the dividing line in Belfast

Brita Lillan Midness

A thesis submitted for the degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews



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ABSTRACT

This thesis delves deep into the archives to examine the emergence of a policy of 'security through separation' embodied by the present-day Belfast peace walls. Through an analysis of the micro-level dynamics of intercommunal conflict at the local level at the start of the Troubles, it becomes apparent that a combination of violence, fear and negotiation along lines of division in the city led to the construction of officially sanctioned barriers between communities. By examining the interaction of local and political level factors present during the autumn of 1969 in Northern Ireland, this thesis determines the set of crucial conditions that served to create an environment conducive for the development and subsequent swift implementation of an official policy of 'security through separation'.

While certainly symbolic of the entrenched division between communities in Northern Ireland, the peace walls have become part of the structure of the conflict. The first peace line to emerge on the streets of Belfast in 1969 was built on a legacy of division and formed part of a pattern of officially sanctioned barriers constructed by the authorities in response to situations of intercommunal violence. By drawing on, heretofore vastly underexplored, incidents of conflict along individual streets in Belfast this thesis seeks to highlight the extent to which the dynamics of intercommunal violence at the local level in Belfast yielded reverberations far beyond their limited geographic area. As walls continue to be proffered up as a solution to a myriad of issues worldwide, this detailed study of the emergence of the Belfast peace walls will perhaps offer pause to those who believe that building barriers is a viable solution in situations of insecurity.

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ABBREVIATIONS

GENERAL ABBREVIATIONS

BIP ……..……..…….. Belfast Interface Project
DOJ ……..…… Department of Justice
DRD ……. Department for Regional Development
CCDC ……..……..…. Central Citizens Defence Committee
GOC ……..…….. General Officer Commanding
HQNI ……... Headquarters, Northern Ireland
IRA ……..……..…… Irish Republican Army
MOD ……..……..…….. Ministry of Defence
NIE ……. Northern Ireland Executive
NIHE ……..……... Northern Ireland Housing Executive
NIO …….. Northern Ireland Office
RIC …… Royal Irish Constabulary
RUC ……..……..…… Royal Ulster Constabulary
ULA ……..……..……..… Ulster Loyalist Association
UPA ……..……..……. Ulster Protestant Association
USC ……..……..…… Ulster Special Constabulary
VCGS ……... Vice-Chief of the General Staff

ARCHIVE/SOURCE ABBREVIATIONS

IWM ……..…… Imperial War Museum
NAI ……..…… National Archives of Ireland
PRONI ……..…… Public Record Office Northern Ireland
NA ……..……..……... The National Archives

NEWSPAPER AND PERIODICAL ABBREVIATIONS

AEE ……..……... *Aberdeen Evening Express*
APJ ……..... *Aberdeen Press and Journal*
BNL ……..…….. *Belfast News-Letter*
BO …… *Ballymena Observer*
BT ……..… *Belfast Telegraph*
BWT ……..……..… *Ballymena Weekly Telegraph*
CET ……..…… *Coventry Evening Telegraph*
DAM ……..…… *Daily Mirror*
DC ……..……..…… *Dundee Courier*
DE ……..……..…… *Daily Express*
DJ ……..…….. *Derry Journal*
DM ……..……..……. *Daily Mail*
EA ……..…… *East Anglian*
II ……... *Irish Independent*
ILN …… *Illustrated London News*
LAT ……..……..……. *Los Angeles Times*
LS ……..…… *Londonderry Sentinel*

LT …… *Larne Times*
NIM …… *Nusight Ireland's Magazine*
PP …… *Palestine Post*
SDT …… *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*
SI …… *Sunday Independent*
ST …… *Sunday Telegraph*
TBP …… *The Birmingham Post*
TC …… *The Courier*
TCWA …… *Taunton Courier and Western Advertiser*
TDT …… *The Daily Telegraph*
TG …… *The Guardian*
THN …… *The Hearst Newspapers*
THT …… *The Telegraph*
TIN …… *The Irish News*
TINBMN …… *The Irish News and Belfast Morning News*
TIP …… *The Irish Press*
TIT …… *The Irish Times*
TNYT …… *The New York Times*
TNWBP …… *The Northern Whig and Belfast Post*
TO …… *The Observer*
TS …… *The Scotsman*
TT …… *The Times*
TWF …… *The Weekly Freeman*
TYP …… *The Yorkshire Post*
YPLI …… *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*
WT …… *Weekly Telegraph*

INTRODUCTION

"Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offence."
- Robert Frost, 1914[1]

The peace line that emerged in September 1969 at the very start of the Troubles in Northern Ireland, was devised as a temporary strategy to address the situation of social and political upheaval on the streets of Belfast. What began as a limited number of barbed wire barricades dotted across the city has grown into an extensive network of imposing permanent structures, which shape the landscape some fifty years later. The impact of this supposedly 'temporary' solution continues to be felt today, particularly by the communities living in the shadow of the ninety-seven barriers across the city.[2] As walls are called for in numerous situations of insecurity worldwide,[3] this thesis seeks to understand why, in the face of intercommunal violence on the streets of Belfast in 1969, walls were chosen as an official approach to address the conflict.

The emergence of the peace line policy at the start of the Troubles in 1969 provides a window through which to examine the impetus behind the construction of barriers in the face of conflict. The intersection of violence, fear and negotiation on the

[1] This forms part of Robert Frost's classic poem 'Mending Wall'. See: Frost, *The Collected Poems of Robert Frost*, 33-34.
[2] BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*; Byrne, et al., *Public Attitudes to Peace Walls (2015) Survey Results.*
[3] For a recent study of the use of walls worldwide, see: Marshall, *Divided.* The resurgence of the calls for and construction of walls worldwide has captured media attention, for examples, see: *TG*, 29 November 2015; *TG*, 16 September 2016.

dividing line produced an approach of 'security through separation' in 1969, which built on the deep-rooted legacy of division between communities in the city of Belfast. Fear was not simply a repercussion of the disturbances in 1969, but rather it was a catalyst for the outbreak of conflict. As will be explored shortly, during previous bouts of intercommunal violence and rioting in the city, communities had sought security through informal separation by retreating further into their perceived respective territories.[4] 1969 was no different: but this time this 'natural' process came to be given official benediction. This research began as an attempt to understand why humans so often chose to wall themselves off from one another rather than seek to stand together on common ground, particularly during periods of instability. This thesis, as will be explored in the following chapters, does not claim that 'security through separation' was the principal motivation behind the construction of the peace walls, but rather seeks to understand why so often, as was the case in Belfast in 1969, the concept of *security* becomes inextricably intertwined with that of *separation*.

This thesis provides an in-depth examination of a policy of 'security through separation' as it was developed, implemented and tested on the streets of Belfast at the start of the Troubles. Through this detailed analysis of events at the local and political levels it becomes apparent that the convergence of competing political interests, an atmosphere of violence and the omnipresence of fear, on all sides, created an environment conducive to the emergence of a policy of 'security through separation'. In this study, the phrase 'security through separation' denotes a precise method for the management of public disorder. This type of policy places priority on short-term

[4] See pages 17-24 in the Introduction for further context regarding the patterns of rioting and residential segregation in Belfast.

expediency to achieve a reduction in violence, at the expense of long-term intercommunal integration. Simply put, the concept of 'security through separation' takes division in society as a given instead of seeking a more sustainable solution to prevent the eruption of violence in the long-term. The construction of walls between communities constitutes the physical mechanism of separation. Yet, in the midst of violence and the associated febrile atmosphere of fear, we don't often stop to ask, 'what precisely it is that we "are walling in or walling out"'?[5]

The use of barriers to divide communities is not unique to Belfast, nor is it even unique to Northern Ireland. Numerous divided cities worldwide continue to grapple with the use of walls built along city streets in situations of insecurity. Extensive scholarship exists mapping the location of numerous walls worldwide and delving deep into the extent to which these walls impact how divided cities function.[6] In addition, the existing literature looks to the future, examining the dynamic factors at play in divided urban centres that converge to influence the efforts of peacebuilding.[7] Even once the physical barriers are dismantled, scholars have demonstrated that the effects of these partitions still linger.[8] Despite the dearth of rigorous scholarship that so clearly demonstrates the impracticalities, inefficacies and dangers of choosing separation over integration, calls for 'security though separation' continue to echo across the world, even today in 2019. An analysis of the emergence of the Belfast peace walls in 1969 provides a window into understanding the interaction of factors that can influence the development of such

[5] Frost, *The Collected Poems of Robert Frost*, 33-34.
[6] For a conveniently compiled set of detailed examinations of the features of divided cities see: Dunn (ed.), *Managing Divided Cities*. To situate Belfast amongst additional divided cities worldwide see: Bollens, *Trajectories of Conflict and Peace*; Calame and Charlesworth, *Divided Cities*; Pullan and Baillie (eds.), *Locating Urban Conflicts*; Pullan, 'Frontier Urbanism: The Periphery at the Centre of Contested Cities'.
[7] For a recent example, see: Bollens, *Trajectories of Conflict and Peace*.
[8] Calame and Charlesworth, *Divided Cities*, 60.

policies of division. Perhaps by understanding the conditions in which walls have become a mechanism of choice in situations of instability, we can work to prevent the implementation of similar policies of division moving forward.

The city of Belfast serves as a microcosm for the situation of division in Northern Ireland more broadly: a seemingly iconic example of a divided city that is featured prominently in the existing scholarship. However, the case of the Belfast peace walls highlights both the common and divergent features of this divided city when compared to divided cities worldwide. On the surface, the distinctly delineated segregated geography of the city and its volatile flashpoints resemble other infamous divided cities, such as Beirut and Nicosia.[9] Nevertheless, Belfast is situated within the United Kingdom where the authorities both wield substantial coercive capacity in the form of the army and simultaneously are beholden to the strong democratic tradition, which requires the state to be responsive to the concerns of its citizens. Thus, while a useful case study for comparative analysis, the case of the Belfast peace walls requires simultaneously its own in-depth study of the emergence of these barriers in order to more effectively contribute to the broader study of the management of conflict in divided cities worldwide.

Despite the existing rich literature on divided cities, a significant gap remains in the examination of the Belfast peace walls as a mechanism of conflict management in divided cities: the historical context in which these barriers emerged. The absence of studies that situate this conflict management mechanism in its wider historical context, or are sometimes even ahistorical in their analysis, has resulted in an incomplete understanding of not only the role that these barriers play in the divided city of Belfast today, but also, fundamentally, why they were built in the first place. As the existing

[9] Ibid., 37-60;121-142.

body of literature on both deeply divided societies and the urban encapsulations of these divisions show, understanding lines of division requires examining them from multiple perspectives.[10] Thus, this thesis contributes to this growing body of knowledge by providing a much needed examination of the emergence of the Belfast peace walls, situating this method of conflict management squarely in its rich historical context.

As Adrian Guelke, a scholar of divided societies, astutely observed: "Deeply divided societies are plainly not a new phenomenon".[11] Nevertheless, the schisms that emerge, particularly in times of conflict, in deeply divided societies, such as Northern Ireland, continue to pose significant challenges to state authorities. Given the constraints placed on society as whole by the walls and the imperfect provision of security provided by these barriers, why then do authorities choose walls as a mechanism for the management of violent conflict in the urban areas of deeply divided societies? The encapsulation of the overarching conflict in the urban setting on a limited piece of territory, brings the divisions between communities into stark relief, particulary as it pertains to the patterns of residential segregation in a city. Examining the management of violent conflict in urban areas situated in a deeply divided societies requires not only situating the micro-level confrontations within the macro-level conflict, but also examining the wider historical context in which these divisions thrive. This thesis delves deep into an historical analysis of the micro-level dynamics of division in Belfast,

[10] Scholars of divided cities hail from numerous disciplines including, architecture, human geography, peace and conflict studies, political science, public policy and urban planning.

[11] Guelke, *Politics in Deeply Divided Societies*, 1. For an illuminating discussion of deeply divided societies and the existing rich literature underpinning this area of inquiry, see: Guelke, *Politics in Deeply Divided Societies*. For an equally illuminating discussion of the divided society of Northern Ireland from a comparative perspective, see: Wright, *Northern Ireland*. For approaches to addressing conflict in divided societies, see: Lederach, *Building Peace*.

demonstrating the extent to which 'the narrow ground'[12] in a deeply divided city shapes responses to conflict.

Peace Walls: Building a Foundation

Although the eruption of the Troubles in Northern Ireland in 1969 and the subsequent turbulent years of political violence drew the attention of the world,[13] the emergence of the peace walls remained conspicuously absent from discussions. While the academic community remained silent, the walls grew, further contributing to the stark sectarian geography of the city of Belfast. Nevertheless, a small body of research focused specifically on the peace walls has more recently made substantial progress towards reintegrating these barriers into discussions of the Northern Irish conflict. This burgeoning body of work focuses in particular on documenting the location of the structures throughout the city, unearthing community perceptions of the walls and analyzing the present-day policy implication of these barriers in Northern Ireland. The existing research on the Belfast peace walls is multidisciplinary, which in itself has enhanced the depth and breadth of the scholarship focused on the barriers.

Just as the younger generations of Belfast have only ever known a city demarcated by the peace walls, these barriers have often been treated as a back drop to other aspects of the conflict in Northern Ireland, depicted as a symptom of the conflict, rather than an active structuring force in their own right. Jonny Byrne noted in his 2011 study of the peace walls, that there was a persistent "lack of political knowledge and

[12] A concept that figures prominently in Stewart's work, *The Narrow Ground: The Roots of Conflict in Ulster*, which will be explored further in the methodology.
[13] Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 623. For a detailed overview of the sheer number of studies focused on Northern Ireland, see: McGarry and O'Leary, *Explaining Northern Ireland*; Whyte, *Interpreting Northern Ireland.*

societal understanding and ambiguity about the peace walls".[14] Byrne's statement still rings true eight years later. What follows is an examination of the existing body of research focused specifically on the peace walls, which simultaneously identifies the persistent gap that this thesis aims to fill: an in-depth history of the initial emergence of the policy of 'security through separation' embodied in the present-day Belfast peace walls.

What is a 'peace wall'? Although this may seem to be a simple question, it, like the peace walls themselves, remains fraught with disagreement.[15] Despite the fact that the peace walls have persisted for almost fifty years, there has yet to be an agreed upon definition for these structures. Adding to this confusion, these barriers are referred to using a variety of terms in popular discourse, including 'security walls' and, even euphemistically as, 'environmental improvement walls'.[16] This thesis does not set out to articulate a 'definitive definition' for the peace walls and instead seeks to engage with the existing interpretations of these structures to examine the impetus and subsequent emergence of these barriers along the streets of Belfast within the wider historical context of the conflict in Northern Ireland.

The first known formal definition for these structures was articulated approximately three years after the construction of the first peace wall. In 1971, a joint working party was tasked with examining areas of confrontation between the two

[14] Byrne, 'The Belfast Peace Walls', 16.
[15] Ibid.; Byrne, et al., *Public Attitudes to Peace Walls (2015) Survey Results*, 3.
[16] *TG*, 13 March 1982; *TIT*, 5 May 1983; *TIT*, 31 October 1982.

communities in Northern Ireland, including the Belfast peace walls.[17] The working party employed the term 'peace line'[18] to refer to these barriers, defining them as follows:

> "any series of physical obstacles or barriers used to control movement between opposing districts of an area of confrontation. Such obstacles may be temporary or permanent, removed by day or in place for the twenty-four hours, manned or unmanned".[19]

More recently, in 2015, Byrne, et al. defined these barriers as "all kinds of physical interface barriers that keep communities apart – including walls, gates and security barriers".[20] The earlier definition refers to 'temporary' barriers, while the more recent definition alludes to structures that are much more permanent in construction. These definitions themselves demonstrate the extent to which the walls have become embedded in the landscape of the city. While the initially temporary nature of the walls may have changed, it is evident from these two definitions that the role of the walls in providing 'security through separation' has persisted.

The precise number of barriers in Belfast today remains disputed, particularly due to the variety of definitions used in reference to the peace walls.[21] Furthermore, the range of figures for the number of barriers in Belfast also stems from different interpretations of whether or a not a particular barrier constitutes a single barrier or should be interpreted as made up of separate entities.[22] For example, in 2017, the Belfast Interface Project

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[17] PRONI, DCR/1/111 ['Future Policy on Areas of Confrontation: Second (and Final) Report of the Joint Working Party on Processions etc', April 1971].
[18] This thesis uses the term 'peace line' when discussing the barriers within the context of the early years of the Troubles as this was the term that tended to be assigned to these structures by the authorities at that time.
[19] PRONI, DCR/1/111 ['Future Policy on Areas of Confrontation: Second (and Final) Report of the Joint Working Party on Processions etc', April 1971].
[20] Byrne, et al., *Public Attitudes to Peace Walls (2015) Survey Results*, 3.
[21] Byrne, 'The Belfast Peace Walls', 16.; Cosstick, *Belfast*, 30.; Gormley-Heenan, Morrow and Byrne, 'Removing Peace Walls and Public Policy Brief (1)', 3.; Nolan, *Northern Ireland Peace Monitoring Report Number One*, 71.; Nolan, *Northern Ireland Peace Monitoring Report Number Two*, 80.; Nolan, *Northern Ireland Peace Monitoring Report Number Three*, 70.; Wilson, *Northern Ireland Peace Monitoring Report Number Four*, 64-64.
[22] Jarman, 'Mapping Interface Barriers', 1.

(BIP) published a report mapping the barriers throughout Belfast and concluded that ninety-seven barriers existed in the city.[23] At about the same time, the Belfast City Council referred to the existence of sixty-three barriers along interfaces in the city,[24] while the Department of Justice (DOJ) figures from 2018 document thirty-eight barriers remaining in Belfast.[25] This thesis focuses on the development of the peace line policy in 1969 and the legacy that it has left of the streets of Belfast. Consequently, this study uses the calculation of ninety-seven barriers put forward by BIP in 2017 since it takes in to account the extent to which the policy of division has become an accepted mechanism of security for authorities across the city, while recognizing that the precise number of barriers continues to be disputed.

Although the exact number of barriers in Belfast continues to be debated, the existing studies demonstrate that the number of walls in Belfast have not only increased since the first peace line was built in 1969, but also continued to grow during the time of relative peace since the 1994 ceasefires.[26] The most recent report by BIP concluded that:

> "[B]arriers have been constructed steadily since 1969, although building has been more prominent in the later stages of the conflict and in particular during the course of the peace process".[27]

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[23] BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*, 7. BIP previously conducted a similar study published in 2011, documenting 99 barriers across Belfast. The change in the documented number of barriers in Belfast between 2011 and 2017 was due to a variety of factors, including the construction of a new wall, reclassification of existing barriers, barrier removal and the documenting of newly identified barriers. See: BIP, *Belfast Interfaces*, 11.; BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*, 11-14.

[24] Belfast City Council, 'The Belfast Agenda', 17.

[25] DOJ, *List of Structures*. This figure for the number of barriers in Belfast only reflects those owned by the DOJ.

[26] BIP, *Belfast Interfaces*, 12-13.; BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*, 9-10.; Jarman, 'Mapping Interface Barriers', 2-8.

[27] BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*, 9-10.

Furthermore, many of the barriers have undergone strengthening and rebuilding during their tenure.[28] This thesis adds additional nuance to BIP's assertion that the walls were built 'steadily' overtime, by demonstrating the impact that instances of intercommunal violence had on both wall construction and strengthening during the early months of the Troubles. The majority of the existing barriers in Belfast are owned by the DOJ, which took over responsibility for the walls from the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) in 2007 after devolution.[29] The remainder of the barriers are the responsibility of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) and the Department for Regional Development (DRD), along with an additional limited number of walls belonging to private owners.[30] The number of walls and responsible bodies in Belfast alone demonstrates the extent to which the peace walls have become an accepted response to intercommunal violence in Belfast.

The first peace line emerged during a tumultuous period in Belfast, which in turn contributed to the existing confusion regarding its construction along the streets of Belfast. In particular, the peace lines are sometimes conflated with both the ad hoc community barricades and the simultaneous, but separate, additional military barricades, which were being built around the same time.[31] Ahistorical discussions of the peace lines have muddied the waters around a complete understanding of their genesis, initial purpose and legacy. Furthermore, existing references to the emergence of the walls tend to refer to their separation function, without delving further to examine precisely why

[28] Ibid., 10. For a detailed study of the factors that have led to the building and strengthening of peace lines since 1969, see: Jarman, 'Building a Peaceline'.
[29] BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*, 9.
[30] BIP also recorded barriers in Belfast where no ownership could be identified. See: BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*, 9.
[31] Calame and Charlesworth, *Divided Cities*, 62-63.

separation over integration was chosen as an official policy response.[32] Consequently, this thesis seeks to more clearly delineate between the different types of barricades, while demonstrating the precise sequence of events which led to the official policy of 'security through separation' in the form of the peace line in September 1969.

The peace walls have been built along interfaces between Catholic and Protestant communities since their initial inception in 1969. Since as early as 1971, studies have been undertaken to map the precise locations of the initial peace lines and their peace wall predecessors.[33] According to the most recent 2017 BIP study, barriers can be found in the following areas of Belfast: forty in north Belfast; thirty in west Belfast; eleven in east Belfast; one in south Belfast; fifteen in central Belfast.[34] The large quantity of barriers in north Belfast is due to the sheer volume of interfaces that exist between the two communities in this area of Belfast compared to the 'split' interface[35] along the main divide in west Belfast. Of the present-day thirty barriers in west Belfast, the majority were built before the ceasefires were declared in 1994.[36] Conversely, half of the current barriers in north Belfast were built following the ceasefires.[37] The continued construction of peace walls after the cessation of outright intercommunal violence demonstrates the extent to which the initially temporary solution swiftly became an accepted response to intercommunal tensions.

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[32] Brett, *Housing A Divided Community*, 64-65.
[33] PRONI, DCR/1/111 ['Future Policy on Areas of Confrontation: Second (and Final) Report of the Joint Working Party on Processions etc', April 1971]; Environmental Design Consultants, *Belfast peacelines study*; Working Group on Peacelines, *Report of working group on peacelines*; BIP, *Belfast Interfaces*; BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*.
[34] BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*, 7.
[35] For a useful examination of the different types of interfaces, see: BIP, *Interface Communities and the Peace Process*, 5.
[36] BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*, 10.
[37] Ibid.

The materials of construction have evolved since 1969, with the present-day peace walls built often from durable materials, such as brick and steel fencing.[38] These formidable walls stand in stark contrast to the 'temporary' barriers that will be shortly explored in this thesis. In conjunction with the ongoing efforts to map the peace walls, a select number of publications document the walls through extensive photographs,[39] which in turn demonstrate the persistent and imposing presence of the walls along the interface between communities in Belfast since 1969. While these photographic collections, particularly when taken together, demonstrate the evolution of the barriers overtime, the decision making processes that led to their construction and strengthening remains under explored in the wider literature.

Despite the significant strides that have been made in the existing literature when it comes to documenting the number, locations and ownership of the walls, gaps remain in the current body of knowledge. In particular, the existing scholarship regarding the ownership, the construction dates and the impetus for construction for each of the peace walls across Belfast remains incomplete.[40] The most recent 2017 BIP study of the walls attributed this difficulty in determining precisely when barriers were built to the following prevalent issue: "In many cases records were not kept (or were not available) of when a barrier was constructed or even reconstructed".[41] Consequently, as will be explored shortly in the methodology, this thesis engaged with a wide range of evidence,

[38] For a detailed overview of the existing materials of construction for each of the ninety-seven barriers, see: BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*.
[39] For views from both sides of the walls, see: Quinn, *Interface Images*; Quinn, *Streets Apart*; Quinn, *Towards 2023*. The following mapping reports also include images of the walls, which taken together, show the evolution of the walls over time. See: BIP, *Belfast Interfaces*; BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*; Environmental Design Consultants, *Belfast peacelines study*; Working Group on Peacelines, *Report of working group on peacelines*.
[40] BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*, 9.
[41] Ibid. An issue that this researcher also encountered during the course of the archival research.

including memoirs, private papers and newspaper articles, in order to contribute to filling this gap specifically as it pertains to the peace walls built in the earliest years of the Troubles between 1969 and 1971.

Although the peace walls were initially designed to provide security for residents living along the dividing line,[42] the walls have had a multifaceted impact on the lives of interface residents far beyond the scope of their initial purpose. The extensive body of literature focused specifically on interface areas in Belfast[43] provides a window through which to better understand the everyday impact of the peace walls.[44] Despite the presence of the walls, security has consistently been a chief concern for interface residents throughout the Troubles and even during times of relative peace.[45] The interface areas of Belfast remain faced with a debilitating combination of social, security and economic challenges,[46] a situation of insecurity to which the peace walls have, arguably, directly contributed.[47] The cost of the Belfast peace walls can be calculated not only in

[42] For a concise and recent overview of the demographics of peace wall communities, see: Gormley-Heenan, et al., 'Analysing Baseline Data Around Peace Walls (4)'.
[43] For a detailed synopsis of the existing extensive literature on interface areas see: Conway and Byrne, *Interface Issues*. The Farset Community Think Tanks Project, the Island Pamphlet series provides an unparalleled window into the lives, concerns and experiences of interface residents, including their experiences of the Belfast peace walls, in their own words. For a particularly pertinent selection see: Hall, *Life on the Interface*; Hall, *Finding common ground*; Hall, *The East Belfast Interface (1)*; Hall, *The East Belfast Interface (2)*. A recent study documents oral histories of the peace walls from both sides of the divide in the Short Strand and Inner East area specifically, see: BIP, *Reflected Lives: Intergenerational oral histories of Belfast's peace wall communities*.
[44] For a testimonial of life on the dividing line in Belfast during the Troubles, see: Macaulay, *Little House on the Peace Line*. For a detailed window into the Belfast community of White City prior to the construction of the peace walls and a view of the walls today, see: Elliot, *Heartlands*.
[45] For insight into interfaces as recurrent flashpoints between communities, see: Heatley, *Interface*. For enlightening survey results, see: Mullan, *Peace Walls Programme Attitudinal Survey Summary of Results*, 5.; Byrne, et al., *Public Attitudes to Peace Walls (2015) Survey Results*, 15.; Byrne, Gormley-Heenan and Robinson, *Attitudes to Peace Walls*, 13.
[46] BIP, *Interface Communities and the Peace Process*, 3.
[47] Murtagh, *Ethnic Space and the Challenge to Land Use Planning*, 50-60.

construction and maintenance fees,[48] but in the role the walls play in contributing to the diminished quality of life for interface residents.[49]

In comparison to the persistent gaps in knowledge regarding the development of the peace line policy in 1969, significant research has been undertaken in recent years regarding the present-day and future policy implications of the Belfast peace walls. In 2013, the Northern Ireland Executive (NIE) asserted its commitment to dismantle all of the peace walls by 2023.[50] However, at the time of writing, only six barriers have been removed in Belfast with a further two removed in part and three barriers have been 'reclassified'.[51] A rich literature exists, which pre-dates the 2013 announcement of the NIE, analyzing the potential present-day policy responses to the walls within the wider context of interface areas.[52] Byrne, in particular, underlined the extent to which "[a]s a policy issue peace walls have been absent from the peace and political process".[53] This thesis contributes to the growing body of work focused on the policy level implication of these walls by providing detailed insight into the conditions that contributed to the initial development of the peace line policy.

A key area of research in recent years has been around the potential removal of the Belfast peace walls. Politicians, community workers, journalists and scholars alike have contributed to an examination of the potential avenues for the removal of the walls as well as the potential challenges.[54] A key theme unearthed through this area of study is

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[48] Ibid., 25-27;29.
[49] Ibid., 27-28;29.
[50] NIE, 'Together: Building a United Community', 9.
[51] BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*, 5.
[52] For examples, see: Byrne, 'The Belfast Peace Walls'; Gormley-Heenan, Byrne, and Robinson, 'The Berlin Walls of Belfast'; Murtagh, *Ethnic Space and the Challenge to Land Use Planning*, 32-48;66-77.
[53] Byrne, 'The Belfast Peace Walls', 17.
[54] For examples, see: Cosstick, *Belfast*; Gormley-Heenan, Morrow and Byrne, 'Removing Peace Walls and Public Policy Brief (1)'; Morrow, Byrne and Gormley-Heenan, 'Removing Peace Walls and Public Policy 2'; Byrne, Gormley-Heenan, Morrow, 'Removing peace walls and Public Policy (3)'; Gormley-

the glaring disconnect between government policy for removal of the walls and the security realities experienced by those living in the shadow of the walls.[55] As this thesis will shortly explore, this is a situation not so dissimilar from the atmosphere in which the first peace lines emerged on the streets of Belfast. As part of the wider inquiry into the removal of the barriers, a select number of surveys have been carried out to understand present-day perceptions of the Belfast peace walls. Despite the presence of the peace walls, fear and concerns for safety remain prevalent issues for those living in the shadow of the walls.[56]

In order for the peace walls to be removed successfully, local level agency and support for the efforts will be imperative.[57] Furthermore, intangible barriers persist in the way of efforts to remove the walls, including a lack of consensus among all parties involved about the definition of a peace wall.[58] This study contributes to this conversation by providing an in-depth history of the emergence of the peace walls, which serves to enhance the existing understanding of what constitutes a peace wall. Before we can begin to understand the impact of these barriers and to examine potential avenues for their removal, we need to appreciate what prompted their construction in the first place.

Although peace walls exist outside of Belfast in Northern Ireland,[59] this study focuses on the case of the Belfast peace walls since it was in this city that the policy was

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Heenan, et al., 'Analysing Baseline Data Around Peace Walls (4)'; Morrow, et al., 'Analysing Baseline Data on Peace Walls (6)'.

[55] Gormley-Heenan, Morrow and Byrne, 'Removing Peace Walls and Public Policy Brief (1)', 5-6.

[56] Mullan, *Peace Walls Programme Attitudinal Survey Summary of Results*, 5-6.; Byrne, et al., *Public Attitudes to Peace Walls (2015) Survey Results*, 15-16.; Byrne, Gormley-Heenan and Robinson, *Attitudes to Peace Walls*, 13.

[57] Gormley-Heenan, et al., 'Analysing Baseline Data Around Peace Walls (4)', 4.

[58] Gormley-Heenan, Morrow and Byrne, 'Removing Peace Walls and Public Policy Brief (1)', 2-3.

[59] BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*, 8;10. For an illuminating study from which to compare the types of interfaces in contested space elsewhere in Northern Ireland with the Belfast peace walls, see: Bell, Jarman and Harvey, *Beyond Belfast*.

first implemented. Belfast appears to have been the location of the earliest example of the use of walls in divided societies to separate opposing communities. The first peace lines went up in 1922 in Belfast,[60] followed only later by similar walls internationally, including in Palestine in 1936[61] and Cyprus in about 1956.[62] Since then, this policy of separation has been applied locally in Derry/Londonderry, Lurgan and Portadown,[63] as well as internationally in Baghdad, Iraq.[64] In the case of Baghdad, the Belfast peace walls provided a template for the United States military to address the situation of sectarian violence in Iraq's capital city in 2007,[65] a connection that has remained largely under the radar.[66] Belfast style walls were touted, in the words of a Belfast police official, as a means to provide residents with "'security first and then normalize and build'".[67] The mere persistence of the once temporary peace walls and the continued intercommunal tension in Belfast challenges this assessment. Nevertheless, the United States authorities asserted that the barriers would be "temporary"[68] and leant heavily on the Belfast peace wall model to build the Baghdad security barriers,[69] suggesting their interpretation of the walls as a viable tool for security in the face of intercommunal violence.

The existing body of research focused on the peace walls provides a solid foundation from which to dig deep into the archives to analyze the dynamics of

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[60] This claim will be explored in-depth in Chapter I.
[61] *PP,* 21 April 1936. For insight into the related period of violence in 1936, see: Morris, *Righteous Victims*, 128-144. For further context regarding the similar patterns of intercommunal conflict along lines of confrontation in Northern Ireland and Palestine, see: Wilson, 'Turbulent Stasis', 66.
[62] Calame and Charlesworth, *Divided Cities*, 123;128;133.; Foley, *Legacy of Strife*, 60.; Morgan, *Sweet and Bitter Island*, 232.
[63] BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*, 8;10.
[64] For a discussion of barriers as a counterinsurgency technique in Baghdad, see: *TG*, 27 April 2007; *TG*, 14 September 2007; Kilcullen, *Out of the Mountains*, 19.
[65] *TG*, 14 September 2007.
[66] For example, Graham discussed the technique in the context of wider security efforts in Baghdad, but did not mention the connection to Belfast. See: Graham, *Cities Under Siege*, 129;240-244.
[67] *TG*, 14 September 2007.
[68] *TG*, 27 April 2007.
[69] *TG*, 14 September 2007.

intercommunal conflict that influenced the construction of these barriers along lines of division in Belfast. This thesis offers a nuanced examination of the mechanism of conflict management embodied in the Belfast peace walls, which has in turn influenced the construction of walls beyond the city of Belfast, while remaining vastly unexplored in the existing scholarship. By delving into a detailed examination of the emergence of this policy of 'security through separation' this study opens a new window into the study of a pivotal period in the Northern Irish conflict and the dynamics of intercommunal violence on the streets of Belfast in September 1969.

Riots and Residential Segregation: A Geographical Template for Division

The persistence of division between the two main communities has been a defining feature of the region, known today as Northern Ireland, for generations. The deep divide between the Catholic and Protestant communities far pre-dates both the peace walls and the creation of Northern Ireland in 1920.[70] As historian A. C. Hepburn observed, the protracted conflict led members of the Catholic and Protestant communities to each share in, what he described, as the "bitter and long-standing division".[71] Barriers, both tangible and intangible, have themselves become part of this shared experience for communities on either side of the divide in Northern Ireland. Although the perceived divisions between the two conflicting communities may not be as wide as in other divided societies worldwide, the conflict in the region has persisted for many generations.[72]

[70] For further context regarding partition, see: Mullholland, *Northern Ireland*, 23-24.; Mulholland, *The Longest War*, 28-30.
[71] Hepburn, *A Past Apart*, 137.
[72] Ibid.

Of particular interest to this study are the geographical lines of division upon which the peace lines were built in Belfast. The recurrent patterns of violence and retreat to residential segregation throughout the conflict in the years prior to, and at the start of the Troubles, played a pivotal role in solidifying flashpoints between communities,[73] which in turn contributed to the broader geographical patterns of division within the city. These patterns of intercommunal violence shaped the landscape of the city, providing a geographical template of division for the construction of physical barriers between communities in Belfast during periods of violence and eventually the implementation of the official peace line policy in 1969. Thus, the present-day locations of the walls not only represent existing areas of confrontation, but also reflect the legacy of division within the city itself. With this in mind, this thesis builds on an examination of the geographical patterns of division in the city of Belfast, focusing specifically on the impact of riots and residential segregation during periods of violence on the sectarian landscape of the city prior to the outbreak of the Troubles in 1969.

The stark geographical lines of division between communities emerged at the start of the nineteenth century as the city of Belfast underwent a substantial growth in population in which the demographics of the previously predominately Protestant city began to shift.[74] Although initially the limited number of Catholic inhabitants in the city were not perceived as a threat by their Protestant neighbors, with the onset of industrialization and the increase in the number of Catholic inhabitants, economic fears, particularly among working-class Protestants, increased congruently.[75] As the town

[73] Darby, *Intimidation and the Control of Conflict in Northern Ireland*, 148;151-152;167.
[74] Hepburn, *A Past Apart*, 3;139.; Jones, *A Social Geography of Belfast*, 34-35;42.; De Paor, *Divided Ulster*, 47-48.; Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*, 143.
[75] De Paor, *Divided Ulster*, 47-48.

grew, members of the Protestant and Catholic communities often gravitated to residential areas dominated by members of their own community. For example, members of the Catholic community who moved to Belfast after 1800 tended to reside in the immediate vicinity of the present-day Falls Road and Divis Street.[76] This meant that the Catholic community of the Falls Road was bordered on one side by the Protestant Shankill Road and on the other by the Protestant community of Sandy Row.[77] The Catholic population also tended to congregate in Ardoyne in north Belfast, in the Markets closer to the city centre and in a small area surrounding the Church of St Matthew in east Belfast.[78] Predominately Protestant communities often surrounded these Catholic centres of population in the city.[79]

While sections of the city gained single identity characteristics starting in the nineteenth century, the lines of division between the communities were often not overtly tangible, and members of an opposing religion could choose to live in an area of the city in which they were the minority, until the lines of division became particularly solidified in 1920.[80] Although the Catholic and Protestant working-class communities may have settled in different areas of the city, they still lived in extremely close proximity to one another. For instance, the dividing lines between communities could be found bisecting

[76] Hirst, *Religion, politics and violence in nineteenth-century Belfast*, 14.; Jones, *A Social Geography of Belfast*, 30-31.; Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*, 144-145.
[77] Barritt and Carter, *The Northern Ireland Problem*, 71.; Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*, 144-145.
[78] Barritt and Carter, *The Northern Ireland Problem*, 71.; Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 41-48.; Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*, 144-145.
[79] Hepburn, *A Past Apart*, 8-9.; Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 49.
[80] Hirst, *Religion, politics and violence in nineteenth-century Belfast*, 15.; Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 49;52.

individual streets across the city,[81] a pattern of division still present in the twenty-first century.[82]

These lines of division between communities were particularly influenced by rioting. The historian A. T. Q. Stewart described riots in the city of Belfast as "a fact of life",[83] while Hepburn noted that riots between the two main communities were "endemic in the history of Belfast".[84] As Stewart demonstrated, using the metaphor of 'seismic zones', a pattern of violence consistently erupted along well known fault lines during periods of tension in Belfast.[85] The occurrence of riots along these lines served to reinforce residential segregation as residents sought security within the relative safety of their own communities in response to intercommunal violence.[86] While in times of relative peace in the city, the lines of division became less distinct, the occurrence of intercommunal violence acted to solidify these divisions.[87]

Political events, particularly uncertainty, could act to spark riots, which would in turn strengthen the existing residential segregation.[88] As the nineteenth century progressed the riots increased in severity in response to the political atmosphere on the island as well as due to the increasingly widespread use of guns during the riots

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[81] Prince and Warner, *Belfast and Derry in Revolt*, 50.
[82] BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*.
[83] Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*, 138.
[84] Hepburn, *A Past Apart*, 174.
[85] Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*, 143. Townshend also described this pattern of violence, referring to the areas of violence between communities as 'shatter zones'. See: Townshend, *Political Violence in Ireland*, 40.
[86] Hirst, *Religion, politics and violence in nineteenth-century Belfast*, 47;157-164.; Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 38.; Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*, 145. Hepburn identified the 1857 riots as a key turning point in prompting a stark solidifying of residential segregation in the city. The period of serious riots from 1857 to 1886 enhanced the residential segregation, leading to a situation in which the working-class areas of Belfast completely split along ethnic lines. See: Hepburn, *A Past Apart*, 117;149.
[87] Ibid., 121-122.; Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 51.
[88] Hepburn, *A Past Apart*, 121.; Hirst, *Religion, politics and violence in nineteenth-century Belfast*, 188.; Mulholland, *Northern Ireland*, 11.; Mulholland, *The Longest War*, 14.

themselves.[89] Townshend astutely observed that riots, similar to other patterns in the region's robust history, "seem to have been frozen in time".[90] Thus, the riots that broke out on the streets of Belfast in 1969 were not a new occurrence for a city that had endured, and in turn been shaped by, periods of protracted rioting for generations.

Although scholars disagree on the precise date for the occurrence of the first sectarian riot in Belfast, it is clear that riots became a significant feature of life in the city from the 1800s onwards.[91] As previously explored, the 1800s saw the emergence of industrialization in the city and with it came a dramatic increase in population and shift in demographics as many of the new workers were Catholic.[92] Along with the new residents came patterns of violence from the rural areas.[93] The increase in the Catholic population of Belfast in turn also influenced a swelling of the ranks within the Protestant political society of the Orange Order.[94] At the same time, Catholics and Protestants struggled for advantage in the turbulent context of rapid urbanisation and industrialisation.[95] This struggle formed the bedrock of division in Belfast society, which

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[89] Hirst, *Religion, politics and violence in nineteenth-century Belfast*, 188;193.
[90] For a detailed discussion of the pattern of "the Belfast riot" since its inception in the early nineteenth century, see: Townshend, *Political Violence in Ireland*, 40.
[91] Scholars have put forward 1812, 1813, and 1835, as potential dates for the emergence of sectarian riots in Belfast. See: Boyd, *Holy War in Belfast*, 9.; Darby, 'The Historical Background', 17.; Hepburn, *A Past Apar*t, 1.; Hirst, *Religion, politics and violence in nineteenth-century Belfast*, 20.; Mulholland, *Northern Ireland*, 11.; Mulholland, *The Longest War*, 13.; Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*, 140.; Townshend, *Political Violence in Ireland*, 40. Although some scholars place emphasis on the more serious bouts of rioting, a survey of the existing literature shows the extent to which rioting was prevalent in Belfast, with riots occurring in the city during the following years prior to the outbreak of the Trouble in 1969: 1812, 1813, 1832, 1835, 1841, 1843, 1852, 1857, 1864, 1872, 1880, 1884, 1886, 1898, 1907, 1909, 1912, 1919, 1920, 1921, 1922, 1935, 1964. See: Boyd, *Holy War in Belfast*, 9.; Farrell, *Rituals and Riots*, 126.; Hepburn, *A Past Apart*, 1;4-5;174.; Mulholland, *Northern Ireland*, 11.; Mulholland, *The Longest War*, 14.; Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*, 140-141.; Wright, *Northern Ireland*, 16;19.
[92] Hepburn, *A Past Apart*, 31-32.; Mulholland, *The Longest War*, 15.; Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*, 144.
[93] Hirst, *Religion, politics and violence in nineteenth-century Belfast*, 19.; Mulholland, *Northern Ireland*, 11.; Mulholland, *The Longest War*, 14.; Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*, 140-141. For a detailed study of the 'urbanization' of rioting, see: Farrell, *Rituals and Riots*, 125-153.
[94] Mulholland, *Northern Ireland*, 14.; Mulholland, *The Longest War*, 17. For further information regarding the Orange Order, see the Glossary.
[95] Farrell, *Rituals and Riots*, 129-130.

in addition to a divided educational system, demagogic Protestant preachers and the general unease among the Protestant population when faced with Irish nationalism, served to fuel the frequent emergence of sectarian riots in Belfast.[96]

Historian Sean Farrell observed that sectarian riots had become virtually synonymous with the city, similar to its reputation for shipbuilding and textiles at the start of the 1860s.[97] Later, during the nineteenth century, the riots actively engaged a diverse range of participants from children to adults, including both men and women.[98] Rather ominously, given the formidable peace walls standing on streets of Belfast today, Townshend observed that as the city grew the importation of this type of violence provided an opportunity for the different communities to maintain their identities meaning that "[t]he sectarian divide was too functional to be permitted to disappear".[99] Over time, the riots in Belfast served not only to highlight the deep divisions within society, but also to embed these divisions further.

Beyond creating an unpleasant reputation for the city, the riots had a significant impact on Northern Irish society from the individual to the political level. At an individual level, the death and destruction brought about by riots had a detrimental effect on everyday life.[100] Fear, particularly the fear of intercommunal violence, was also a strong determinant in the hardening of residential segregation when faced with violence or even simply the potential for violence.[101] At a local level, building on the fear instilled at the individual level, the riots exacerbated residential segregation as people sought

[96] Ibid.; Mulholland, *Northern Ireland*, 14.; Mulholland, *The Longest War*, 17.
[97] Farrell, *Rituals and Riots*, 125.
[98] Hirst, *Religion, politics and violence in nineteenth-century Belfast*, 188.
[99] Townshend, *Political Violence in Ireland*, 46.
[100] Farrell, *Rituals and Riots*, 131-132.
[101] Hepburn, *A Past Apart*, 121-122.

safety within their own community.[102] Moreover, at a political level, the riots contributed to the divided political culture.[103] Thus, riots played a pivotal role in forging the division between communities in Belfast, from the individual to the political level, including through entrenching patterns of residential segregation.[104]

The legacy of persistent rioting in Belfast offered a model of violence for future generations, which in turn served to further cement tensions between the Catholic and Protestant communities.[105] The very same lines of division that saw the occurrence of intercommunal violence in the form of riots during the nineteenth century again experienced similar bouts of violence during the Troubles.[106] Townshend noted that the occurrence of rioting in 1886 and the local level conditions that contributed to the riots were, in his words, already, "traditional".[107] With the onset of the Troubles in 1969, violence erupted along the very same lines as during previous bouts of violence, where even certain streets once again became sites of conflict.[108]

These lines of division between the two communities were not only historical flashpoints, but also served as active theatres of war for intercommunal violence during the Troubles.[109] While residential segregation certainly provides a degree of security, offering both physical protection and a means to maintain a community's culture, it remains, in the words of Hepburn, "an imperfect vehicle for delivering stability".[110]

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[102] Farrell, *Rituals and Riots*, 131-132.; Darby, 'The Historical Background', 17.; Prince and Warner, *Belfast and Derry in Revolt*, 49-50.
[103] Farrell, *Rituals and Riots*, 131-132.
[104] Hepburn, *A Past Apart*, 11.
[105] Doyle, *Fighting Like the Devil for the Sake of God*, 244-245.
[106] Mulholland, *The Longest War*, 16.
[107] Townshend, *Political Violence in Ireland*, 185.
[108] PRONI, DCR/1/111 ['Future Policy on Areas of Confrontation: Second (and Final) Report of the Joint Working Party on Processions etc', April 1971].
[109] Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 472.; Farrell, *Rituals and Riots*, 138.; McKittrick and McVea, *Making Sense of the Troubles*, 62-63.; Parkinson, *Belfast's Unholy War*, 15-16.
[110] Hepburn, *A Past Apart*, 122.

Nevertheless, in the face of repeated instances of intercommunal violence, the patterns of residential segregation have been enhanced with each bout of intercommunal violence.[111]

Methodology

In 1990, as the violence of the Troubles continued, scholar of political science, John Whyte stated: "[i]t is quite possible that, in proportion to size, Northern Ireland is the most heavily researched area on earth".[112] Although this body of knowledge surrounding the conflict in Northern Ireland has only continued to grow since 1990, the Belfast peace walls and their initial emergence on the streets of Belfast in 1969 remains underexamined. As observed by scholars of the Troubles, Prince and Warner: "The world will keep changing, and so will the ways in which historians study the past. There will always be something new to be said about the start of the Troubles".[113] This thesis situates the emergence of the Belfast peace walls within its wider historical context through a qualitative methodology, underpinned by the method of historical analysis.

Historically focused examinations of the Northern Irish conflict figure prominently in the existing literature. One such example, is the historian A. T. Q. Stewart's *The Narrow Ground: The Roots of Conflict in Ulster* in which he identifies and examines patterns present in the protracted conflict between the two communities.[114] In order to identify such patterns, Stewart takes a 'long view', situating the more modern periods of violence within the history of the region to demonstrate that existing features

[111] Ibid.
[112] Whyte, *Interpreting Northern Ireland*, viii.
[113] Prince and Warner, *Belfast and Derry in Revolt*, 261.
[114] Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*; McGarry and O'Leary, *Explaining Northern Ireland*, 230.

of the conflict have historical roots.[115] However, this approach is not completely uncontroversial, as so clearly demonstrated by scholars John McGarry and Brendan O'Leary.[116] For instance, Stewart himself viewed the conflict through a unionist perspective and in addition placed explanatory emphasis on a cultural window through which to examine the conflict.[117] With such critiques of the 'long view' approach in mind, this thesis strives to remain neutral, examining the emergence of the peace walls from all sides and perspectives.

The 'long view' of this thesis focuses in detail on three pivotal moments in Belfast: 1922, 1935 and 1969. The sharp focus on these three periods, amidst the wider Northern Irish conflict, serves to provide a more detailed account of the striking micro-repetitions during intercommunal crises that took place decades apart, while also delineating the unique aspects of barrier building during each period. Furthermore, by situating the peace walls in their wider historical context the patterns and parallels of intercommunal violence in Belfast come to light, including not only the dividing lines along which the conflict repeatedly emerged, but also the subsequent eerily similar official responses to the violence.[118] Writing shortly after the outbreak of the Troubles in 1969, historian Liam de Paor observed: "The whole Northern Irish problem is complex, and its complexities are entangled in history".[119] This thesis reaches back into the depths of history to untangle one crucial aspect of the conflict in Northern Ireland: the emergence of the Belfast peace walls.

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[115] Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*; McGarry and O'Leary, *Explaining Northern Ireland*, 230-31.
[116] For an insightful critique of this approach see: McGarry and O'Leary, *Explaining Northern Ireland*, 96;106;227;230-31.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*, 154.
[119] De Paor*, Divided Ulster*, 14.

This thesis focuses in particular on the local level perceived territorial divisions, similar to what Stewart refers to as 'the narrow ground', between communities in Belfast to examine the patterns and parallels of the conflict and the use of barriers along lines of division. In Belfast, and indeed Northern Ireland more broadly, the two main opposing communities have lived "cheek by jowl" for generations[120] on a limited piece of land. Through a nuanced examination of the dynamics of intercommunal conflict at the local level,[121] the interaction of violence, fear and negotiation on the dividing line in Belfast gains further clarity. As observed by Stewart:

> "The war in Ulster is being fought on a narrower ground than even the most impatient observer might imagine, a ground every inch of which has its own associations and special meaning […] To understand the full significance of any episode of sectarian conflict, you need to know the precise relationship of the locality in which it occurred to the rest of the mosaic of settlement. But the checker board on which the game is played has a third dimension. What happens in each square derives a part of its significance, and perhaps all of it, from what happened there at some time in the past. Locality and history are welded together".[122]

Through a micro-level analysis of the dynamics of conflict along lines of division in Belfast, this thesis seeks to situate the emergence of the peace walls in their wider historical context. Despite the impressive scale of research that has been undertaken regarding the conflict in Northern Ireland, it is the political level rather than the local level that tends to garner the most attention.[123] Thus, much remains to be studied regarding the dynamics of the conflict at the local level.

This thesis examines the micro-level dynamics of intercommunal violence primarily at the start of the Troubles within the context of the legacy of division in

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[120] Mulholland, *The Longest War*, 1-2.
[121] For an example of this approach to the study of intercommunal violence at the micro-level, see: Wilson, *Frontiers of Violence*.
[122] Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*, 181-182.
[123] Darby, *Intimidation and the Control of Conflict in Northern Ireland*, viii.

Northern Ireland. In doing so, the research draws on archival materials, which tend to use the terms 'Catholic' and 'Protestant' when discussing the two communities in Northern Ireland. Thus, the use of the terms 'Catholic' and 'Protestant' when discussing issues, such as territorial claims, should not be taken as this author's endorsement of such social constructions, but rather a reflection of the evidence found in the archival materials upon which this thesis is based.

The historian Richard English effectively lays out what he describes as the "five key elements of a distinctively historical approach".[124] Given the absence of a comprehensive history of the Belfast peace walls in the existing literature, this thesis builds on this historical approach to trace the emergence of the walls through extensive archival research. The researcher engaged with the evidence available in the archives through an empiricist approach, allowing the evidence to lead the trajectory of the research. The first key component articulated by English underlines the significance of the contribution of the historical approach which takes into account what he describes as "long memory".[125] This lends itself to what English defines as the second key component of the historical method, the opportunity to put forward "a profoundly context-specific approach to explanation".[126] This 'long view' provides a crucial window into examining the emergence of the peace walls.

The third component outlined by English is "the range, nature, and interrogation of sources and evidence", which form part of the historical method.[127] This thesis consulted a wide range of sources, such as newspaper articles, memoirs, police reports,

[124] English, *Does Terrorism Work?*, 18-30.
[125] Ibid.,18.
[126] Ibid., 20.
[127] Ibid., 21.

community publications and photographs, in order to build a nuanced picture of the interaction of local and political level dynamics that led to the development of the peace line policy. The sources themselves derive from multiple physical and online archives.[128] As part of the archival research and in order to examine the dynamics of intercommunal conflict on the very streets of Belfast, this thesis builds simultaneously on the anthropological approach of 'thick description'.[129] This approach immersed the researcher in the local and political level perspectives of the conflict through an interrogation of diverse sources of evidence.

While the archives contain a wealth of information pertaining to the peace walls, they remain an incomplete historical record.[130] As such care was taken at each turn to contextualize and interrogate each piece of evidence. For instance, the government records consulted, while a window into the development of the peace line policy, were at times only partially available.[131] The archival sources themselves are not without their own set of biases. For example, newspaper reports, while an important perspective on the events at the local level in Belfast during periods of intercommunal violence, are influenced by a variety of factors, including the availability of information at the time of

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[128] The author conducted research in person at the following archives: Belfast Central Library; Linen Hall Library; Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, Special Collections at Queen's University Belfast, The National Archives of Ireland, The National Archives, Imperial War Museum. The author consulted the following online archives: The British Newspaper Archive; CAIN (Conflict Archive on the Internet).

[129] Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 6. For an example of a detailed ethnographic approach to the study of local level dynamics of conflict in Belfast during the early years of the Troubles, which serves to shed light on broader conflict issues in the region, see: Burton, *The politics of legitimacy*.

[130] For a discussion of the related merits and limitations of archival research, see: Claus and Marriott, *History*, 366-390.; Evans, *In Defence of History*, 88-89.; Trachtenberg, *The Craft of International History*, 158. Scholars of the Troubles have confronted this issue in their own research, for example, see: Prince and Warner, *Belfast and Derry in Revolt*, 2.

[131] Previous researchers have encountered similar issues of availability when consulting government documents, for example, see: Charters, *Whose Mission, Whose Orders?*, 19. In the context of this research project, given that the research focused on records directly related to the conflict, from time to time files discussing security issues were sometimes closed, others only partially open with sections omitted or portions of available documents were redacted, often to protect the names of the individuals listed in the documents. In addition, given that the events of the Troubles are still relatively recent, additional existing files have yet to be released.

reporting and the perspectives of their readership.[132] In order to address the biases and associated limitations of the available sources, the researcher sought to triangulate evidence in order to develop a more complete and nuanced picture of the emergence of the Belfast peace walls. For example, when examining the development of the peace line policy the author consulted official government records, private papers, memoirs, newspaper reports, photographic collections and pamphlets.

Stewart described an historian as akin to "an oceanographer rather than a stroller on a promenade" who creates charts based on the available data and in the face of limited evidence still has an opportunity to "read between the lines" to examine the past.[133] The absence of information in existing sources is also, in and of itself, informative. For example, the memoirs of those in key positions of power in London and at Stormont during the emergence of the peace walls, make little, if any reference at all to these barriers, signaling the extent to which the importance of the peace walls has been missed, even by those who presided over their construction.[134] Consulting a broad range of archival sources in itself served as an important mechanism in the study of these barriers of division.

As identified by English in his fourth point about the historical method, this historical approach does not entirely rely on theory, but does contribute to the theoretical debates.[135] Therefore, a study of the history of the Belfast peace walls, provides an

[132] This issue has been highlighted by previous scholars of the intercommunal violence in Northern Ireland. For example, see: Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 4.
[133] This concept is explored further by Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*, 16-17.
[134] Callaghan, *A House Divided*; Faulkner, *Memoirs of a Statesman*; Healey, *The Time of My Life*; Wilson, *The Labour Government 1964-1970.*
[135] English, *Does Terrorism Work?*, 25.

opportunity to understand both their past and present roles between communities.[136] As English elucidated in his fifth and final point about the historical method, this approach remains wary of drawing conclusions about the "inevitability in human behavior" and instead, engages in a nuanced analysis of past events without such confining constraints.[137] Thus, the historical approach of this thesis contributes to broader discussions of the implications of the peace walls among the wider academic community.

As observed by Townshend in his own work on the history of Irish political violence: "'Total history' only happens once, and not subsequently".[138] This thesis does not purport to constitute a definitive and complete history of the Belfast peace walls, but rather, with deference to the limitations of the available sources, seeks to present as complete a picture as possible of the emergence of the Belfast peace walls. Furthermore, as shown by Townshend:

> "A historical account can, however, demonstrate the way in which certain avenues of political choice have been closed off. Without such understanding it is unlikely that successful policies can be formulated".[139]

Thus, this thesis provides a, heretofore unopened, window into the emergence of the policy of 'security through separation' embodied in the Belfast peace walls.

As previously demonstrated, this thesis employed a qualitative methodology that allowed the researcher to delve deep into the archives to examine the development of the policy of 'security through separation' embodied in the peace walls. As part of the overarching research project, the author conducted a wide range of interviews with individuals from interface residents to political leaders. The opportunity to meet with and

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[136] For a discussion of history as a window into the past and the present, see: Cannadine, 'Preface', xii.; Carr, *What is History?*, 24.
[137] English, *Does Terrorism Work?*, 27.
[138] Townshend, *Political Violence in Ireland*, vii.
[139] Ibid., ix.

learn from the perspectives of those individuals living within the shadow of the peace walls as well as those individuals working on wider policy issues related to the barriers, shaped this researcher's understanding of the present-day Belfast peace walls. However, as the project evolved it became focused primarily on the emergence of the early peace lines in 1969. Thus, while the sixteen individual interviews have not been cited in this thesis,[140] the discussions during these interviews demonstrated the pervasive impact that the walls continue to have in the city of Belfast, which influenced this author's decision to investigate why the Belfast peace walls were built in the first place.

Chapter Outline

As we approach the fiftieth anniversary of the construction of the Belfast peace walls, many questions remain, including: 'What prompted the construction of the walls?'; 'How did a temporary solution become a permanent presence on the streets of Belfast?'; 'Was there an alternative to the construction of peace line in the early months of the Troubles?', to name just a few. In order to answer these questions, we must look back to the pivotal events of September 1969 and the legacy of division in Northern Ireland prior to the outbreak of the Troubles.[141] This thesis aims to make several distinct contributions to the literature on the Northern Irish conflict.

First, Chapter I seeks to situate the emergence of the first peace line in Belfast in 1969 in its wider historical context. Previous studies have often identified 1935 as the first year a barrier was used to provide security through separation in a situation of

[140] A comprehensive list of the interviews is included in the Bibliography.
[141] This thesis focuses primarily on three periods in the history of Northern Ireland during which riots erupted on the streets of Belfast, leading authorities to implement a policy of 'security through separation' as a response to the intercommunal violence. For a history of the wider conflict in Northern Ireland, see: Bardon, *A History of Ulster*; Bourke and McBride (eds.), *The Princeton History of Modern Ireland*; Mulholland, *The Longest War*.

intercommunal conflict in Belfast.[142] However, this thesis demonstrates that the emergence of the first known barriers to separate opposing communities during an outbreak of intercommunal violence occurred more than a decade earlier, at the very start of the 1920s Troubles. While limited reference is made in the literature to the temporary walls of the 1920s,[143] the existing studies do not engage in a detailed analysis of the emergence and subsequent role of these walls between the two communities. This chapter establishes a pattern of top-down, temporary barrier building at the hands of the authorities that began in the 1920s and re-emerged in 1935.

Despite the scale and ferocity of the violence in Belfast at the start of the 1920s, it has not garnered as much attention as the modern Troubles.[144] Writing at the start of the modern Troubles, historian Andrew Boyd reflected on the comparative significance of this period of violence, which were in his words: "Far more terrifying than all the disturbances of the nineteenth century were those of the years from 1920 until 1922".[145] While studies of the violence of the 1920s may have been eclipsed by a surge in scholarship about the modern Troubles, it is certainly a period of violence in Belfast's history worthy of its own in-depth analysis. It set the mold for future confrontations. A select number of scholars have since made substantial contributions to filling this existing void in our knowledge of the 1920s, demonstrating in particular the impact of the violence on the lives of Belfast's residents.[146] This thesis adds to this expanding body

[142] Byrne, 'The Belfast Peace Walls', 25.; Connolly and McIntosh, 'Imagining Belfast', 51. These studies appear to rely on the work of Denis Smyth when discussing the 1935 barrier. See: Smyth, *Sailortown.*
[143] Cosstick, *Belfast*, 42.; Heatley, *Interface*, 81.
[144] Parkinson, *Belfast's Unholy War*, 9.
[145] Boyd, *Holy War in Belfast*, 176.
[146] Crucial studies of this period include: Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937'; Parkinson, *Belfast's Unholy War*; Wilson, *Frontiers of Violence*; Wilson, '"The Most Terrible Assassination That Has Yet Stained the Name of Belfast"'.

of literature in Chapter I through a micro-level examination of the previously underexplored emergence of the first known iterations of peace lines in the city of Belfast and their subsequent perceived role in ensuring security through the separation of communities during the Troubles of the 1920s and the later 1935 riots.

Secondly, while the outbreak of the later Troubles in 1969 has been well documented in the existing academic literature,[147] the genesis of the peace walls remained largely undiscussed until now. Scholars of the peace walls tend to agree that the walls first began to emerge on the streets of Belfast in 1969.[148] However, the precise chain of events that led to their construction has yet to be thoroughly investigated. Chapter II focuses specifically on the situation in Belfast during August and early September 1969 to more clearly delineate the precise interaction of structural factors as well as the local and political level context in which the Belfast peace walls first emerged. In contrast to the official barricades from the 1920s and 1935-36, at the start of the Troubles barricades were no longer an auxiliary measure for the authorities when faced with intercommunal violence. This chapter provides a detailed examination of the development of the policy of 'security through separation', which sat at the core of the authorities' efforts to address the emergence of intercommunal violence on the streets of Belfast in 1969.

Thirdly, Chapter III subsequently examines the initial implementation of the peace line policy by the British Army as part of their broader efforts to address the situation of intercommunal conflict in Belfast. Although an evolving and rich literature

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[147] For a detailed, and almost day by day, account of the events in Northern Ireland from the beginning of 1968 to the beginning of 1969, see: Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*.

[148] Byrne, 'The Belfast Peace Walls', 30.; Cosstick, *Belfast*, 42. However, August 1969 is sometimes incorrectly referred to as the date the first peace line was built. For example, see: Nolan, *Northern Ireland Peace Monitoring Report Number Two,* 81.

exists focused specifically on the British Army's deployment in the Northern Irish conflict,[149] its direct role with regards to the peace line policy remains underexplored in the existing scholarship. This chapter seeks to situate the walls in their historical context and examine the street level implementation of the policy of separation, which was embodied in the construction of the peace walls, to shed light on the extent to which the autumn of 1969 constituted a critical period in the history of the Belfast peace walls.

Fourthly, building on the earlier examination of the development and implementation of the peace line policy in September 1969, Chapter IV investigates the potential alternatives to this policy of 'security through separation'. Through this exploration of the potential policy alternatives, it becomes clear that the structural, local and political factors identified in previous chapters, which shaped the official approach to the disturbances, contributed to the entrenchment of this policy of division on the streets of Belfast. Finally, the thesis draws to a close with an examination of the present-day legacy of the policy of 'security through separation'. Although the construction of the first peace line may have been heralded as a temporary solution in 1969, the concluding chapter demonstrates how swiftly the construction of peace lines became a key mechanism for the authorities to address the intercommunal violence along the dividing lines in Belfast. In the face of mounting intercommunal violence in 1969, the authorities remained focused on the short-term, seeking political expediency rather than sustainable solutions. In contrast, by way of conclusion, this thesis pauses to reflect on

[149] For accounts from the perspective of the army, see: Dewar, *The British Army in Northern Ireland*; Wharton, *A Long Long War*. For detailed academic accounts of the British Army's role in Northern Ireland, see: Burke, *An Army of Tribes*; Sanders and Wood, *Times of Troubles*. For a study of the interaction between military and civil interests at the start of the Troubles, see: Charters, *Whose Mission, Whose Orders?*. Further insightful studies include in particular: Hamill, *Pig in the Middle*.

the long-term implications of the policy of ‘security through separation’ embodied in the Belfast peace walls.

CHAPTER I

BELFAST'S BARRICADES: A LEGACY OF DIVISION

"Most of what was happening in Northern Ireland after 1969 seemed to the general public to be new and revolutionary, but to the historian a good deal of it was almost eerily familiar."
- A.T.Q. Stewart, 1977, 1989[150]

The Belfast peace walls have been built along lines of division between communities in the city since their inception in 1969. While the sheer longevity of the present-day peace walls may be unprecedented in the history of Belfast, 1969 was not the first time that such barriers emerged on the city's streets. Instead, the introduction of these barriers in 1969 formed part of a pattern of officially sanctioned 'security through separation' efforts employed by the authorities in situations of intercommunal violence in Belfast since the first half of the twentieth century. As historian Marc Mulholland observed in his work regarding the history of the conflict in Northern Ireland: "Sectarian patterns of conflict have reproduced through time and adapted to changed circumstances".[151] The use of barriers between communities is one such sectarian pattern of conflict, which previously remained vastly underexplored in the existing scholarship. Until now, examinations of the present-day peace walls have tended to focus on the existing role of the barriers between communities.[152]

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[150] Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*, 3-4.
[151] Mulholland, *The Longest War*, 1.
[152] A discussion of the existing literature focused on the Belfast peace walls can be found in the Introduction.

This chapter seeks to shift the conversation from a surface level analysis of the walls to one that incorporates their deep-rooted history in the streets of Belfast. In order to better understand the impetus behind the introduction of these barriers between communities by the British Army in 1969, we need to appreciate the ways in which the start of the Troubles and the subsequent response of the authorities were similar to earlier crises and in which ways they differed. This chapter situates the emergence of the peace line policy in its wider historical context, by delving into an analysis of the earliest iterations of peace lines built in the city during 1922-23 and 1935-36 respectively. By 1969, the use of barriers in situations of intercommunal conflict was part of an existing pattern of officially sanctioned approaches to violence on the streets of Belfast. The early iterations of barriers in 1922-23 and 1935-36, unlike their 1969 predecessors, served as temporary, top-down measures, applied only on a limited scale, designed to facilitate 'security through separation' in situations of intercommunal conflict in the city. Through a micro-level analysis of the emergence of these early barriers, this chapter seeks to establish the existing pattern of barrier building along lines of division in the city prior to outbreak of the Troubles in 1969.

1920s Belfast: Bombs, Bullets and Barriers

Northern Ireland emerged during the tumultuous period of the 1920s Troubles where it was immediately confronted with the issue of division between Catholic and Protestant, a schism in society that, as shown by the repeated riots in the city of Belfast, often resulted in violence.[153] Sectarian tensions were persistent in Belfast as the century began and the descent into ferocious violence on the streets of the city in 1920 brought

[153] Darby, 'The Historical Background', 20.; Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*, 140-141. For further context regarding the repeated riots in Belfast see the relevant discussion in the Introduction.

the intercommunal divisions to the fore.[154] In his detailed history of the region of Ulster, historian Jonathan Bardon described the situation in Belfast during July of 1920 as one of "outright sectarian warfare".[155] In just a two-year period, from July 1920 to June 1922, upwards of 450 people lost their lives as a result of the violence in Belfast.[156] Catholics made up about two-thirds of the fatalities in the city during this period, yet they only constituted a quarter of Belfast's population.[157] While the violence of the early 1920s was not dramatically worse in terms of the number of deaths compared to the violence at the start of the modern Troubles,[158] this earlier period of violence had a significant impact on the city and its residents, leaving a lasting acrimonious legacy on both sides of the divide.[159]

This period of violence brought the conflict directly to the doorsteps of Belfast residents. The violence infiltrated homes and places of business, even children became victims of the conflict, as the violence claimed the lives of people attempting to go about their daily routines in the city.[160] Women and children were not immune to the violence

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[154] Kernaghan, *Watching for Daybreak*, 35.; De Paor, *Divided Ulster*, 107.
[155] Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 470.
[156] Parkinson highlighted the difficulties in determining the precise number of deaths in Belfast during the 1920s Troubles, noting that existing estimates for the number of deaths tend to be between 416 and 455 with his calculation coming in at 498. Parkinson's own calculation encompasses the period of June 1920 to October 1922. See: Parkinson, *Belfast's Unholy War*, 12;326. For an in-depth analysis of the plausible reasons behind the wide range of figures for the number of deaths during this period in Belfast, see: Wilson, 'Boundaries, Identity and Violence', 432-433.
[157] Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 494.
[158] For example, in Northern Ireland 496 people lost their lives in 1972, with 294 dying in Belfast alone. A point of comparison, the first total figure draws on McKittrick et al.'s work, while the precise figure for Belfast draws from a separate data set by Sutton, which lists the total number of deaths in 1972 at 480. Despite the discrepancies between the two calculations, it is clear that Belfast experienced a significant portion of the deaths in 1972. See: McKittrick, et al., *Lost Lives*, 138.; Sutton, 'An Index of Deaths from the Conflict in Ireland'. For a further study that maps the deaths in Northern Ireland during the Troubles, see: Fay, Morrissey, and Smyth, *Mapping Troubles-Related Deaths in Northern Ireland*.
[159] Hepburn, *A Past Apart*, 174.; McKittrick and McVea, *Making Sense of the Troubles*, 4.; Parkinson, *Belfast's Unholy War*, 12.
[160] For detailed descriptions of this violence, see: Gannon, 'In the Catacombs of Belfast', 284-285.; Parkinson, *Belfast's Unholy War*; Wilson, *Frontiers of Violence*, 179-181.; Wilson, '"The Most Terrible Assassination That Has Yet Stained the Name of Belfast"', 83-106. Newspaper articles from the period

as the conflict itself was waged on the streets of the city, rather than some distant battlefield.[161] While the range of victims in age and gender gave the violence an air of randomness, it was still bounded since often victims were selected due to their membership in an opposing community and thus the violence on the city's streets comprised a situation of 'representative violence'.[162] At the same, the Irish Republican Army (IRA) was engaged in an ongoing insurgency directed against the Crown Forces, which augmented the ferocity of the violence in Belfast in its own right.[163] Furthermore, there was a tit for tat quality to the violence in the 1920s, with one side perpetrating violence in response to the violent actions of the other, which in turn contributed to a perpetuation of violence.[164]

A key reason for the surge in fatalities between 1920-22 was the availability of deadly weapons, in particular guns and bombs.[165] Furthermore, the violence ensued shortly after the end of the First World War, which meant that not only were weapons more readily available, but there were many men in the city with the training to use them with deadly force.[166] Sniping in particular became a means to inflict harm upon members of the perceived 'other' community.[167] As accounts of the violence from the period attest, assailants could engage in this activity without having to leave their own community.[168] In a situation where the division between the two opposing communities was so distinctly

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paint a poignant picture, for a selection from 1922 see: *BNL*, 6 January 1922; *TNWBP*, 16 February 1922; *SDT*, 20 March 1922.

[161] *BNL*, 3 April 1922; *TCWA*, 5 April 1922; *TNWBP*, 3 June 1922; Gannon, 'In the Catacombs of Belfast', 280;294.; Kenna, *Facts and Figures of the Belfast Pogrom 1920-22*, 101-112.

[162] See Wright's and Wilson's work for further analysis of 'representative violence': Wright, *Northern Ireland*, 11-12.; Wilson, *Frontiers of Violence*, 196-197.

[163] Parkinson, *Belfast's Unholy War*, 23;31.

[164] Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 488.; McFadden, *Ulster Voices*, 88.; Wright, *Northern Ireland*, 11-12.

[165] Parkinson, *Belfast's Unholy War*, 14;313.; Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*, 153.

[166] Ibid.; Wilson, *Frontiers of Violence*, 179-180.; Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 466.

[167] Parkinson, *Belfast's Unholy War*, 14.; Wilson, *Frontiers of* Violence, 179-180.

[168] *TNWBP*, 28 February 1922; Gannon, 'In the Catacombs of Belfast', 282.

delineated, particularly thanks to residential segregation, perpetrators of violence could be fairly certain of killing or wounding a member of the opposing community if the attack was carried out on an opposing community's territory.[169] This situation of outright conflict on the streets of Belfast and the extent to which the violence invaded the very homes of individuals on both sides of the divide, instilled fear in the city's residents.[170]

The violence and conflict of the 1920s caused disruption to everyday life and stoked terror across the city.[171] The violence even pervaded the city centre, in the form of gunfire, to a greater extent than it would later that same century during the modern Troubles.[172] However, it was the working-class residents of Belfast, both Catholic and Protestant, in particular, who endured the brunt of the violence during the 1920s,[173] a situation similar to the outbreak of violence in 1969.[174] In particular, during the 1920s Troubles, the areas where the two communities met bore the majority of the violence, whereas the more homogenous working-class areas in the city did not experience the same levels of violence.[175] As a Catholic visitor to Belfast in 1922 observed, the lines of division along which the two communities met were particularly dangerous: "It is at such meeting-places of opposing quarters that the danger is greatest. Here death lurks always in waiting for the unwary".[176]

The existence of the two warring communities living within each other's immediate vicinity throughout the city of Belfast contributed to the plethora of potential

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[169] Wright, *Northern Ireland*, 11-12.
[170] Wilson, *Frontiers of Violence*, 196-197.
[171] Ibid., 197.
[172] Parkinson, *Belfast's Unholy War*, 14-15.
[173] Wilson, *Frontiers of Violence*, 178.
[174] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume* 1, 47-62;222.
[175] See Wilson's work for further analysis of these patterns of violence: Wilson, *Frontiers of Violence*, 178.
[176] Gannon, 'In the Catacombs of Belfast', 286.

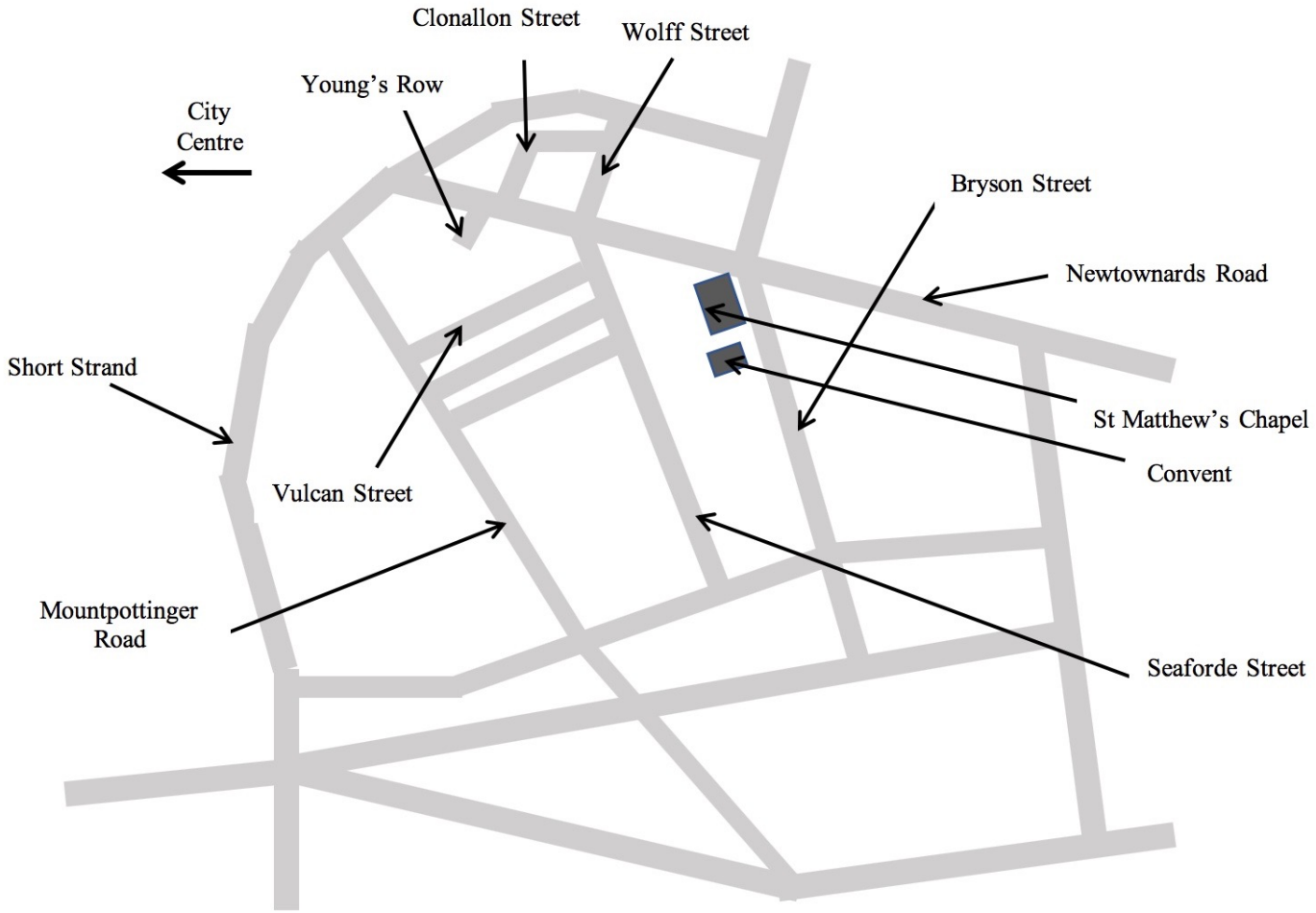
opportunities for intercommunal violence.[177] Furthermore, the close proximity availed perpetrators of a veritable tool box for violence and intimidation, which was used to devastating effect. For example, acts of intimidation during this period included verbal abuse, the dispatching of threats written in letters, arson, bombings and murder.[178] Due to acts of intimidation and outright violence, the landscape of the conflict ridden areas of the city themselves were transformed into battlefields.[179] As the Troubles of the 1920s continued, acts of horrific violence became part of everyday life, just as the presence of the soldiers, the armored cars and the bullet ridden homes contributed to the burgeoning war zone in Belfast.[180] It was in this atmosphere of ferocious sectarian conflict that the first peace line barriers emerged on the streets of Belfast, adding to the scarred landscape of the city.

The first iterations of peace lines in Belfast were built in 1922 in east Belfast where the Protestant and Catholic communities met, along the dividing line at Newtownards Road.[181] Until now, there appears to have been a tendency in the literature to only reference the existence of one barrier in east Belfast,[182] when there were actually two separate barriers built in the area in 1922. While the sectarian conflict was waged throughout the city of Belfast during the early 1920s, the area around Seaforde Street and the adjacent Newtownards Road in east Belfast garnered a reputation in newspapers at the time as 'notorious', a reflection of the recurrent intercommunal violence in the

[177] Martin's work demonstrated this in reference to patterns of migration during this period, see: Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 75.
[178] Ibid., 77.
[179] Wilson, *Frontiers of Violence*, 179.
[180] Gannon, 'In the Catacombs of Belfast', 280;282-283. For a detailed examination of the ways in which the city's residents adapted to this new rhythm of life see: Wilson, *Frontiers of Violence*, 180-181.
[181] HA/5/591 ['Erection of Barricades – Newtownards Road.', 4 May 1922].
[182] Heatley, *Interface*, 81.

immediate area.[183] In this part of east Belfast, a small Catholic residential enclave sat, surrounded on all sides, by members of the Protestant community.[184] This particular pattern of residential segregation along the lower Newtownards Road in east Belfast served as a geographical template for the subsequent emergence of barriers between the two communities during the 1920s Troubles.

[183] For example, see: *TNWBP*, 28 February 1922. Martin discussed the 'notorious' reputation that the area developed as well: Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 70.
[184] Parkinson, *Belfast's Unholy War*, 42.



Map 1: **East Belfast c.1920.** Map focused on the predominately Catholic area of east Belfast in 1920, highlighting the intersection of Young's Row and Seaforde Street with Newtownards Road. This map was drawn by the author based on existing maps of the area. Sources: Ordnance Survey Northern Ireland. *Town Plan of Belfast City Centre*. 8 Inches to 1 Mile. Belfast: Ordnance Survey Northern Ireland, 1939.; Bartholomew. *Belfast Street Atlas*. Edinburgh: Bartholomew, 1990.

The Catholic enclave in this area of east Belfast, known as Ballymacarret,[185] emerged in 1830 and later underwent a period of expansion in the years after 1886 up until 1920.[186] While the number of Catholics in the area increased, the majority of the population remained Protestant as the Troubles of the 1920s unfolded.[187] By the start of the 1920s, Catholic community members resided and worked in streets that were largely occupied by Protestants, which was interpreted by elements of the Protestant community as an encroachment of the Catholic community into their territory.[188] Seaforde Street in particular had previously been situated beyond the boundaries of the Catholic enclave in east Belfast, but in 1920 it was part of the perceived Catholic territory in this corner of Belfast.[189]

The close proximity of the two communities in this area of east Belfast not only heightened the sense of threat felt by both communities, but also provided ample opportunity for the occurrence of violence. From 1920 to 1922, seventy-six members of both the Protestant and Catholic communities in this area of east Belfast would die as a result of the conflict.[190] The acts of intimidation in Belfast more broadly, particularly directed against the Catholic community, occurred throughout the 1920s Troubles with the summer months of 1920 as well as the period between May and June of 1922 experiencing noticeable spikes in such activities.[191] As Parkinson demonstrates, there was a higher propensity for acts of intimidation in parts of the city where the perceived

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[185] For a history of the early years of Ballymacarret from the perspective of the Catholic community, see: Kernaghan, *Watching for Daybreak*, 1-10.
[186] Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 77.
[187] Gannon, 'In the Catacombs of Belfast', 280.; Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 77.
[188] Ibid., 78.
[189] Ibid.
[190] Kernaghan, *Watching for Daybreak*, 59.
[191] Parkinson, *Belfast's Unholy War*, 59.

territory of the minority community abutted the majority community's territory or where Catholic homes were situated on the edges of predominately Protestant areas.[192] In particular, the lower end of Newtownards Road, was the site of vicious sectarian conflict as the violence progressed, including evictions, shootings and bombings perpetrated out in the open on the city's streets.[193]

As the summer of 1920 arrived, an ominous situation of intercommunal tension continued to develop in Belfast, which was largely inflamed by external events in the wider region of Ulster.[194] The shipyard expulsions in east Belfast precipitated the subsequent rise in vicious intercommunal violence, which emerged first in this area of the city before spreading elsewhere.[195] The presence of one of the city's key industrial hubs in the immediate vicinity of east Belfast meant that this portion of the city experienced heightened levels of violence throughout the 1920s Troubles.[196] Certain areas were significantly more dangerous than neighboring streets, constituting what Wilson identifies as micro-boundaries.[197] In particular, the intersections of Seaforde Street and Young's Row with Newtownards Road emerged as particularly contentious flashpoints between the two communities and became centres of violence during the early years of the 1920s Troubles.[198]

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[192] Ibid.
[193] For an account the evictions see: Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 105-106.; Parkinson, *Belfast's Unholy War*, 42-46. As the violence progressed, newspaper articles provided an important glimpse into the omnipresent situation of conflict: *YPLI*, 27 February 1922; *BNL*, 28 February 1922; *BNL*, 13 May 1922; *TNWBP*, 3 June 1922; *BNL*, 3 June 1922; *TNWBP*, 16 June 1922.
[194] Parkinson, *Belfast's Unholy War*, 23-28.
[195] Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 470-474.; Parkinson, *Belfast's Unholy War*, 29-41.; Patterson, *Class Conflict and Sectarianism*, 115-142.
[196] Parkinson, *Belfast's Unholy War*, 50.
[197] Wilson, *Frontiers of Violence*, 178.
[198] Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 79-80;83-84.; *BNL*, 12 July 1921; *BNL*, 22 November 1921; *TNWBP*, 22 December 1921; *DJ*, 15 March 1922.

In an effort to address the mounting intercommunal violence in east Belfast, the military sought to separate the two communities. Initially, this approach of 'security through separation' constituted the insertion of barbed wire structures between the two communities at the ends of Seaforde Street and Wolff Street as the violence first kicked off in July 1920.[199] The barriers appear to have been put up on July 23, 1920, with soldiers placed on duty at the intersections as well.[200] The barbed wire structures at Seaforde Street were attached to a knife-rest frame,[201] which indicates that they were able to be put in place quickly as the barriers did not have to be built into the streets themselves. Just days earlier, Seaforde Street and the immediate area had been the site of looting and violence, during which the military had come under attack from stones when posted in Seaforde Street.[202] While the precise attackers are not named in an existing account of the violence, given the position of the troops, the gathering of Orangemen in the area and the streets from which the attackers came, it is plausible that in this instance the troops were placed between the Protestant and Catholic communities at Seaforde Street to prevent loyalist incursions into the predominately Catholic area.[203]

The efforts of the security forces during the early months of the conflict appeared focused on keeping the two sides apart in an attempt to restore security to this part of east Belfast. Further evidence suggests that the military also put up barbed wire structures in Fraser Street, as well as similar side streets attached to the main roadway of the Newtownards Road, during the summer in response to the intercommunal violence.[204]

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[199] Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 83.
[200] *BNL*, 24 July 1920.
[201] *ILN*, 4 September 1920.
[202] *BNL*, 23 July 1920.
[203] Ibid.
[204] *BNL*, 27 August 1920.

Meanwhile, the presence of a barricade at the end of Seaforde Street persisted throughout the summer of 1920 and remained even as the curfew came into effect at the end of August.[205] In addition to the barbed wire barriers, military posts were put in place in Seaforde Street as well as other streets in the area, complete with machine guns pointed in the direction of the violence ridden areas.[206] The focus of the security forces on these lines of divisions signals a recognition on the part of the authorities of the devastating violence that occurred where the two opposing communities came into contact. The use of barbed wire barricades in Belfast by the military was not unique to the corners of these streets in Ballymacarret. Similar such structures, along with military pickets, were employed in the city during the Troubles of the 1920s as part of the security apparatus to address the disturbances.[207]

Within weeks of the July 1920 disturbances, the security forces seemed to be in command of the security situation along Newtownards Road and the adjacent Catholic enclave.[208] Initially, the presence of the early barriers provided some protection to inhabitants, specifically by making the defence of Seaforde Street in particular more feasible and preventing general access to the roads themselves.[209] However, due to the porous construction of the barriers, perpetrators of violence, on both sides, were still able to launch attacks over and through the barricades. For example, at the Seaforde Street and Newtownards Road junction there were recorded instances of shots being fired from and into Seaforde Street as well as a particularly devastating bombing incident on

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[205] *ILN*, 4 September 1920; Kenna, *Facts and Figures of the Belfast Pogrom 1920*-22, 30.; Kernaghan, *Watching for Daybreak,* 42-43.
[206] *BNL*, 26 August 1920; *TS*, 27 August 1920.
[207] *BNL*, 23 November 1921; *ILN*, 4 September 1922; PRONI, D3347/2, D3347/3; Kenna, *Facts and Figures of the Belfast Pogrom 1920-22*, 46.
[208] Parkinson, *Belfast's Unholy War*, 48.
[209] Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 83-84.

September 25, 1921, despite the presence of the barrier and the military.[210] The likes of 'Island Confetti',[211] bombs and bullets formed integral instruments in the tool box of violence for perpetrators in the area.[212] The barricades could do little to prevent perpetrators from attacking 'the other side' from within the relative safety of their own territory.

Not only were the barriers of a porous construction, but their presence did not prevent violence from breaking out elsewhere in and directly emanating from the Seaforde Street flashpoint specifically. For instance, in 1921 there were numerous reports of violence, including shootings and bombings being perpetrated into and from this location.[213] Furthermore, the barbed wire barriers were not sturdy enough to prevent them from being moved out of the way in the midst of violence, which became apparent early on in their tenure when a crowd was able to remove the barrier at the entrance to Seaforde Street on August 26, 1920.[214] While the barriers along this particular flashpoint in east Belfast initially appear to have diminished the emergence of violence in the area directly surrounding the barriers, they proved insufficient as the violence continued.[215]

Although the truce signed in July 1921 yielded some changes to the conflict in the southern portion of Ireland, the violence was reignited in Northern Ireland with

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[210] *TC*, 26 September 1921; *TNWBP*, 26 September 1921; *TS*, 11 October 1921; *BNL*, 14 October 1921; Kenna, *Facts and Figures of the Belfast Pogrom 1920-22*, 89.; Kernaghan, *Watching for Daybreak*, 47-49.; Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 84.

[211] 'Island Confetti' was comprised of discarded pieces of metal found in the shipyards, including rivets, bolts and nuts. See: Kernaghan, *Watching for Daybreak*, 40.; Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 84.

[212] Ibid.

[213] *BNL*, 19 July 1921; *TNWBP*, 19 September 1921; *BWT*, 26 November 1921; *TNWBP*, 28 November 1921; Kenna, *Facts and Figures of the Belfast Pogrom 1920-22*, 48;89.; Kernaghan, *Watching for Daybreak*, 45;47-49.

[214] Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 473.

[215] Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 83-84.

Belfast experiencing serious levels of violence.[216] The military had maintained a presence in the area in 1921, including at the Seaforde Street and Wolff Street junction,[217] even implementing a restriction on gatherings of three or more individuals in the area.[218] Nevertheless, at the end of 1921, Father John Hassan, a priest from the nearby St Mary's church, described the persistent violence as a 'siege', stating:

> "For a year and a half already that devoted Catholic area has been living day and night under an almost unbroken siege. The inhabitants are in peril, both indoors and out of doors".[219]

By 1922 the area along the lower end of Newtownards Road was particularly unsafe, with newspapers filled with reports of violence, injury and death in the area during the first few months of the year.[220] The persistent violence posed a danger not only to residents living in the area, but also to anyone attempting to use the roads in the immediate vicinity.[221]

During the early months of 1922, there were frequent shootings in the area, particularly at the junctions of Newtownards Road with Seaforde Street and Young's Row, which resulted in injury and death.[222] Sniping between the two communities soon became one of the main forms of violence that acted as an impetus for the construction of more formidable barriers along the dividing line.[223] The frequent outbursts of violence in east Belfast, particularly around the so-called "dreaded Seaforde Street area",[224]

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[216] Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 484.; Parkinson, *Belfast's Unholy War*, 142.
[217] *WT*, 1 October 1921.
[218] Ibid.
[219] Kernaghan, *Watching for Daybreak*, 36;49.
[220] *TNWBP*, 12 January 1922; *BNL*, 7 February 1922; *BO*, 3 March 1922.
[221] *BNL*, 6 January 1922; *BNL*, 27 February 1922; *BO*, 3 March 1922.
[222] *BNL*, 6 January 1922; *BNL*, 27 February 1922; *TNWBP*, 16 February 1922; *TNWBP*, 17 February 1922; *BNL*, 17 February 1922; *TNWBP*, 23 February 1922; *BNL*, 23 February 1922.
[223] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to the Lord Mayor from Dawson Bates, 10 March 1922]; *LT*, 25 February 1922; *TNWBP*, 28 February 1922; *TNWBP*, 14 March 1922; Kernaghan, *Watching for Daybreak*, 51.
[224] *BO*, 3 March 1922.

occurred in the midst of the wider tumultuous situation across the city, which required the attention of the already hard-pressed security forces and the fire crews.[225] For example, a newspaper article in *The Northern Whig and Belfast Post* published on March 14, 1922, tallied the violence from the first months of 1922, including in the Seaforde Street area, drawing attention to its particularly devastating effects:

> "The toll which gunmen and bomb-throwers took from Belfast in the year 1921 – 110 killed and 540 wounded – was terrible enough in all conscience. In the past ten weeks of 1922 they have taken an even more terrible toll, relatively speaking. During these ten weeks – from the beginning of the year up to Sunday night – no less than 83 persons met their deaths from bullet and bomb, while the seriously wounded by the same agencies numbered 157".[226]

It was this persistent atmosphere of violence that endangered the lives of people frequenting Newtownards Road as well as those living in Seaforde Street and Young's Row, while also having a direct impact on businesses in the area, which influenced the construction of the more formidable barriers.[227]

The decision to build the barriers came from the Minister of Home Affairs, Sir Richard Dawson Bates, but was taken in consultation with Sir William Coates, the Lord Mayor of Belfast, who gave the formal instruction for the construction of the barricades.[228] In addition, the City Commissioner and the City Surveyor were consulted with regards to the construction of the barricades.[229] By this time the Home Office was

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[225] *BNL*, 5 April 1922. For a detailed account of the violence in Belfast during this period, see: Parkinson, *Belfast's Unholy War*, 206-215.; Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 487;494.; Phoenix, 'Political Violence, Diplomacy and the Catholic Minority in Northern Ireland, 1922', 33-35.
[226] *TNWBP*, 14 March 1922.
[227] *BO*, 3 March 1922; PRONI, HA/5/591 ['Erection of Barricades – Newtownards Road.', 4 May 1922], ['Minute Sheet', 4 July 1923].
[228] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to the Lord Mayor from Dawson Bates, 10 March 1922], ['Erection of Barricades – Newtownards Road.', 4 May 1922], [Letter to the Ministry of Home Affairs, 18 May 1922], [Letter to the Ministry of Finance, 19 May 1922], [Letter to Dawson Bates from the City Surveyor, 1 August 1923]; Belfast City Council, 'Former Lord Mayors'.
[229] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to the Lord Mayor from Dawson Bates, 10 March 1922].

in charge of managing 'law and order'[230] in Northern Ireland.[231] The head of the Home Office, Minister of Home Affairs Sir Richard Dawson Bates,[232] had a reputation for being anti-Catholic.[233] The decision to construct the more formidable barriers took place amidst the Northern Irish government's broader efforts to put in place "a more aggressive security policy" in March and April of 1922.[234] For example, by early April, the Minister of Home Affairs gained further security powers with the passing of the Special Powers Act on April 7th.[235] The new bill, passed by the predominately unionist Northern Irish government, further contributed to the shaping of Northern Ireland to favor the interests of the unionists.[236] It was in this context of sectarian tinged politics that the decision to build the more formidable barriers on the streets of east Belfast was taken. Thus, it is plausible that the decision to construct the two barriers reflected the unionist government's efforts not only to diminish instances of violence in the area, but also to contain the nationalist enclave.

As the violence entered March 1922, a sense of urgency on the part of the government to find a solution to the violence taking place in east Belfast, amidst the wider turmoil, was palpable. For instance, in a letter discussing the proposed construction of more formidable barriers in the area, the Minister of Home Affairs, wrote to the Lord Mayor on March 10, 1922, and asserted the following: "In view of the state of the City

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[230] As noted by Frank Wright, in ethnic frontier societies in which one community feels that the law of the land does not represent them, then a situation emerges in which the traditionally stabilizing force of law and order in a stable society no longer exists. See: Wright, *Northern Ireland*, 12. This nomenclature is used throughout this thesis when referencing 'law and order' to underline the contentious nature of this term.
[231] Kenna, *Facts and Figures of the Belfast Pogrom 1920-22*, 64.
[232] For further information on Dawson Bates see the Biographical Notes.
[233] Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 498.; Kenna, *Facts and Figures of the Belfast Pogrom 1920-22*, 64.
[234] Phoenix, 'Political Violence, Diplomacy and the Catholic Minority in Northern Ireland, 1922', 37.
[235] Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 490-491.; Boyd, *Holy War in Belfast*, 176.; English, *Armed Struggle*, 39.; Phoenix, 'Political Violence, Diplomacy and the Catholic Minority in Northern Ireland, 1922', 37-38.
[236] Boyd, *Holy War in Belfast*, 176.; English, *Armed Struggle*, 39.

you will appreciate the necessity for urgent action".[237] A letter to the editor published in *The Northern Whig and Belfast Post* just a few days later illustrates the pressure that the government was under to address the situation of 'lawlessness' in the city and the region more broadly:

> "Before disaster overtakes us I would appeal to the Belfast authorities to take immediate and energetic action, and execute swift and stern justice on the desperate ruffians infesting the city".[238]

Although the letter is not attributed to a specific individual, it appears to be written from the perspective of a unionist, further underlining the public pressure that the government was under from its constituents to address the threat posed by the perceived Catholic 'ruffians'. Ultimately, amidst persistent violence, the first iterations of peace lines in the city of Belfast were built in March 1922 along Newtownards Road, one in front of the entrance to Seaforde Street and the other in front of the entrance to Young's Row, along the dividing line[239] between the Protestant and Catholic communities.[240]

The situation around the lower Newtownards Road in east Belfast and the necessity for immediate action appears to have been brought to the attention of the Minister of Home Affairs in late February 1922 by two separate individuals. First, in a letter dated February 17, 1922, a Mr. D.E. Lowry[241] wrote directly to the Minister of Home Affairs to alert the minister of a "danger that is every day getting more dangerous".[242] According to Mr. Lowry a "risk to human life" existed emanating directly

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[237] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to the Lord Mayor from Dawson Bates, 10 March 1922].
[238] *TNWBP*, 14 March 1922.
[239] For further context regarding this line of division, see: Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*, 144-145.
[240] PRONI, HA/5/591 ['Erection of Barricades – Newtownards Road.', 4 May 1922], [Letter to the Lord Mayor from Dawson Bates, 10 March 1922]; *BNL*, 13 March 1922; Ordnance Survey Northern Ireland, *Town Plan of Belfast City Centre*.
[241] In the letter the author states that he is the chairman of the district, presumably referring to the immediate area of east Belfast. See: PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to Dawson Bates from D. E. Lowry, 17 February 1922].
[242] Ibid.

from Catholic streets that ran along the main roads, including Newtownards Road in east Belfast.[243] In particular, he noted that "aggressive sniping" occurred from Seaforde Street.[244] Furthermore, he warned that a solution to the situation of violence was urgently needed as he foresaw "bloodshed" if nothing was done, noting the potential for a surge in violence in the area if individuals took "the law into their own hands".[245]

Mr. Lowry even suggested that a 8ft to 9ft sandbag barrier be constructed along Newtownards Road at the end of Seaforde Street to prevent both firing into Newtownards Road and the ability to see Newtownards Road from Seaforde Street.[246] Without such a structure, Mr. Lowry appeared to believe that a cycle of violence could erupt, which would beyond the control of the politicians, and he ended his letter by stating, "it is much easier to start an avalanche than stop it!!".[247] The Minister of Home Affairs appears to have taken a personal interest in this letter and replied to Mr. Lowry shortly thereafter on February 20th.[248] In his reply the minister referred to the request as concerning "more protection for main thoroughfares such as the Newtownards Road".[249] This wording suggests that the subsequent barriers were put up to protect those on Newtownards Road from the Catholic side streets, particularly as continued violence directed towards the Protestants risked provoking a retaliatory response by loyalists. Although likely intended as a means to contain the perceived threat from the Catholic community, in a way, by

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[243] Ibid.
[244] Ibid.
[245] Ibid.
[246] He also appeared to make recommendations concerning access between the two streets, but the precise details are illegible from the existing original archival document. See: Ibid.
[247] Ibid.
[248] A note scribbled on a copy of the letter suggests that the Minister of Home Affairs personally consulted with someone identified as "D.C.", likely the RIC Divisional Commissioner, on this matter. See: PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to D. E. Lowry from Dawson Bates, 20 February 1922].
[249] Ibid.

putting in place the barriers, the structures provided a potential opportunity to protect both sides from an escalation of violence.

A second request for further protection in this area of east Belfast was sent to the Minister of Home Affairs on February 27, 1922, by an individual who appeared to be a member of government.[250] This letter underlined the threat of shooting coming from Young's Row along Newtownards Road, which the author described as consistently occurring each morning between the hours of 7.00am and 8.00am.[251] The author referred to this area of Belfast specifically as "now the worst spot in the city".[252] While the author did not advocate for a barrier, they did enquire about turning the Picture House sitting at the corner of Young's Row into a provisional Specials barrack.[253] The author appears to have identified the threat in the immediate area as one emanating from the Catholic community. For example, the letter contains reference to "absolute strangers to Belfast" living in Vulcan Street as well as the potential presence of ammunition and arms stored somewhere on the grounds of the nearby Chapel.[254] Although a letter of reply from the Minister of Home Affairs is not contained amongst the existing archival documents, a note scribbled across the top of the original letter notes that the Minister of Home Affairs "dealt personally with this matter". [255] Again, the identification of a threat emanating from the Catholic area suggests that the impetus behind the barrier construction was originally to prevent hostilities directed towards the Protestant area from the Catholic enclave.

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[250] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to Dawson Bates, 27 February 1922].
[251] Ibid.
[252] Ibid.
[253] Ibid.
[254] Ibid. Given its location, Vulcan Street was likely a Catholic street in 1922. See: Ordnance Survey Northern Ireland, *Town Plan of Belfast City Centre*.
[255] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to Dawson Bates, 27 February 1922].

The perception of a threat emanating from the Catholic area was also portrayed in local newspaper reports. For instance, following the construction of the barriers, a newspaper headline ran with the wording "Barriers in Sinn Fein District".[256] The *Newsletter* in 1922 was a unionist leaning paper[257] and thus this headline implies a unionist perception, at the time, that the barriers would essentially contain the problem coming from the Catholic community. In addition, the short two-line article from the *Newsletter* directly alludes to the perceived containment of the Catholics behind the barriers:

> "As the result of disturbances which have occurred in East Belfast, barriers have been erected at the Newtownards Road end of Seaforde Street and Young's Row, narrow exits being left to allow of communication with the main thoroughfare. Sentries are posted outside the barriers".[258]

This sentiment that the Catholic community, and therefore the related incidents of violence, would be contained behind the barricades was also alluded to in an article from *The Northern Whig and Belfast Post*:

> "This step was taken as the result of conflicts which have occurred in this part of the city between hostile crowds, bombing and sniping being part of the modus operandi which, unfortunately, has resulted in several fatalities. Outside the barrier now erected, with the object of preventing further outbreaks, sentries have taken up duty".[259]

Meanwhile, a separate newspaper article, from across the sea, published in *The Scotsman* on May 27, 1922, described a later bombing incident in the Seaforde Street area as follows:

> "Last night a bomb was thrown from Seaforde Street over the sandbag barrier which has been erected to protect the Protestants passing on the Newtownards Road or *vice versa*".[260]

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[256] *BNL*, 13 March 1922.
[257] Parkinson, *Belfast's Unholy War*, 31;55.
[258] *BNL*, 13 March 1922.
[259] *TNWBP*, 13 March 1922.
[260] Italics are included in the original newspaper article, see: *TS*, 27 May 1922.

Again the protection of the Protestant community from the Catholic community figures prominently as the central impetus for the construction of the barrier, yet this article does allude to the violence being perpetrated in the other direction as well.

Although, from the perspective of the authorities in Belfast, the barriers appear to have been designed largely to contain the perceived Catholic threat. A document from the Ministry of Finance suggests that the government simultaneously viewed the barriers as a means to protect both sides from an escalation of violence by preventing the sniping that was perceived to be originating in the Catholic area and thus in turn averting a retaliatory response from the Protestant area:

> "In March, 1922, in view of the dangerous conditions on this road and of the danger ensuing to pedestrians on the road through sniping from Seaforde Street and Young's Row it was decided that barricades should be erected at the end of these two streets both for the protection of the inhabitants in the streets themselves and to minimse the danger to pedestrians through sniping from the streets".[261]

Nevertheless, the government document directly references the 'sniping from' the two Catholic streets, signaling that the official view identified the key threat to security as originating from the Catholic areas.

Despite the frequent identification of a threat that emanated from the Catholic community, some newspaper reports of the emergence of the barriers did cite the occurrence of violence more broadly in east Belfast as the impetus for the construction of the barriers.[262] However, the official government position appears to have consistently tended toward identifying the Catholic area as a threat. For example, during an appearance in Claims Court in March 1922, a former resident of Seaforde Street

[261] PRONI, HA/5/591 ['Erection of Barricades – Newtownards Road.', 4 May 1922].
[262] *BNL*, 13 March 1922; *TNWBP*, 13 March 1922.

discussed the circumstances surrounding the death of his wife in their home on September 25, 1921, noting in reference to the presence of an armored car in the area, that "it was for the protection of the street, and would not fire in their direction, because Seaforde Street was not aggressive".[263] However, in response, a representative of the Corporation, asserted that as of March 1922 "an armoured car had to patrol Seaforde Street continuously, and that the street had to be barricaded", intimating that it was violence emanating from Seaforde Street that was in fact a threat to security and the impetus behind the barricade construction.[264]

Although discrepancies exist in reports of the precise date for the construction of the two barriers, it is evident that the barricades were built shortly after the consultation between the Minister of Home Affairs and the Lord Mayor of Belfast in March 1922. A government account from the Ministry of Finance states that the construction of the walls was undertaken by the Belfast Corporation on March 14, 1922.[265] However, newspaper reports from March 13, 1922, instead assert that barriers were built at the ends of the two streets even earlier, specifically during the morning of March 11, 1922.[266] Therefore, it is possible that the initial structures were put in place on March 11, 1922, with the formal construction of the barricades taking place three days later on March 14, 1922. Despite the discrepancies in accounts of the dates of their construction, the barriers were nonetheless built relatively swiftly after both the Minister of Home Affairs receipt of the two letters in February and the inter-governmental consultation the next month.[267] The

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[263] *TNWBP*, 3 June 1922.
[264] Ibid.
[265] PRONI, HA/5/591 ['Erection of Barricades – Newtownards Road.', 4 May 1922], [Letter to the Ministry of Home Affairs, 23 May 1922].
[266] *BNL*, 13 March, 1922; *TNWBP*, 13 March 1922; *DJ*, 15 March 1922.
[267] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to Dawson Bates from D. E. Lowry, 17 February 1922], [Letter to Dawson Bates, 27 February 1922], [Letter to the Lord Mayor from Dawson Bates, 10 March 1922].

new barriers emerged during a particularly turbulent month in Belfast during 1922 where the city appeared to descend further into conflict.[268] In March 1922, violence perpetuated violence on the streets of Belfast,[269] a situation of intercommunal conflict which clearly required more than security barricades to successfully address the disturbances.

The barriers, in conjunction with the wider security apparatus in the city, were intended to provide an immediate relief to the violence in the area of east Belfast. The proposed design for the barriers was envisioned with a swift construction in mind, with initial discussions outlining a structure that would be around 12-14ft high, built by placing shingle in a one foot space between two sheet boards.[270] Additional accounts of the barriers corroborate the proposed height and the use of wooden boards as the primary material in the construction of the two barricades.[271] For example, while recollecting the events of the 1920s Troubles, Belfast resident John E. Sayers, stated: "Even today I cannot drive along the Newtownards Road without seeing in my mind the high wooden barricade that stood at the end of Seaforde Street to cut off a field of fire".[272] The height of the barriers and the materials used were chosen deliberately to act as a means to deter sniping both in and out of the two streets. For instance, the Minister of Home Affairs specifically referenced the threat of sniping, from both sides, when discussing the barricades with the Lord Mayor.[273] Barriers of this height could also serve to discourage

[268] For an overview of the violence in Belfast during this period see: Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 487-488. Detailed reports of shooting deaths across the city during this period can be found in the newspapers, for instance, see this newspaper article from the end of March 1922: *TNWBP*, 30 March 1922.
[269] Scholars have noted the cyclical characteristic of the violence during this period, see: Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 487-488.; English, *Armed Struggle*, 40. The McMahon murders are one such example, see: Wilson, '"The Most Terrible Assassination That Has Yet Stained the Name of Belfast"'.
[270] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to the Lord Mayor from Dawson Bates, 10 March 1922].
[271] *DJ*, 15 March 1922; *TNWBP*, 18 March 1922; *TNWBP*, 7 October 1922. At Seaforde Street, sandbags were also used in the construction of the barricade. See: *TS*, 27 May 1922.
[272] John E. Sayers quoted in: Gailey, *Crying in The Wilderness*, 3.
[273] PRONI, HA/5/591 ['Erection of Barricades – Newtownards Road.', 4 May 1922].

other sectarian confrontations including the throwing of objects and insults as the barricades were too high for the two sides to see one another. The use of these materials embedded the barricades into the streets of east Belfast, a stark contrast to the barbed wire barriers that initially stood in their stead.

Although the barriers were built to prevent the two intersections from becoming further sites of violence, they still allowed for the freedom of movement of residents. First, the barriers did not completely seal off the entrances to the two streets, but instead left small passages on either side of approximately two feet for pedestrians to enter and leave the streets.[274] Second, vehicle access to and from the Catholic area was still possible via nearby streets.[275] This meant that both residents going about their daily routines and perpetrators of violence could still move freely between the two sides. The presence of the barriers, in the midst of the curfew, did not relieve the police and soldiers of their security duties and sentries remained present at the site of the barriers.[276] While the barriers were designed to prevent further violence, their mere presence simultaneously reflected the extent to which the very streets of Belfast had already been scarred by conflict.

Despite the swift construction of the barriers and their clearly thought-out design, violence still continued in the immediate area, including in the very streets the barricades were in place to protect.[277] For example, just days after the construction of the barriers,

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[274] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to the Lord Mayor from Dawson Bates, 10 March 1922]; *BNL*, 13 March 1922; *TNWBP*, 13 March 1922; Gannon, 'In the Catacombs of Belfast', 281.
[275] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to the Ministry of Home Affairs from the Inspector General's Office RUC, 11 July 1923].
[276] *BNL*, 13 March 1922; *TNWBP*, 13 March 1922; Gannon, 'In the Catacombs of Belfast', 281-282.; John E. Sayers quoted in: Gailey, *Crying in The Wilderness*, 3. For further context regarding the curfew, see: *BNL*, 19 May 1922; *TNWBP*, 23 May 1922.
[277] *BNL*, 20 March 1922; *TNWBP*, 20 March 1922; *TNWBP*, 30 March 1922; *BNL*, 24 April 1922; *BNL*, 23 May 1922; *TNWBP*, 23 May 1922; *TNWBP*, 19 June 1922; *TNWBP*, 23 June 1922; *TNWBP*, 21 August 1922; *TNWBP*, 23 October 1922.

on March 18th, James Harkness was shot as he passed by Young's Row while out shopping with his wife on Newtownards Road; he died the very next day.[278] James Harkness is reported to have been part of the Ulster Protestant Association (UPA), a paramilitary organization of loyalist persuasion,[279] which is believed to be responsible for the deaths of a number of Catholics. The shot that killed James Harkness is said to have been taken by a sniper from the IRA.[280] Thus, the barriers were unable to completely halt the escalation of intercommunal violence. Furthermore, not only did the barriers only protect a limited area from gunfire, but gunmen could still bypass the barriers and access the intersections to perpetrate violence into an opposing community.[281] In the months after the construction of the barricades, shootings continued to take place in the immediate vicinity of the barriers.[282]

In addition to the persistent sniping, the height of the barriers did not prevent bombs from being thrown over the barricades.[283] For example, more than two months after the construction of the barriers, on May 26th, a series of bombs were thrown in east Belfast, including at the Seaforde Street and Newtownards Road junction.[284] One of the bombs thrown during the evening of May 26th landed in Seaforde Street, wounding a ten year old girl and a thirty-four year old man.[285] Whilst the barricades may have reduced the potential for violence in the area, the violence that did take place had a propensity for

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[278] *TNWBP*, 20 March 1920; *BNL,* 5 April 1922; *TNWBP*, 5 April 1922; *BNL*, 15 July 1922; *TNWBP*, 15 July 1922.
[279] For further information regarding the UPA, see the Glossary.
[280] Kernaghan, *Watching for Daybreak*, 52.
[281] *WT*, 3 June 1922; *TYP*, 5 June 1922; *BNL*, 12 July 1922; *BNL*, 15 February 1923; Kernaghan, *Watching for Daybreak*, 57.
[282] *BNL*, 10 April 1922; *BNL*, 19 May 1922; *TNWBP*, 23 May 1922; *BNL*, 28 May 1922; *BNL* 15 June 1922; *BNL*, 20 June 1922.
[283] *TWF*, 25 March 1922; *TNWBP*, 27 May 1922; *TS*, 27 May 1922; *WT*, 26 August 1922.
[284] *TNWBP*, 27 May 1922; *TS*, 27 May 1922.
[285] *TNWBP*, 27 May 1922.

being significantly less discriminating than it may have been without the barriers as perpetrators could not see the potential victims. Furthermore, the barricades did not prevent bombs from being thrown into the barricaded area in Seaforde Street from other locations.[286] Although not every act of violence resulted in fatalities, the presence of the barricades did not deter further injuries from occurring.[287] Consequently, as with their barbed wire predecessors, the more formidable barriers remained imperfect provisions of security.

In conjunction with the violence in the immediate vicinity of the barriers, the barricades themselves even became sites of violence. For example, in the early days of their initial construction, two unsuccessful attempts were made to burn the barricade at Seaforde Street.[288] First, on March 11th, a group, reportedly made up of Orangemen, attempted to burn the barricade.[289] Then again on March 17th, unnamed assailants made an unsuccessful attempt to set the Seaforde Street barricade on fire.[290] The efforts to burn down the barricades suggests that loyalists at the time saw the barricades as only an artificial protection mechanism for the Catholic community. Without the barricades it is plausible that the loyalists envisioned an opportunity for the elimination of the nationalist enclave. While the barricades clearly served to prevent some instances of violence, the mere presence of the barriers simultaneously further underscored the perceived difference and division between the two communities.

The barriers also acted as another means for assailants to identify potential victims from the opposing community. For example, on October 5, 1922, Mary Sherlock,

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[286] Kernaghan, *Watching for Daybreak*, 52;61.
[287] *BNL*, 19 May 1922.
[288] *DJ*, 15 March 1922; *TNWBP*, 18 March 1922.
[289] *DJ*, 15 March 1922.
[290] *TNWBP*, 18 March 1922.

exited the Catholic territory of Seaforde Street through the barricade and was shot shortly after beginning her shopping along Newtownards Road.[291] A witness account of the incident noted that a group of individuals standing on a nearby street corner, within perceived Protestant territory, observed and then followed the woman before she was shot within approximately ten minutes of leaving the Catholic enclave.[292] The murder of Mary Sherlock is reported to have been perpetrated by members of the UPA and the final murder committed by this particular group.[293] With the barricades acting as markers for each community's territory, residents remained vulnerable to attack as they entered or exited the barricaded area.

It is curious given the levels of persistent intercommunal violence, particularly along the divide at Newtownards Road, that the two more formidable barriers were not built sooner by the authorities. Perhaps the significant uptick in violence during 1922 hastened the necessity for such security provisions in the eyes of the authorities. During this year, Catholics in Belfast found themselves at the receiving end of a substantial amount of violence, accounting for a large portion of victims in the city.[294] As the conflict moved further into 1922, following the signing of a treaty by some of the Sinn Féin leaders and the British state, the violence directed against the Catholics increased.[295] A Catholic visitor to Belfast in April 1922, noted that the barriers, in his words, "were only put up after about eighteen months of massacre and incendiarism".[296] He felt that the authorities had stopped far short of setting up a sufficient level of protection for the

[291] *TNWBP*, 7 October 1922.
[292] Ibid.
[293] Kernaghan, *Watching for Daybreak*, 61.
[294] Gannon, 'In the Catacombs of Belfast', 280.; Kenna, *Facts and Figures of the Belfast Pogrom 1920-22*, 106-112.
[295] Mulholland, *The Longest War*, 31.
[296] Gannon, 'In the Catacombs of Belfast', 281.

Catholic community since only a limited number of barriers had been erected.[297] Whilst he may have disagreed with the level of security provided by the authorities, it is clear that he perceived the barriers to be a security mechanism put in place to protect Catholics from their loyalist neighbors.

This perception that the barricades were intended to protect the Catholic community, appears to have also been held by loyalists, including the group that attempted to burn down the Seaforde Street barrier just days after it was built.[298] Meanwhile, a description of the loyalist crowd's attempt to burn down the barricades from *The Derry Journal*, underlines the perception of the Catholic community that they were under attack from elements of the Protestant community:

> "By the blockading of these two thoroughfares, however, they have been frustrated in their evil designs at these points, although an effort was made on Saturday to burn down the "obstruction" at Seaforde St. This proved unsuccessful, and thus deprived Seaforde St. and Young's Row as objects for attack, the Orange hooligans of the district were compelled to return to Foundry St. for an outlet for the seemingly insatiable lust for the lives of Catholics".[299]

In addition, the article credits the presence of the barricades as a key deterrent in preventing a loyalist incursion into the two Catholic streets. However, the loyalist violence was ultimately redirected to a Catholic area that was not protected by the barricades. Given the wider context of intercommunal violence across the city of Belfast in 1922, the barricades in east Belfast served as insufficient bandages, belatedly in the eyes of some, applied to an already gaping wound.

Despite the persistent violence in east Belfast, from the perspective of the security forces, the barriers in east Belfast played a successful role in reducing violence in the

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[297] Ibid., 282.
[298] *DJ*, 15 March 1922.
[299] Ibid.

area immediately adjacent to the barricades. By July 1923, more than one year after the construction of the barricades, an RUC assessment of the barriers asserted that "they have had an excellent effect, both for mutual protection to the two parties".[300] While this RUC assessment suggests that the aim of the barriers, from the perspective of the authorities, was 'mutual protection', it appears that others, including loyalists, as well as the visiting Catholic priest, had identified the barricades as a mechanism of protection specifically for the Catholic community. The RUC assessment of the function of the barriers highlights the efforts of the authorities at the time to contain and prevent an escalation of violence. By 'protecting' the Catholic community with the barricades, the authorities had an opportunity to lessen the occurrence of violence against the Catholic community and thus the propensity for retaliation in the other direction.

The key to the success of the barriers, from a policing perspective, was particularly linked to the role of the structures in stopping the two sides from being able to see one another regularly.[301] The police also attributed the presence of the barriers to a significant reduction in groups of youth congregating on the nearby corners of Wolff Street and Clonallon Street.[302] While there may have been a reduction in the crowds in these areas, youth still gathered in these areas, an action that appears to have been a contributing factor to the shooting of Mary Sherlock on October 5, 1922.[303] Regardless, the barricades were also deemed by the police as effective in deterring acts of

[300] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to the Ministry of Home Affairs from the Inspector General's Office RUC, 11 July 1923].
[301] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to the Ministry of Home Affairs from the Inspector General's Office RUC, 11 July 1923], [Letter to the Commissioner's Office RUC Belfast from the District Inspector's Office RUC Belfast E, 27 August 1923].
[302] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to the Ministry of Home Affairs from the Inspector General's Office RUC, 11 July 1923].
[303] *TNWBP*, 7 October 1922.

'lawlessness', including even serving as a policing mechanism in their own right,[304] which simultaneously helped to augment the limited policing resources. Nevertheless, the two barricades along Newtownards Road seem to have remained the only barriers of their kind erected during the Troubles of the 1920s.

Despite the perceived benefits of the presence of the barriers to the work of the police and their apparent, albeit imperfect, role as a provision of security for local inhabitants, calls for the removal of the barriers were raised repeatedly in July, August and September 1923.[305] In particular, the City Surveyor was tasked, on more than one occasion,[306] with contacting the Minister of Home Affairs to discuss "the desirability of removing the barriers".[307] It appears that the decision to assign the City Surveyor this job was based on the perception among councillors that the situation in the city no longer required the presence of the barriers. For example, a *Newsletter* article described a discussion of the barriers in early September as follows:

> "Councillor Alexander alluded to the terrible times through which the city had passed, and said they all welcomed the changed conditions which prompted them to ask for the removal of these barriers. But the question was: Would those troublous times return? He feared they would, unless they as public men did their duty promptly and fearlessly and without favour. It would not be the fault of some politicians if these barriers were not required again. Proceeding, Councillor Alexander referred to recent speeches of certain local politicians, which, he said, were likely to give rise to trouble".[308]

By the autumn of 1923, the Troubles had largely dissipated and been replaced by "a fragile peace" with the emergence of Civil War in the southern portion of the island

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[304] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to the Inspector General RUC, 3 August 1923], [Letter to the Commissioner's Office RUC Belfast from the District Inspector's Office RUC Belfast E, 27 August 1923].
[305] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to Dawson Bates from the City Surveyor, 1 August 1923], [Letter to Dawson Bates from the City Surveyor, 20 August 1923], [Letter to Dawson Bates from W. L. Scott, 22 September 1923]; *BNL*, 4 September 1923; *TNWBP*, 4 September 1923.
[306] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to Dawson Bates from the City Surveyor, 1 August 1923], [Letter to Dawson Bates from the City Surveyor, 20 August 1923]; *BNL*, 4 September 1923; *TNWBP*, 4 September 1923.
[307] Ibid.
[308] *BNL*, 4 September 1923.

earlier that summer.[309] However, Councillor Alexander's warning that such barriers would be required again should violence return would prove to be true.

Despite the categorization of the barriers during the summer of 1923 as an "inconvenience",[310] the Minister of Home Affairs relied on the assessment of the RUC to determine that the barriers were still necessary and thus should not be removed.[311] For instance, the RUC regarded the perceived "inconvenience" presented by the barriers as "negligible compared to the benefit".[312] However, this security assessment did not deter calls for the removal of the barricades. For example, the very next month, on August 20, 1923, the City Surveyor, on behalf of the Improvement Committee, argued that the removal of the barriers could be undertaken "without danger to the public peace".[313] Although the barriers had been effective during the previous period of violence, it was argued at the time that the same conditions of violence which prompted were no longer present by the summer of 1923,[314] directly contradicting the RUC's existing assessment that the barriers remained necessary.

Conversely, the RUC attributed the diminished situation of violence in the area as being influenced by the presence of the barricades.[315] Furthermore, the ongoing situation of violence, the function of the barriers to prevent the two sides from seeing one another and a recent murder bolstered the RUC's argument for the retention of the

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[309] Phoenix, 'Political Violence, Diplomacy and the Catholic Minority in Northern Ireland, 1922', 45.
[310] It is unclear from the existing archival documents who precisely raised this concern, but it is possible that it was the City Surveyor. See: PRONI, HA/5/591 ['Minute Sheet', 4 July 1923], [Letter to the RUC, 6 July 1923].
[311] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to the Ministry of Home Affairs from the Inspector General's Office RUC, 11 July 1923].
[312] Ibid.
[313] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to Dawson Bates from the City Surveyor, 20 August 1923].
[314] From the existing archival documents it remains unclear who felt that the conditions had changed, but it was likely a point raised by the City Surveyor. See: PRONI, HA/5/591 ['Minute Sheet', 4 July 1923].
[315] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to the Commissioner's Office RUC Belfast from the District Inspector's Office RUC Belfast E, 27 August 1923].

barricades as discussions continued into September 1923.[316] The murder to which the RUC referred was the death of John Shevlin on September 4, 1923, who was killed near his business on the Oldpark Road.[317] Although this murder did not occur in the immediate vicinity of the barriers, it is clear that the RUC felt it could have security repercussions for the barricaded area. This suggests that the authorities remained concerned about a continuation of the situation of 'representative violence' and the related deadly tit for tat killing cycle that had been a feature of the violence at the start of the 1920s. In addition, a member of the RUC also asserted their belief that the inhabitants of both Seaforde Street proper and the area more widely would rather the barricades remained.[318] Thus, the ongoing security concerns outweighed other arguments for the removal of the barricades, which in turn had a strong influence on the Minister of Home Affairs' decision to retain the barricades between communities.[319]

Ultimately, the barriers were viewed by the authorities as only a temporary solution to the situation of violence within the city.[320] It is likely that this view of the barriers as temporary measures in the midst of violent conflict was shared by community members in Belfast. For example, a newspaper article outlining an inquest into the death of Mary Sherlock referred to the barrier at the end of Seaforde Street as "the "hoarding" across Seaforde Street".[321] The very use of the term 'hoarding' underlines the perception

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[316] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to the Commissioner's Office RUC Belfast from the District Inspector's Office RUC Belfast E, 27 August 1923], [Note on RUC document 'Barriers – Seaforde Street and Young's Row', 7 September 1923], [Letter to the Ministry of Home Affairs from the Inspector General's Office RUC Belfast, 7 September 1923].
[317] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to the Ministry of Home Affairs from the Inspector General's Office RUC Belfast, 7 September 1923]; *WT*, 22 September 1923.
[318] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to the Commissioner's Office RUC Belfast from the District Inspector's Office RUC Belfast E, 27 August 1923].
[319] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to the City Surveyor from Dawson Bates, 10 September 1923].
[320] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to the Inspector General RUC, 3 August 1923].
[321] *TNWBP*, 7 October 1922.

that the barricades were not a permanent solution to the situation of violence in the city. The official decision to remove the barricades was eventually taken on September 24, 1923.[322]

Again, as with the construction of the barricades, it was a letter that contributed to their removal, but this time the concern over the barriers centered on their negative impact to commercial interests in the area. A letter addressed to the Minister of Home Affairs from the Secretary of the Glentoran Football and Athletic Club[323] on September 22nd, asked for the minister's support for the removal of the barricade at Young's Row to allow queuing down Young's Row rather than Newtownards Road.[324] The adjacent Popular Picture House was set to re-open on September 24th,[325] signaling an economic interest in relation to the request for the removal of the barricades. The Minister of Home Affairs appears to have shortly thereafter suggested to the RUC that the barricades be removed.[326] The RUC representative consulted, while in favor of retaining the barricades, did accept the removal of both barricades along Newtownards Road.[327] Subsequently, and swiftly thereafter, the Minister of Home Affairs approved the removal of both barricades.[328] The minister's support for the removal of the barricades was

[322] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Two letters to the City Surveyor from Ministry of Home Affairs, 24 September 1923].
[323] For further context regarding this local organization, see: Wilson, '"The Most Terrible Assassination That Has Yet Stained the Name of Belfast", 88.
[324] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to Dawson Bates from W. L. Scott, 22 September 1923].
[325] Ibid. The Popular Picture House appears to have been perceived as 'neutral' territory earlier during the Troubles. See: Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 80.
[326] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Note on the back of a RUC letter, 23 September 1923], [RUC letter, 23 September 1923].
[327] PRONI, HA/5/591 [RUC letter, 23 September 1923].
[328] He permitted first the removal of the barricade at Young's Row and later that same day he decided that the barricade at Seaforde could also be removed. See: PRONI, HA/5/591 [Two letters to the City Surveyor from the Ministry of Home Affairs, 24 September 1923], [Copy of telegram from the Ministry of Home Affairs].

communicated directly to the City Surveyor.[329] Given that the barricades were a top-down security measure, with limited community input, their removal could be undertaken rather expeditiously with direct lines of communication between the relevant government agencies.

By the time the two barricades were removed, they had been in place for approximately eighteen months. The persistence of violence along the dividing line between the Catholic and Protestant communities of east Belfast from 1920-23, despite the construction of increasingly formidable barriers, demonstrates that the introduction of barriers did not address the root causes of the conflict. Given the close proximity of the two communities in this corner of east Belfast and the limited resources available to the security forces, the imposition of a policy of 'security through separation' was appealing to the authorities as it served to prevent an escalation of violence in the short-term. This approach was predicated on the interaction of local and political factors that influenced the development of a policy that placed priority on *separation* to achieve *security*. Given the political climate in Northern Ireland during the 1920s, the use of such barriers to wall off a Catholic area of the city underlines not only the existing deep divisions in Northern Ireland, but also the unionist government's perception of the Catholic community as a threat to security in the city. The barricades continued to stand between the communities after the cessation of the majority of the intercommunal violence, which in turn highlights the persistent sense of insecurity in the city in the face of continued tension between the two communities.

[329] PRONI, HA/5/591 [Letter to the Inspector General RUC, 25 September 1923], [Two letters to the City Surveyor from the Ministry of Home Affairs, 24 September 1923], [Note regarding call to Surveyor, 24 September 1923].

1935: The Return of Barbed Wire and Barricades to Belfast

A mere thirteen years after the construction of the first iterations of the peace walls in Belfast, sectarian conflict accompanied by vicious intercommunal riots once again erupted on the streets of Belfast in 1935.[330] The disturbances of 1935 largely followed the pattern of previous sectarian violence in Belfast.[331] Amidst the violence in Belfast during the summer of 1935, the parallels with the most recent bout of intercommunal violence were not lost on observers, with an anonymous individual stating in *The Northern Whig and Belfast Post*:

> "At one period of the week, indeed, it seemed as though Belfast as a whole had been thrown right back to 1921-22 – general curfew, armoured car, barricade, machine gun, military picket, street fighting, burning, looting, promiscuous shooting, intimidation, eviction, and a daily toll of killed and wounded".[332]

Along with the intercommunal violence, came an official approach of 'security through separation' with a new iteration of security barriers. Previous references to this instance of barricade construction have tended to focus on its uniqueness in the history of Belfast.[333] However, this thesis demonstrates the extent to which the use of barriers in 1935 fit into a pattern of intercommunal violence in which 'security through separation' was already an accepted official response to intercommunal violence in Belfast. While barbed wire barricades were put up across the city by the security forces in reaction to the violence, the following discussion concentrates on the events in the York Street area of Belfast where the initial barbed wire barricades were swiftly followed by a formidable peace line structure built between the two communities.

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[330] Hepburn, *A Past Apart*, 174.; Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*, 141.
[331] Darby, *Intimidation and the Control of Conflict in Northern Ireland*, 17-18.
[332] The author of the article wrote under the pseudonym "An Old Fogey", see: *TNWBP*, 22 July 1935.
[333] A discussion of the existing literature can be found in the Introduction.

By the start of 1935, the conditions ripe for intercommunal violence had been simmering for some time in Belfast.[334] In the lead up to the summer months of 1935, tension between the communities continued to mount.[335] Given the tense situation between the two communities in Belfast initially a ban was placed on processions, but this decision was later reversed due to the backlash directed against the government.[336] The serious rioting in Belfast began on July 12th as an Orange parade proceeded from Royal Avenue and into York Street and then by Lancaster Street.[337] While precise accounts over the specific sequence of events that led to the outbreak of the riot differ, the violence in Lancaster Street soon emanated out further into the York Street area of the city.[338] Only three days after the start of the rioting on July 12th, the death toll had already reached five dead in the city.[339]

The occurrence of the parades served as a direct catalyst for weeks of violence. In Belfast as a whole, between July 12th and the last days of August in 1935, five Catholics and eight Protestants died as a result of the violence, with Catholics making up most of the injured.[340] The violence in the aftermath of the July 12th, predominately took place in the York Street area of Belfast, which was referred to at the time as "the storm

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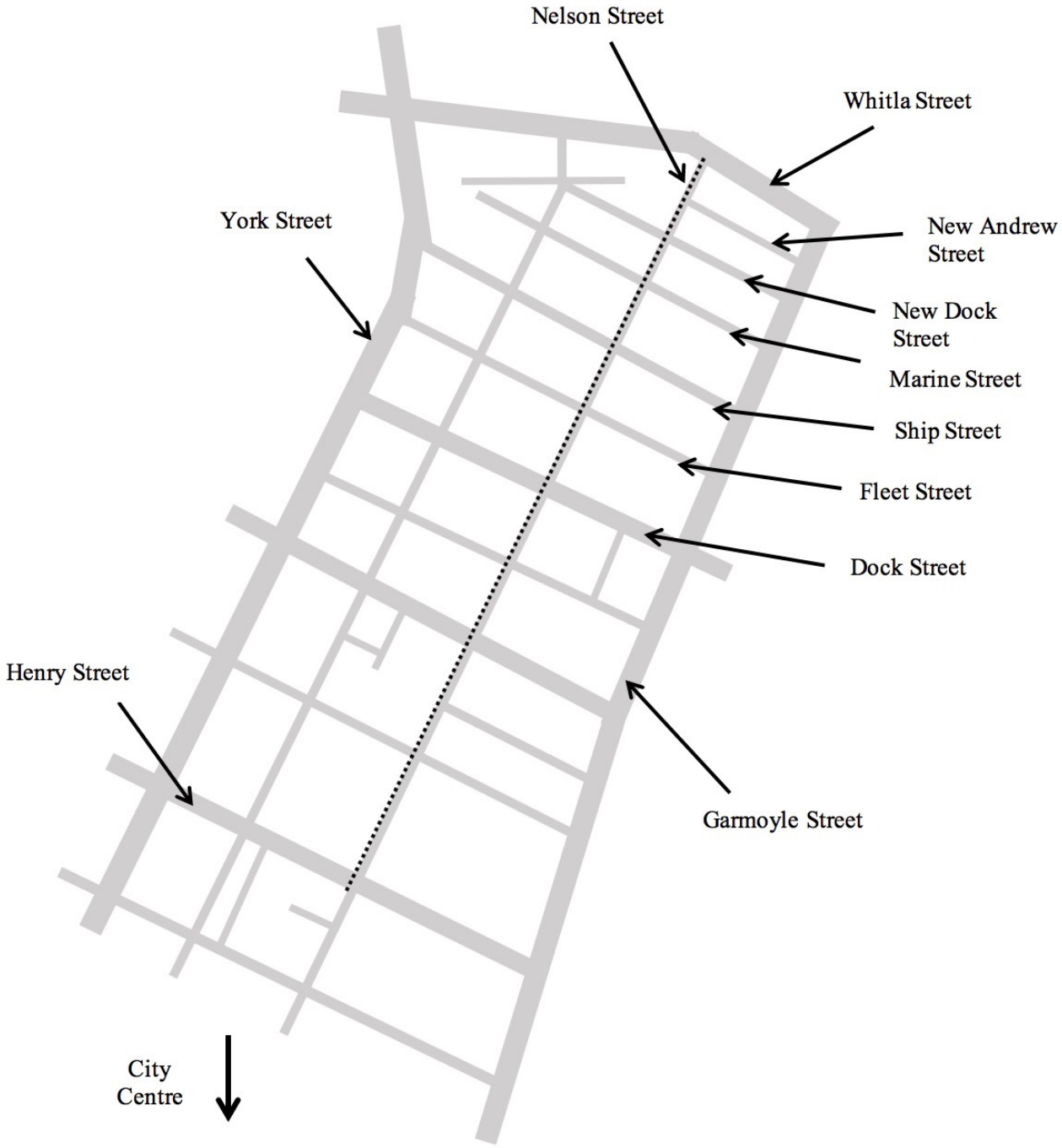
[334] Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 539.; Boyd, *Holy War in Belfast*, 178.; Hepburn, *A Past Apart*, 174-179;202.; Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 177;181-184.; De Paor, *Divided Ulster*, 115-116.; Smyth, *Sailortown*, 25.
[335] *LS*, 13 June 1935; *TNWBP*, 12 July 1935; Hepburn, *A Past Apart*, 178.; Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 179.
[336] Bardon, *Belfast*, 73.; Bardon, *A History of* Ulster, 539.; Boyd, *Holy War in Belfast*, 178.; Hepburn, *A Past Apart*, 179.; Kernaghan, *Watching for Daybreak*, 70.; De Paor, *Divided Ulster*, 116.
[337] Bardon, *Belfast*, 73.; Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 540.; Smyth, *Sailortown*, 25.
[338] *TNWBP*, 18 July 1935; *BNL*, 8 August 1935; Smyth, *Sailortown*, 25.
[339] *TS*, 15 July 1935.
[340] Bardon, *Belfast*, 73.; Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 541. Figures for the number of fatalities in the weeks following the July 12th parade in Belfast have been cited in the literature as both twelve and thirteen. See: Bardon, *Belfast*, 73.; Boyd, *Holy War in Belfast*, 178.; De Paor, *Divided* Ulster, 116. For an account of this period of violence in the words of those who experienced it, see: Munck and Rolston, *Belfast in the Thirties*, 46-60.

centre"[341] of violence in the city.[342] The violence extended out to other areas of Belfast as the rioting continued, resulting in not only the loss of life, but also arson, looting and destruction of property.[343] In addition, the violence and threats prompted the displacement of people in the city, particularly in areas where individuals found themselves surrounded by a majority of members of the other main religion.[344] The dividing lines between communities once again emerged as flashpoints as the city descended further into violence.

[341] *TS*, 15 July 1935.
[342] Kernaghan, *Watching for Daybreak*, 70.
[343] *TS*, 15 July 1935; *BNL*, 17 July 1935; *TNWBP*, 18 July 1935; *TNWBP*, 22 July 1935.
[344] *BNL*, 18 July 1935; *BNL*, 19 July 1935; *TNWBP*, 19 July 1935.



Map 2: **York Street area in 1935.** Map of the York Street area to illustrate the micro-level territorial divisions between the two communities. The dotted line indicates the route of the peace line barrier. This map was drawn by the author based on existing maps of the area. Sources: Hepburn, A. C. *A Past Apart: Studies in the History of Catholic Belfast 1850 – 1950*. Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 1996., 181.; Ordnance Survey Northern Ireland. *Town Plan of Belfast City Centre*. 8 Inches to 1 Mile. Belfast: Ordnance Survey Northern Ireland, 1939.

The York Street area of Belfast experienced particularly high levels of violence during the summer months. In 1935, the religious composition of the area around York Street was such that perceived Catholic and Protestant territories directly abutted on another, leaving the two communities living in extremely close quarters.[345] For instance, Nelson Street, inhabitant by a Protestant majority, signified a border between the Catholic area in this part of the city close to the docks and the adjacent Protestant territory.[346] It is important to note that the area around York Street was not inhabited by two clearly delineated Catholic and Protestant enclaves.[347] Instead, the sectarian boundaries often cut right across individual streets.[348] Scholar Declan Martin described the sectarian geography of this area of the city as a "'sandwich' effect", which meant that each community claimed sections of the area, living in very close proximity to one another.[349]

This was not the first time that this area of the city had been transformed into a sectarian battleground. For instance, the Troubles of the 1920s brought violence in the form of rioting, shootings and evictions to the York Street area.[350] In particular, as demonstrated by Martin's pivotal study on migration patterns, the sectarian geography of this part of the city likely contributed to the high levels of violence present in the area during the 1920s.[351] It is certainly plausible that the same sectarian geography could have

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[345] Hepburn, *A Past Apart*, 181.
[346] Catholic homes tended to be situated between Nelson Street and Garmoyle Street with Protestant homes making up the majority between Nelson Street and York Street. See: Ibid., 180.
[347] Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 90-91.
[348] Ibid., Map III(iii).
[349] Martin's description of the geography of the city in this instance focused on the layout of the area in the early 1920s. Nevertheless, it is plausible to assume that sectarian boundaries remained somewhat the same between the 1920s and 1935. See: Ibid., Map III(iii);90-91.
[350] Bardon, *Belfast*, 42.; Parkinson, *Belfast's Unholy War*, 169;250.; Smyth, *Sailortown*, 23.
[351] Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 90-91.

also been a contributing factor to the violence that devolved there in 1935. Furthermore, during the previous century this area of Belfast had experienced additional bouts of sectarian conflict, including in 1864 and 1886.[352] During these periods of intercommunal conflict, specific streets emerged as particularly violent flashpoints, including the area immediately around York Street, such as Dock Street and Garmoyle Street.[353] Consequently, the intercommunal violence that emerged on the same streets in 1935 was not an unfamiliar sight to residents.

The violence of 1935 in the York Street area bore a striking resemblance to the disturbances of the 1920s Troubles. Once again the community members living along the divide experienced the brunt of the intercommunal violence. Perpetrators of the disturbances engaged in a range of violent acts, including intimidation, evictions, incendiarism and sniping.[354] In the York Street area, the close proximity of the two communities meant that neighbours were pitted against neighbours in this part of Belfast.[355] Further, parallels with the 1920s Troubles emerged in relation to the government response to the intercommunal violence in 1935 with the use of the army and the implementation of a curfew. The last time that the assistance of the army had been requested was in 1922.[356] Within two days of the start of the rioting the army was called on to assist the police in the area around York Street as the violence continued.[357] The police were accused of not doing enough to prevent attacks on the Catholic

[352] Parkinson, *Belfast's Unholy War*, 16.; Smyth, *Days of Unity in the Docklands of Sailortown, 1907-1969*, 24.; Smyth, *Sailortown*, 21.
[353] Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 97.; Smyth, *Sailortown*, 21.
[354] *TS*, 15 July 1935; Hepburn, *A Past Apart*, 185-190.; Smyth, *Sailortown,* 25.
[355] Ibid.
[356] Hepburn, *A Past Apart*, 182.
[357] *BNL*, 15 July 1935; *TS*, 15 July 1935.

community of Sailortown, which then necessitated the intervention of army.[358] Even the presence of the curfew, which was reinstated on July 14th,[359] was not sufficient to curb the intercommunal violence that had erupted in the city.[360]

The army was deployed on the streets at midnight on July 14th and succeeded in reestablishing a semblance of order by 4.00am.[361] While the precise number of soldiers deployed at this time is unclear, at least two companies from the Border Regiment were present in the York Street area at that time.[362] The troops were in place for ten days in Belfast following their initial deployment.[363] A newspaper account of the introduction of troops in the York Street area of Belfast described the re-introduction of the soldiers to Belfast, noting how they lined the streets armed with bayonets.[364] The presence of the British troops deployed to the city's streets, both was strikingly similar to the previous periods of intercommunal violence,[365] while foreshadowing the scenes that would emerge at the start of the Troubles in 1969.[366]

In the days that followed the initial outburst of violence on the streets of Belfast in mid-July, official barricades once again began to appear on the city's streets. The swift emergence of the barricades suggests that such barriers were an existing template in the security forces' tool box of methods to address intercommunal violence. The decision to use barricades appears to have been taken rather quickly with the *Newsletter* noting that

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[358] Smyth, *Sailortown*, 26.
[359] Hepburn, *A Past Apart*, 183.
[360] *BNL*, 15 July 1935.
[361] Hepburn, *A Past Apart*, 182.
[362] *TS*, 15 July 1935.
[363] Hepburn, *A Past Apart*, 195.
[364] *TS*, 15 July 1935.
[365] Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 21.; Hepburn, *A Past Apart*, 174.
[366] *TT*, 16 August 1969.

the intention of the security forces to build barricades became public knowledge on July 15th:

> "It was learned last night that in order that the police may be better able to deal with disturbances in the York Street area the ends of some of the streets are to be barricaded. Measurements of the streets have been made and it is expected that either to-day or to-morrow the barricades will be erected".[367]

The impetus for the barricade construction appears to have been to facilitate the ability of the police to address the violence in the vicinity of York Street.[368] In particular, according to a *Newsletter* report, the barricades were intended both to separate the opposing sides in order to ward against the potential for future violence and to contain the barricaded areas should additional disturbances arise:

> "The erection of the barricades, it is understood, is not only for the purpose of partially segregating factions as a preventative measure but also to confine the areas in the event of further disorders".[369]

The function of the barricades as a means of containment bears a strong resemblance to discussions over the use of the official barricades during the previous violence of the early 1920s. Furthermore, the decision to segregate the opposing communities underlines the focus of the authorities, once again, on short-term expediency and the acceptance of the perceived lines of division between communities.

Barricade construction began on July 16th in the vicinity of York Street.[370] By July 17th barricades were already in place on streets leading out from York Street toward Nelson Street, including Fleet Street, New Andrew Street, New Dock Street, Marine Street, and Ship Street, as well as parts of Nelson Street.[371] The position of the newly

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[367] *BNL*, 16 July 1935.
[368] Ibid.; *BNL*, 2 August 1935.
[369] *BNL*, 17 July 1935.
[370] Ibid.
[371] Ibid.; *TNWBP*, 17 July 1935; Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 187. For useful maps of the York Street area, see:

constructed barricades appear to have been chosen based on areas of previous confrontations in the vicinity of York Street.[372] It seems that the police undertook the construction of the barricades at these locations.[373] Denis Smyth and Michael Farrell both asserted in their work that it was the British Army who put up the peace line structure in the York Street area in 1935.[374] Based on the available evidence it is plausible that the police erected the first barricades and the army later built a more formidable barrier in this area of the city. While the police may have been the ones building the initial barriers, the City Surveyor and additional government authorities appear to have been working in cooperation with the police regarding the erection of the barriers.[375] This division of labor was largely reminiscent of the top-down barrier construction during the 1920s Troubles.[376]

Barricades not only were used in the York Street area of Belfast, but also were constructed elsewhere in the city during the summer of 1935. For instance, within days of the barriers going up in the York Street area of Belfast, newspaper reports indicated the construction of barricades in the vicinity of west Belfast, north Belfast and later in east Belfast.[377] The barbed wire barricades emerged as an integral part of the security forces' efforts to keep conflicting communities apart. For example, according to an article in *The Northern Whig and Belfast Post*, barricades were deployed "[a]s a

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Ordnance Survey Northern Ireland, *Town Plan of Belfast City Centre*; Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', Map III(iii).

[372] *BNL*, 17 July 1935.

[373] Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 187.

[374] Farrell, *Northern Ireland*, 139.; Smyth, *Sailortown*, 26.

[375] *TNWBP*, 22 July 1935; *TNWBP*, 2 August 1935.

[376] It is also interesting to note that the Minister of Home Affairs was still Dawson Bates. For further context regarding his tenure as Minister of Home Affairs see the Biographical Notes.

[377] *TNWBP*, 18 July 1935; *TNWBP*, 19 July 1935; *BNL*, 19 July 1935; *TNWBP*, 22 July 1935; *BNL*, 25 July 1935; *TNWBP*, 18 November 1935.

precaution against the extension of the disorders".[378] The barricades served as an ad hoc response to intercommunal violence, with an article in *The Scotsman*, stating: "The portable barbed wire barricades are kept in readiness and rushed to wherever required".[379] Once again, barbed wire lay strewn across the landscape accompanied by soldiers armed with bayonets, while police patrols continued as Belfast found itself in the midst of further intercommunal conflict.[380] The 'security through separation' experiment rolled out at the start of the 1920s, further expanded during the 1935 disturbances, becoming a key aspect of the security strategy of the authorities in the face of intercommunal violence in the city.

Initially, the presence of the barricades in the York Street area appear to have contributed to curbing the occurrence of violence in their vicinity in the days and weeks after their construction.[381] On July 17th, the Commissioner of Police for Belfast released a statement in which he referred to the barricades stating: "'There has been a very definite improvement in the York Street area, and the provision of barricades seems to have been a success'".[382] While violence continued in other parts of Belfast, the violence in the York Street portion of the city tended to be limited to specific episodes rather than larger conflicts.[383] Approximately two weeks after the construction of the barricades a newspaper article in *The Northern Whig and Belfast Post*, with the sub-title "Barricades Justified: Brisk Shopping Once More" reported that "[t]he barriers in the branch streets

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[378] *TNWBP*, 19 July 1935.
[379] *TS*, 22 July 1935.
[380] Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 541.
[381] *TNWBP*, 29 July 1935; Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 187.
[382] *TNWBP*, 18 July 1935.
[383] Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 187.

off York Street have been effective".[384] The security forces had faded from the streets and in their place children and their parents had begun to return to their everyday lives.[385]

In the early days of the disturbances, during the middle of July, both the police and the military had been under pressure and the strain appeared to be taking its toll.[386] At the time, the RUC comprised of 1,103 men in Belfast and an additional 170 members of the USC were sent out with the express purpose of stopping the looting of the Catholic buildings located in predominately Protestant sections of the city.[387] In the face of mounting intercommunal violence, the police confronted a situation where their numbers were simply insufficient to address the disturbances at hand.[388] According to a *Newsletter* article from August 2, 1935, the construction of barricades served to augment the police's limited resources:

> "The report of the Improvement Committee stated that the City Surveyor was co-operating with the Government authorities in the erection of barricades in the York Street area with a view to facilitating the police in dealing with the disturbances there".[389]

Meanwhile, allegations were levied against the police, by at least one member of the Belfast City Council, Councillor Hill, who stated the following:

> "It is owing to the inaction of the police that these street barriers have had to be erected, and I can prove it".[390]

The construction of the barricades in response to the intercommunal violence acted as a short-term policing resource for the security forces, which had been unable to quell the

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[384] *TNWBP*, 29 July 1935.
[385] Ibid.
[386] *BNL*, 17 July 1935.
[387] Hepburn, *A Past Apart*, 195.
[388] Ibid.
[389] *BNL*, 2 August 1935.
[390] *TNWBP*, 2 August 1935.

outbreak of violence initially, just as the barriers had done during the violence of the 1920s.

While the barricades may have formed an integral component of the security apparatus when faced with intercommunal violence, reaction to their presence on the city's streets was not overwhelmingly positive. Even within the local government, opposition to the presence of the barricades was raised in August 1935.[391] For instance, on August 1st, Councillor Cole asserted that the presence of the barricades acted "to vilify Belfast".[392] Councillor Cole's critique appears to have been in the context of a discussion over the impact of the recent violence on ratepayers in Belfast due to the police's inability to effectively protect the ratepayers without the presence of the barricades.[393] Just a couple weeks later another member of the Belfast City Council, Councillor Hill, announced his intention to ask the Minister of Home Affairs for the removal of the barricades and the curfew with a proposed motion that read as follows:

> ""That in view of the fact that a large number of ratepayers in York Street and York Road area are losing trade and are being hampered in business by the continuance of the Curfew regulations, the Council requests the Minister of Home Affairs to raise the Curfew order and to remove the barricades as being a barrier to the co-operation of all citizens to maintain the honoured name of the city, and as these are unsightly and disparaging to the welfare of the city in the eyes of tourists and visitors"".[394]

Again, as in 1923, objections to the barricades centered on their harmful economic impact. However, this time the negative impact of the barricades as physical barriers to community coexistence as well as their damaging influence on perceptions of the city more broadly were both highlighted publicly.

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[391] *BNL*, 2 August 1935.
[392] Ibid.
[393] *TNWBP*, 2 August 1935.
[394] *TNWBP*, 14 August 1935.

After a consultation between members of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the police, during which the situation in the areas of the city affected by the violence was examined, the curfew in the York Street area was withdrawn on August 16th.[395] While the curfew may have been removed, a strong police presence was still in place and the barricades in the York Street area as well as in east Belfast, including in Seaforde Street, remained.[396] This suggests that the barricades were viewed as a viable top-down solution to the intercommunal violence, as had been the case at the start of the 1920s as well, with the police assessments playing a key role in the longevity of the barricades. While the tense atmosphere in the city had reportedly dissipated, according to the police,[397] the violence persisted throughout the summer and into the autumn.[398] Thus, the ongoing violent atmosphere contributed to the maintenance of the barricades.

Similar to the barricades of 1922-23 in east Belfast, a more formidable barrier was eventually built in the immediate vicinity of York Street in 1935. A potential contributing factor to the construction of the stronger barrier may have been instances of continued violence in the vicinity of the initial barriers, including shootings.[399] Smyth described the security barrier as "a large fence", which ran down all of Nelson Street, cutting across adjacent streets in its path.[400] The position of this subsequent barrier mirrored the location of the initial barricades erected in the York Street area in July. The new barricade appears to have been a solid barrier, made with

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[395] *BNL*, 17 August 1935.
[396] Ibid.
[397] Ibid.
[398] Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 541.; Smyth, *Sailortown*, 26. Newspaper reports from the summer months into the autumn of 1935 provide a detailed window into the extent of the violence during and after the riots. See: *TS*, 22 July 1935; *BNL*, 8 August 1935; *DC*, 23 September 1935; *TNWBP*, 23 September 1935; *DJ*, 25 September 1935; *BO*, 27 September 1935; *TNWBP*, 18 November 1935.
[399] Newspaper reports provide snapshots of the types and locations of such violence. See: *DC*, 23 September, 1935; *BO*, 27 September 1935.
[400] Smyth, *Days of Unity in the Docklands of Sailortown, 1907-1969,* 26.; Smyth, *Sailortown*, 22;26.

corrugated iron, that was as tall as the door frames in the adjacent buildings.[401] The height and position of the barrier, similar to the 1922-23 barriers, would have prevented the two sides from seeing one another and acted as an enhanced form of protection against the likes of sniping and even name calling.

The barrier along Nelson Street remained between the two communities until March of 1936.[402] The removal of the barricade only occurred once the violence in the area had diminished.[403] While the 1935-36 peace line barrier may have be in place for a shorter period of time than its 1922-23 predecessors, it was built more swiftly after the start of intercommunal violence than had been the case during the previous decade. As Byrne noted, in 1935, the barrier "was seen as a viable and acceptable policy decision to address sectarian violence and disorder".[404] It is plausible that by this time, given the use of such barriers during the 1920s, the use of security barriers in the face of intercommunal violence was seen as an efficient and effective way to contain intercommunal violence, particularly when confronted with limited resources among the security forces. Furthermore, the persistent presence and strengthening of the barrier once again underlined the official acceptance of the notion that *security* in the city required the *separation* of the two communities.

Conclusion

While the emergence of violence in 1969 and the subsequent years of conflict in Northern Ireland may have seemed to some observers at the time as unprecedented, as Stewart astutely noted, to scholars of history "a good deal of it was almost eerily

[401] Farrell, *Northern Ireland*, 139.; Smyth, *Sailortown*, 22.
[402] Byrne, 'The Belfast Peace Walls', 25-26.; Farrell, *Northern Ireland*, 140.; Smyth, *Sailortown,* 26.
[403] Ibid.
[404] Byrne, 'The Belfast Peace Walls', 25.

familiar".[405] As demonstrated in this chapter, the peace walls, similar to the ongoing intercommunal violence at the start of the Troubles, were far from unprecedented. Instead, the present-day peace walls are part of a pattern of 'security through separation', which has been repeatedly implemented in Belfast during instances of intercommunal violence. Despite the prevalence and pattern of intercommunal disturbances in Belfast, the implementation of this approach to *security* based on *separation* as a response to intercommunal violence has remained under-examined, until now.

Through delving into the archives of history and examining both the emergence and the role of these barriers of division at the micro-level, it becomes apparent that, despite their repeated use by the security forces, the barricades were in fact imperfect provisions of security. Nevertheless, it is clear, based on the response of the authorities during the 1920s Troubles and again in 1935-36, that the use of barriers when faced with intercommunal violence had become an acceptable policy response to the government authorities in Belfast. The gradual and largely limited adoption of this method during the 1920s Troubles stands in stark contrast to the swift and more widespread use of such barriers when intercommunal violence erupted again in 1935. This in itself suggests that the authorities had learned some lessons from their experience addressing intercommunal violence during the 1920s and put these lessons learned into practice during 1935-36 in the form of barricades. However, by building on existing divisions in society, the construction of barricades not only served as an inadequate response to security concerns, but also did not address the root cause of the violence, paradoxically providing an opportunity for tensions to continue to fester.

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[405] Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*, 3-4.

The reflections of a visitor to Belfast during the summer of 1935 underline the paradoxical role that the officially sanctioned barriers played on the streets of the city:

> ""Queer things, these barricades," remarked a visitor, referring to the barriers in the York Street area. "In France it is the rioters and revolutionists who build barricades in time of turmoil; here it is the authorities who construct them."".[406]

By 1935 the use of such walls was essentially an auxiliary measure for the authorities in the face of intercommunal violence and the scale of the implementation of this 'security through separation' experiment in the first half of the twentieth century remained relatively limited. However, the repeated decision on the part of the authorities to pursue *security* though *separation* underscores the extent to which lines of division in society were accepted and subsequently leveraged as a means to manage the intercommunal violence. The barriers of the 1920s and 1935-36 brought the extent of the division between the communities into sharper focus and formed part of a pattern of violence along lines of division in the city, which persisted over the years, emerging again at the onset of the Troubles.[407]

[406] *TNWBP*, 5 August 1935.
[407] Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*, 154.

CHAPTER II

DEVELOPING A POLICY OF SEPARATION

"Ulster is still what one might call a stone's throw from anarchy."
- Oliver Wright, United Kingdom Representative in Northern Ireland, September 1969[408]

The development of the peace line policy in 1969 did not occur in a vacuum. Instead, amidst the divisive politics of the day, the combination of events at the local level, political level interests and structural constraints, both deep-seated and immediate, yielded an official approach of 'security through separation'. As the intercommunal violence moved into August 1969, the authorities found themselves in the midst of a massive crisis of public order, embodied in the presence of community barricades cutting across the streets of Belfast and Derry/Londonderry, for which they were woefully unprepared. During the early 1920s and 1935-36 the use of walls remained an auxiliary measure for the authorities when faced with intercommunal violence. However, at the start of the Troubles in 1969, barricades swiftly became the fulcrum of politics in Northern Ireland, which catapulted the barricades and the potential policy responses to the forefront of discussions.

Although the issue of community barricades was later eclipsed by the mounting insurgency against the British Army by paramilitary organizations,[409] the inability of the authorities to address the epidemic of barricade building and community retrenchment

[408] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Ulster: September 13, 1969'].
[409] For a discussion of the relevant literature see the Introduction.

into territorial heartlands contributed to the embedding of the conflict between the two communities. This chapter begins with a detailed examination of the events surrounding the deployment of the British Army in Northern Ireland and the internal security situation that the troops encountered during the early weeks of their deployment, with a particular emphasis on the unprecedented emergence of a preponderance of community barricades in the city. Subsequently, the focus shifts to the development of the official peace line policy in September 1969, which emerged in response to contentious competing political interests, built directly on existing lines of division in society and represented an official acquiescence to the notion that *security* could only be ensured through the *separation* of the two warring communities.

1969: A Descent into Violence

Between 1922 and 1969, Northern Ireland experienced a period of relative calm, with only brief bouts of violence disrupting the region, including the riots of 1935 and 1964 as well as the Border Campaign from 1956 to 1962.[410] While signs of division persisted during this period with residential segregation in particular constituting a part of everyday life, outright sectarian violence remained relatively limited.[411] Boyd described the period after the cessation of the 1935 riots in Belfast as a time of "uneasy peace", noting poignantly that "beneath the surface the old antagonisms still survived".[412] It wasn't until the summer of 1969 that serious intercommunal violence returned to the region when what began as a civil rights campaign in the late 1960s devolved into

[410] Boyd, *Holy War in Belfast*, 179-181.; De Paor, *Divided Ulster*, 127-128;161-162.; Hepburn, *A Past Apart*, 236.; Prince and Warner, *Belfast and Derry in Revolt*, 47-64.; Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*, 140-141.
[411] Prince and Warner, *Belfast and Derry in Revolt*, 50.
[412] Boyd, *Holy War in Belfast*, 178.

conflict.[413] With tensions between the two communities heightened by the previous year's events, Northern Ireland arrived at the start of 1969 in a particularly precarious position. [414] As the months passed, the conditions were becoming ripe for an outbreak of violence as sectarian tensions increased.[415]

By August 1969 the conflict escalated, particularly in Belfast,[416] where violence erupted in the traditional territorial heartlands of the two communities. Between July and August 1969, the violence was largely contained to specific sections of the city with 'the Orange-Green line' between Springfield Road and Hasting Street as well as the Falls Road/Divis Street, Unity Flats, Crumlin Road and the lower Shankill Road bearing the brunt of the disturbances.[417] The riots tended to emerge on the very same streets as they had during previous disturbances in the city.[418] While the violence and destruction may have been relatively "limited and localized",[419] the reverberations from the intercommunal violence extended far beyond individual streets in Belfast.

The sectarian violence pitted the Protestant and Catholic communities against one another,[420] resulting in rampant destruction of property and numerous injuries in Belfast

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[413] For further information on the civil rights campaign and the shift to violence, see: Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 643-669.; Mac Ginty and Darby, *Guns and Government*, 16.; De Paor, *Divided Ulster*, 165-205.
[414] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 5-6. Extensive research has been undertaken on this period in Northern Irish history, see: Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 643-669.; De Paor, *Divided Ulster*, 193.; Ó Dochartaigh, *From Civil Rights to Armalites*, 17-61.; Prince and Warner, *Belfast and Derry in Revolt*; Purdie, *Politics in the Streets*; Stewart, *The Narrow Ground,* 14.; Wright, *Northern Ireland*, 164-216.
[415] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 6.
[416] *TIT*, 4 August 1969; Smith, *From Violence to Power Sharing*, 66.
[417] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 222.; *DAM*, 4 August 1969; *DE*, 4 August 1969.
[418] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['Historical Record of Main Events Northern Ireland 5 Oct 69 to 11 Aug 69']. For insight into the patterns and parallels with previous bouts of violence, see the detailed discussion of the history of rioting in Belfast in the Introduction.
[419] For further information on the localized patterns of conflict in 1969 see: Kelly, 'Belfast, August 1969', 228-241.
[420] *DM*, 4 August 1969; *TIT*, 4 August 1969.

alone.[421] Both the damage to houses and the fear of the violence resulted in the displacement of thousands of people, often in Catholic portions of the city.[422] In particular, the community members living along the interfaces between the opposing sides were acutely affected by violence as flashpoints between the communities once again became outright battlegrounds in the city.[423] The violence and destruction contributed to an intensification of violence between communities as the opposing sides were spurred to seek retaliation, a situation described by a confidential British Army report as one of "vindictive escalation".[424] The conflict emerging in Belfast during the late summer of 1969 was starkly reminiscent of previous bouts of violence in the city, particularly that of the 1920s and 1935.

From early August, the violence and intimidation already emanating from the sectarian clashes led to the flight of families from areas where they were in the minority, causing a hardening of the lines of division between the communities.[425] Observers of the violence in early August 1969 recounted a situation of anger and fear that had overtaken the city.[426] For example, an account of the events in a newspaper article from August 5th described the tense atmosphere along one interface in the city:

> "Ominously, neither Roman Catholic nor Protestant rioters in the Crumlin Road district of Belfast today showed any sign of repentance. Both factions spent the

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[421] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'], ['Period 12 – 19 Aug 69']; NAI, TSCH 2000/6/658 ['The Situation in the North of Ireland']; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Riots in Belfast Care of the Homeless and Displaced']; *DM*, 4 August 1969.
[422] The number of people affected at the very height of the disturbances was between 5,000 to 6,000. See: NAI, TSCH 2000/6/658 ['The Situation in the North of Ireland']; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 '[Riots in Belfast Care of the Homeless and Displaced'].
[423] For a detailed account of the locations of violence during this period, see: Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 37-42.
[424] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'].
[425] *TG*, 4 August 1969; *TT*, 5 August 1969; *DAM*, 6 August 1969; *TIT*, 7 August 1969; *TG*, 7 August 1969. This pattern has also been identified in previous studies, for example: English, *Armed Struggle*, 101.; Prince and Warner, *Belfast and Derry in Revolt*, 149.
[426] *DM*, 4 August 1969; *TT*, 5 August 1969; *DAM*, 6 August 1969.

> day grimly preparing for trouble in such a way as to make further violence inevitable".[427]

Concern arose at the time that the hardening of divisions between communities, as families retreated from the hinterlands, would result in a situation of deeply entrenched residential segregation within the city.[428] For example, a local priest reportedly observed "that further disturbances could cement the city into solid denominational ghettoes against whose blank face reason will brain itself".[429] This initial concern proved to become a reality as, once again, reminiscent of previous periods of intercommunal violence, the lines of division became more apparent as communities retreated further into their respective perceived territory, strengthening the presence of residential segregation within the city.[430]

By the middle of August, Belfast and Derry/Londonderry had become the sites of the most severe violence.[431] The violence lent itself to the fostering of further polarization between the two sides.[432] Not only were the two cities at the centre of the conflict, but events in one city would yield reverberations in the other. A connection between the cities which directly contributed to the emergence of disturbances in Belfast, creating a situation described by the British Army as akin to Civil War.[433] In particular, on August 14th, in response to events in the Bogside, members of Belfast's Catholic community engaged in demonstrations which morphed swiftly into riots as both the RUC

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[427] *TT*, 5 August 1969.
[428] *TG*, 7 August 1969.
[429] Ibid.
[430] Wright, *Northern Ireland*, 9;205.
[431] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'], ['Period 12 – 19 Aug 69'].
[432] NAI, TSCH 2000/6/658 ['The Situation in the North of Ireland'].
[433] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'], ['Period 12 – 19 Aug 69'].

and members of the Protestant community mounted their own response.[434] These actions by the Catholic community were interpreted by elements of the Protestant community, and the RUC, as an uprising.[435] This led loyalists to engage in an offensive against predominately Catholic portions of Belfast, with the goal of eliminating what they viewed as the heartland of the insurgency.[436] The offensive directed towards the Catholic territory was later likened to "invasions" in the Tribunal of Inquiry report, which detailed the disturbances of 1969.[437]

It is noteworthy that, on both the Protestant and Catholic sides, in 1969 the intercommunal disturbances emerged without the help of overarching organizations orchestrating violence against 'the other'.[438] Instead, each community's fear of the emergence of intercommunal conflict in the context of a tumultuous economic, social and political environment prompted violent responses.[439] In Belfast, the two sides engaged one another in violent conflict along the interfaces between the Catholic and Protestant communities.[440] The size of the city of Belfast and the number of residentially segregated enclaves not only created a situation with numerous potential flashpoints, but also made community heartlands difficult to defend against attack.[441] The Report of Tribunal of Inquiry into the situation in Northern Ireland in 1969 later concluded that

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[434] Mulholland, *Northern Ireland*, 58-59.; Mulholland, *The Longest War*, 72.; De Paor, *Divided Ulster,* 201. For further context regarding the Battle of the Bogside and the subsequent reverberations in Belfast, see: Bardon, *A History of Ulster,* 666-672.
[435] Mulholland, *Northern Ireland*, 58-59.; Mulholland, *The Longest War*, 72.
[436] Mulholland, *Northern Ireland*, 58-59.; Mulholland, *The Longest War*, 72.
[437] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 13.
[438] Ibid., 11;13-14.
[439] Smith, *From Violence to Power Sharing*, 66.; Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 11.
[440] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'], ['Period 12 – 19 Aug 69'].
[441] Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 670.; De Paor, *Divided Ulster*, 201. The situation in Belfast differed greatly from Derry/Londonderry in this respect where community heartlands, such as the Bogside, were logistically much simpler to defend. See: De Paor, *Divided Ulster*, 201.

"[i]n so tense a situation it needed very little to set going a major disturbance",[442] demonstrating the precarious position of the city of Belfast and its citizens during the summer of 1969.

In a situation where it took only the toss of a single stone to incite violence, a strong police presence was required to quell the disturbances. But such a resource was not available in Northern Ireland at the start of the Troubles. The shortage of available security forces to address the mounting intercommunal violence was a significant structural factor, which contributed to a chasm of security enforcement and the subsequent creation of the peace line policy. By the summer of 1969, the approximate strength of the RUC was only 3,200.[443] The RUC had a Reserve Force made up of eight platoons, with approximately thirty members each, which could be deployed to engage in riot control.[444] This Reserve Force was not sufficient to bolster the RUC in the face of the significant intercommunal violence.

In addition to the issue of insufficient resources, which hindered the police response to the violence, and arguably even more importantly, there was a tense relationship between the police and members of the Catholic community in Belfast, a situation starkly reminiscent of the Troubles in the 1920s and in 1935.[445] In particular, the demographics of the USC, which was made up exclusively of Protestants, contributed to a chasm of mistrust between the police and the Catholic community.[446] The USC, with

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[442] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 11.
[443] Ibid., 7.
[444] Ibid.
[445] Parkinson, *Belfast's Unholy War*, 14.; Smyth, *Sailortown*, 26.; Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 15.
[446] Ibid., 17.; PRONI, D2560/5/43; PRONI, D2560/5/22; NAI, TSCH 2000/6/660 ['Memorandum Re Visits to Six Counties'].

a strength of approximately 8,500, was there to support the RUC.[447] However, the USC was not an effective force to quell the violence,[448] particularly given the tense relationship between the USC and the Catholic community. Instead, the USC's presence on the streets ran the risk of further exacerbating the existing sectarian violence, rather than contributing to police efforts to prevent violence.[449] While, in 1969, the RUC did contain a limited number of members from the Catholic community,[450] their employment in the police force equally tended to result in distrust from other members of the Catholic community in addition to friction with members of the Protestant community.[451]

This demographic issue coupled with the role of the police in addressing the emergence of riots, in which members of the Catholic community participated, led to the widespread belief among the wider Catholic community, and those following the events from Ireland, that the RUC was not an impartial force.[452] Simultaneously, the RUC came under increased attack from members of the Catholic community, which meant that the police became conditioned to view Catholics as the aggressors.[453] The police, namely the USC, were even accused of leading Protestant attacks on the Catholic community during August 1969.[454] The Tribunal of Inquiry later found that, despite the actions of some

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[447] Only 300 of the USC were engaged in fulltime work with the RUC leaving the rest as part-time volunteers. See: Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 7.
[448] The USC were eventually deployed in Belfast with mixed results. See: Ibid., 17-18.
[449] Ibid., 17.
[450] See Wright for an analysis of ethnic frontiers within government institutions, including the Northern Irish police force: Wright, *Northern Ireland*, 114-115.
[451] NAI, TSCH 2000/6/660 ['Memorandum Re Visits to Six Counties'].
[452] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 15.; NAI, TSCH 2000/6/658 ['Report of Discussion at Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 15th August 1969 concerning Northern Ireland'], ['The Situation in the North of Ireland', 18 August 1969].
[453] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 15.
[454] NA CJ 3/18 ['Ulster: Valedictory Despatch', 6 March 1970]; NAI, TSCH 2001/6/516 ['Text of Press Conference given by Dr. Patrick J. Hillery T.D. Minister for External Affairs, at the Department of External Affairs, Dublin on 6th July, 1970']; PRONI, D2560/5/43.

individual members of the police force, on the whole the RUC did not engage in partisan cooperation with the Protestant community.[455] Nevertheless, the police did lose the pivotal trust of many in the Catholic community.[456] The loss of confidence and the perception of partisan leanings in the police force resulted in, what was described by the Tribunal of Inquiry as, "the fateful split between the Catholic community and the police",[457] which in turn contributed to the tense situation on the streets of Belfast in August 1969.

From early August 1969, observers of the events in Northern Ireland, including officials in the Northern Irish government and the British Army, recognized that the RUC was not strong enough to prevent further violence in the region, principally as it did not have the resources to police the entirety of Northern Ireland in such a situation of widespread disturbances.[458] The previous bouts of rioting during the summer served to expend the RUC beyond their means.[459] Furthermore, the issue of insufficient manpower among the police in August was further compounded by the Inspector-General's decision to continue operating as if the police force had the adequate numbers to address the violence.[460] Given the semi-detached status of Northern Ireland, the option to reinforce the RUC with police based in other areas of the United Kingdom was not available in 1969.[461] Not only did the police in Britain register their objection to engaging in police

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[455] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 15.
[456] PRONI, D2560/5/10.
[457] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 15.
[458] PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 [Press Release, 17 August 1969]; PRONI, CAB/4/1458 ['Discussion on possible use of Troops in aid of the Civil Power arising out of disturbances in Belfast on 2nd-3rd August, 1969]; IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['The IS Situation in Northern Ireland Period 5 Oct 68 – 11 Aug 69'].
[459] Mulholland, *The Longest War,* 71.
[460] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 16.
[461] Ibid., 7.

work in Northern Ireland whilst the Special Powers Act was in place, but a legal mechanism did not exist to facilitate the reinforcement of the Northern Irish police force from elsewhere in the United Kingdom.[462] Thus, in addition to the significant mistrust between the police and the Catholic community, the RUC was overstretched, overtired and lacking in sufficient reinforcements, which hampered their ability to deal with the disturbances across Northern Ireland.

At the start of the Troubles, Northern Ireland retained its semi-detached status within the wider United Kingdom, a place that the authorities in London viewed cautiously, concerned that they could be "sucked into the Irish bog".[463] Although Northern Ireland was a part of the United Kingdom, since its formal emergence at the start of the 1920s, it had operated largely as its own self-governed entity without much involvement from the government in Westminster.[464] In the words of Labour politician Merlyn Rees, from 1920 until the start of the Troubles, "Northern Ireland had been left very much to its own devices, a part of the United Kingdom that Westminster preferred to forget".[465] In light of a failure of the RUC to contain the violence in August 1969, the British Army was the only available force left to address the situation in Northern Ireland.[466] No such intermediate security force existed, such as a National Guard outfit, between the police and the army. Thus, escalating to the deployment of the British Army was the only remaining option for the government.[467] The introduction of the army was not an ideal solution to the mounting violence, because, as demonstrated by Townshend,

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[462] The Police Act, which stipulated a means for such assistance to be provided to Northern Ireland, did not come to fruition until 1970. See: Callaghan, *A House Divided,* 19.
[463] Ibid., 15.
[464] However, this would soon change as the Troubles progressed with the imposition of direct rule in 1972. See: Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 689.
[465] Rees, *Northern Ireland*, 7.
[466] Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 19.
[467] Mulholland, *The Longest War*, 74.

military forces are not designed for policing since their strength lies rather in tackling violence head on.[468] Furthermore, the introduction of the British Army was seen only as the final option should all else fail, particularly because the presence of troops risked exacerbating the existing upheaval in Northern Ireland.[469] The significant disadvantages related to the deployment of the British Army were not lost on the key decisionmakers in London, who were reluctant to send in troops.[470]

On the eve of the British Army's deployment in Belfast the police's inability to maintain 'law and order' in the city was palpable. For instance, on August 14th, in response to what the police considered to be a rebellion,[471] they employed the use of machine guns, an action which resulted in five deaths, four of whom were Catholics.[472] Despite their efforts, the police were unable to prevent neither the Protestant groups from entering the Catholic territory, nor the acts of looting and arson on the city's streets.[473] Catholic homes, particularly in the vicinity of Conway Street,[474] were also damaged by

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[468] Townshend also astutely showed that the presence of the military also tends to aggravate the situation at the political level. See: Townshend, *Political Violence in Ireland*, 409.

[469] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 7.; PRONI, CAB/4/1458 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet Held at Stormont Castle on Monday, 11th August, 1969, at 4.00p.m.']; NAI, TSCH 2000/6/658 ['Report of Discussion at Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 15th August 1969 concerning Northern Ireland']. Stewart demonstrated the past precedent for the presence of the army to foster further violence. See: Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*, 149-150.

[470] Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 19-20.

[471] In reality, the IRA participation in the violence was very limited. For instance, evidence suggests that the IRA engaged the police with gunfire in Divis Street at St. Comgall's School. See: Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 10.

[472] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'], ['Period 12 – 19 Aug 69']; Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 9.

[473] Ibid., 162.

[474] Approximately 48 Catholic houses were destroyed in Conway Street. See: Ibid. As a result of the violence in July and August 1969, 63 of the 64 homes on Conway Street alone sustained serious damages, a significant portion of which were recommended for demolition. See: Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 2 (Appendices)*, 'Map (M) Main Riots Areas of Belfast'.

fires set by Protestants.[475] The next morning the police force was utterly spent and, given the events of the previous evening, it was clear that any semblance of 'law and order' had simply disintegrated across Belfast.[476] The police continued their patrols, but exhaustion along with their own growing number of casualties and overstretched resources resulted in the decision to limit patrols and to remain in armored vehicles while on the streets of the city.[477] The insufficient numbers of police available, their fractured relationship with the Catholic community and their belief that the Catholic community was mounting a rebellion, resulted in the police no longer being able to maintain 'law and order' in the region.

With the situation in Northern Ireland in the midst of unraveling and the police failures to prevent or merely even contain the violence, the decision was eventually taken to deploy the British Army,[478] under the command of GOC Lieutenant-General Sir Ian Freeland.[479] The Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Harold Wilson, authorized the deployment of only 6,000 members of the British Army in Northern Ireland.[480] Although the number of troops initially deployed in August of 1969 was almost double the number of existing RUC police officers,[481] the insufficient number of troops initially deployed to Northern Ireland itself constituted a crucial structural factor that would shortly contribute to the development of the peace line policy. At the time, the British government was

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[475] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 9-10;162.
[476] Ibid., 10.
[477] Ibid., 194.; IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland']. Between August 14th and September 1st it appears that the police, with few exceptions, patrolled in the Falls area of the city. See: PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/2A ['The Facts About the Falls'].
[478] PRONI, HA/32/2/55 ['Formal Government decisions (i.e. those taken by the Cabinet or Cabinet Committees) in relation to the use and deployment of (a) the R.U.C., (B) the U.S.C. and (c) the Army including (where available) the information and evidence placed before Ministers']; Townshend, *Britain's Civil Wars*, 70.
[479] For further information concerning GOC Sir Ian Freeland, see the Biographical Notes.
[480] Smith, *From Violence to Power Sharing*, 59.
[481] Ibid., 66.

wary of "get[ing] sucked into the Irish bog", a concern that had not only influenced their decision to send troops,[482] but also limited their direct political engagement to the efforts of the United Kingdom Representative in Northern Ireland and the oversight of the Home Secretary in London.[483]

Troops arrived on the streets of Belfast during the evening of August 15th with the express mission of separating the opposing Protestant Shankill and Catholic Falls Road communities to prevent further violence, a task of separation that would remain a core tenet of the military's operation in the subsequent months.[484] This initial position of the troops between the two communities in this area of the city reflected the line along which Belfast's first peace line would soon emerge.[485] While the presence of the troops along this dividing line diminished the atmosphere of violence in the immediate area, riots continued elsewhere in Belfast that evening.[486]

At first the Catholic community's reaction to the presence of the British Army on the streets of Belfast was relatively positive. The army's arrival provided protection from the violence inflicted upon Catholics by members of the Protestant community and helped to alleviate fears of even more significant violence directed against the Catholic community at the hands of the Protestants.[487] Paddy Devlin, a local politician, even

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[482] Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 15.
[483] Mulholland, *Northern* Ireland, 60.; Mulholland, *The Longest War*, 74. For further information concerning Oliver Wright see the Biographical Notes.
[484] Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 39.; IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'], [Letter and attachments from GOC Freeland to General Baker, 18 October 1969], ['Period 12 – 19 Aug 69']; NAI, TSCH 2000/6/658 ['Report of Discussion at Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 15th August 1969 concerning Northern Ireland']; MOD, *Operation Banner*, 2 – 4.; Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 51.; Sanders and Wood, *Times of Troubles*, 4.
[485] Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 39.; Dewar, *The British Army in Northern Ireland*, 29.
[486] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'], ['Period 12 – 19 Aug 69'].
[487] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland']; NAI, TSCH 2000/6/658 ['Report of Discussion at Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 15th August 1969 concerning Northern Ireland']; MOD, *Operation Banner*, 2 – 4.; PRONI, D2560/5/53; Mac Ginty and Darby, *Guns and Government*, 16.

directly appealed to Chichester-Clark on August 15th, noting that troops were needed in the Falls Road area of Belfast due to the presence of Protestants citizens carrying armaments and that the troops would be "welcomed".[488] Images of Falls Road area Catholic residents offering tea to the soldiers have become synonymous with this early positive relationship between the British Army and the Catholic community.[489] But during a discussion with his British counterparts on August 15th Dr Hillery, the Irish Minister for External Affairs, demonstrated the tenuous nature of this welcome, asserting that community members in Northern Ireland were welcoming the troops "because they believe paradoxically that the devil you don't know is better than the devil you know".[490] Despite the protection initially provided by the arrival of the army, it is clear that the troops had a long way to go before gaining the trust of the entire Catholic community.

Meanwhile, there were also those within the nationalist community who felt the military was aligned with the Protestants against the Catholics.[491] Moreover, the deployment of the British Army, symbolic to republicans as representative of British tyranny on the island, eventually served to foster a militarized response among members of the Catholic community.[492] Initially, the IRA[493] appears to have been unprepared and did not take an overtly active role in the Belfast disturbances.[494] However, within months the Provisional IRA emerged on the scene, an ominous signal of the impending years of

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[488] PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Message received for P.M. from Paddy Devlin, M.P.', 15 August 1969].
[489] PRONI, D2560/5/53; Bardon, *Belfast*, 148.
[490] NAI, TSCH 2000/6/658 ['Report of Discussion at Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 15th August 1969 concerning Northern Ireland'].
[491] Mulholland, *Northern Ireland*, 60.
[492] Mac Ginty and Darby, *Guns and Government*, 16.; Mulholland, *Northern Ireland,* 60-62.; Mulholland, *The Longest War*, 74.; MOD, *Operation Banner*, 2 – 4.
[493] For an in-depth history of the IRA, see: English, *Armed Struggle*.
[494] Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 101.; Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 11.; MOD, *Operation Banner*, 3 – 1;8 – 1.; Mulholland, *The Longest War*, 78.; MOD, *Operation Banner*, 3 – 1.

violence to follow.[495] The potential for rejectionism of the army by the Catholic community was there from the start, yet remained largely latent until the Provisional IRA took up their campaign. The apprehension and mistrust among members of the Catholic community stemmed from their experience of the British Army during the conflict of the 1920s.[496] The army's inability to quell all of the violence in the city upon their arrival fermented fears that the troops were not there to provide protection to the Catholic community,[497] which further supported the republican narrative. In time, the army's actions provided fodder for the republican narratives and thus in turn contributed to the souring of relations with the Catholic community.[498] It did not take long for the initial warm reception to temper and for the British Army to confront staunch resistance when attempting to uphold 'law and order', particularly in the barricaded Catholic communities.[499]

The Protestant community's initial reaction to the presence of the British Army on the streets of Belfast was also somewhat positive as community members felt a sense of relief at the arrival of troops.[500] However, some loyalists expressed disappointment as they appear to have felt that the city would have been devoid of members of the Catholic community if only the army had arrived a couple of days later.[501] This reaction from the loyalist community is in itself evocative of the febrile atmosphere present in the city at the start of the Troubles. The early, relatively positive reaction to the presence of the army soon shifted as members of the Protestant community called for the troops to restore

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[495] Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 101.; Darby, 'The Historical Background', 27.; Mulholland, *The Longest War*, 78-78.
[496] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['Talk to Commanders 2 Sep 69'].
[497] Hamill, *Pig in the Middle*, 17-18.
[498] PRONI, D2560/5/53.
[499] Hamill, *Pig in the Middle*, 19.
[500] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['Staff College Lecture 9th December 1970'].
[501] Mulholland, *Northern Ireland*, 60.; Mulholland, *The Longest War*, 73.

order to the city by focusing, in particular, on the Catholic parts of the city.[502] The perception that the army had instead been deployed to protect the Catholics increased as incidents occurred in which they appeared to be favoring the Catholics.[503] Moreover, the disarmament of the RUC shortly thereafter served to enflame discontentment among the Protestant ranks towards the army.[504] Thus, the Protestants of Belfast, similar to their Catholic counterparts, soon came to have a turbulent relationship with the British Army.

Although it was certainly an unusual sight in 1969 to see the British Army on the streets of a city in the United Kingdom, Belfast itself already resembled a war zone. The violence of August 1969, led to approximately 1,800 families leaving their homes,[505] due to concerns over their safety.[506] These fears stemmed both from direct acts of violence as well as intimidation,[507] a situation reminiscent of the violence of the 1920s and 1935. The Catholic community living in the vicinity of Divis Street and Falls Road in particular formed a significant percentage of the families affected by displacement as a result of the violence in 1969.[508] Elsewhere in the city, Catholic members of the population were also being displaced from mixed areas and often moving into the more homogenous nationalist working-class areas.[509] While substantial numbers of Catholics sought refuge

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[502] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 [Letter and attachments from GOC Freeland to General Baker, 18 October 1969], ['Staff College Lecture 9th December 1970'].
[503] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland']; NA, CJ 3/18 ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events', 9 September 1969].
[504] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['Staff College Lecture 9th December 1970'].
[505] McKittrick and McVea, *Making Sense of the Troubles*, 64.
[506] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'], ['Period 12 – 19 Aug 69'].
[507] For a detailed analysis of intimidation in the Northern Irish conflict, see: Darby, 'Intimidation and Interaction in a Small Belfast Community'.; Darby, *Intimidation and the Control of Conflict in Northern Ireland*.
[508] While a precise figure is not given in the military reports, the assessment from an internal security operations report described the scale of the displacement in this area as affecting "a very large portion of the Catholic population". See: IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'], ['Period 12 – 19 Aug 69']. McKittrick and McVea as well as Newsinger asserted later that 1,500 of the total 1,800 displaced families in August 1969 were Catholic. See: McKittrick and McVea, *Making Sense of the Troubles*, 68.; Newsinger, *British Counterinsurgency*, 157.
[509] Mulholland, *The Longest War*, 77.

in the Falls and Ardoyne areas of Belfast, concern arose among members of the Catholic community that they were in dire need of protection despite the retreat further into the Catholic heartlands of Belfast.[510]

Distressing images of residents, on both sides, fleeing their homes with the possessions that they could carry became common place during the riots of 1969.[511] These images of individuals carting what they could carry from their homes was largely reminiscent of previous bouts of civil unrest in Belfast.[512] In particular, the repeated instances of intimidation and population movements in Belfast had served to shape the emergence of separate territorial enclaves of Catholic and Protestant communities, which Boyd described as already "characteristic" of the city in 1969.[513] In 1969, it appears that Catholics in Belfast tended to evacuate their homes along the dividing line between the Falls and the Shankill, while their Protestant neighbors took precautions, such as moving valuables, rather than always completely departing their homes.[514] While fear reigned on both sides of the divide, the differing patterns of evacuation suggests that members of the Protestant community still held at least a limited amount of faith in their greater numbers compared to their Catholic neighbors. This substantial population movement in the face of the intercommunal violence in Belfast hardened the geographical lines of division between the two communities.

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[510] NAI, TSCH, 2000/6/658 ['Memo from Taoiseach's department', 18 August 1969], ['Visit of Northern Ireland M.P.s to Department', 18 August 1969].
[511] PRONI, INF/7/A/7/17; Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 190.
[512] Boyd, *Holy War in Belfast*, 98.
[513] Ibid.
[514] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 190.

The interface along the dividing line between the Falls and Shankill communities emerged as a particularly serious flashpoint at the start of the Troubles in 1969.[515] While, given the distance of time, it is difficult to determine precisely why certain interfaces endured more significant levels of violence than others, certain structural factors shed light on the propensity for violence at this particular interface. As with previous bouts of intercommunal violence in the 1920s and 1935, the communities lived in extremely close proximity to one another along this divide in 1969. Given the widely held perception among the Protestant community that they were being confronted with a rebellion,[516] striking at the heart of the Catholic community in west Belfast provided an opportunity to break the rebellion. While prominent Catholic enclaves existed elsewhere in Belfast, including the Short Strand, the isolated nature of these areas meant that these Catholic communities may have appeared less threatening than those living in the heartland of west Belfast.

Once the fighting had begun along the dividing line in west Belfast, the geography of the city played a role in where the most significant outburst of violence occurred. For instance, the areas around the upper Falls Road and the lower Falls Road/Divis Street, where Catholics and Protestants lived on the same streets along the dividing line experienced significant violence.[517] However, the area toward the middle of the dividing line remained relatively protected by the presence of the linen mills acting as a buffer between the two sides.[518] In August, the area around the upper Falls Road,

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[515] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 2 (Appendices)*, 'Map (M) Main Riot Areas of Belfast'.
[516] Mulholland, *Northern Ireland*, 58-59.; Mulholland, *The Longest War*, 72.
[517] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 2 (Appendices)*, 'Map (M) Main Riot Areas of Belfast'.
[518] Ibid.; NA, WO 305/3763 ['Belfast Town Plan' MOD 1969 map].

including infamously at Bombay Street, experienced significant levels of violence.[519] The occurrence of such spectacular violence further enhanced the buffer zone between the communities along the dividing line, particularly in areas where families were forced out of burnt homes.[520] Meanwhile, the area around the lower Falls Road/Divis Street endured serious violence, but such a buffer zone had yet to be created to the same extent during the violence of July and August 1969.[521] As shown in Chapters III and IV, these areas continued to crop up as sites of significant violence as the conflict moved further into the autumn of 1969. The persistence of the violence along this portion of the dividing line suggests that perpetrators of intercommunal violence had yet to achieve their goals in these areas after the initial emergence of violent conflict.

In response to the disturbances in Belfast during the summer of 1969, both communities had thrown up barricades around their respective territories, which in turn contributed to the existing divisions between communities within the city. The community barriers tended to be built with materials that were on hand, such as paving stones, and even vehicles were appropriated to form parts of the barricades, reaching nearly as high as the adjacent terraced houses,[522] which directly contributed to the appearance of 'lawlessness' within the city. By late August 1969 Belfast resembled "a powder-keg",[523] an equally apt description for the city as the violence continued into

[519] Hamill, *Pig in the Middle*, 18.; Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 2 (Appendices)*, 'Map (M) Main Riot Areas of Belfast'.
[520] Ibid.
[521] Ibid.
[522] NAI, TSCH 2000/6/658 ['Eye-witness account of events in Belfast, by Seamus Brady', 22 August 1969]; NAI, TSCH 2000/6/660 ['Memorandum Re Visits to Six Counties']; PRONI, INF/7/A/7/12; PRONI, T3922/2/8; *TDT*, 5 August 1969; *TIT*, 5 August 1969; *SI*, 7 September 1969; *TDT*, 10 September 1969; *TT*, 10 September 1969; Óg Ó Fearghail, *Law (?) and Orders*, 6.
[523] NAI, TSCH 2000/6/658 ['Eye-witness account of events in Belfast, by Seamus Brady', 22 August 1969].

September. The numerous barricades sat across the city's streets,[524] served to highlight the extent to which the violence had overtaken everyday life in the city.

This was not the first time in the history of Belfast that communities had sought security behind barricades. For instance, community barricades had emerged on the streets of Belfast during the intercommunal violence of the 1920s.[525] Then again, just over a decade later, barricades were built by community members in 1932 as conflict grew between communities and the police.[526] For example, a photograph from October 1932 taken in the Falls Road area depicts a series of cobble stone barricades that, according to a note on the back of the photograph, were erected "to keep 'B' Specials out".[527] The repeated use of unauthorized barricades by community members as a means of self-defense in the midst of violence on the streets of Belfast underlines the persistent distrust, particularly among members of the Catholic community, in the ability of the authorities to provide adequate protection to those living on the frontlines of conflict.

The scale of barricade-building in Belfast as the Troubles kicked off in 1969 was unprecedented in the city. The preponderance of barricades on the streets of Belfast presented the authorities with a serious dilemma, particularly concerning, first and foremost, what should be done about the barricades themselves. While intercommunal violence on the streets of Belfast was not a new phenomenon for authorities in Northern Ireland, nor their counterparts in London, the extent of barricade construction during previous crises had not been close to the scale or degree present on the streets of Belfast in 1969. Although the precise impetus for scale of barricade construction in 1969 is

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[524] NAI, TSCH 2000/6/659 ['Memorandum Re Visits to Six Counties', 5 September 1969].
[525] Wilson, *Frontiers of Violence*, 179.
[526] PRONI, INF/7/A/7/3; Bardon, *Belfast*, 66.; Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 528. For further context regarding the outdoor relief riots, see: Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 527-529.; De Paor, *Divided Ulster*, 114.
[527] PRONI, INF/7/A/7/3.

unclear, it is plausible that the relatively recent example of barricade construction in Paris during May 1968 may have had an influence since it was both fresh and familiar thanks to the media coverage at the time.[528] Furthermore, it is conceivable that barricade construction became increasingly ubiquitous due to a combination of factors that will shortly be explored, namely the mounting intercommunal violence and the emergence of organized Catholic community defence outfits.

The barricaded Catholic area in west Belfast provided a particularly poignant picture of the extent to which the city had succumbed to a state of outright intercommunal conflict. Near the end of August 1969, the barricaded area around the Ardoyne and Falls Road region of Belfast housed approximately 35,000 to 40,000 people.[529] By September 1969 the number was still roughly 30,000.[530] In addition to the physical barricades themselves, men were found manning the barricades from the evenings into the early morning and they would restrict entry into the area unless individuals could confirm their identity.[531] The Catholic barricaded areas operated as relatively independent areas from the rest of the city and in turn appeared in staunch opposition to the government of Northern Ireland itself, subsequently causing serious consternation to the authorities who seem to have come quickly to refer to such zones as 'No-Go Land'.[532]

These Catholic areas were run by committees, namely the overarching Central Citizens' Defence Committee (CCDC), which acted as the central committee that

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[528] Purdie, *Politics in the Streets*, 235-236. Paris was no stranger to barricades, for an analysis of the legacy of barricade building in Paris, see: Traugott, *The Insurgent Barricade.*

[529] The majority of the people behind these barricades in the Catholic area of Belfast were Catholic, but there were a number of Protestants as well. See: NAI, TSCH 2000/6/658 ['Eye-witness account of events in Belfast, by Seamus Brady', 22 August 1969].

[530] *SI*, 7 September 1969.

[531] NAI, TSCH 2000/6/658 ['Eye-witness account of events in Belfast, by Seamus Brady', 22 August 1969]; NAI, TSCH 2000/6/659 ['Memorandum Re Visits to Six Counties', 5 September 1969].

[532] PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Meeting between Commander 39 INF BDE and the Central Citizens Defence Committee held at Springfield on 16th September 1969'].

presided over the street and area committees.[533] The CCDC was formed in August 1969 as the representative body for all barricaded nationalist areas in Belfast.[534] By September 1969, the CCDC, was described by the *Citizen Press* as "the body representing more than 20,000 people within the barricades".[535] The headquarters for the group was in the Long Bar on Leeson Street in west Belfast.[536] The CCDC, while not a republican organization, was led by known republican Jim Sullivan, and included representatives from the Catholic church, local politicians, individual community members as well as IRA members.[537] The defence committees were each comprised of representatives from individuals streets.[538] The elected representatives in each area who made up the defence committees tasked individuals, referred to by an army assessment as 'vigilantes',[539] to provide security for the barricaded communities. In addition, the CCDC took charge of relationships with actors outside the barricaded areas, specifically the security forces, city hall, and other government agencies, while also providing services to the community members within the barricaded areas.[540]

It appears that the CCDC advocated directly for the construction and maintenance of the community barricades. For example, the *Citizen Press*, published by the Belfast CCDC, asserted the following on August 20, 1969:

> "We must maintain our defences until such times as we are sure that we are safe. The presence of the British troops is not enough; we must be sure that when they go we will not again be left staring down the barrels of the B-Specials' guns. So we ask all people in the area to maintain the barricades and do everything they

[533] Prince and Warner, *Belfast and Derry in Revolt*, 223.
[534] Adams, *Before the Dawn*, 117.
[535] PRONI, D2560/1/7.
[536] Adams, *Before the Dawn*, 117.; Devlin, *Straight Left*, 110.
[537] Adams, *Before the Dawn*, 117.; Devlin, *Straight Left*, 110-111.; Flackes, *Northern Ireland: A Political Directory, 1968-79*, 38.; Prince and Warner, *Belfast and Derry in Revolt*, 223.
[538] Adams, *Before the Dawn*, 113-114;117.; Óg Ó Fearghail, *Law (?) and Orders*, 6.
[539] NA, DEFE 13/904 ['An Assessment of the Threat to Military Security as at 5th November, 1969'].
[540] Devlin, *Straight Left*, 110-111.; Prince and Warner, *Belfast and Derry in Revolt*, 223. For a testimonial of the experience of the Catholic community behind the barricades, see: Adams, *Before the Dawn*, 111.

> can do [to] help the Citizen's Defence Committees, which are our only sure guarantee of peace".[541]

Thus, it is plausible that the unprecedent number of barricades in the city at the start of the Troubles was strongly influenced by the CCDC mandate, which encouraged the construction of barricades around the Catholic communities and in turn prompted a similar response in Protestant communities. In addition, the Catholic areas appeared more organized when it came to implementing defensive bodies than their Protestant counterparts where no such committees existed.[542] The existence of the defence committees and the provisions of services to community members within the Catholic barricaded areas, all outside the purview of government control, contributed to the authorities' concern over the evolving security situation in the city.

The Catholic barricaded areas of Belfast often appeared to be functioning as independent territorial entities, with the area behind the barricades around the Falls Road even becoming known as 'Free Belfast'.[543] The barricaded areas produced their own publications, which recounted the violence endured by community members and were also used as a platform to voice political demands.[544] For example, an early copy of the *Barricades Bulletin* referred to the barricaded areas as "the liberated areas", stating that the persistent violence, despite the British Army, confirmed "the C.D.C. contention that the defence of the liberated areas must come from the men of the district".[545] Meanwhile, a *Citizen Press* publication, from early September 1969, read:

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[541] PRONI, D2560/5/21.
[542] Hamill, *Pig in the Middle*, 19
[543] *SI*, 7 September 1969. The barricaded Catholic areas which were also referred to by the *Citizen Press* as the 'liberated area'. See: PRONI, D2560/1/3.
[544] PRONI, D2560/5/10; PRONI, D2560/5/22; PRONI, D2560/5/44; NAI, TSCH 2000/6/659 ['Memorandum Re Visits to Six Counties', 5 September 1969]. The relationship between political demands and the barricaded Catholic communities will be explored in more depth in Chapter III.
[545] PRONI, D2560/5/44.

> "'Congratulations to all involved in the great clean-up at the beginning of the week. We have shown that we can run the place. Now keep it that way!!'".[546]

This announcement itself underlined the declared independence of this area of Belfast from the rest of Northern Ireland. Meanwhile, radio stations also sprang up in both communities, which served not only to play music, but also to share messages as well as articulate political demands.[547] The illegal radio stations often broadcast inflammatory remarks, which contributed to fomenting violence as the intercommunal disturbances continued into September.[548] Thus, behind the barricades, particularly in the Catholic areas, it appeared as if sections of the city were in the process of seceding from Northern Ireland.[549]

In addition, both the police and military were often unable to enter the barricaded Catholic areas.[550] The very slogans on the barricades themselves indicated that the security forces were not welcome.[551] Furthermore, the hostility of the Catholic community towards the police was apparent in the publications put forward from behind

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[546] PRONI, D2560/1/5.

[547] For example, the Protestant side operated illegal radio stations by the names of 'Radio Orange', 'Radio Shankill', and 'Radio Ulster'. On the Catholic side they ran illegal radio stations by the names of 'Radio Free Belfast', 'Radio Peace', and 'Radio Sundown'. See: NA, CJ 4/425 ['Illegal Broadcasting Stations in Northern Ireland', c.September 1969], ['Northern Ireland – Pirate Radio Stations', 5 September 1969], [MOD Message 'From Chief of the Defence Staff', 9 September 1969]; NAI, TSCH 2000/6/659 ['Memorandum Re Visits to Six Counties', 5 September 1969]; NAI, TSCH 2000/6/660 ['Memorandum Re Visits to Six Counties']; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the Period 4th – 10th September, 1969']; PRONI, D2560/5/10; PRONI, D2560/5/44. Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 40.; Adams, *Before the Dawn*, 117.; Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 102-103.

[548] Particularly due to the relationship between violence and inflammatory broadcasts from some of the stations, the army eventually took action to stop the illegal broadcasts by jamming the radio stations. See: PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the Period 4th – 10th September, 1969']; NA, CJ 4/425 ['Northern Ireland – Pirate Radio Stations', 5 September 1969], [MOD Message 'From Chief of the Defence Staff', 9 September 1969], ['Northern Ireland – Jamming of Pirate Radios', 9 September 1969]; *TDT*, 9 September 1969; *TG*, 10 September 1969.

[549] Gerry Adams later described one of the nationalist areas behind the barricades as "the statelet". See: Adams, *Before the Dawn*, 116.

[550] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'], ['Period 12 – 19 Aug 69']; NAI, TSCH 2000/6/659 ['Memorandum Re Visits to Six Counties', 5 September 1969]; PRONI, D2560/1/3; *SI*, 7 September 1969.

[551] Miers, *Northern Ireland*, 2;8.

the barricades. For example, at the start of September 1969, the *Citizen Press* asserted "Hell-No" as its response to police entering the barricaded areas.[552] It is important to note that relationships between the barricaded Catholic areas and the security forces were not uniform through the city. For example, in east Belfast the police were still able to patrol within the Catholic enclave of the Short Strand, in and around Seaforde Street, during August and September 1969.[553] Nevertheless, the inability of the security forces to maintain a semblance of 'law and order' across all areas of Belfast contributed to the mounting tensions in the city and at Stormont.

While both Catholic and Protestant communities built barricades at the start of the Troubles, the rationale behind their construction varied. On the one hand, the Catholic barricades in Belfast sprang up as largely defensive measure in response to the violence during July and August of 1969 and the sense that Catholic areas of Belfast were under threat from the Protestant community.[554] In August 1969, the *Barricades Bulletin*, the self-described "voice of Free Belfast" stated: "The barricades are there to defend the people".[555] There were concerns that the threat and violence in August 1969 even included a pogrom against the Catholic community.[556] This was not an unfamiliar concern, which instead went deep into the depths of history amid the prolonged tensions

[552] PRONI, D2560/1/4.
[553] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 223.
[554] Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 101.; NA, CJ 3/18 ['Ulster: September 13, 1969']; NA, DEFE 13/904 ['An Assessment of the Threat to Military Security as at 5th November, 1969'].
[555] PRONI, D2560/5/10.
[556] Ibid.; PRONI, T3300/17/2/3; *NIM*, October 1969; Adams, *Before the Dawn*, 110. Although the term 'pogrom' has been employed often to describe the violence directed at the Catholics during August of 1969, as English noted, it is not an accurate description of the violence that occurred during this period. This word infers that the violence was solely directed against the Catholics and overstates the sheer extent of the violence. Nevertheless, the use of the term does underline how these events were perceived, particularly amongst the republican contingent of the Catholic community. See: English, *Armed Struggle*, 104.

between the two communities.[557] The construction of barricades around the Catholic communities underscored not only the Catholic community's mistrust of the RUC, but also a crucial deficit in existing security force legitimacy in the eyes of the Catholic community, which contributed to the implementation of their own security measures, including the barricades.

In 1969, the renewed onset of heightened sectarian violence in turn had increased the perception that the Catholic communities were in need of defence.[558] The committees in control of the Catholic barricaded areas cited the security as a key rationale for the barricades.[559] In particular, the committees asserted they were in a pitched battle against representatives of the state, in the form of the USC and what they described as "Unionist Extremists".[560] Furthermore, events at the political level in Northern Ireland that appeared to back the unionist agenda contributed to justifications for the maintenance and strengthening of the barricades around the Catholic communities of Belfast in August 1969.[561] At the start of September 1969, the *Citizen Press* reiterated the security function of the barricades, stating "that they provide protection against all types of marauding Unionist militia, whether they be the R.U.C., the B-Men, or the thugs of the U.V.F.".[562] At the same time, those behind the Catholic barricades recognized that the presence of the barricades could divide the Protestant and Catholic communities further. For instance, the *Citizen Press* asserted the following in the same issue in early September:

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[557] For an in-depth discussion, see: Wilson, '"The Most Terrible Assassination That Has Yet Stained the Name of Belfast"', 89-90.
[558] The mechanism of defence would soon extend beyond the physical barricades, with the emergence of the Provisional IRA. See: English, *Armed Struggle*, 81-147.
[559] PRONI, D3253/5/11/5.
[560] Ibid.
[561] PRONI, D2560/5/22.
[562] PRONI, D2560/1/4.

> "The danger about the barricades is that they surround purely catholic areas and hence that they will bring about even even greater divisions between Catholic and Protestant working people. Defence Committee Members are very aware of this problem. They fought behind the barricades for purely defensive reasons, and their demands are merely demands to ensure the safety of the people. The barricades do not in anyway represent a threat to the Protestant people of Belfast".[563]

It appears that the barricaded Catholic community did not wish to see the barricades retained in the long-term, but rather saw the barriers as a short-term security measure.

On the other hand, the Protestant barricades often appear to have been built in protest against the Catholic barricades[564] and out of concern that the IRA was being sheltered in the Catholic barricaded areas.[565] Not only were the Protestant barricades symbolic of their protest of the Catholic barricades, but members of the Protestant community sought to leverage their barricades to influence the government and security service actions towards the Catholic community.[566] For instance, the barricades provided a tool for those individuals who did not want the Stormont reforms to come to fruition.[567] As with their Catholic counterparts, members of the Protestant community felt threatened, which also contributed to the construction of the barricades.[568] Thus, the issue of security underpinned the construction of the community barricades on both sides of the divide in the early months of the Troubles.[569]

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[563] Ibid.
[564] *TT*, 5 September 1969; *AEE*, 13 September 1969; *ST*, 14 September 1969; NA, CJ 3/18 ['Ulster: September 13, 1969']; NA, DEFE 13/904 ['An Assessment of the Threat to Military Security as at 5th November, 1969']; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 42. The construction of Protestant barricades as an act of protest against Catholic barricades continued into September 1969. See: PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 [Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the Period 4th – 10th September, 1969].
[565] Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 101.; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the period 4th - 10th September, 1969']; *Army in Ulster – The Men in the Middle*; *AEE*, 13 September 1969.
[566] *TT*, 5 September 1969.
[567] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Ulster: September 13, 1969'].
[568] PRONI, D3233/7/5 ['Ulster Diary: August 12th-29th, 1969'].
[569] *ST*, 14 September 1969; IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland']; NAI, TSCH 2000/6/660 ['Memorandum Re Visits to Six Counties']; Bardon, *Belfast*, 148.

Despite the different rationales behind the construction of barricades on the Catholic and Protestant sides, the community barricades presented a particularly difficult issue for both the security forces and the Northern Irish government. The barricaded areas, especially in Belfast, would shortly play a pivotal role in the trajectory of the evolving situation in Northern Ireland at the start of the Troubles.[570] Barricade construction continued regardless of the presence of the British Army[571] and by the beginning of September 1969 they were rampant in the city, particularly between the Falls Road and the Shankill Road.[572] Barricaded areas in both Catholic and Protestant parts of the city were operating outside the purview of the government, whilst both the security forces and the politicians found themselves struggling to regain even a semblance of control over these areas.[573] As the conflict moved into September, barricades of all shapes and sizes impeded not only the physical landscape of Belfast, but also the discussions at the political level in Northern Ireland.

Security, Politics and the Development of a Policy

By the start of September 1969, the community barricades, particularly those in Belfast, had become of paramount concern to the authorities.[574] Despite calls for the removal of the barricades, even from the Northern Irish Prime Minister Chichester-Clark himself, the barricades stood defiantly on the streets of Belfast.[575] The existence of the barricades and their continued construction both exemplified and perpetuated the

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[570] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'], ['Period 12 – 19 Aug 69'].
[571] PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 [Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the Period 4th – 10th September, 1969']; PRONI, INF/7/A/7/12; *CET*, 5 September 1969.
[572] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'].
[573] *TDT*, 9 September 1969.
[574] PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 [Press Release, c.28 August 1969], ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet Held at Stormont Castle on Monday, 8th September, 1969, at 2.30p.m.'].
[575] *BT*, 5 September 1969; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Speech by the Minister of State at the Ministry of Development', 4 September 1969].

atmosphere of 'lawlessness' in the city, which in turn threatened the existence of the government of Northern Ireland.[576] The government found itself in an increasingly precarious position faced with widespread disturbances on the streets of its cities, disagreement amongst its own ranks and the looming potential of direct rule, despite both its pledges of reform and the presence of the British Army to address the security situation in the region.[577] Concern over not only the internal security situation more broadly in Northern Ireland, but also specifically the Belfast barricades themselves had reached the halls of the United Kingdom's government in London.[578] James Callaghan, the United Kingdom's Home Secretary, would later describe September 1969 as "the month of the barricades".[579]

The decisive discussion, which precipitated the development of the peace line policy came on September 8, 1969, at a Meeting of the Cabinet in Northern Ireland, as ministers discussed the enforcement of law and order in the region.[580] Following a report delivered by the Minister of Home Affairs concerning the security situation and the potential for action to be taken "to assist in a return to normal conditions", discussions centered on the role of the community barricades in the situation of 'lawlessness' in Belfast.[581] For example, the Minister of Agriculture noted, with reference to the issue of hijacked vehicles being used in the construction of barricades, that certain areas of

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[576] *CET*, 5 September 1969; *SI*, 7 September 1969.
[577] *TG*, 10 September 1969; Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 672-674.
[578] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Ulster: September 13, 1969'].
[579] Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 101.
[580] Those present at this meeting included: the Prime Minister, the Minister in the Senate, the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Home Affairs, the Minister of Health and Social Services, the Minister of Education, the Minister of Agriculture, the Minister of Commerce, the Minister of Development, the Minister of State at the Ministry of Development, the Leader of the House of Commons, the Attorney General, the Secretary to the Cabinet, the Assistant Secretary, and Mr. D. Gilliland. See: PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet Held at Stormont Castle on Monday, 8th September, 1969, at 2.30p.m.'].
[581] Ibid.

Belfast had descended into a "state of complete lawlessness".[582] Furthermore, the Minister of Home Affairs asserted that the "continued existence of major barricades in the Falls Road area was the greatest example of lawlessness".[583] The Ministers appeared concerned about the need "to restore confidence in the Protestant areas of the city",[584] signaling an official perception of the community barricades as largely a product of the perceived Catholic community dissension. From the discussion among ministers at this cabinet meeting, it is clear that the Belfast barricades were a source of chief concern to government leaders.

This discussion followed a tumultuous weekend in Belfast during which the British Army's very efforts to remove barricades were called into question.[585] Although the military authorities had initially requested to undertake a "policy of peaceful negotiation", the Northern Irish Ministers, along with the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, felt that a swift removal of the barricades was vital for the return of 'law and order' to the city.[586] However, given the limited number of troops in Northern Ireland, a swift and effective action was at odds with the inadequate resources at hand.[587] For instance, it had required approximately 1,000 troops to remove barricades on September 4th that were blocking certain main roads in the city.[588] This limited operation for barricade removal in the city of Belfast had necessitated approximately one sixth of the available troops, an early indication that addressing the emergence of the community

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[582] Ibid.
[583] Ibid.
[584] The minutes do not cite precisely which ministers, however, given that it was a Cabinet meeting it is likely that all ministers present participated in this discussion and subsequent agreement. See: Ibid.
[585] Ibid.
[586] Ibid.
[587] The wider ramifications of the limited number of troops in Northern Ireland will be examined further in Chapter IV.
[588] Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 43.

barricades, let alone doing so swiftly, would require much more than the limited manpower available at the start of September.

Until now the precise precipitating factors and the sequence of events that led to the construction of the first peace line have remained ambiguous. One existing account of the events of September 1969 suggests that it was an announcement on television by the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, stating that the barricades had to be removed, which prompted the GOC's peace line policy.[589] However, this thesis demonstrates that it was the discussions at the Cabinet meeting on September 8, 1969, in light of the mounting crisis embodied by the community barricades and the recent tumultuous weekend of violence, which served as the catalyst for the Northern Irish government to push the British Army "for a clear statement of their intentions with regard to the removal of the barricades".[590] Despite the British Army's insistence on implementing a "policy of peaceful negotiation", the Cabinet sided with the Northern Irish Prime Minister's existing assessment of the need "for urgent action to have the major barricades dismantled".[591] From the outset, the military and the politicians, while each seeking to address the mounting sectarian conflict, found that their approaches did not always align perfectly.

The British Army's existing strategy to remove the barricades centered on negotiations, cooperation and persuasion rather than the use of force because the later was viewed as counterproductive to the goal of alleviating tensions within the city. In addition, the strategy of negotiation over the use of brute force was likely more viable

[589] Hamill, *Pig in the Middle*, 24-25.
[590] PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet Held at Stormont Castle on Monday, 8th September, 1969, at 2.30p.m.'].
[591] Ibid.

for the army given the limited number of troops present in Belfast. This strategy of negotiation, spearheaded by the GOC himself, was implemented early on in the army's deployment.[592] The GOC was keen to avoid the use of force, despite urging from the Northern Irish government, because he recognized that if the troops decided to occupy the barricaded areas by force it would be much more difficult to extract themselves from the conflict.[593]

Reflecting on the early days of the army's deployment, just a few years later, the then retired GOC, Sir Ian Freeland, underlined the importance of "patient persuasion" when it came to removing community barricades rather than the use of force, which he felt could have triggered further violence at that time.[594] Even prior to deployment in August 1969, the army had identified community barricades as a central part of the difficult internal security situation in Northern Ireland.[595] Thus, very early on, the military began persuading residents to remove their barricades, by ensuring security through the construction of army barriers in instances where the community barricades were dismantled voluntarily,[596] which also allowed the army to restrict movement between the conflicting territories.[597] The British Army's initial policy of persuasion and assurances of security through the use of military barricades set the stage for the

[592] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/4 ['Address to Belfast City Council']; IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['Talk to Commanders 2 Sep 69'], [Letter and attachments from GOC Freeland to General Baker, 18 October 1969]; PRONI, HA/32/3/2 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held in Stormont Castle on Tuesday, 19th August, 1969, at 12 Noon']; *EA*, 1 September 1969.
[593] Hamill, *Pig in the Middle*, 24.
[594] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/4 ['Ulster']; IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['Message Form', 3 February 1971].
[595] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['The IS Situation in Northern Ireland Period 5 Oct 68 – 11 Aug 69']; PRONI, HA/32/2/55 ['Formal Government decisions (i.e. those taken by the Cabinet or Cabinet Committees) in relation to the use and deployment of (a) the R.U.C., (B) the U.S.C. and (c) the Army including (where available) the information and evidence placed before Ministers'].
[596] *TDT*, 19 August 1969; *TT*, 21 August 1969.
[597] PRONI, INF/7/A/7/11; *TT*, 16 August 1969; Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 202.

formalization of a policy of 'security through separation' in the form of a peace line as the conflict entered September 1969.

Just days before the pivotal Meeting of the Cabinet, on September 6th, the British Army managed to negotiate with the CCDC for the dismantling of three Catholic barricades in Albert Street.[598] This street was a main route in the city, which had been significantly hampered by the presence of the barricades.[599] At the time, the GOC described the successful dismantling of the barricades as a significant accomplishment, while also noting that the removal of the Albert Street barricades was a positive illustration of his policy to remove them through both cooperation and persuasion.[600] However, a report of the barricade removal from the *Citizen Press* demonstrates that the negotiations had been somewhat contentious: "The army agreed to meet the C.D.C. at 9a.m. on Saturday morning about the barricades in Albert Street, at 8.30 they moved in to take them down".[601] Furthermore, the *Citizen Press* described the removal of those barricades as "The Last Concession!", asserting that "[t]he barricades are the last line of defence for our women and children and our homes, and as such we cannot give them up".[602] The dismantling of these barricades was undertaken with the collaboration of the army, public representatives, priests and community members.[603] Despite initial opposition from the crowd gathered in Albert Street at that time, community members

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[598] PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the Period 4th – 10th September, 1969']; PRONI, D2560/1/6; *ST*, 7 September 1969; *SI*, 7 September 1969; *TO*, 7 September 1969.
[599] *SI*, 7 September 1969; *BNL*, 8 September 1969. Albert Street was a key route for access to the city centre from the Falls Road portion of Belfast. See: PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the Period 4th – 10th September, 1969']; Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 2 (Appendices)*, 'Map (M) Main Riot Areas of Belfast'.
[600] *SI,* 7 September 1969; IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/4 ['Address to Belfast City Council'].
[601] PRONI, D2560/1/6.
[602] Ibid.
[603] *SI*, 7 September 1969.

eventually also participated in the removal efforts.[604] A key component of the negotiations included the British Army's assurance that if the barricade was removed there would be a troop presence on the street for protection.[605] The provision of security to facilitate the removal of community barricades would soon become a core tenet of the peace line policy.

The removal of the Albert Street barricades, at a time when additional barricades continued to be built in the city, was heralded as a sign of positive progress, yet the removal process itself was not without controversy.[606] This example of a peaceful negotiation and subsequent barricade removal was marred by press reports asserting that the army had negotiated an agreement with the IRA.[607] Ultimately, these accusations did undermine the British Army's peaceful negotiation tactics when confronted with the additional barricades on the streets of Belfast, particularly as it portrayed the troops as siding with the republican factions against the Protestant community.[608] In addition, the news of the negotiations prompted a riot by members of the Protestant community on September 8th,[609] signaling a growing sense of suspicion from the Protestant community directed toward the army. The GOC was aware of the detrimental effect that this could have on the army's ability to carry out its job. In particular, he expressed the concern that this could lead to the army only being able to patrol the Catholic areas, while the RUC

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[604] *ST*, 7 September 1969.
[605] *TO*, 7 September 1969; PRONI, D2560/1/6.
[606] *BNL*, 8 September 1969; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the Period 4th – 10th September, 1969'].
[607] PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet Held at Stormont Castle on Monday, 8th September, 1969, at 2.30p.m.']; Dewar, *The British Army in Northern Ireland*, 37-38.
[608] PRONI, HA/32/3/2 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held at Stormont Castle at 5.30p.m. on Monday, 8th September, 1969'].
[609] Dewar, *The British Army in Northern Ireland*, 38.

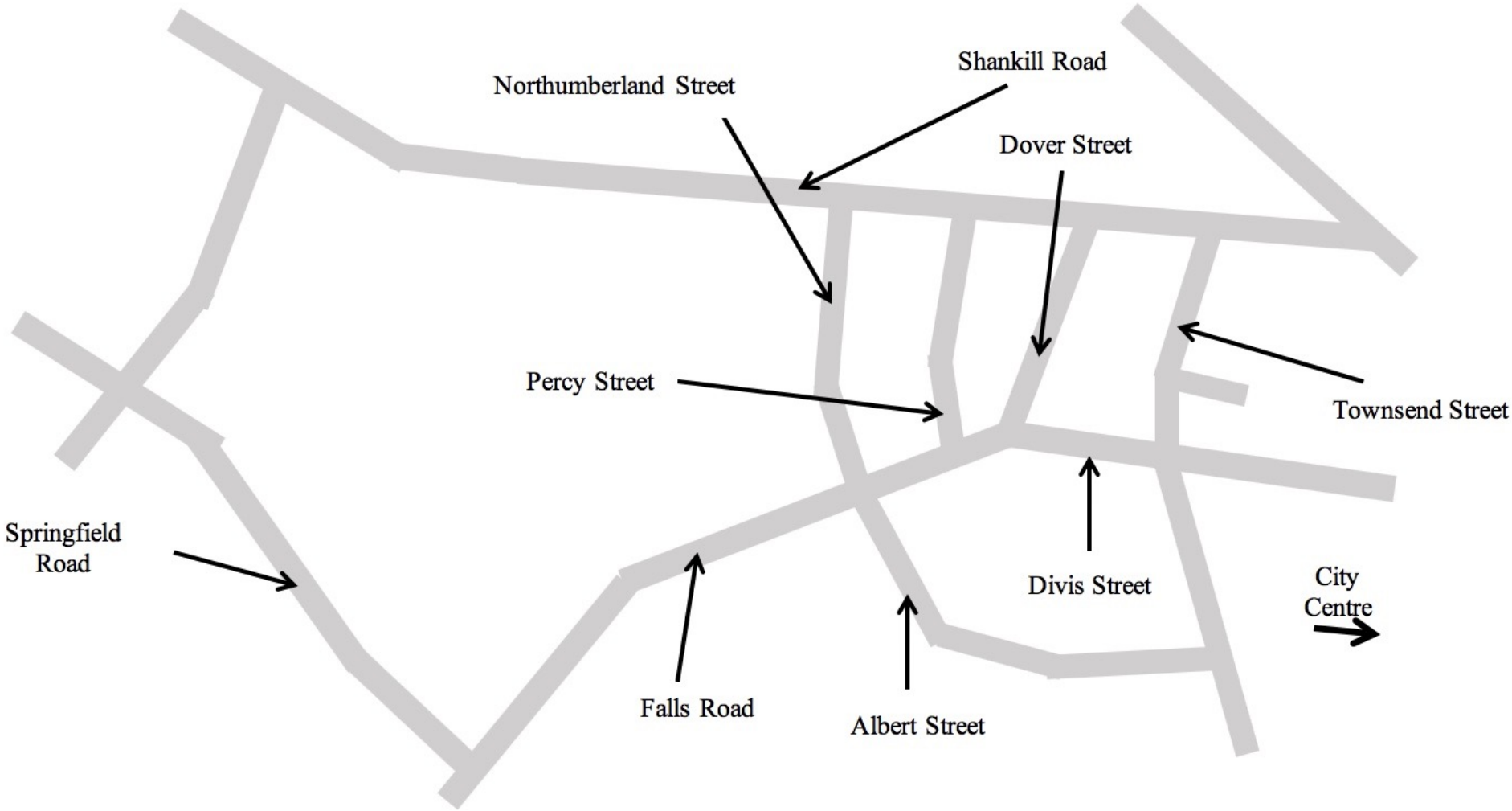
patrolled in the Protestant parts of the city.[610] Thus, what could have perhaps been a peaceful and pivotal turning point in the efforts to address sectarian tensions in the city, swung the pendulum swiftly in the opposite direction, instead contributing to the conditions in which a policy of division emerged.

In addition to the allegations levied against the British Army concerning their relations with the IRA, that same weekend, events on Percy Street in Belfast served to further turn the tide against the army's original strategy. While initially the GOC and his army succeed in their efforts to prevent the spread of further violence, events in Percy Street surged out of control as the evening of Sunday September 7th arrived.[611] The start of the weekend had seen antagonistic groups of people out on the streets, the construction of new barricades and the setting of fires.[612] What began as a group of approximately 300 Protestants at a Percy Street barricade, expanded rapidly to a crowd of around 3,000.[613] Tensions between the two communities were inflamed as each sought to defend themselves from the perceived threat posed by 'the other'. For example, during the events of September 7th, an unnamed Protestant illegal radio station "appealed to Protestants to defend themselves "from the Catholic hordes"".[614] A single platoon of soldiers was present in the area at the time and despite the company commander's requests that the crowd depart, they remained.[615] The concern emerged that the crowd of 3,000 strong had

[610] PRONI, HA/32/3/2 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held at Stormont Castle at 5.30p.m. on Monday, 8th September, 1969'].
[611] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events', 9 September 1969]; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the period 4th - 10th September, 1969'].
[612] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events', 9 September 1969]; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the period 4th - 10th September, 1969'].
[613] The surge in people was largely due to the urging of illegal Protestant radio stations. See: NA, CJ 4/425 ['Northern Ireland: Report from Superintendant Hill, 11 a.m. Monday 8th September']; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the period 4th - 10th September, 1969']; Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 102-103.
[614] *TBP*, 8 September 1969.
[615] PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the period 4th - 10th September, 1969'].

the capacity to overrun the limited number of soldiers present and thus would be able to mount an attack against the Catholic residents living at the other end of the street.[616] Thus, the decision to use CS gas[617] was subsequently taken by the company commander.[618] As the CS gas was directed at a Protestant crowd, the British Army faced accusations of bias and the Percy Street incident contributed to tensions between the army and the Protestant community, which in turn damaged the army's negotiating position with regards to the barricades.[619]

[616] Ibid.
[617] CS gas is also known as tear gas.
[618] A reported 18 cartridges of CS gas were used in addition to three grenades, which caused the crowd to disperse initially before eventually returning. See: PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the period 4th - 10th September, 1969']; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 43.
[619] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland']. In addition, reports by individuals present in Percy Street suggest that the CS gas was only fired at the Protestant community members and that some policemen present suffered effects from the gas. There are discrepancies between different accounts of events at Percy Street that night, which is apparent even in the description of the crowd size and when it increased. See: PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/5A [Statement taken by Constable E. Coulter, 7 September 1969], [Statement taken by Constable J. Hughes, 7 September 1969], ['Statement of Evidence of Con. R. Morrison']; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the period 4th - 10th September, 1969'].



Map 3: **West Belfast in 1969.** Both Percy Street and Albert Street are situated in west Belfast in the vicinity of the Falls and Shankill divide. This map was drawn by the author based on existing maps of the area. Sources: IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland']; Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 2 (Appendices)*, 'Map (M) Main Riot Areas of Belfast'.

This incident at Percy Street marked the end of the 'honeymoon period' for the British Army in the relationship with the Protestant community.[620] While it has been previously said, for instance in Bardon's analysis of the early months of the conflict, that the 'honeymoon period', with both communities, remained intact during the autumn of 1969,[621] from the perspective of the military it appears to have dissolved much earlier in the deployment of the British Army directly following the incident at Percy Street on September 7th.[622] For instance, a confidential military assessment of the internal security operations in Northern Ireland stated:

> "On 7th September the Honeymoon period ended abruptly when 1 R HAMPS had to use CS to clear a Protestant crowd from Percy Street, Belfast. The Protestants then accused the Army of being partial to the Catholic cause and their line hardened against the Security Forces. In Londonderry minor clashes occurred and the same allegations were made".[623]

Moreover, the GOC announced that the honeymoon period had already ended during a press conference in October 1969, stating at the very beginning of his remarks: "The honeymoon period lasted only 3½ weeks and was broke on Sunday 7 September when CS had to be used by the Army in Percy Street Belfast".[624] The ramifications of the events at Percy Street succinctly demonstrates the extent to which incidents at the local level influenced the trajectory of the conflict in Northern Ireland. Furthermore, the occurrence of the incident at Percy Street in the immediate aftermath of the allegations of an

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[620] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/4 ['Press Conference', 22 October 1969].
[621] Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 674. For an example of a further discussion of the 'honeymoon' period, which indicates that it remained during the autumn of 1969 see: Dewar, *The British Army in Northern Ireland*, 48; Hamill, *Pig in the Middle*, 8-32. Ó Dochartaigh demonstrated that in Derry/Londonderry the army's relationship with the Catholic community already contained significant fissures in the early weeks of deployment, see: Ó Dochartaigh, *From Civil Rights to Armalites*, 135-136.
[622] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'].
[623] Ibid.
[624] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/4 ['Press Conference', 22 October 1969].

agreement between the IRA and the army regarding barricade removal at Albert Street, likely fomented the Protestant community's discontent with the army's tactics.

Although the army assessment of the end of the 'honeymoon period' clearly states that it ended after the Percy Street incident on September 7th, it remains unclear if subsequently the army perceived both communities to be in opposition to the troops. While the army documents note the end of the 'honeymoon period', the military justification for this appears to focus on the fracturing of relations with the Protestant community specifically. In particular, the justification for the end of the 'honeymoon period' focuses on the army's use of CS gas to disperse a crowd of Protestants who had gathered in Percy Street.[625] The very use of CS gas against the Protestant crowd suggests that the army perceived the Catholic community as the threatened entity at that point in time. In a text of the GOC's press conference remarks found in the archives, he noted in the aftermath of the Percy Street incident, that:

> "some people began to accuse the Army of not acting impartially and demands grew for the forceful removal of barricades round the Catholic areas of Belfast and Londonderry so that Law and Order should be restored".[626]

The words "some people" appear to have been written in after the word "Protestants" was crossed out.[627] This focus on the Protestant community perhaps indicates that the army was aware of the existing tense relationship between the Catholic community and the troops at the start of the deployment, which had deep roots in the Northern Irish conflict. While, with the benefit of hindsight, the formal cessation of the 'honeymoon' period with the Catholic community may have come later, the perception of the army at

[625] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland']; NA, CJ 3/18 ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events', 9 September 1969].
[626] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/4 ['Press Conference', 22 October 1969].
[627] Ibid.

the time that the 'honeymoon' period had ended, with both communities, may have influenced the decision to build the peace line and subsequent military barriers.

The so-called 'honeymoon period' of a military operation for the purposes of peace enforcement or support can last anywhere from one hundred days to three months from the start of the deployment.[628] In the case of the deployment of the army at the start of the Troubles in Northern Ireland, it only lasted approximately three and a half weeks.[629] Although the term itself may conjure up light hearted connotations. According to the MOD's own retrospective assessment in 2006, the so-called 'honeymoon period' constituted "*the most important phase of the campaign*".[630] The breakdown in positive relations between the army and both the Catholic as well as the Protestant community appears to have been a significant factor in spurring the emergence of the peace line policy. For instance, in a confidential military assessment the acknowledgement of the end of 'the honeymoon period' is directly followed by this statement:

> "A tougher policy was then ordered which included the construction of a Peace Line between the Shankill and the Falls districts in Belfast and a vehicle control system at night (a type of vehicle curfew) round the Shankill/Falls area".[631]

Thus, a direct line can be drawn between the events in Percy Street on September 7th and the subsequent emergence of the first peace line.

Commentators appear to have largely missed the significance of the Percy Street confrontations, which while a limited, local level incident, had ramifications beyond this individual street in Belfast. Furthermore, the implications of the events at Percy Street appear to have been largely overlooked by the authorities at the time. For example, a

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[628] MOD, *Operation Banner*, 8 – 2.
[629] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/4 ['Press Conference', 22 October 1969].
[630] Italic emphasis used in the original source, see: MOD, *Operation Banner*, 8 – 2.
[631] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'].

District Inspector of the RUC reportedly deemed the use of CS gas as "an "unfortunate mistake"", while Oliver Wright described it as "the unfortunate tear gas incident in Percy Street".[632] The use of the word 'unfortunate' suggests an underappreciation on the part of the authorities of the true consequences of using the CS gas against the Protestant crowd. This fits in to a pattern of the authorities not recognizing the weight that these local level events could contribute to tipping the scales toward further violence in the city. As the incident at Percy Street shows, micro-level confrontations had implications beyond the few block radius of the initial violence.

The events of that fateful weekend in September 1969, particularly the continued existence of the barricades, prompted grave concern among members of the Northern Irish government that a lack of action would not only result in the fracturing of the government itself, but also would leave the government vulnerable to allegations of an inadequate response to the disturbances.[633] There was particular concern that the position of the government would be undermined as the "more extremist elements" would gain traction from the continued existence of the barricades.[634] Consequently, the Cabinet decided on September 8th, to urge the British Army's leadership to articulate a decisive approach for removing the barricades.[635] It is highly probable that the events of the recent weekend, in particular the Protestant reaction to the army's barricade removal efforts, influenced the tone of discussions at the meeting of the Cabinet.

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[632] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events', 9 September 1969]; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the period 4th - 10th September, 1969'].
[633] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events', 9 September 1969].
[634] Ibid.
[635] PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet Held at Stormont Castle on Monday, 8th September, 1969, at 2.30p.m.']; NA, CJ 3/18 ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events', 9 September 1969].

The immediacy of this demand further underscored the urgency of the issue presented by the barricades in the eyes of the Northern Irish government.[636] Hours later, at a meeting of the Joint Security Committee,[637] the GOC articulated a tentative plan and the committee members determined that the GOC would present the completed plan to address the barricades at a meeting the following day.[638] It appears that the Joint Security Committee agreed to his initial, tentative plan, when it was first presented on September 8, 1969.[639] This left the GOC with an exceedingly short window to develop a complete plan for the removal of the barricades.

On September 9th, just one day after the request from the Northern Irish government ministers, the GOC presented his strategy for addressing the situation in Belfast.[640] The plan officially presented on September 9th by the GOC was very similar to the tentative plan he outlined the previous day.[641] Tackling security concerns in the city of Belfast, both for residents and the Northern Irish government, was at the center of his proposal. It appears from his proposed policy that the GOC felt that by providing residents with an adequate sense of security the British Army would then be able to

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[636] PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet Held at Stormont Castle on Monday, 8th September, 1969, at 2.30p.m.'].
[637] The Joint Security Committee meetings occurred on Mondays on a regular basis in 1969. The Prime Minister of Northern Ireland chaired the meetings, but the GOC was the integral member of the Committee, along with the Chief Constable and the Cabinet Ministers. See: Hamill, *Pig in the Middle*, 46;295.
[638] PRONI, HA/32/3/2 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held at Stormont Castle at 5.30p.m. on Monday, 8th September, 1969'].
[639] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events', 9 September 1969].
[640] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events', 9 September 1969]; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet Held at Stormont Castle on Monday, 8th September, 1969, at 2.30p.m.']; PRONI, HA/32/3/2 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held on Tuesday, 9th September, 1969, at Stormont Castle'].
[641] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events', 9 September 1969]; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet Held at Stormont Castle on Monday, 8th September, 1969, at 2.30p.m.']; PRONI, HA/32/3/2 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held on Tuesday, 9th September, 1969, at Stormont Castle'].

negotiate the removal of the community barricades and in turn a return of 'law and order' to the city.

The plan put forward by the GOC was comprised of three interrelated measures with the construction of a peace line at its core.[642] The overarching policy followed the GOC's existing efforts to remove barricades through peaceful negotiation rather than by force, while simultaneously incorporating some of the lessons learnt from previous attempts to remove barricades in the city. Furthermore, it is plausible that, given the British Army's likely familiarity with the use of communal barriers in both Cyprus and Palestine, these similar structures may have influenced the peace line proposal.[643] Despite the divergence in opinions between the military and the politicians at the start of September 1969, the GOC's final proposal did manage to both assuage the concerns of Chichester-Clark's government and build on the British Army policy of peaceful negotiation for the removal of the barricades.

The first measure focused on limiting movement in a particularly violence ridden area of the city and proposed the implementation of "[a] system of vehicle control" between Crumlin and Grosvenor Road.[644] This measure built on existing tactics undertaken by the security forces on the streets of Belfast, with a more narrow focus on limiting movement around a particularly contentious flashpoint between the two

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[642] An undated document entitled "Outline Plan" from the GOC's private papers sheds further light on the proposed security measures that he presented to the Joint Security Committee meeting on September 9th. It contains a fourth measure, not included in the final proposal, entitled "Community Participation", which described this measure as follows: "To provide the opportunity for the community as a whole to participate fully in the task of restoring life to the city, plans are being made to activate the Civil Defence organization for Belfast and to use this as a principal means for establishing harmony and cooperation with the authorities in all districts". See: IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/4 ['Outline Plan']. Although this fourth measure was not included in the GOC's final proposal, it appears that community engagement remained a core component of his strategy in Belfast.

[643] *PP*, 21 April 1936.; Calame and Charlesworth, *Divided Cities*, 123;128;133.; Foley, *Legacy of Strife*, 60;124.

[644] PRONI, HA/32/3/2 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held on Tuesday, 9th September, 1969, at Stormont Castle'].

communities for the purpose of ensuring security. Given that this was implemented in advance of the military's attempts to prevent the use of car bombs in the Troubles, for which a similar system of military barriers would eventually be put in place around the city centre,[645] it appears that 'security through separation' was at the core of this particular measure. In advance of the proposal of this measure, a study had been conducted by the army regarding the potential for the implementation of a similar type of mechanism in the area.[646] The impetus for the "system of vehicle control" seems to have been focused on its efficacy in keeping the two communities apart, in particular by preventing "outsider" access to the area cordoned off by the army.[647]

The flashpoints along the divide between opposing communities had a reputation for attracting trouble-makers, and if left unchecked, provided an opportunity for the occurrence of intercommunal violence. Less than a month earlier, on August 15th, the burning of Bombay Street had, according to an elderly resident of Bombay Street, been perpetrated by "strangers",[648] which is likely a reference to the loyalist mob that was comprised predominately of so-called 'outsiders'. Loyalists later wrote a song describing their escapades:

> "On the 15th of August we took a little trip,
> Up along Bombay Street and burned out all the shit,
> We took a little petrol and we took a little gun,
> And we fought the bloody Fenians till we had them on the run".[649]

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[645] *TG*, 29 March 1974.
[646] PRONI, HA/32/3/2 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held at Stormont Castle at 5.30p.m. on Monday, 8th September, 1969'].
[647] Ibid.
[648] n.a., 'The burning of Bombay Street 1969. A Phoenix will rise from the ashes'.
[649] Hamill, *Pig in the Middle*, 18.

Bombay Street was a Catholic Street situated immediately adjacent to the predominately Protestant Cupar Street.[650] Residents of Bombay Street noted that prior to the violence the two communities had lived in relative harmony.[651] While the violence may not have been entirely caused by so-called 'outsiders', given the devastation wrought by this one very recent night of violence, it is plausible that the incident influenced the decision to limit movement between the two sides along the contentious dividing line.

The exact boundaries of the area under the vehicle control were to be determined through consultation, but could be altered in response to dynamics on the ground as needed after the initial implementation of the policy.[652] The early plans for this system of vehicle control appear to be consistent with the zone implemented in September 1969.[653] The system of vehicle control initially went into effect in the evening on September 10th after the Minister of Home Affairs issued the command under the auspices of the Special Powers Act.[654] This measure stipulated that the movement of cars in and out of the area was to be prevented between the hours of 9.00pm and 6.00am each day.[655] The precise period for the length of the restriction of movement in this area was reportedly not initially apparent to the public upon implementation.[656] It was subsequently clarified that ambulances, vehicles belonging to doctors and essential

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[650] NA, WO 305/3763 ['Belfast Town Plan' MOD 1969 map]; Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 2 (Appendices)*, 'Map (M) Main Riot Areas of Belfast'.
[651] n.a., 'The burning of Bombay Street 1969. A Phoenix will rise from the ashes'.
[652] PRONI, HA/32/3/2 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held on Tuesday, 9th September, 1969, at Stormont Castle'].
[653] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland']; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 [Press Release, 10 September 1969].
[654] Ibid. The system of vehicle control stayed in place from September 10th until October 28th of the same year. While the formal vehicle control measure was lifted on October 28th, some of the check points remained. See: PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/2A [Press Release, 28 October 1969].
[655] PRONI, HA/32/3/2 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held at Stormont Castle at 5.30p.m. on Monday, 8th September, 1969'].
[656] *TIP*, 11 September 1969.

services would be able to move freely during this time.[657] The later implementation of "a vehicle pass system" was designed to allow individuals living or working within the zone to travel through the checkpoints. In addition, the restrictions on movement were not applied to public buses.[658] This measure allowed for a semblance of freedom of movement, while allowing the security forces to police this area of the city using the limited number of resources available.

In order to enforce the restriction of vehicle movement in the area, the British Army and the RUC put in place and manned barriers and checkpoints at the entry and exit points of the area.[659] The army check points that were part of the system of vehicle control appear to have been built of similar material to the initial peace line, including barbed wire and wood barriers.[660] The army had previously employed the use of road blocks in areas which were particularly turbulent, including around the Falls/Shankill divide in the initial days of its deployment.[661] In an earlier tentative description of the new measures, the 'system of vehicle control' was described as a "modified curfew", but it was subsequently noted that the term "curfew" should not be used and rather for the focus to be on the limiting of vehicular movement.[662] The use of the term 'curfew' risked inflaming an already volatile situation.[663]

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[657] PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 [Press Release, 10 September 1969]; *TT*, 10 September 1969; *CET*, 10 September 1969.
[658] PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 [Press Release, 11 September 1969].
[659] PRONI, HA/32/3/2 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held on Tuesday, 9th September, 1969, at Stormont Castle']; *APJ*, 10 September 1969; *TIP*, 11 September 1969.
[660] PRONI, INF/7/A/7/14.
[661] NAI, TSCH 2000/6/659 ['Memorandum Re Visits to Six Counties', 5 September 1969].
[662] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events', 9 September 1969].
[663] Ibid.

The second measure articulated in the GOC's proposed policy outlined the official formation of the peace line.[664] The intention to provide 'security through separation' is apparent in the very wording of the policy, which stated that "[a] peace line was to be established to separate physically the Falls and Shankill communities".[665] This area of Belfast had seen particularly high levels of violence during the previous month, with violent clashes and rampant destruction taking place most explicitly in the areas where the two communities met.[666] While the GOC proposed the general location of the peace line, this second measure determined that the decision regarding the precise route of the peace line would include the input of the Belfast Corporation.[667] According to the undated document entitled 'Outline Plan' the location of the peace line would be decided in advance by Belfast City authorities with the input of both the RUC and military personnel. The anticipated general location was expected to be in the vicinity of the neighboring Percy Street, Dover Street and Coates Street.[668]

These three streets in particular had been the site of violent intercommunal clashes since the army's deployment in August.[669] When the army initially arrived along this interface on August 15th, there were not enough troops available to patrol the precise path of the interface along the smaller side streets, including in Coates Street, Dover

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[664] The undated 'Outline Plan' document appears to designate the term of 'Peace Line' to this new type of barrier stating that "[t]he fence when erected will be referred to as the "Peace Line"". See: IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/4 ['Outline Plan']; PRONI, HA/32/3/2 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held on Tuesday, 9th September, 1969, at Stormont Castle'].
[665] Ibid.
[666] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 116-127.
[667] PRONI, HA/32/3/2 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held on Tuesday, 9th September, 1969, at Stormont Castle'].
[668] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/4 ['Outline Plan'].
[669] Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 39.; Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 133-156;190-195.

Street and Percy Street.[670] This meant that with troops placed further away from the dividing line, along streets, such as the Falls Road,[671] the opportunity for violent intercommunal conflict remained. Consequently, the decision to place the peace line precisely on this dividing line in September served as a means to secure this interface within the confining parameters of the available troop levels, a limitation which had already allowed significant intercommunal violence to continue.

The decision to focus on the Falls/Shankill and prevent movement between the two appears to be something that was discussed in the early days of the army's deployment.[672] In addition, the police had recommended that the army concentrate their efforts along the divide between the Falls Road and Shankill Road communities.[673] It was even suggested in an account discussed by journalist Desmond Hamill that policeman Sam Bradley recommended to Brigadier Hudson, on August 15, 1969, that "troops should establish a Peace Line" separating the two communities.[674] However, it is possible that this account of the events is retroactively applying the term 'Peace Line' to a suggestion that focused on the importance of the troops acting to separate the two communities.

The peace line itself was to be built as "a temporary barbed wire fence" between the two communities.[675] In addition to the fence, both the police and the army would be

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[670] Ibid., 195.
[671] Ibid.
[672] PRONI, HA/32/2/55 ['Formal Government decisions (i.e. those taken by the Cabinet or Cabinet Committees) in relation to the use and deployment of (a) the R.U.C., (B) the U.S.C. and (c) the Army including (where available) the information and evidence placed before Ministers'].
[673] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 195.
[674] Hamill, *Pig in the Middle*, 15.
[675] PRONI, HA/32/3/2 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held on Tuesday, 9th September, 1969, at Stormont Castle'].

tasked with manning the peace line.[676] While the measure stated that it would be "temporary" and that "there should be no question of the peace line becoming permanent", the plan included a caveat stipulating that there may be circumstances in which the barbed wire barrier would require reinforcement.[677] This early recognition of the potential need for further strengthening of the peace line to ensure security foreshadowed the subsequent construction of a permanent barrier along the route of the first peace line in the following years.

The third and final measure articulated by the GOC dealt directly with the complete removal of the barricades. It stipulated that with the construction of the peace line, the process of barricade removal could begin.[678] The GOC's strategy was to deal with the slightly less contentious barricades located at the edges of the city before working in towards the more contentious barricades located in the city centre.[679] This appears to have been an effort to build confidence in the British Army's ability to provide security in the eyes of the barricaded communities, while also addressing the politicians' concerns over the need for urgent action. The RUC was tasked with addressing the barricades in the Protestant parts of the city, while the army would concentrate on the barricades in the Catholic areas,[680] a reflection of the persistent sectarian atmosphere in the city.

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[676] Ibid.
[677] Ibid.; IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/4 ['Outline Plan'].
[678] PRONI, HA/32/3/2 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held on Tuesday, 9th September, 1969, at Stormont Castle'].
[679] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events', 9 September 1969]. Although the focus of this thesis is on the Belfast peace lines, it is important to note that the army eventually applied the use of the peace line tactic in Derry/Londonderry. See: PRONI, HA/32/3/2 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held on Tuesday, 9th September, 1969, at Stormont Castle']; IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland']; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 45.
[680] PRONI, HA/32/3/2 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held on Tuesday, 9th September, 1969, at Stormont Castle'].

Emphasis was also placed on conducting the removal of the barricades in a tactful manner as both the army and the politicians wanted to avoid a situation in which community members would rebuild the barricades.[681] In an ideal situation it was envisioned that the barricades would be taken down voluntarily by the community members, but it was acknowledged that this may not always be attainable.[682] This measure focused on the removal of community barricades, yet it stipulated, rather ominously, that "[w]here necessary military barriers would replace the barricades".[683] While this measure may have been intended to rid the city of barricades, it inadvertently contributed to the conditions in which informal community barriers were replaced by formalized structures between Belfast communities.

Prior to the implementation of the new measures to remove the barricades, the Northern Irish Prime Minister intended to give a televised address on September 9th both to explain the initiative and to reiterate his commitment to the new government reforms.[684] The announcement of the new measures did not go as planned, when the contents of his speech were leaked ahead of the evening broadcast to at least two members of the Catholic church leadership in Northern Ireland, who subsequently demonstrated an unfavorable reaction to the proposed measures.[685] The Joint Security Committee had felt it imperative that the church leaders should receive a briefing on the

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[681] Ibid.
[682] Ibid.
[683] Ibid.
[684] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events', 9 September 1969]; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the Period 10th – 17th September 1969']. Callaghan recalled in his memoirs that the Northern Irish Prime Minister made the announcement on September 8th. However, this does not appear to have actually been the case because, as previously demonstrate earlier in this chapter, the formal policy was not discussed until September 9th. See: Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 103.
[685] The Prime Minister recorded his speech in advance at the Broadcasting House at 3.00pm on September 9th, just prior to the Joint Security Committee meeting in which the details of the plan were discussed. See: NA, CJ 3/18 ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events', 9 September 1969], ['Narrative of Events: 29 August – 14 September, 1969']; NA, CJ 3/14 ['Note of a Meeting', 15 September 1969].

plan, with the goal of gaining their support prior to the broadcast.[686] Not only did the leaking of the broadcast result in the Catholic religious leaders obtaining an incomplete explanation of the proposed measures, but it also threatened the trust between the government and the Catholic leadership, which was crucial for addressing the disturbances on the streets of Northern Ireland.[687] The leak of the contents of Chichester-Clark's speech is emblematic of the particularly tense situation present in Northern Ireland at the start of the September 1969.

The Catholic leadership's trepidations over the proposed measures centered on the security concerns and the lack of consultation prior to the Prime Minister's broadcast. While Father Patrick Murphy, Bishop William Philbin and Cardinal William Conway each expressed different degrees of anger regarding the proposed measures, the sentiments of anger and fear for the Catholic community were palpable.[688] These three leaders represented different hierarchies within the Catholic church, each with connections to the city of Belfast. Cardinal William Conway, a Belfast native who was from Dover Street, directly on the dividing line between the two communities, served as the spiritual leader for the Catholic community in Northern Ireland.[689] Bishop William Philbin was the Bishop of Down and Connor, who resided in Belfast.[690] Father Patrick Murphy served as the Administrator of St. Peter's Cathedral, which was situated near the

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[686] Robert Porter, the Minister of Home Affairs, was tasked with contacting the leaders of the Protestant faith. Oliver Wright, the United Kingdom Representative in Northern Ireland, was in charge of contacting Catholic leader, Cardinal Conway. See: NA, CJ 3/18 ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events', 9 September 1969]; PRONI, HA/32/3/2 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held on Tuesday, 9th September, 1969, at Stormont Castle'].

[687] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Narrative of Events: 29 August – 14 September, 1969'], ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events', 9 September 1969], ['Record of Conversation with Cardinal Conway', 10 September 1969].

[688] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events', 9 September 1969], ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events - II', 11 September 1969], ['Narrative of Events: 29 August – 14 September, 1969']; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 [Confidential note regarding barricade removal, 11 September 1969].

[689] *TNYT*, 18 April 1977.

[690] *TNYT*, 24 January 1971.

Falls Road in Belfast.[691] The Catholic community more broadly upon hearing the announcement stood in opposition to the removal of the barriers as they were wary of exposing themselves to security threats without sufficient protection.[692] Consequently, the government representatives were obliged to actively address these concerns in order to seek support from the Catholic leaders for the new measures.[693]

To address the concerns of the Catholic leadership, Oliver Wright, after conferring with the GOC confirmed that the army would implement the new measures gradually, while ensuring the security of the community, with the peace line in particular figuring prominently as a key provision of security.[694] In addition, the Ministry of Home Affairs made clear that individuals who had acted in defence of their homes would not be subject to the Special Powers Act.[695] In spite of the Catholic leadership's initial frustration at the lack of consultation prior to the proposal of the new measures, Cardinal Conway did implore the city's citizens not to resist the army's efforts.[696] Although the leak and the subsequent initial negative feedback clouded the proposed measures, the implementation of the peace line policy continued as planned.

The Northern Irish Prime Minister's broadcast to announce the new measures underlined the pivotal role of the peace line to address the internal security situation in Belfast, yet simultaneously fueled unease over the existing precarious situation in

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[691] *TT*, 18 September 1969.
[692] *APJ*, 10 September 1969; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the Period 10th - 17th September 1969'].
[693] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Narrative of Events: 29 August – 14 September, 1969'], ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events - II', 11 September 1969]; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 [Confidential note regarding barricade removal, 11 September 1969].
[694] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Narrative of Events: 29 August – 14 September, 1969'], ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events', 9 September 1969].
[695] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Narrative of Events: 29 August – 14 September, 1969']; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 [Confidential note regarding barricade removal, 11 September 1969], [Press Release, 11 September 1969].
[696] PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the Period 10th - 17th September 1969'].

Northern Ireland more broadly. Chichester-Clark made it clear that the barricades had to come down, whether voluntarily or at the hands of the British Army.[697] In his speech Chichester-Clark asserted that the barricades were "'strangling the whole community'" and went so far as to implore the citizens of Belfast to remove them, asking "'What do we want? More jobs and houses – or more funerals'".[698] The Prime Minister placed emphasis on the need for a swift removal of the barricades to restore a peaceful situation in the city. Perhaps the intimation that the army was on standby was designed to encourage a speedy execution of the voluntarily barricade removal efforts. Yet, the announcement of the imminent barricade removal itself produced a "hostile reaction" from Catholics and Protestants alike.[699] For example, a *Birmingham Post* article described the reaction from behind the Catholic barricades in Belfast, stating:

> "[…] there was one simple reaction to the Prime Minister's words: no. No, the barricades will not be pulled down. No, the Army will not be allowed to remove them. No, the "peace line" will not allay fears. And one yes: We will fight on. The Citizens' Defence Committee held an emergency meeting and reaffirmed their determination to keep the barricades up – at all costs. "Getting the Army to tear them down is just an attempt to turn the people against the troops." said one man".[700]

The Prime Minister's speech revealed a tension between the preoccupations of a government concerned with the damage inflicted upon Northern Ireland's reputation as well as its own position by the disturbances and communities organizing in self-defence alarmed by threats to their own security.

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[697] *CET*, 10 September 1969; *AEE*, 10 September 1969, *TBP*, 10 September 1969; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the Period 10th - 17th September 1969'].
[698] *TBP*, 10 September 1969
[699] *TT*, 11 September 1969.
[700] *TBP*, 10 September 1969.

From Chichester-Clark's speech it was evident that the construction of the peace line was at the heart of the new policy to remove the barricades and address the disturbances in the city.[701] In particular, he stated:

> "we have now decided that the army will erect and man a firm peace line to be cited between the Divis Street area and the Shankill Road on a line determined by a representative body from the City Hall. In conjunction with this action, barricades will be removed in all areas of Belfast both Protestant and Catholic".[702]

Nevertheless, the future of the barricades in Derry/Londonderry remained vague and in his announcement the Prime Minister had not made clear the amount of time that citizens would have to demolish their own barricades in Belfast.[703] The Prime Minister may have delivered the message, but he discussed the content with the GOC[704] and it was made clear that it was a decision taken together with the army leadership.[705] While the delivery of the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland's message may have been firm, it appears the contents served to generate unease among some members of the population and this concern was further exacerbated by aspects of the new policy that remained uncertain.[706]

The announcement of the new measures also contributed to the atmosphere of political uncertainty present at the start of September 1969. Specifically, during his speech, Chichester-Clark asserted that he would cease to govern if it became impossible, whether by the actions of individuals or other circumstances, for the implementation of the reforms pledged by his government.[707] The Northern Irish Prime Minister's assertion that he would resign further underscored not only the precarious position that the Prime

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[701] *APJ*, 10 September 1969; *TBP*, 10 September 1969; *Army in Ulster – The Men in the Middle.*
[702] Ibid.
[703] *TG*, 10 September 1969.
[704] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events', 9 September 1969].
[705] *TDT*, 10 September 1969.
[706] Ibid.
[707] *APJ*, 10 September 1969; *TBP*, 10 September 1969; *TDT*, 10 September 1969, *TT*, 10 September 1969; NA, CJ 3/18 ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events', 9 September 1969].

Minister found himself in as well as the crucial relationship between a return to 'law and order' in the city and the future of his government, but also the importance of the peace line at that moment. The Prime Minister staked his own credibility on the successful removal of the barricades and thus put his ability to govern at risk.[708] On the one hand, the Prime Minister's overarching statement broadly appeased unionists.[709] On the other hand, some British government officials were concerned with the hurried nature of Prime Minister's announcement and felt that greater consultation between Stormont and London was necessary when it came to decisions over future initiatives.[710] Despite diverging perceptions over the new measures, it was clear that much still depended on the successful implementation of the policy to address the mounting violence in the region.

Conclusion

The patterns of violence that erupted on the streets of Belfast in 1969 echoed the battles fought along the same fault lines during previous periods of violence in the city. By September 1969 the situation in Northern Ireland had reached a dangerous precipice, leading one British government representative in Northern Ireland to assert that the region was "a stone's throw from anarchy".[711] The emergence of a preponderance of community barricades, never before seen to the same extent in Belfast, significantly contributed to the perceived situation of 'anarchy' on the streets of Belfast. Thus, the issue of the community barricades swiftly became the fulcrum of Northern Irish politics at the start of the Troubles.

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[708] NA, CJ 3/14 ['Note of a Meeting', 15 September 1969].
[709] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Narrative of Events: 29 August – 14 September, 1969'].
[710] NA, CJ 3/14 ['Note of a Meeting', 15 September 1969].
[711] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Ulster: September 13, 1969'].

It was in this atmosphere of violent sectarian conflict that the first peace line emerged on the streets of Belfast, as the British Army, at the behest of the Northern Irish government, attempted to address the rising security concerns at both the local and political levels in the region. As community members sought to implement their own mechanisms of security in the form of barricades, the British Army and the Northern Irish government countered with their own policy of 'security through separation'. The mounting intercommunal tension and the pressure exerted on the Northern Irish government's own precarious position contributed to the creation of an atmosphere where immediate action was seen, from the perspective of the authorities, as a viable solution to both local and political level security concerns.

While designed to address concerns over security, none of the individual components of the peace line policy addressed the root cause of insecurity in the city. Only those rare commentators who took a longer term view of the situation discerned the shape of the future. As early as 1969, Boyd remarked, in reference to concerns that the ongoing situation of sectarian bigotry in the region may never cease, that "[i]f that is to be so, then Northern Ireland is going to be an unhappy place for future generations – as unhappy, perhaps as it was for generations long-dead".[712] Given the staunchly divided and deeply embedded situation of intercommunal tension present in 1969, by only addressing the surface level manifestation of the intercommunal violence, the peace line policy inadvertently risked contributing to the division of communities for generations to come.

[712] Boyd, *Holy War in Belfast*, 203.

CHAPTER III

CONSTRUCTING SECURITY

"If the barricades remain, only weeds will grow – unemployment, poverty, backwardness, despair."
- James Chichester-Clark, Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, September 12, 1969[713]

The peace line built between the Falls and Shankill communities was at the heart of the authorities' efforts to address the internal security situation presented by the community barricades in Belfast during September 1969. In conjunction with the construction of the first peace line, the British Army set about working to remove the community barriers across the city. As the army sought to dismantle the barricades, and build the peace line, all while facilitating a return to 'law and order' in the city, it soon found itself in the midst of negotiating contentious conflicting territorial claims and the inter-related calls for security from all sides. The implementation of the peace line policy in this divisive atmosphere of intercommunal violence and political upheaval had a decisive impact in setting the stage for the emergence of the permanent peace walls. Although the construction of the peace line was a crucial part of the September 1969 security strategy, it was not the main goal, which was instead the removal of all community barricades and, ultimately, the restoration of 'law and order'. Nevertheless, it is the peace walls which have become the most enduring and concrete legacy of this policy.

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[713] PRONI, CAB/9/B/308/2 ['Statement by the Prime Minister, Major J.D. Chichester-Clark, at Press Conference Following Publication of the Cameron Report on Friday, September 12, 1969'].

The chapter begins with an examination of the contentious negotiations over the removal of the community barricades across the city of Belfast in the autumn of 1969. Unlike the previously explored earlier iterations of the peace line barriers, in 1969 the authorities engaged in negotiations with the opposing communities in Belfast. These negotiations, amidst the wider situation of turmoil in the Northern Ireland, contributed to the cementing of a policy of 'security through separation' in the form of the first peace line in September 1969. Subsequently, the chapter engages in an in-depth analysis of the construction of the first peace line itself, demonstrating the extent to which territorial divisions at the local level influenced the placement of the barrier. This section of the chapter focuses on one house, in one contested street, situated directly on the dividing line between two opposing communities, in the midst of conflict ridden Belfast during September 1969. Through a micro-level analysis, the extent to which local level dynamics influenced the placement of the initial peace line between communities in Belfast becomes apparent.

Negotiating Security in a Situation of Insecurity

As the conflict continued into September 1969, it soon became clear that the barricades would not simply come down overnight.[714] The sheer number of barricades in Belfast in early September 1969 was astounding, with the British Army recording the presence of approximately 134 barricades in the immediate area around the Falls Road on September 12th alone.[715] While the removal of the barricades in Belfast at the start of September 1969 was of paramount concern to the British Army and the government authorities, precisely how this should be done soon became its own point of contention.

[714] *TG*, 10 September 1969; *BNL*, 11 September 1969; *TT*, 15 September 1969.
[715] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'].

Both the British Army leadership and their political counterparts in Northern Ireland recognized that the community barricades would need to be removed to ensure security in the city. However, there appears to have been a distinct divergence between the approaches of the Stormont government and the British Army to the barricade removal.

This divergence in approach was evident with the political pressure placed on the army to develop the peace line policy in the first place. When it came to the implementation of the policy, tension remained between political expediency and methodical military methods. On the one hand, the army, led by GOC Freeland, was aware of, and focused on, the importance of patiently gaining the cooperation of the barricaded communities.[716] On the other hand, the Northern Irish government and their counterparts in London were largely focused on seeing a swift removal of the barricades.[717] The diverging timelines for the barricade removal, despite a shared goal of removing the community barricades and restoring security in the city, further fostered the situation of insecurity in the city as proclamations from Stormont and British Army approaches to the barricades did not always appear perfectly in step, particularly to the barricaded communities.[718]

As the conflict moved into September 1969, the focus in London and at Stormont was on securing a return to a 'normal' situation in the region, of which the removal of

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[716] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/4 ['Address to Belfast City Council'].
[717] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Northern Ireland: Narrative of Events, Tuesday 16 September 1969']; PRONI, CAB/9/B/308/2 ['Statement by the Prime Minister, Major J.D. Chichester-Clark, at Press Conference Following Publication of the Cameron Report on Friday, September 12, 1969']; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at Stormont Castle on Friday, 12th September, 1969, at 2.30p.m.]; PRONI, CAB/9/B/308/2 ['Statement by the Prime Minister, Major J.D. Chichester-Clark, at Press Conference Following Publication of the Cameron Report on Friday, September 12, 1969']; *AEE*, 12 September 1969; *TT*, 16 September 1969.
[718] *LAT*, 11 September 1969; *TT*, 11 September 1969.

the community barricades was an integral component.[719] From the perspective of the unionist government,[720] the swift removal of the barricades was paramount for a return to 'law and order' in the city.[721] For example, the existence of the barricades allowed certain individuals to act with relative autonomy outside the purview of government, while also fostering a situation that the unionist government viewed as outright 'lawlessness'.[722] On a practical level the presence of the barricades made policing difficult,[723] including preventing the army and police from successfully patrolling inside barricaded areas.[724] The Northern Irish Prime Minister further emphasized the impact and importance of the community barricades in early September 1969, asserting that the presence of the barriers had led to the paralysis of everyday life in the city.[725]

At the same time, the barricades contributed to a sense of gridlock within the Northern Irish government itself. Specifically, in the eyes of government authorities, the barricades and their continued presence were not only an embarrassment, but they also made the government's position, and in particular the Prime Minister's own ability to govern effectively, even more fragile.[726] The Northern Irish Prime Minister was under

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[719] PRONI, CAB/9/B/308/2 ['Statement by the Prime Minister, Major J.D. Chichester-Clark, at Press Conference Following Publication of the Cameron Report on Friday, September 12, 1969']; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at Stormont Castle on Friday, 12th September, 1969, at 2.30p.m.']; NA, CJ 3/18 ['Statement Issued by Northern Ireland Government on 15 September']; *TBP*, 11 September 1969; Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 101.

[720] For insight into the evolution of the Unionist government in Northern Ireland from 1921 until the early years of the Troubles, see: Bew, Gibbon, and Patterson, *Northern Ireland 1921-1994*.

[721] *TDT*, 10 September 1969; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 [letter from Chichester-Clark, 18 September 1969].

[722] *TBP*, 10 September 1969; *TBP*, 11 September 1969; *AEE*, 12 September 1969; Devlin, *Straight Left*, 111.

[723] NAI, TSCH 2000/6/660 ['Memorandum Re Visits to Six Counties'].

[724] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['Talk to Commanders 2 Sep 69']; NAI, TSCH 2000/6/660 ['Memorandum Re Visits to Six Counties']; NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held at 5.30p.m. on Thursday, 25th September, in Stormont Castle']; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 44.

[725] *TDT*, 10 September 1969.

[726] *TT*, 15 September 1969; NA, CJ 3/18 ['Northern Ireland: Narrative of Events, Tuesday 16 September 1969']; Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 103-104.

immense pressure from members of his own government.[727] Even, as the army worked to remove the barricades, the government came under fire from loyalists, keeping the barricades at the top of the political agenda at Stormont.[728] The emphasis on a speedy removal of the barricades at Stormont appears to have been influenced by the Northern Irish government's concern over potential reactions from the Protestant community.[729] It is interesting to note that the authorities referred directly to a concern over a 'Protestant' reaction,[730] suggesting that the authorities were approaching the intercommunal violence through the lens of sectarian division. By viewing the violence on the streets of Belfast through this lens, the authorities contributed to a situation where 'security through separation' became an increasingly attractive policy in 1969.

Additionally, the presence of the Catholic barricades around the Falls Road area of the city appeared to suggest that the Catholic enclave had already essentially seceded from Northern Ireland, echoing the situation in Derry/Londonderry with the existence of 'Free Derry'.[731] This area in the vicinity of the Falls Road became known as 'Free Belfast', mirroring the situation in Derry/Londonderry in both name and action.[732] For example, both areas operated independently from the state from behind the barricades, engaged in negotiations with the security forces and displayed the Republic of Ireland's flag during the August violence.[733] In Belfast, the words 'You Are Now Entering

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[727] *TT*, 15 September 1969; NA, CJ 3/18 ['Northern Ireland: Narrative of Events, Tuesday 16 September 1969']; Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 104.
[728] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Notes of Discussions Between the Defence Secretary and the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland on Thursday, 18th September; & Mr. Porter, Minister of Home Affairs and Mr. Faulkner, Minister of Development on Friday, 19th September, 1969'].
[729] NA, CJ 3/14 ['For the Record', 4.45pm, 15 September 1969].
[730] Ibid.
[731] For further concise context regarding 'Free Derry', see: Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 44.; Ó Dochartaigh, 'Northern Ireland Since 1920', 149.
[732] De Paor, *Divided Ulster*, 201;204.
[733] Ibid.

Liberated Belfast' written on a barricade further underscored the connection between Derry/Londonderry and Belfast.[734] While the community barricades may have been built at the local level, along the streets of Belfast, the reverberations from their construction were felt all the way up into the upper echelons of the Northern Irish government and even across the sea in London.

The community barricades, particularly in the Catholic areas of Belfast continued to gain further prominence, beyond simply their imposing presence in the city, as weighty political bargaining chips.[735] In particular, members of the Catholic community leveraged the barricades as bargaining tools in an attempt to achieve their political goals during the early months of the Troubles.[736] Specifically, the CCDC, repeatedly put forward a set of demands that they felt should be met before their barricades were dismantled,[737] an action which the government leaders in London and at Stormont deemed objectionable.[738] For instance, toward the end of August 1969, the CCDC articulated its 'Manifesto from the barricades', which laid out the interests of the barricaded community of 'Free Belfast':

> "1) Disbandment of the B-Specials.
> 2) Disarming and re-organisation of the R.U.C.
> 3) General amnesty for those involved in the disturbances, and in particular those who have defended their homes.
> 4) Release of all Political prisoners
> 5) Repeal of the Specials Powers Act and withdrawal of the Public Order Act.

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[734] PRONI, T3922/2/8.
[735] Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 102.
[736] NA, DEFE 13/904 ['An Assessment of the Threat to Military Security as at 5th November, 1969']; NA, CJ 3/14 ['For the Record', 4.45pm, 15 September 1969].
[737] PRONI, D2560/5/10; Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 102.
[738] NA, CJ 3/14 ['For the Record', 4.45pm, 15 September 1969]; NA, CJ 3/18 ['Northern Ireland: Narrative of Events, Monday 15 September 1969']; NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Conclusions of a Joint Security Committee Meeting Held at 5.30p.m. on Monday, 15th September at Stormont Castle']; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at Stormont Castle on Monday, 15th September, 1969, at 4.30p.m.']; *TT*, 16 September 1969; *TT*, 17 September 1969; Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 101-102.

> 6) Implementation of the Civil Rights Covenant, and if necessary legislation from Westminster over the head of Stormont for Civil Rights".[739]

The CCDC's demands demonstrated the extent to which the community barricades had become a new front line in the ongoing conflict in Northern Ireland. At the same time, this use of the barricades as political bargaining tools perpetuated a sense of disorder in the city and threatened the perceived legitimacy of the government.

While the use of the barricades as political bargaining chips may have been a strategy particularly abhorred by the Northern Irish government, it is important to note that a key issue underlying this bargaining technique was the concern over security emanating from within the barricaded Catholic communities.[740] The demands themselves underlined the persistent animosity that existed between the nationalist community and the police as the Troubles kicked off in 1969, which in turn bolstered arguments for the maintenance of community barricades for security purposes. In particular, as shown by the demands laid out by the CCDC, the B-Specials were identified as a direct threat to the Catholic community. These concerns over security would emerge as key factor in the negotiations over the community barricades during the autumn of 1969.

It was against this divisive political backdrop that the British Army worked to remove the barricades and implement a semblance of 'law and order' in the city under the auspices of the peace line policy in September 1969. But before the army was even able to begin fully implementing the new policy, negotiations took place in London, which set the stage for an even more precise process for the removal of the barricades.

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[739] PRONI, D2560/1/9. While the precise wording and sometimes content of the demands from inside the Catholic barricades evolved as the conflict continued into the autumn, the message that the barricades would remain until the demands were met remained consistent. For a selection of further examples from the *Citizen Press* and the *Barricades Bulletin*, see: PRONI, D2560/1/4; PRONI, D2560/5/10; PRONI, D2560/5/21; PRONI, PRONI, D2560/5/23; PRONI, D2560/5/44.
[740] PRONI, D2560/1/8; *TG*, 10 September 1969.

In response to Chichester-Clark's earlier announcement that all the barricades would have to be removed immediately with the construction of the peace line, a delegation of Catholic community representatives flew directly to London to argue against the immediate removal of the barricades.[741] The group of Catholic leaders included three Stormont members of parliament, Paddy Devlin, Paddy Kennedy and Gerry Fitt; Father Murphy; businessman, Tom Conaty;[742] and chairman of the CCDC, Jim Sullivan.[743] The delegation, with the exception of Jim Sullivan,[744] met directly with Callaghan to discuss the barricades and the related security concerns of the Catholic population.[745]

At the time, it appears some of the delegation members did not believe that the government in London had been made aware of the new policy in advance of the Northern Irish Prime Minister's announcement.[746] For instance, the CDCC asserted the following:

> ""Mr. Callaghan was not aware of the full text of Major Chichester-Clarke's challenge on the barricades." Chichester-Clarke had directly contradicted earlier assurances given to the C.D.C. by Major Dyball "that he would not take down the barricades without prior agreement"".[747]

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[741] Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 103.; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 44.
[742] Tom Conaty later replaced Jim Sullivan as chairman of the CCDC. See: Flackes, *Northern Ireland*, 38.
[743] NA, CJ 3/14 [Report by J. Halliday regarding conversation between the Home Secretary and Chichester-Clark, 10 September 1969]; NA, CJ 3/18 ['Northern Ireland: Narrative of Events, Monday 15 September 1969']; *TT*, 11 September 1969; *TIP*, 11 September 1969; Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 103.
[744] Jim Sullivan did not participate in the meeting with the Home Secretary, waiting instead in a nearby room, because Callaghan would not meet with the IRA member. See: Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 103. A *Citizen Press* report of the barricade negotiations provided an alternative account of the delegation, asserting that two distinct delegations had gone to London and then had decided to meet with Callaghan at the same time. One delegation represented the CCDC and included Paddy Kennedy, Paddy Devlin and Jim Sullivan. The other delegation represented the peace committee and included Tom Conaty, Father Murphy, Gerry Fitt and J.D. McSparran. See: PRONI, D2560/1/9.
[745] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Northern Ireland: Narrative of Events, Monday 15 September 1969']; Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 103.
[746] *TIP*, 11 September 1969.
[747] PRONI, D2560/1/7.

Furthermore, Tom Conaty felt that London's approval of the policy for barricade removal demonstrated that the government did not fully grasp the gravity of the circumstances faced by the barricaded communities.[748] In addition, members of the delegation were purportedly disconcerted over who was actually responsible for the security situation in Belfast as they felt the Prime Minister's announcement of the barricade removal was not in line with their earlier discussions with both the GOC and the Home Secretary.[749] A later *Citizen Press* article recounting the barricade removal process reiterated the impression at the time that Chichester-Clark's announcement did not reflect existing military policy:

> "Chichester Clark eventually replied on Sept 9th by threatening to remove the barricades immediately, thus rejecting the policy of careful negotiation which had been adopted by Westminster and the military".[750]

The contentious nature of the announcement was succinctly summed up at the time by Gerry Fitt who asserted that the call for the removal of the barricades was "'deliberatively provocative'".[751]

These reactions from the Catholic community representatives demonstrated the unstable ground upon which both the barricades and the negotiations over their removal stood in September 1969. While the perception in Belfast, particularly behind the barricades, may have been one of disengagement between Stormont and London, the two governments were engaged in discussions regarding the situation presented by the barricades.[752] Nevertheless, this perceived disconnect between the government in London, the governing body at Stormont and the British Army, illustrates the tense and

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[748] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Record of Conversation with Father Murphy and Mr. Conaty', 11 September 1969].
[749] *TT*, 11 September 1969.
[750] PRONI, D2560/1/9.
[751] *LAT*, 11 September 1969.
[752] NA, CJ 3/14 [Report by J. Halliday regarding conversation between the Home Secretary and Chichester-Clark, 10 September 1969].

tumultuous atmosphere in which barricade removal negotiations were taking place during September 1969.

Despite London's early resistance to being pulled "into the Irish bog",[753] the negotiations over the removal of the barricades had already begun to force the government in London to wade into the mud within only weeks of the British Army's deployment. Following what Callaghan described as "a rather difficult five-hour meeting" on September 11th, a method for the removal of the barricades was agreed upon by the negotiating parties.[754] The final agreed upon method for barricade removal centered on street level negotiations and British Army assurances of security to facilitate the removal of the barricades.[755] Callaghan later described the step-by-step plan for the barricade removal of the barricades as follows:

> "[…] we agreed on a formula; that the local Army commander would first discuss the security situation with the people behind the barricades; that he would assess the requirements for military protection and how they could best be met; and that the barricades would be removed either by the local people alone or with the help of the Army".[756]

This gradual approach to the removal of the barricades reflected the GOC's existing, measured method for the removal of the barricades already agreed upon by the Joint Security Committee at Stormont.[757] The inclusion of localized discussions over security was necessary given the sectarian geography of the city of Belfast, where a blanket

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[753] Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 15.
[754] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Narrative of Events: 29 August – 14 September, 1969']; *AEE*, 12 September 1969; *CET*, 12 September 1969; *TT*, 16 September 1969; *TT*, 17 September 1969; Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 103.
[755] *TT*, 17 September 1969; Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 103.; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 44.
[756] Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 103. Callaghan's recollection of this agreement is very similar to the process noted in a 1969 Home Office memorandum, which outlined three key steps to be taken for barricade removal. See: PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the Period 10th - 17th September 1969'].
[757] PRONI, HA/32/3/2 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held on Tuesday, 9th September, 1969, at Stormont Castle'].

security policy would not have been adequate given the variation in intercommunal tensions across the different areas of the city.

This detailed approach to the barricades was accepted by the Northern Irish government as it appeared to constitute "a fair compromise" whereby public concern over the barricade removal was assuaged and the Catholic community leaders were committed to aiding in the effort to remove the barricades.[758] Nevertheless, Oliver Wright noted that the meeting in London had "left a feeling of unease with the Northern Ireland Government".[759] For instance, the government at Stormont remained uncertain as to whether the Catholic community representatives would follow through on the agreed upon formula.[760] Oliver Wright's description of the situation in Northern Ireland after the meeting in London illustrates the potential for a detrimental domino effect for the authorities should the barricade removal policy fail:

> "[…] at the worst, if Mr. Fitt double crosses, or procrastinates, the Northern Ireland Government may be unable to contain the Protestant backlash; and it may lose its capacity to control events. If that were to happen, they would be unable to sell to their supporters the likely recommendations of the Hunt Committee and fail to carry their reform programme through Parliament. A lot therefore at stake".[761]

With the appearance of key decisions taking place in London regarding Northern Irish affairs, ministers at Stormont felt that both the government's authority and credibility were on shaky ground.[762] Even if the agreement was upheld and progress was made on the barricade removal there was still the risk that an "erosion of the authority of the Northern Ireland Government" would likely occur.[763] Thus, the barricades and their

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[758] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Narrative of Events: 29 August – 14 September, 1969'].
[759] Ibid.
[760] Ibid.
[761] Ibid.
[762] PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at Stormont Castle on Friday, 12th September, 1969, at 2.30p.m.'].
[763] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Narrative of Events: 29 August – 14 September, 1969'].

potential removal sat at the fulcrum of politics in Northern Ireland as the conflict continued into September.

Although a plan for the removal of the barricades had been agreed between the Catholic delegation and the government, the implementation of the plan was yet to come. In particular, the CCDC reportedly felt "mandated to report back to the people of Belfast before it made any decision".[764] Meanwhile, a vote had been conducted in the barricaded Falls area on September 10th concerning the potential removal of the barricades, which yielded a resounding result of 'No' against the removal of the barricades from community members.[765] The results of the vote shed light on the extent to which the Catholic community in the Falls felt that the barricades were necessary for their protection, with one street cited as tallying 219 people in favor of the barricades remaining with only two people in favor of their removal.[766] In addition, the *Citizen Press*, reported the following:

> "While Paddy Devlin, Paddy Kennedy and Jim Sullivan held talks with Mr. Callaghan over 100 delegates from barricades on the Lower Falls gave united support for the maintenance of the barricades. At the meeting held on Thursday night C.D.C. members revealed that in a straw poll held in several streets in the area as many as 97 per cent of the people wanted to maintain the barricades".[767]

Clearly, significant work remained before the army could begin to remove the Catholic community barricades. Catholic community confidence in the army's provision of security, including the peace line, would be critical for the successful negotiation of the removal of the barricades.

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[764] PRONI, D2560/1/9.
[765] *TIP*, 11 September 1969.
[766] Ibid.
[767] PRONI, D2560/1/7.

The local level negotiations over the barricades brought politicians and religious leaders into the fray in Belfast, in an attempt to facilitate a removal of the barricades. In particular, politicians and religious leaders joined in the negotiations, to assure the residents behind the barricades that they would be provided with security if the barricades were dismantled.[768] Notably, Catholic leaders Father Murphy and Bishop Philbin engaged directly with the Catholic community in the Falls Road to encourage and persuade the community members to dismantle the barricades, an approach that did lead toward removing barricades in the area.[769] Regardless of the negotiators, the theme of security was omnipresent in these discussions surrounding the removal of the Catholic barricades. In the words of Catholic delegation member Tom Conaty: "'We are promising our people that when negotiations are complete they will have a greater security than the barricades'".[770] Thus, much depended on community confidence in the alternate security provisions provided by the army in the autumn of 1969.

At the same time, the Northern Irish Prime Minister remained under pressure from members of his own government and constituents.[771] For example, on September 14th the Northern Irish government came under fire from influential Protestant community leaders.[772] The Chairman of the Shankill Defence Association, John McKeague, reportedly asserted that if the barricades remained it would signal that the

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[768] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Record of Conversation with Cardinal Conway on 15 September']; NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Report by Chiefs of Staff Duty Officer 151800A to 160830A Sep', 16 September 1969]; *TT*, 17 September 1969; Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 101.

[769] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Record of Conversation with Cardinal Conway on 15 September'], ['Record of Conversation with Cardinal Conway', 19 September 1969]; NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Report by Chiefs of Staff Duty Officer 151800A to 160830A Sep', 16 September 1969]; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 44.; *TT*, 17 September 1969; *TT*, 18 September 1969.

[770] *TT*, 17 September 1969.

[771] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Northern Ireland: Narrative of Events, Monday 15 September 1969']; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the Period 10th – 17th September 1969']; Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 104.

[772] Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 44.

Northern Irish government both failed to address the disturbances and was inept at governing.[773] In addition, Reverend Ian Paisley declared his intention to bring a Loyalist crowd, 100,000 strong, directly to Stormont on September 30th to protest what he deemed the "'pussy-footing, fence-straddling Unionist Government'".[774] Meanwhile, the unionist leaning publication, *The People's Press*, blamed Callaghan and the government at Westminster for the existence of 'Free Belfast', asserting the following:

> "[…] the maintenance of the "States within the State of Northern Ireland" is a continuous encouragement to violence. Behind the white lines, and the areas cut off by the "peace line" the people who would welcome a return of the British Forces of law and order are left defenceless, and at the mercy of rabble-rousing dictators".[775]

From this perspective, the construction of the peace line, in place of community barricades, availed those behind the military barrier with opportunities for impunity rather than it acting as a means to prevent the further occurrence of violence.

Not only did the government come under fire from Protestant political and community leadership, but in reaction to a September 12th announcement by the CCDC that Catholic barricades would not come down, Protestants asserted their intention to rebuild their own barriers if progress was not made in dismantling the Catholic barriers.[776] The mere symbolism of the persistent presence of the Catholic barricades provoked concern among loyalists and unionists alike, as the barricades constituted a head-on challenge to the state's Weberian "*monopoly of the legitimate use of physical*

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[773] Ibid.
[774] Ibid.
[775] PRONI, D2560/5/34.
[776] PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the Period 10th – 17th September 1969'].

force within a given territory".[777] For example, just a couple weeks later, *The People's Press*, asserted:

> "THE AUTHORITY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ULSTER MUST BE RESTORED TO THE WHOLE TERRITORY OF NORTHERN IRELAND. Every day that this is delayed means a day gained for the gunmen to build up their strength".[778]

The combination of dissent from its supporters and the perceived weakening of its own position served to push the Northern Irish government to seek a swift resolution to the issue presented by the Catholic community barricades.

On September 15th a series of meetings were held, in Belfast and London respectively, regarding the evolving situation in Northern Ireland.[779] The flurry of parallel meetings in London and at Stormont reflects the tense atmosphere and urgent need to address the disturbances in the region, of which the barricades played a pivotal role. In response to this pressure and after new barricades were erected in the city, Chichester-Clark sought to issue further firm orders for the immediate removal of the barricades and to publicly threaten the use of the army to remove the barriers "by force" if his words were ignored.[780] The need for such a statement appears to have been agreed upon by all members of the Northern Irish Cabinet who feared that the Northern Irish government was on the precipice of losing its credibility due to the persistence of the barricades.[781] Back in London, Callaghan felt this would have a detrimental effect on the

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[777] From Max Weber's 'Politics as a Vocation' lecture, italics are included in the original text, see: Weber, *From Max Weber*, 78.
[778] Capitalization included in the original text, see: PRONI, D2560/5/34.
[779] NA, CJ 3/14 ['For the Record', 4.45pm, 15 September 1969], ['For the Record', 6.15pm, 15 September 1969]; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at Stormont Castle on Monday, 15th September, 1969, at 4.30p.m.'], ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the Period 10th – 17th September 1969']; NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Conclusions of a Joint Security Committee Meeting Held at 5.30p.m. on Monday, 15th September at Stormont Castle'].
[780] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Conclusions of a Joint Security Committee Meeting Held at 5.30p.m. on Monday, 15th September at Stormont Castle']; Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 104.; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 44.
[781] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Northern Ireland: Narrative of Events, Monday 15 September 1969'].

fragile negotiations regarding the removal of the barricades.[782] In particular, he was concerned that such a demand would fall flat without a contingency plan in place should the request be disregarded.[783] Consequently, Callaghan made his own televised address on September 15th to call for the removal of the barricades, to refute the use of barricades as bargaining tools and to reconfirm the army's role in providing security for all members of the community.[784] The *Citizen Press* later described this address as a "puff statement".[785] Meanwhile, elements within the Northern Irish government felt that the statement by Callaghan rendered the Northern Irish government mere "puppets",[786] which served to further erode the unstable ground upon which Stormont sat in 1969.

The next day, September 16th, the stage appeared set for a decisive meeting between the GOC and Stormont's Cabinet Ministers.[787] Significant progress had not yet been made on the removal of the barricades, despite the discussions in London and Callaghan's statement. Meanwhile, the CDCC was meeting that very same day and expectations for a successful barricade removal were low.[788] There had been much confusion since the meeting in London regarding the CCDC's position on the removal of the barricades, particularly due to conflicting reports and statements from those involved in the negotiations as well as the fast pace of events.[789] It was expected that the GOC, the Northern Irish Prime Minister, and members of the Security Committee would

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[782] Ibid.; Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 104.
[783] NA, CJ 3/14 ['For the Record', 6.15pm, 15 September 1969].
[784] Ibid.; NA, CJ 3/18 ['Record of Conversation with Cardinal Conway on 15 September']; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at Stormont Castle on Monday, 15th September, 1969, at 4.30p.m.']; *TT*, 16 September 1969; Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 104. That same evening the Northern Irish government issued a press release to reiterate their commitment to seeing the barricades dismantled. See: PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 [Press Release, 15 September 1969].
[785] PRONI, D2560/1/9.
[786] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Northern Ireland: Narrative of Events, Monday 15 September 1969'].
[787] *CET*, 16 September 1969; NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Conclusions of a Joint Security Committee Meeting Held at 5.30p.m. on Monday, 15th September at Stormont Castle'].
[788] *CET*, 16 September 1969.
[789] PRONI, D2560/1/9.

need to formulate a plan of action should the negotiations not yield a removal of the barricades.[790] However, around 12.30pm on September 16th, reports of agreements and barricade removals started to filter in to the government authorities, in a situation Oliver Wright described as akin to receiving the reports of an election's results.[791] It appeared as if the tense situation over the barricades in Belfast was finally coming to an end.[792]

By that very same evening, it became clear that the barricaded community of the Falls area intended to dismantle their barricades by September 19th as well as in the other areas of the city under the auspices of the CCDC.[793] In particular, a meeting between Brigadier Hudson of the army and the CCDC occurred in the evening on September 16th, during which the precise process for the removal of the barricades around the Catholic communities was discussed.[794] On September 17th, in conjunction with the barricaded communities, the army and the RUC began to remove the barricades.[795] The army worked with the Catholic communities, while the RUC worked with the Protestant communities.[796] Two days later on September 19th, further barricades were removed.[797] Finally, on September 22nd, the streets of Belfast were reportedly completely cleared of the community barricades.[798] While it appears that approximately nine barriers lingered on the streets of Belfast by September 24th, the reason for the continued presence was due to a shortage of the required tools to remove the remaining materials from the

[790] NA, CJ 3/14 ['For the Record', 6.15pm, 15 September 1969].
[791] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Northern Ireland: Narrative of Events, Tuesday 16 September 1969'].
[792] Ibid.
[793] Ibid.; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Meeting Between Commander 39 INF BDE and the Central Citizens Defence Committee held at Springfield on 16th September 1969'].
[794] Ibid.
[795] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Report by Chiefs of Staff Duty Officer 171800A to 180830A', 18 September 1969]; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 44.
[796] Ibid.
[797] Ibid.
[798] Ibid., 45. This later date for the removal of the barricades differs from a previous report, stating that the barriers were removed earlier. See: Dewar, *The British Army in Northern Ireland*, 38.

streets.[799] At the time, a *Citizen Press* article commented on the removal of the barricades, stating: "The barricades are down. We are physically secure for the moment".[800] Although the barricades had been removed, it is clear that the Catholic community remained wary.

The discussions over the barricades resulted in members of the British Army from its leadership down to troops on patrol on the city's streets becoming active negotiators over barricade removal.[801] Despite high level negotiations at a political level between community representatives and the government as well as the security forces, residents on the ground were not always receptive to the barricade removal, particularly due to security concerns, which resulted in further discussions between the military and communities becoming necessary at the local level.[802] The army engaged directly with the leadership behind the barricades during these negotiations, taking on what, Denis Healey, the Secretary of State for Defence, described as a diplomatic role as the army attempted to talk the barriers down rather than through the immediate use of force.[803] For example, the pivotal meeting between Brigadier Hudson and the CCDC that took place on September 16th had addressed key steps for the removal of the barricades in Belfast.[804] This appears to have been one in a series of meetings that kept the lines of communication open regarding the barricade removal in Belfast.[805] This was a practice that the army had

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[799] PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Barricade Position as at 10.00a.m. on 25th September'].
[800] PRONI, D2560/1/9.
[801] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Transcript of S of S Press Conference - 8p.m. Aldergrove, Friday, 19 September 1969'].
[802] *DE*, 11 September 1969; *TT*, 17 September 1969.
[803] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Report by Chiefs of Staff Duty Officer 151800A to 160830A Sep', 16 September 1969], ['Transcript of S of S Press Conference - 8p.m. Aldergrove, Friday, 19 September 1969']; NAI, DFA 2003/17/30 ['British Army Policy in the North']; PRONI, D2560/1/8.; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 44.; *AEE*, 13 September 1969.
[804] The individuals present at the meeting were Brigadier Hudson, P. Devlin, J. Sullivan, H. Kennedy, Rev. Father P. Murphy and P. Kennedy. See: PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Meeting Between Commander 39 INF BDE and the Central Citizens Defence Committee held at Springfield on 16th September 1969'].
[805] Ibid.

engaged in even prior to the implementation of the official barricade removal program[806] and this line of open communication continued into the early months of 1970.[807]

The tactic of direct negotiation by members of the army with the barricaded communities was not always well received.[808] For example, the army's engagement with Catholic groups left them open to accusations of engaging in negotiations with the IRA.[809] However, the GOC asserted that the army's willingness to talk to the barricaded communities was a key ingredient to the success of the policy. [810] Furthermore, the GOC claimed that, at the time, the army was unaware of who precisely belonged to the IRA.[811] Despite the army's efforts to facilitate the removal of the community barricades peacefully, the might of the British state became further entangled in the contentious claims to territory epitomized by the barriers strewn across the city's landscape in September 1969.

Recognizing the prevalence of fear behind the barricades and tailoring negotiations to address these concerns was only part of the equation to remove the community barricades. The army simultaneously had to convince the barricaded communities that the troops would in fact provide adequate security once the community barricades were removed. While negotiations over the barricades encompassed a range of participants, at the end of the day it fell to the British Army to secure the city, thus

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[806] NAI, DFA 2003/17/30 ['British Army Policy in the North']; Dewar, *The British Army in Northern Ireland*, 37-38;49.
[807] NAI, DFA 2003/17/30 ['British Army Policy in the North']. For further context regarding this particular engagement role taken on by army officers during this period see Burke's detailed account: Burke, *An Army of Tribes*, 72-74.
[808] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held at 5.30p.m. on Thursday, 25th September, in Stormont Castle'].
[809] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/4 ['Comments by Lieutenant-General Sir Ian Freeland on the Galley Proofs of a Penguin Book entitled "Ulster" by the *Sunday Times* Insight Team'].
[810] Ibid.
[811] Ibid.

much rested on the ability of the troops to ensure security amidst the intercommunal tension. Negotiations over security concerns constituted a critical step towards removing the barricades, but keeping them down required the barricaded communities to trust that the army would in fact provide them with sufficient security in order to keep the barriers from reappearing on the streets of Belfast as the conflict continued into the autumn of 1969.

The Emergence of the First Peace Line

At the heart of the army's efforts to remove the community barricades across Belfast sat the peace line. The first peace line emerged along the contentious divide between the Falls and the Shankill communities in Belfast. As shown in Chapter II, this particular faultline between these two communities in Belfast had been the site of significant intercommunal violence in the preceding months, which highlighted the substantial logistical challenge for the army when it came to patrolling the area with only a limited number of troops. The significant levels of violence, along with the preponderance of barricades in the area, made the need for the army to contain the intercommunal tensions in this part of the city painstakingly evident. The existing academic literature tends to agree that the first peace line was built in 1969 between these two communities, however, it neglects to examine in detail the actual emergence of the peace line along this route.[812] Although the peace line policy was a product of the government's response to the mounting sectarian violence, the local level dynamics concerning the issues of territory and security influenced both the emergence of the first peace line and its successors.

[812] BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*, 25-28.; Byrne, 'The Belfast Peace Walls'; Cosstick, *Belfast*; Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*, 62.

The existing perceived territorial boundaries of the Catholic and Protestant communities in 1969 played a significant role in determining the precise location of the peace line. At the start of the Troubles, the stark pattern of residential segregation with the Catholic community situated around the Falls Road area just south of the Protestant community of the Shankill Road, was described, in a report by the Tribunal of Inquiry, as "[o]ne of the most distinctive features of the social geography of Belfast".[813] A largely invisible, but mutually assumed, line split the two communities from east to west, known as 'the Orange-Green line'.[814] In 1969, this dividing line was situated to the north of the main arterial route through the Catholic territory of the Falls.[815] A large portion of the Catholic community in this area lived in homes situated to the south of Divis Street/Falls Road.[816] Members of the Catholic community also lived between Divis Street/Falls Road and 'the Orange-Green line', on streets that also often were occupied by their Protestant neighbours to the north.[817] For example, Catholics tended to live on the southern sides of Dover Street and Percy Street, while Protestants occupied the homes along the street to the north.[818] Thus, 'the Orange-Green line' divided the two communities often bisecting

[813] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 116.
[814] The color orange refers to the Protestant community, while the color green refers to the Catholic community. See: Ibid.; Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 2 (Appendices)*, 'Map (M) Main Riot Areas of Belfast'. Color coded maps of the city denoting patterns of residential segregation continued to be used throughout the conflict by the security forces. See: *TIT*, 16 February 1991.
[815] This road entered Catholic territory from the city centre as Divis Street before becoming Falls Road at Northumberland Street. See: Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 117.; Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 2 (Appendices)*, 'Map (M) Main Riot Areas of Belfast'.
[816] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 117.
[817] Ibid.
[818] Ibid.

individual streets along the way.[819] This existence of a communal boundary line dividing individual streets was not unique to the Falls/Shankill divide. Instead, numerous interfaces cut across streets in Belfast at the start of the Troubles, which often had a history of violent clashes between the two communities.[820]

This pattern of residential segregation was not a new phenomenon in 1969, particularly between the Falls Road and Shankill communities, which had long been a flashpoint for the Catholic and Protestant communities of Belfast. For example, approximately a hundred years earlier, in 1852 and 1872, the army intervened between the Falls and the Shankill communities in an effort to prevent violence between the two sides.[821] The security forces were also stationed between the Falls and the Shankill in 1893 and 1914 in response to discussions over iterations of the Home Rule Bill.[822] With the onset of outright intercommunal conflict in 1969, this particular dividing line became a crucial battleground for the army in its efforts to address the violence and restore a semblance of security to the city as a whole.

It was along this contentious dividing line between the two communities that the first peace line was built in September 1969.[823] While the general location of the peace line between the two communities was outlined by the GOC and agreed upon by the Joint Security Committee, the specific location of the peace line on the streets of Belfast was

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[819] NA, WO 305/3763 [‘Belfast Town Plan’ MOD 1969 map]; Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 2 (Appendices)*, ‘Map (M) Main Riot Areas of Belfast’.
[820] Prince and Warner, *Belfast and Derry in Revolt*, 50.
[821] Stewart, *The Narrow Ground*, 139;154.
[822] Martin, ‘Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937’, 52.
[823] A 1969 MOD map colored coded with the locations of the Catholic, Protestant and mixed communities in Belfast, shows the perceived boundary between the Catholic Falls and the Protestant Shankill, which nearly identically matches a 1969 military map of the peace line. See: IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 [‘IS Operations Northern Ireland’]; NA, WO 305/3763 [‘Belfast Town Plan’ MOD 1969 map].

determined with the input of Belfast Corporation.[824] A meeting was held on September 10, 1969, at Belfast City Hall where corporation officials, the British Army and the councillors who represented the wards located in what was referred to as "the peace zone", met to discuss the precise location of the peace line.[825] Construction of the peace line by the British Army subsequently began on September 10th, one day after the plan was made public, in conjunction with the implementation of the vehicle control zone.[826]

The peace line itself sat in the middle of the vehicle control zone, which concentrated its cordon on the Falls and Shankill communities.[827] The building work began during the late evening of September 10th, after the conclusion of a meeting at City Hall earlier that afternoon.[828] The path of the peace line stretched from Coates Street to Cupar Street, along an approximately 1.5-2 mile route.[829] It was not made up of one continuous barrier and instead comprised of a series of approximately 30 barricades that cut across streets and derelict space, while also incorporating existing buildings into the

[824] PRONI, HA/32/3/2 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held on Tuesday, 9th September, 1969, at Stormont Castle']; *AEE*, 10 September 1969; *CET*, 10 September 1969; *TBP*, 10 September 1969; *TDT*, 10 September 1969.

[825] It is possible that more than one meeting was held to determine the location of the peace line as some sources cite an afternoon meeting, while others reference a meeting that took place on the morning of September 10th. See: *TG*, 10 September 1969; *TT*, 11 September 1969; *Army in Ulster – The Men in the Middle*.

[826] Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 43.; NA, CJ 3/18 ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events', 9 September 1969]; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 [Press Release, 10 September 1969]; *AEE*, 10 September 1969; *TBP*, 10 September 1969; *TT*, 10 September 1969; *DE*, 11 September 1969; *LAT*, 11 September 1969. Although Callaghan recounted in his memoirs that construction began right away after the announcement of the policy by the Northern Irish Prime Minister, as demonstrated by this chapter, this was not actually the case. See: Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 103.

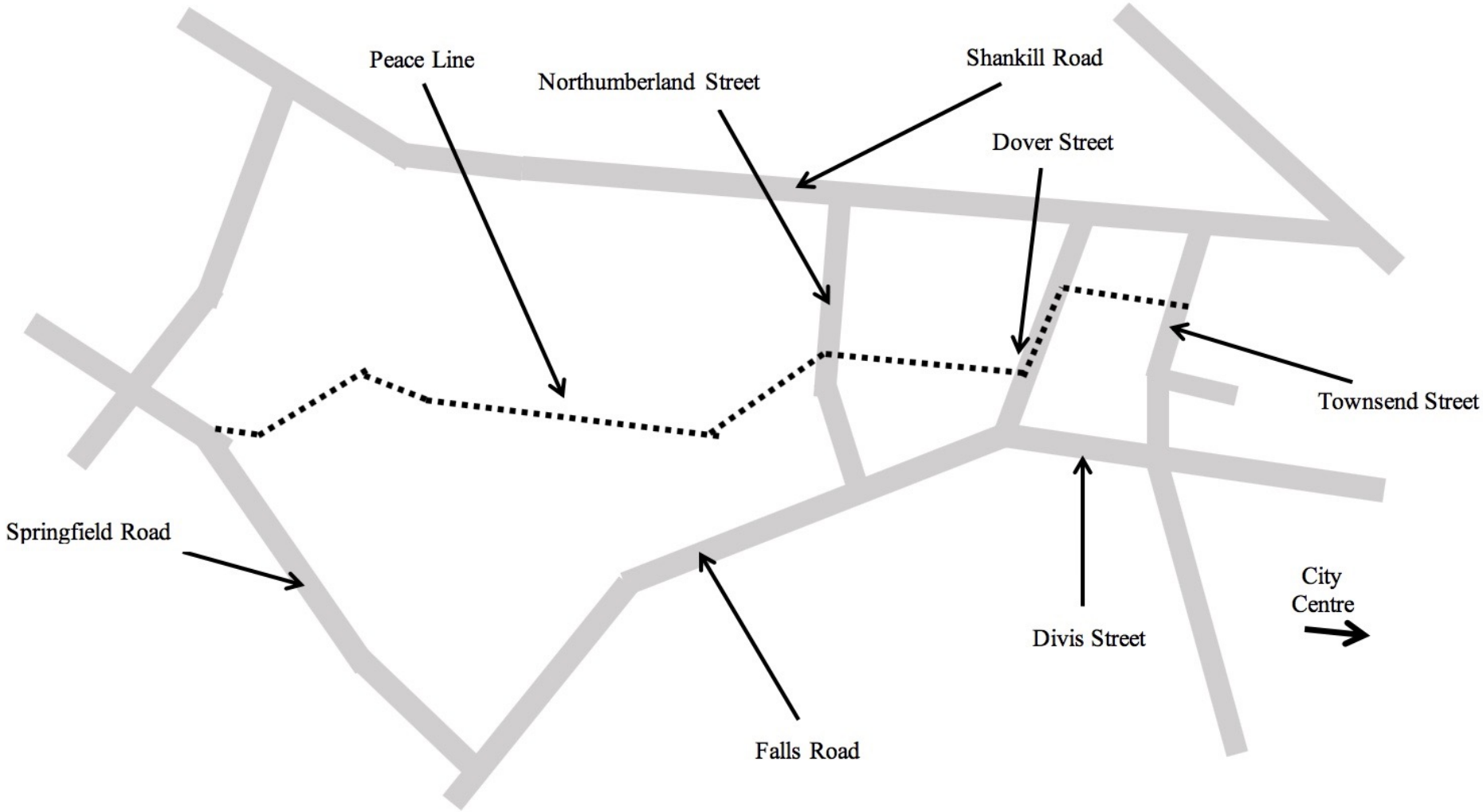
[827] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'].

[828] *TINBMN*, 11 September, 1969; *TT*, 11 September 1969.

[829] PRONI, DCR/1/111 ['Future Policy on Areas of Confrontation: Second (and Final) Report of the Joint Working Party on Processions etc', April 1971]; *CET*, 11 September 1969; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 44.; Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 103.

line to act as barriers.[830] Thus, the geography and existing architecture of the city both molded, and were themselves shaped, by the emerging peace line.

[830] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland']; PRONI, DCR/1/111 ['Future Policy on Areas of Confrontation: Second (and Final) Report of the Joint Working Party on Processions etc', April 1971]; *TT*, 12 September 1969; *BNL*, 28 January 1970; Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 103.



Map 4: **The first peace line in 1969.** The approximate route of the first peace line in September 1969. This map was drawn by the author based on existing maps of the peace line and the surrounding area. Sources: IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland']; Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 2 (Appendices)*, 'Map (M) Main Riot Areas of Belfast'.

The materials and manner of construction used to build the peace line led to observers at the time describing it as "a temporary barbed wire fence",[831] yet the mere presence of the peace line signaled the extent to which the very streets of Belfast had once again become theatres of war. The peace line was approximately 5-6ft tall and built by the British Army using barbed wire, corrugated iron, steel and wood.[832] For example, in places the barriers comprised of a series of steel posts connected together with barbed wire on either side of more barbed wire coils.[833] In addition to the barriers themselves, the peace line included check points and was to be patrolled by both the police and the British Army, with troops present along the line day and night.[834] While perhaps more tidy in appearance than the previous community barricades, the ragged rolls of barbed wire zig zagging across Belfast's streets lent credence to concerns over the atmosphere of mounting conflict between the two communities in the city.

The construction of the peace line did not proceed smoothly in all areas and instead the British Army encountered push back from community members both in response to the dismantling of the community barricades, but also in the implementation of the peace line.[835] In particular, Dover Street, a street that served as a direct link between the Catholic Divis Street and the Protestant Shankill Road, where both Catholics and Protestants lived, became a point of contention.[836] The position of Dover Street along the divide between the two communities meant that it had been the scene of

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[831] PRONI, HA/32/3/2 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held on Tuesday, 9th September, 1969, at Stormont Castle'].
[832] *CET*, 10 September 1969; *CET*, 11 September 1969; *TBP*, 11 September 1969; *TT*, 11 September 1969; *CET*, 16 September 1969; Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 103.
[833] *TT*, 11 September 1969.
[834] *TG*, 10 September 1969; *TT*, 11 September 1969; PRONI, HA/32/3/2 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held on Tuesday, 9th September, 1969, at Stormont Castle'].
[835] *DE*, 11 September 1969; *DM*, 11 September 1969; *LAT*, 11 September 1969; *TBP*, 11 September 1969.
[836] *Army in Ulster – The Men in the Middle*; NA, WO 305/3763 ['Belfast Town Plan' MOD 1969 map].

intercommunal violence in Belfast on more than one occasion during the previous century.[837] Furthermore, given its location on the 'Orange-Green line' it had already endured a significant level of violence in 1969 alone. For example, a month earlier in August of 1969, Dover Street and the surrounding area experienced serious bouts of violence, which not only served to foster further fear amongst residents on both sides, but also left much of the street in shambles.[838] Furthermore, Dover Street was also the site of the killing of the first individual at the hands of the republicans during the troubles on August 14th.[839] More recently, Dover Street saw significant disturbances on September 7th, as part of the wider situation of intercommunal violence that led to pivotal confrontation between the army and the Protestant crowd at Percy Street.[840] The two streets ran parallel to one another, connected by a number of cross streets, making for quick and easy access between the two flashpoints.[841] Thus, the disagreement regarding the construction of the peace line at Dover Street in September appears to have been linked to its geographic significance for the two communities and the recent violence in the area.

Only twenty-four hours into the emergence of the peace line on September 11th as army engineers[842] proceeded with construction in Dover Street, members of the

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[837] Boyd, *Holy War in Belfast*, 105-106;164-165.
[838] *Army in Ulster – The Men in the Middle*; *TBP*, 15 August 1969; PRONI, D2560/5/10; PRONI, D2560/5/22; NA, DEFE 13/904 ['Brief Northern Ireland', 12 November 1969]; Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 18;135;137-142;192.; Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 2 (Appendices)*, 'Map (M) Main Riot Areas of Belfast'.; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 39.; Adams, *Before the Dawn*, 107; Devlin, *Straight Left*, 105-106.
[839] McKittrick, et al., *Lost Lives*, 33.; Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 137-142.
[840] PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/5A [Statement taken by Constable R. J. Chestnutt, 7 September 1969], [Statement taken by Constable E. Coulter, 7 September 1969].
[841] NA, WO 305/3763 ['Belfast Town Plan' MOD 1969 map].
[842] The members of the army working on this portion of the peace line at Dover Street were part of the Third Field Squadron, Royal Engineers. See: *TBP*, 12 September 1969.

Catholic and Protestant communities assembled voicing opposition to the location of the peace line.[843] Initially, the army had begun construction at the precise location of an existing Protestant barricade on Dover Street. However, members of the Protestant community asserted that they were concerned that construction at this first location would leave some members of the Protestant community isolated in Catholic territory.[844] When faced with disagreement from the community, the army moved the barrier to a location approximately 50 yards away on the same street, but this second location also prompted a dispute.[845] The disagreement over the precise location of the barrier caused the work on the peace line to halt while the troops conferred with their headquarters.[846] Even the GOC visited Dover Street to review the construction of the peace line and discuss the removal of community barricades as well as the disputed location of the peace line with residents.[847] It is striking that this local level disagreement along one individual street in Belfast was significant enough to draw the direction attention of the GOC responsible for the peace and security of the whole of Northern Ireland.

In an effort to find a solution regarding the placement of the peace line, an army captain attempted to negotiate on the ground between the two sides.[848] Ultimately, faced with opposition from community members from both sides, the army officers ceased work on the peace line.[849] There are varying accounts regarding the cessation of construction at this location, and thus it remains unclear if construction stopped based on a decision made by the army officers present at Dover Street or if it was due to an order

[843] Ibid.; *TIT*, 12 September 1969.
[844] *Army in Ulster – The Men in the Middle*.
[845] *TBP*, 12 September 1969.
[846] *Army in Ulster – The Men in the Middle.*
[847] Ibid.; *TBP*, 12 September 1969; TIT, 12 September 1969.
[848] Ibid.
[849] *TBP*, 12 September 1969; *TIT*, 12 September 1969; *TBP*, 12 September 1969; *Army in Ulster – The Men in the Middle*.

issued to the troops from the army leadership.[850] Nevertheless, the dispute regarding the precise location of the peace line at Dover Street was eventually referred back to Belfast City Hall.[851] In an account of the events of September 1969, Callaghan alluded to the difficulties of the working relationship between the GOC and the city council members, stating:

> "I should add that he got very little help or understanding from the Belfast City Council, who were supposed to help him determine the route of the peace line. His comments on the quality and level of ability of the councillors and administrators were absolutely sulphurous".[852]

Callaghan's recollections shed light on the wider context in which negotiations over the location of the peace line were being undertaken by the army and the local politicians. While the British Army had initially anticipated completing the peace line on September 11th,[853] the disagreement at Dover Street had a significant impact on the army's ability to put the new peace line swiftly in place.

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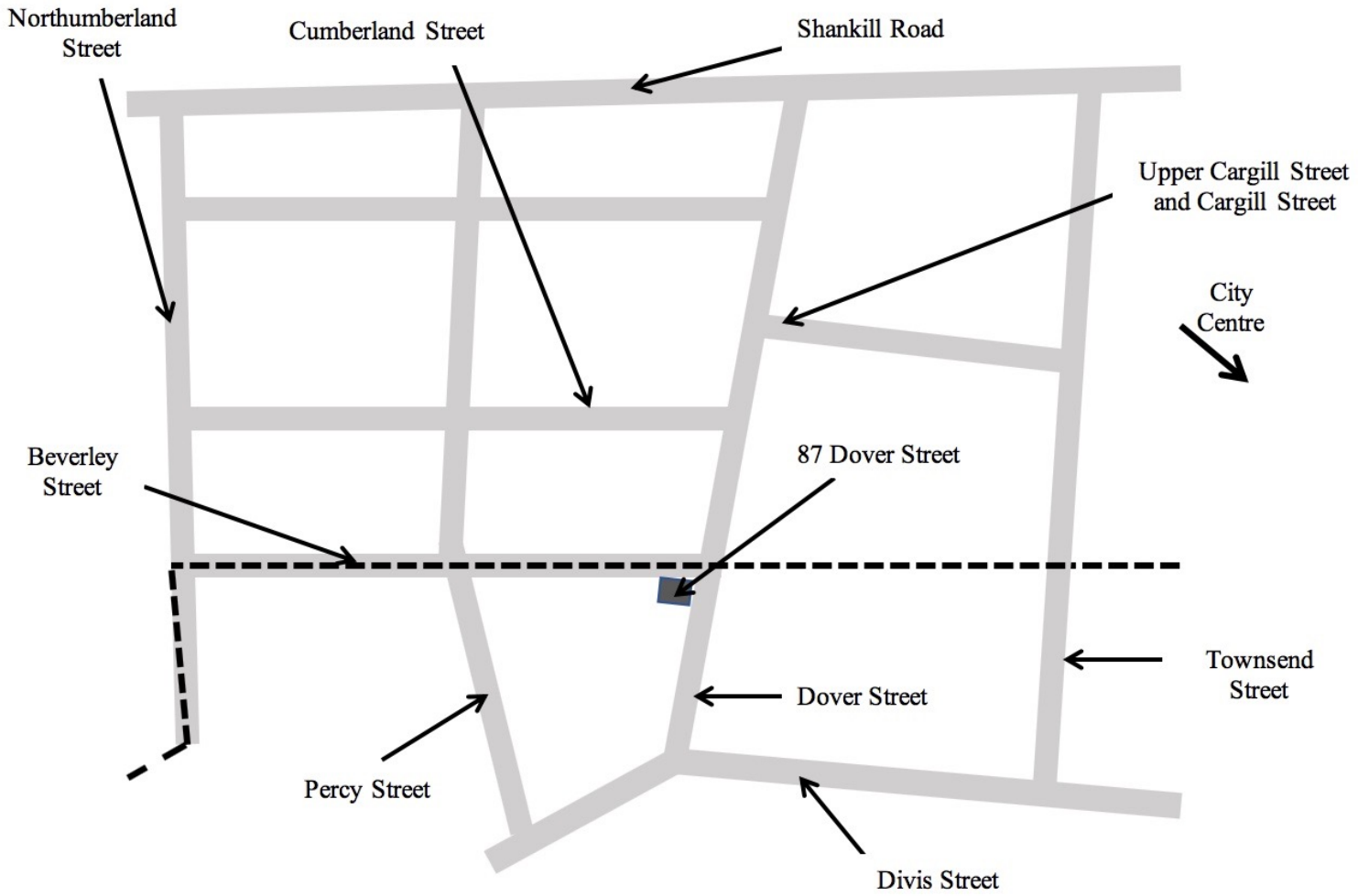
[850] *TBP*, 12 September 1969; *TIT*, 12 September 1969; *TBP*, 12 September 1969; *Army in Ulster – The Men in the Middle*.
[851] *AEE*, 12 September 1969; *TBP*, 12 September 1969; *TT*, 12 September 1969; *CET*, 12 September 1969; *Army in Ulster – The Men in the Middle*.
[852] Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 104.
[853] *CET*, 11 September 1969.



Map 5: **Dover Street area in 1969.** The line cutting across the map indicates the perceived route of 'the Orange-Green line'. This map was drawn by the author based on an existing map of the area. Source: Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 2 (Appendices)*, 'Map (M) Main Riot Areas of Belfast'.

In discussions regarding the peace line, community members cited the need for protection and a quarrel quickly developed, which led to crowds gathering along Dover Street, further underscoring the speed with which a confrontation between the two communities could develop in the tense environment of September 1969.[854] Community members from both sides argued that they required protection from 'the other'.[855] For example, a recorded exchange between a man and a woman on Dover Street demonstrates the extent to which fear on both sides prompted calls for 'security through separation':

> Woman: "You keep yous out and we keep up there."
> Man: "That's just fair enough."
> Woman: "We need our protection."
> Man: "I don't want nothing to do with you [inaudible comment]."
> Woman: "We have lived for over the past month with this fear too."
> Man: "Well what fear?"
> Woman: "The fear of you people".[856]

This sentiment that *security* required *separation* from 'the other' was echoed at the time by a Protestant local councillor who stressed to the army the importance of keeping the two communities apart to ensure the safety of residents: "[t]he closer they [republicans] get to our people, the more trouble you're going to have controlling both crowds".[857] While it is difficult to ascertain the extent to which communal attitudes at the start of September on Dover Street were really as homogenous as they were often portrayed, the confrontation at Dover Street underlines that security and the need for protection from 'the other side' was of paramount concern on both sides of the divide.

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[854] *Army in Ulster – The Men in the Middle*.
[855] Ibid.
[856] The man and the woman, from the video footage appear to be residents of the immediate area who live on either side of the dividing line. See: Ibid.
[857] Ibid.

Amidst this local level atmosphere of fear and violence, the imposition of the officially sanctioned peace line between the two communities, was tantamount to a recognition by the authorities, however inadvertent, of each community's perceived territorial claims. Despite the position of the army between the two communities and its pivotal role in negotiating conflicting territorial claims, the troops on the ground at Dover Street did not all appear to have grasped the importance of territory to the two communities. For example, one member of the army present in Dover Street described the halt in construction of the peace line at that location as being precipitated by community members simply changing their minds.[858] While the micro-level dynamics between the two communities had substantial ramifications for the emergence and endurance of the peace line, it seems that the significance of this was lost on some members of the army at the time.

The dispute over the precise location of the peace line centered on house number 87 on Dover Street[859] and pitched the might of the British Army into a local level dispute over conflicting claims to territory situated within the territorial boundaries of the United Kingdom. House number 87 sat approximately a couple blocks in to Dover Street from Divis Street and on the corner where Beverley and Dover Street met.[860] Just a week earlier, the violence at Percy Street on September 7th, which acted as a catalyst for the development of the peace line policy, had been further stoked by disagreements between the Protestant and Catholic communities outside number 87 Dover Street.[861] The micro-

[858] Ibid.
[859] Ibid.
[860] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 2 (Appendices)*, 'Map (L) High Velocity Damage to Divis Flats'.
[861] *TBP*, 8 September 1969.

level confrontations along individual streets in turn contributed to the wider situation of insecurity along the dividing line between the Falls and Shankill communities.

In 1969, house number 87 was a Catholic home.[862] The Protestant community argued that the peace line should be situated below the house at house number 89, while the Catholic community asserted that the peace line should be above house number 87 in order to ensure that it was contained within Catholic territory.[863] A Protestant councillor argued that the presence of the Catholic house should not prevent the Protestant community from exercising their claim to that portion of the street.[864] The Protestant argument for the placement of the peace line appeared to have less to do with the specific house and more to with the concern that if the peace line was situated above house number 87, Protestants would be left in a Catholic area.[865] The sentiment of separation was succinctly summed up by one man, on the Catholic side of the divide, who stated, during discussions over the placement of the peace line:

> "Catholic houses in the Catholic quarter. Protestant houses in the Protestant quarter. And we'd be happy.".[866]

Meanwhile, an observer noted, in response to this dispute, that "[i]n Dover Street Catholics and Protestants jealously guard their own territory to the last inch".[867] The arguments over territory at Dover Street seemed to suggest that the perception existed wherein if one side lost territory it was automatically acquired by 'the other side'. Thus, paradoxically, the proposed presence of the peace line both assuaged fears over physical security, while solidifying fears over the potential for 'the other side' to usurp territory.

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[862] *Army in Ulster – The Men in the Middle*.
[863] Ibid.; *TBP*, 12 September 1969.
[864] *Army in Ulster – The Men in the Middle*.
[865] Ibid.
[866] While the individual's name and community affiliation is not included in the archival footage, it would appear based on his position in the street that he belonged to the Catholic community. See: Ibid.
[867] Ibid.

The army captain present sought to find a compromise, even suggesting that the army could build a corridor to the house so that it was still accessible from the Catholic side, but this idea was rejected by a Catholic committee representative present at the time.[868] A local Protestant councillor warned the army that altering the location of the peace line because of the disagreement over the Catholic home at number 87 would render the British Army's implementation of similar operations "impossible" elsewhere in Belfast.[869] Given the contested and contentious territorial claims in Belfast, the army risked getting pulled further into local level territorial disputes over other individual homes across the city if such a precedent was set in Dover Street.

This was not the first time that house number 87 took center stage in the sectarian conflict in Dover Street.[870] In 1921, the same house[871] had a machine gun post directly outside of it, manned by the British Army, to prevent violence between the Catholic and Protestant communities.[872] While Dover Street experienced incidents of violence in the 1920s Troubles, Martin's research demonstrated that enforced migration did not occur in this street as was the case in other streets during the same time period.[873] Nonetheless, the positioning of a British Army post directly outside 87 Dover Street in 1921 suggests that this home was situated on the dividing line between the two communities during this early bout of intercommunal conflict as well. While the pattern of repeated local level confrontations between the two communities at 87 Dover Street is in itself significant, it

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[868] Ibid.
[869] Ibid.
[870] Ibid.
[871] A street directory does not appear to exist for 1921, perhaps due to the absence of a census in 1921 and the ongoing disturbances. The house was occupied in 1920 and 1922. See: n.a., *Belfast and Province of Ulster Directory for 1920*, 315.; n.a., *Belfast and Province of Ulster Director for 1922*, 316.
[872] *Army in Ulster – The Men in the Middle*.
[873] Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 126.

is also important to note that these instances of violence represented individual moments of crisis amidst longer periods of co-existence between the two sides. Thus, the emergence of the repeated flashpoint at this location simultaneously signals that the two communities had been able to live side by side at times, co-existing, relatively peacefully, on the limited territory.

As it turns out the house that was at the center of the contention in 1969 was empty as the elderly Catholic woman had left her home in response to previous violence. The *Belfast and Northern Ireland Directory 1969* lists a Mrs. Annie Keown as the resident of 87 Dover Street.[874] It appears that her family had helped her move from the house prior to September 11th, due to the violence in the area. [875] According to her son, James Keown, who lived on a street close to the Falls Road, his mother's house was ransacked on or just before September 8th:

> ""We have moved her because of the troubles. I have been keeping watch on her house but today found it had been ransacked and looted," he claimed. Mr. Keown said that with neighbours, he started taking the remains of the furniture back to his own area. "A crowd of about 50 people started jeering at us and saying they would help us to get out by burning us out"".[876]

Mr. Keown's account illustrates the violent and tense atmosphere in which the negotiations over the construction of the peace line took place. Although the house at the centre of the debate sat empty, the two sides remained staunchly divided over their claims to territory on Dover Street.

The army, according to a 1969 MOD issued map, understood the Catholic portion of Dover Street as extending from Divis Street until Dover Street met Upper Cargill

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[874] n.a., *Belfast and Northern Ireland Directory 1969*, 271.
[875] *TBP*, 8 September 1969.
[876] Ibid.

Street.[877] However, the Tribunal of Inquiry report asserted that, as of August 1969, the Catholic portion of the street only reached until Cumberland Street.[878] Meanwhile, a newspaper account of the territorial claims to Dover Street in 1969 declared that Protestants had claim over the street.[879] The confusion over the territorial claims of each community in Dover Street is apparent in the very wording of the article, which described the incident as follows:

> "The dispute arose because a Protestant Street had originally been included in a Catholic area and later, when the peace line was re-sited, a Catholic house was incorporated into a Protestant area".[880]

These varying interpretations of the precise territorial claims of each community highlights the difficulties involved in determining the placement of the peace line.

Furthermore, while 'the Orange-Green line' did cut across Dover Street, a legacy of the repeated bouts of intercommunal violence along this divide, the residential segregation in this area of the city was not absolute, a situation reminiscent of the York Street area in 1935. The blurring of this dividing line in times of relative peace again signals the possibility that the two sides were able to co-exist in Dover Street. Meanwhile, the dispute over 87 Dover Street in the midst of mounting intercommunal violence underlines an issue faced along other dividing lines in Belfast, where similar seemingly isolated houses stood in the perceived territory of an opposing community. The presence

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[877] The military map was color coded to indicate which sections of the city were Protestant, Catholic and mixed. See: NA, WO 305/3763 ['Belfast Town Plan' MOD 1969 map]. Another map found in the War Office files includes a hand drawn dotted line which may either been an indication of the proposed peace line route or a representation of the perceived 'Orange-Green line' in 1969. See: NA, WO 305/3763 ['Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland' W].
[878] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 137.
[879] *TT*, 16 September 1969.
[880] Ibid.

of these homes outwith the protected boundaries of their 'own' communities could be perceived as either being salient or even hostile outposts by 'the other side'.

While the location of the peace line at Dover Street continued to be disputed, the communities decided to maintain their own barricades. For example, the Protestants from Dover Street built their own barricade not only as an act of protest against the peace line, but also to separate them from their Catholic neighbors.[881] As of September 12th, there were three barricades in the immediate vicinity of number 87 Dover Street.[882] One barricade appears to have extended out across Dover Street in front of number 87.[883] A second barricade, belonging to the Catholic community,[884] sealed off the entrance to Beverley Street from Dover Street, which was directly next to number 86 Dover Street.[885] This barricade separating Beverley Street from Dover Street appears to have been previously taken down just two days before on September 10th in response to Chichester-Clark's plea for the voluntary removal of the barricades.[886] The third barricade sat further down Dover Street right before Duffy Street met Dover Street.[887] The locations of these barricades left an apparent no man's land between the two communities,[888] further underscoring the approach of 'security through separation' taken by the community members themselves.

Within two days of the start of construction, the peace line between the Falls and Shankill was nearly completed, but the dispute over the location of the peace line at

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[881] *Army in Ulster – The Men in the Middle*.
[882] It is assumed that these were community barricades. See: IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'].
[883] Ibid.
[884] *TIP*, 11 September 1969.
[885] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'].
[886] *TIP*, 11 September 1969; IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'].
[887] Ibid.
[888] *TBP*, 13 September 1969; IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'].

Dover Street remained unresolved.[889] A large portion of the peace line appears to have been close to completion on the same day as the construction began.[890] It is possible that there were fewer outright disputes on the streets of Belfast over the placement of the peace line at other locations since the remainder of the proposed route of the peace line traversed more clearly defined areas.[891] Meanwhile, the areas in the immediate vicinity of Dover Street resembled a patchwork of opposing territorial claims between the two communities.[892] The British Army continued to maintain a presence in Dover Street, despite the existence of community barricades, as discussions unfolded over the official location of the peace line.[893] It took until the evening of September 15th for the dispute at Dover Street to be resolved and for the peace line construction to be completed.[894] Previously, September 10th tended to be viewed as the accepted completion date for the peace line.[895] However, the discussions over the placement of the peace line at Dover Street required days of negotiations, surpassing initial expectations for the construction timeline.[896] The peace line was completed only after the disagreement over the location of the peace line at Dover Street was resolved by Catholic and Protestant councillors.[897]

While the British Army had attempted to mediate between the two sides and encourage local level agency in the decisions regarding the placement of the peace line,

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[889] *TBP*, 13 September 1969; PRONI, CAB/4/1474 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet Held at Stormont Castle on Friday, 12th September, 1969, at 2.30p.m.'].
[890] *TT*, 11 September 1969; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 44.; *Army in Ulster – The Men in the Middle*.
[891] NA, WO 305/3763 ['Belfast Town Plan' MOD 1969 map].
[892] Ibid.
[893] *TBP*, 13 September 1969.
[894] *CET*, 16 September 1969; *TT*, 16 September 1969; *ILN*, 20 September 1969.
[895] Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 44.; Melaugh, *A Chronology of the Conflict – 1969*.
[896] *AEE*, 13 September 1969; *CET*, 16 September 1969; *ILN*, 20 September 1969; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the Period 10th - 17th September 1969'].
[897] *TT*, 16 September 1969; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the Period 10th - 17th September 1969'].

the implementation of the policy of separation put the army in the rather absurd position of serving as arbitrator over whether house number 87 belonged within Catholic or Protestant territory. The British Army's role at that time was to ensure peace acting in an impartial capacity while the politicians were tasked with implementing reforms to quell the violence throughout the region.[898] However, the army's direct participation in the decisions over the territorial ownership of the two communities in Belfast, embodied in the dispute over 87 Dover Street, demonstrates the inherent difficulties in finding a sustainable peaceful solution to a conflict where the two main warring communities live side by side and claim ownership over the same piece of territory.

The final agreed upon route of the peace line at Dover Street meant that the line cut across Dover Street before heading up Beverley Street.[899] A structure was built directly outside of number 87 Dover Street, right at the corner where Dover Street and Beverley Street met, which would have placed number 87 on the Catholic side of the peace line.[900] A photograph from October 12, 1969, suggests that the peace line ultimately put in place by the army at Dover Street left house number 87 in Catholic territory, but pedestrians were still able to cross between the two separate sections of Dover Street.[901] The photograph also shows a Union Jack flag outside 86 Dover Street indicating the start of the Protestant territory on Dover Street immediately on the other

[898] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['Talk to Commanders 2 Sep 69'].
[899] PRONI, DCR/1/111 ['Future Policy on Areas of Confrontation: Second (and Final) Report of the Joint Working Party on Processions etc', April 1971]. It is important to note that this 1971 map of the peace line, particularly concerning its location at Dover Street, does not identically match the 1969 army map of the peace line or the perceived boundaries between the Catholic and Protestant communities from the 1969 color coded military map. See: IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland']; NA, WO 305/3763 ['Belfast Town Plan' MOD 1969 map].
[900] The exact placement of the wall remains unclear as the position of the barrier is indicated with two lines on the map. See: PRONI, DCR/1/111 ['Future Policy on Areas of Confrontation: Second (and Final) Report of the Joint Working Party on Processions etc', April 1971].
[901] PRONI, T3922/2/9.

side of the peace line.[902] Furthermore, an additional military map depicting the area as of October 1, 1969, shows a barrier built directly outside of 87 Dover Street.[903] Despite the presence of the peace line, a community barricade still sealed off the entrance to Beverley street just one month after the initial construction of the military barrier.[904] The persistence of the community barricade indicates that the army and its peace line had yet to gain the confidence of all community members on both sides of the divide.

The incident at Dover Street in the middle of September 1969 serves to highlight the pervasive impact of the dynamics brought forth by situations of mutual fear in times of crisis. The involvement of the army, politicians and community members from both sides of the divide in negotiations over the precise placement of the peace line demonstrates the extent to which intercommunal conflict envelopes a wide range of actors into the fold. In such situations of seemingly inescapable intercommunal violence, even limited pieces of territory become potential, albeit marginal, advantages that each side views as a viable commodity over which to fight. Furthermore, as shown by the negotiations over 87 Dover Street, it was the precise position of the barrier that prompted a dispute and not the desirability of building a wall between the two communities. The presence of communities living side by side on Dover Street in 1969 demonstrated that communal co-existence had been possible. Nevertheless, as in 1921, the close proximity of the two communities created a flashpoint at 87 Dover Street, with separation on the dividing line emerging in each case as the official response to violence. The general perception that *security* could only be achieved through *separation* led to the particular

[902] Ibid.
[903] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 [Six maps entitled 'Section of Belfast Shewing Proposed Peace Zone When Completed', c.December 1969].
[904] PRONI, T3922/2/9.

absurdities of the 87 Dover Street stand-off, but also left a wider and lasting legacy right across Belfast.

Conclusion

Although designed to prevent intercommunal violence, the first peace line was built on existing lines of division in society, which not only further engrained the divide between communities, but also made the army the perceived arbitrator over territorial disputes rather than simply an impartial force to preserve the peace. As demonstrated by the dispute over 87 Dover Street, it would have been naïve to ignore the divergent territorial claims of the two communities, yet the act of building the very first peace line in 1969 gave credence to these claims, further entrenching this pivotal aspect of the conflict. Furthermore, as shown by the negotiations over barricade removal and the dispute over the placement of the peace line at 87 Dover Street, a significant cultural gulf existed between the perceptions of security held by the barricaded communities and the view of the situation by the authorities, sitting in offices far removed from the street level violence.

While the presence of the peace line and the clear delineation of territorial claims, provided the authorities with an opportunity to lessen the number of potential flashpoints in the city, the peace line contributed to the ongoing territorial disintegration across the city of Belfast. This approach may have been amenable to the authorities because, as Frank Wright noted, "everyone knows that little disturbances can become big ones".[905] With the construction of the peace line the authorities appeared to see an opportunity to minimize the potential opportunities for violence by limiting the number of interfaces

[905] Wright, *Northern Ireland*, 287-288.

between communities and building, an increasingly, "impregnable"[906] barrier between the opposing sides. However, this approach, focused largely on short-term security concerns, whilst contributing to the entrenched division between communities.

The very same day that the first peace line began to emerge on the streets of Belfast, Edward Heath, Leader of the Opposition, gave a speech on the mounting violence in Northern Ireland in which he asserted that "'[i]n the end, they [the Protestant and Catholic communities] must live side-by-side and not across barriers or barricades, whether put up by the communities or by the forces of law and order themselves'".[907] Shortly, thereafter on September 12th Chichester-Clark issued his own statement regarding the barricades, which ominously foreshadowed what was to come in Northern Ireland over the following decades: "If the barricades remain, only weeds will grow – unemployment, poverty, backwardness, despair".[908] Although the community barricades to which Chichester-Clark was referring may have largely disappeared from the streets of Belfast, more formidable barriers soon emerged in their stead, which laid the foundation for the present-day peace walls. In an effort to remove the existing barriers to address short-term concerns, the authorities planted the seeds for a different type of weed to grow.

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[906] See Wright's work for a discussion of this type of strategy in deeply divided societies more broadly: Ibid., 288.
[907] *TBP*, 11 September 1969; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 44.
[908] PRONI, CAB/9/B/308/2 ['Statement by the Prime Minister, Major J.D. Chichester-Clark, at Press Conference Following Publication of the Cameron Report on Friday, September 12, 1969'].

CHAPTER IV

EXCHANGING ONE BARRIER FOR ANOTHER

"In Belfast, we were able to get the Army in and the barricades down by offering those behind the barricades security instead of fear."
- Oliver Wright, United Kingdom Representative in Northern Ireland, September 25, 1969[909]

While the peace line policy developed in September 1969 was intended to facilitate the removal of community barricades from the streets of Belfast, it simultaneously succeeded in directly contributing to the construction of officially sanctioned physical barriers between communities. The new peace line between the Falls and Shankill communities was an important part of the negotiations over the provision of security to facilitate the removal of the community barricades. However, the ongoing situation of violence, despite the presence of the army, made this work particularly difficult. Consequently, much depended on the peace line and its ability to prevent further instances of intercommunal violence in the city in order for the army to remove the community barriers from the city's streets. Just as the development of the peace line policy itself was influenced by the social and political upheaval in Northern Ireland in 1969, the implementation of such a policy, in a situation of intercommunal conflict, contributed to its entrenchment on the streets of Belfast.

This chapter begins with an examination of a significant incident at Coates Street in September 1969, which played a pivotal role in embedding the supposedly temporary

[909] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Londonderry', 25 September 1969].

barbed wire barricades into the streets of Belfast. Subsequently, this chapter investigates the broader implementation of the peace line policy, focusing in particular on the army's efforts to address security concerns on both sides of the divide in the final months of 1969. Although the intention may have been to remove barricades from the city's streets, the British Army ended up exchanging one barrier for another as they sought to address the situation of intercommunal violence in Belfast.

Coates Street: A Hardening of the Line

As demonstrated in the previous chapter, the peace line was an integral component of the British Army's efforts to negotiate intercommunal security concerns in a situation of insecurity in Belfast. In the early days of the construction of the peace line it became apparent that the presence of the barrier between the Falls and Shankill was intended to instill confidence in the opposing communities to encourage them to voluntarily dismantle their barricades with the understanding that, alongside the completion of the peace line, the security forces would ultimately remove all of the community barricades.[910] However, on both sides of the new peace line, and at the political level, perceptions diverged over what precisely constituted adequate security and protection.

While the Catholic community and its representatives demanded assurances of security, the Protestant community tended to feel that the presence of the troops was adequate for the removal of the barricades.[911] In the aftermath of the meeting in London between Callaghan and the Catholic community representatives, the Home Secretary

[910] *CET*, 10 September 1969; *CET*, 12 September 1969; NA, CJ 3/18 ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events', 9 September 1969].
[911] Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 45.; Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 103-104.

asserted "that the Catholics now had adequate protection and that their fears were less necessary than they had been".[912] Callaghan was particularly concerned that the fears behind the Catholic barricades would be exploited.[913] Furthermore, the Northern Irish government did not appear to recognize the significance of the fears of both the Catholic and Protestant communities regarding the removal of the barricades, feeling instead, by the second week of September 1969, that these fears were not reasonable.[914] The Northern Irish government representatives themselves were in favor of a strong military presence to prevent the occurrence of further disturbances.[915] Thus, there was not only a divergence of opinion over security between the two conflicting communities, but there was a clear disconnect between the local level dynamics on the streets of Belfast and the perception of these events from the political level.

Whether or not the fears behind the barricades were 'reasonable', they still played a pivotal role in the construction and potential removal of the barricades. Consequently, the army needed to address the security concerns of the barricaded communities in order to facilitate the removal of the barriers and a return to a situation of security in the city. This section of the chapter examines a key incident at Coates Street at the end of September 1969, which directly challenged the assurances of security at the very core of the peace line policy. This event not only constituted a pivotal turning point in the implementation of the peace line policy during the autumn of 1969, but also set the stage for the entrenchment of these barriers in the streets of Belfast for years to come as fear on both sides of the divide remained omnipresent.

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[912] Ibid., 103.
[913] Ibid., 103-104
[914] *TBP*, 11 September 1969.
[915] Ibid.

In the Catholic areas of the city, the barricades were seen as a vital line of defence against attacks in a contentious atmosphere where those in nationalist areas feared the occurrence of a 'pogrom' at the hands of the loyalist community.[916] From the defence committee announcements to individual interviews in newspaper articles, members of the Belfast Catholic community in September 1969 repeatedly asserted that the barricades were critical for their security.[917] For example, a woman interviewed in a September 10th newspaper article stated poignantly: "'The barricades are the only things which keep us safe'".[918] On the other side, the fear for personal safety behind the barricades in the Protestant areas appeared to emanate from concern over a potential mounting nationalist insurgency behind the Catholic barricades.[919] Thus, fear on both sides of the divide fueled the construction of community barricades.

It is apparent that the GOC himself was acutely aware of the importance of recognizing and adequately addressing the palpable fear present behind the barricades.[920] At the very start of September, even the *Citizen Press* reported that, as a result of a meeting with CCDC members, "the C.D.C. feel that the G.O.C. now has a clearer idea of the fears and objectives of the people inside the barricaded areas".[921] Addressing this fear and instilling confidence amongst the communities appeared to be part of the army's broader strategy in Northern Ireland upon its deployment,[922] an endeavor critical for the removal of the barricades. The peace line formed a key component of the army's efforts

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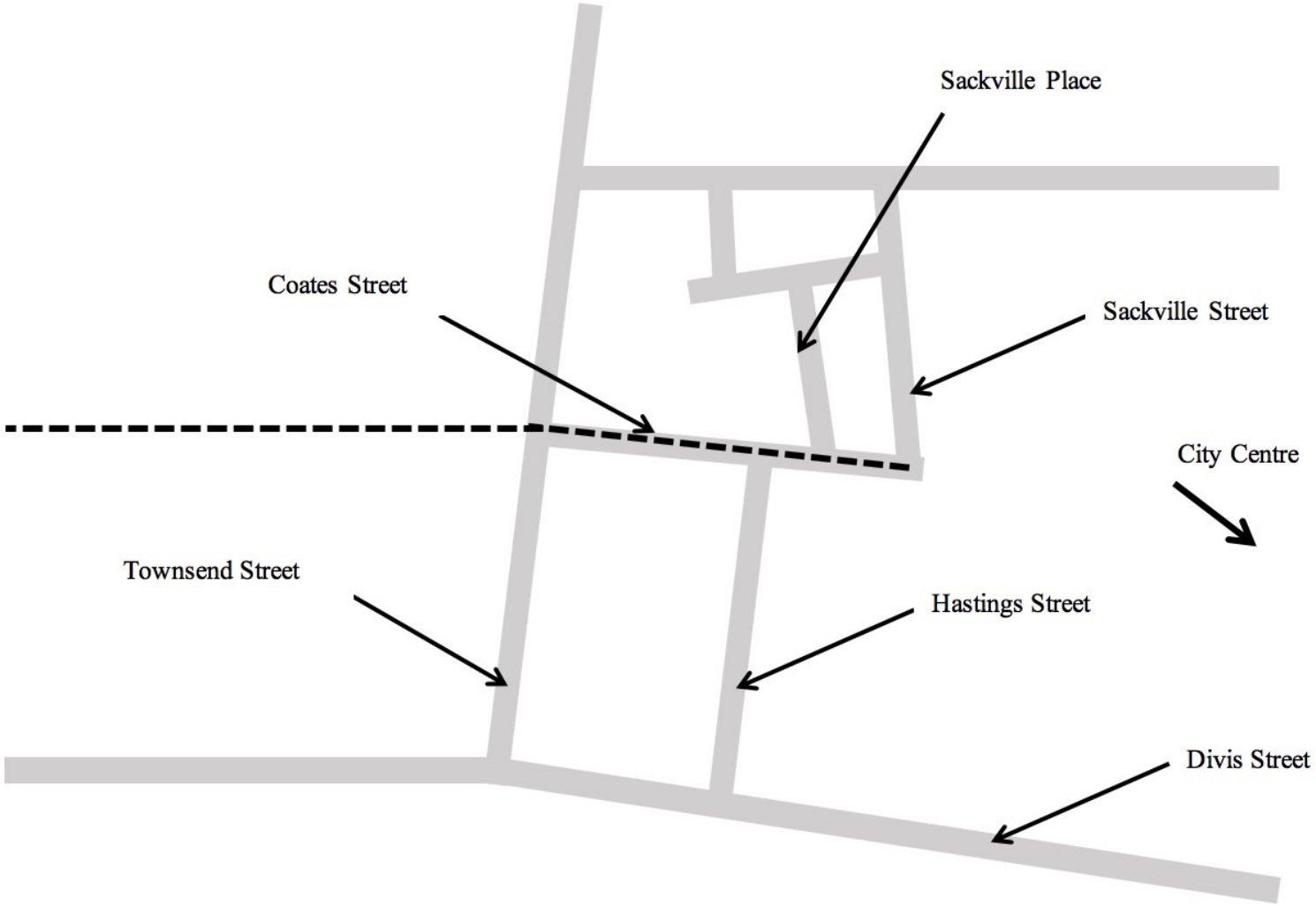
[916] PRONI, D2560/5/10; PRONI, T3300/17/2/3; *NIM*, October 1969; Adams, *Before the Dawn*, 110.
[917] NAI, TSCH, 2000/6/660 ['Report by Eamonn Gallagher', September 1969]; PRONI, D2560/1/3, D2560/1/5, D2560/1/6; *TBP*, 10 September 1969; *LAT*, 11 September 1969.
[918] *TBP*, 10 September 1969.
[919] Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 101.; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the period 4th - 10th September, 1969']; *Army in Ulster – The Men in the Middle*; *AEE*, 13 September 1969.
[920] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['Talk to Commanders 2 Sep 69'].
[921] PRONI, D2560/1/4.
[922] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'].

not only to address the fears behind the barricades, but also to tackle the broader situation of insecurity in the city. Within weeks of its construction, the new peace line was put to the test with an incident along the dividing line at Coates Street.



Map 6: **Coates Street area in 1969.** The line cutting across the map indicates the perceived route of 'the Orange-Green line'. This map was drawn by the author based on an existing map of the area. Source: Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 2 (Appendices)*, 'Map (M) Main Riot Areas of Belfast'.

In September 1969, Coates Street sat directly on 'the Orange-Green line' between the Falls and Shankill communities in Belfast. This intangible line of division embodied in 'the Orange-Green line' began where Coates Street and Sackville Street met, before continuing directly up the length of Coates Street itself.[923] According to a map published by the Tribunal of Inquiry that investigated the disturbances, the line appeared to bisect Coates Street right down the middle, indicating the contentious position of the street in 1969.[924] Coates Street was a relatively short street, which also served as a direct link between the predominately Catholic portion of Townsend Street and the largely Protestant Sackville Street.[925] Coates Street was only a short walk away from both Percy Street and Dover Street,[926] which had both been sites of serious intercommunal violence and contentious negotiations in recent weeks. According to a MOD map from 1969, Coates Street was perceived to be a Catholic street, which abutted perceived Protestant territory.[927] The junction where Catholic Coates Street met Protestant Sackville Street marked the boundary between the two communities.[928] Not only was Coates Street itself directly on a dividing line in 1969, but the area in the immediate vicinity of the street also constituted a patchwork of territorial claims, with Catholic territory making salients into predominately Protestant areas.[929]

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[923] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 2 (Appendices)*, 'Map (M) Main Riot Areas of Belfast'.
[924] Ibid.
[925] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland']; NA, WO 305/3763 ['Belfast Town Plan' MOD 1969 map], ['Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland' E]; PRONI, DCR/1/111 ['Future Policy on Areas of Confrontation: Second (and Final) Report of the Joint Working Party on Processions etc', April 1971]; Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 2 (Appendices)*, 'Map (M) Main Riot Areas of Belfast'.
[926] NA, WO 305/3763 ['Belfast Town Plan' MOD 1969 map].
[927] Ibid.
[928] Ibid.
[929] Ibid.

Due to its position along 'the Orange-Green line' Coates Street and the immediately adjacent area had already endured serious levels of violence in the preceding months.[930] In 1969, it appears to have been inhabited by a predominately Catholic population.[931] During the violence of August and July, two buildings on Coates Street as well as additional buildings in the streets leading off Coates Street sustained serious damage.[932] This area of Belfast was no stranger to intercommunal conflict, for instance, it had experienced violence during the 1920s Troubles.[933] At the start of the twentieth century Coates Street appears to have been a primarily Catholic street,[934] with the adjacent area around Brown Square viewed as loyalist territory.[935] This pattern of residential segregation persisted and thus the two communities were living in particularly close quarters in this area of Belfast at the start of the Troubles in 1969.[936]

While Coates Street may have been a Catholic Street in September 1969[937] it led directly into a loyalist enclave, which, similar to during the 1920s Troubles,[938] was a rather isolated outcrop from the rest of Protestant west Belfast.[939] The Protestants in this area were surrounded on three sides by Catholic territory in the Divis Street/Falls Road area, the nearby Unity Flats and along the bottom of the Old Lodge Road.[940] In the 1920s

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[930] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 133.; Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 2 (Appendices)*, 'Map (M) Main Riot Areas of Belfast'.
[931] Adams, *Before the Dawn*, 118.
[932] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 2 (Appendices)*, 'Map (M) Main Riot Areas of Belfast'.
[933] Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 71.
[934] Ibid., 126; Map IV (i).
[935] Ibid.; Wilson, '"The Most Terrible Assassination That Has Yet Stained the Name of Belfast"', 99.
[936] NA, WO 305/3763 ['Belfast Town Plan' MOD 1969 map].
[937] Adams, *Before the Dawn*, 118.; NA, WO 305/3763 ['Belfast Town Plan' MOD 1969 map].
[938] Wilson, '"The Most Terrible Assassination That Has Yet Stained the Name of Belfast"', 99.; NA, WO 305/3763 ['Belfast Town Plan' MOD 1969 map].
[939] Ibid.
[940] Ibid.

this pattern of residential segregation had led loyalists around Brown Square to experience a heightened sense of threat from their nearby Catholic neighbors.[941] A similar atmosphere of sectarian tension developed with the onset of intercommunal violence during the summer of 1969. Once again, the loyalists in this micro-salient of Protestant territory felt almost completely surrounded.[942] The sectarian tensions between the two communities living in such close proximity along the dividing line contributed to the repeatedly volatile nature of this interface as the violence continued into the autumn of 1969.[943]

The first peace line began in Coates Street before stretching out away from the city centre.[944] Although an early military map of the peace line itself in September 1969 does not indicate the existence of a structure at Coates Street,[945] a newspaper account of the construction of the peace line notes that a structure was built in Coates Street beginning on September 10th.[946] Furthermore, a map found in the records held by the War Office from c.1969 shows a hand drawn dotted line down the length of Coates Street, which appears to indicate either a potential position of the peace line at this location or the existence of the perceived 'Orange-Green line' along the street.[947] The line is situated along the end of the street on the Shankill Road side of the street stretching from the junction with Sackville Place until Coates Street intersects with Townsend

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[941] Wilson, '"The Most Terrible Assassination That Has Yet Stained the Name of Belfast"', 99. The nearby Arnon Street was the site of a horrible massacre at the hands of the USC in 1922. See: Kenna, *Facts and Figures of the Belfast Pogrom 1920-22*, 78.
[942] Crawford, *Inside the UDA*, 67-68.
[943] This same area experienced further serious intercommunal violence in October 1969 as well. See: Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 674. For further context regarding the contentious atmosphere in this area see: Crawford, *Inside the UDA*, 67-68.
[944] PRONI, DCR/1/111 ['Future Policy on Areas of Confrontation: Second (and Final) Report of the Joint Working Party on Processions etc', April 1971].
[945] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'].
[946] *TBP*, 11 September 1969.
[947] NA, WO 305/3763 ['Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland' E].

Street.[948] Three 'X's are marked on the map which may indicate the presence of barricades, one of which is situated where Coates Street and Sackville Street met.[949] This junction appeared to have been recognized as a point of contention by the authorities at the start of the Troubles.

When the British Army arrived to build the peace line in Coates Street, troops encountered opposition from the local community members who appeared to be of unionist sympathy.[950] As the troops started constructing the barrier, a number of women and children reportedly began to sing "'We shall not be moved'".[951] Meanwhile, during the construction process, existing barricades belonging to Protestants were re-sited slightly, while the crowd shouted "'Go home, you bums'".[952] The crowd gathered at Coates Street, voicing their opposition to the army's actions, seem to have been predominately Protestant. For example, the newspaper article describes opposition being voiced when a Protestant barricade was moved, a woman waving a Union Jack flag and questions from the crowds regarding the future of the Catholic barricades.[953] Despite the initial protests from the Protestant side at the re-siting of their barrier and the construction of the peace line,[954] unlike the neighboring Dover Street, the peace line in Coates Street appears to have gone up relatively smoothly. As of September 12th, at least one community barricade remained on Coates Street, situated near the end of the street before it intersected with Sackville Street.[955] The presence of a community barricade at this

[948] Ibid.
[949] Ibid.
[950] *LAT*, 11 September 1969; *TBP*, 11 September 1969.
[951] Ibid. The decision of the loyalist crowd to sing this particular civil rights song suggests that they viewed the removal of their barricade and the construction of the peace line as an imposition on their own freedom.
[952] Ibid.
[953] Ibid.
[954] Ibid.; *LAT*, 11 September 1969.
[955] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'].

junction suggests that not only did tension remain between the two communities, but the army and its peace line had yet to gain the trust of at least one, or both, of the communities.

In the days before the Coates Street incident conditions were ripe for an outburst of intercommunal violence in Belfast with tensions between the communities persisting despite the presence of the peace line. For example, violence continued in the city with shootings, petrol bombings and at least one bomb explosion taking place during the weekend of September 20th alone.[956] At the same time, in the week leading up to the violent incident at Coates Street, progress was made in removing the community barricades in Belfast.[957] Nevertheless, as if in anticipation of the potential for an escalation of violence, on September 25th, the existing ban on both outdoor meetings and processions was not only extended until December 31, 1969, but also further prohibitions were added to its parameters.[958] The initial ban had been put in place in response to the rioting during August 1969.[959] The imposition of the ban on processions was reminiscent of the more recent bouts of intercommunal violence in the city, including the infamous violence of 1935.

Coates Street itself also saw confrontations between the two communities directly prior to the September 28th incident. For example, during the evening of Thursday September 25th, a Protestant crowd had congregated in Coates Street where they proceeded to shout insults aimed at the Catholics living on the other side of the peace

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[956] PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the Period 18th – 24th September 1969']; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 45.
[957] PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the Period 18th – 24th September 1969'].
[958] Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 45.
[959] PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 [Press Release, 26 September 1969].

line, but reportedly no violent incidents took place.[960] The CCDC asserted that the actions of the crowd from the Shankill amounted to a message of "'We will get you all eventually'" directed towards the Catholics.[961] This interpretation by nationalists of the message coming from the Shankill appears to have corroborated their existing concern of the loyalist intent to execute a 'pogrom' against the Catholic community.

The following evening, on Friday September 26th, a single gunshot was recorded, but did not result in any injuries as the street was empty at that time.[962] A security forces report described the evening of September 26th-27th as "comparatively quiet in Belfast".[963] A 'quiet' that would prove to be the lull before the storm. Subsequently, beginning in the afternoon on September 27th, violence occurred close by Coates Street just outside the Unity Flats when a crowd, on their way back from watching a football match, engaged in a fight that swiftly morphed into a riot directed at the security forces in the area, which persisted until the early morning hours of the next day.[964] As a result of the violence an estimated forty-one arrests were made, while forty-eight soldiers and fifty-four police members were injured.[965] Thus, tensions in the immediate vicinity of Coates Street were already running high before the violence subsequently escalated as the fateful weekend arrived.

Furthermore, the anniversary of the signing of the Covenant came at a rather unfortunate time. In particular, on September 27th the Northern Irish politician William

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[960] PRONI, D2560/4/7.
[961] Ibid.
[962] Ibid.
[963] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Report by Chiefs of Staff Duty Officer 261800A to 290830A', 29 September 1969].
[964] Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 45.; Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 2 (Appendices)*, 'Map (M) Main Riot Areas of Belfast'.
[965] Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 45.

Craig, gave a speech at an event organized by the Ulster Loyalist Association (ULA)[966] to celebrate the 1912 Ulster Covenant signing,[967] which appears to have played a pivotal role in the occurrence of violence at the peace line.[968] The *Citizen Press* later drew a direct link between Craig's speech and the violence, stating: "[t]he Coates Street mini-pogrom started as a result Craig's "great flame" speech in the Ulster Hall on Covenant Day".[969] Speaking to an audience of approximately 2,000 people, amidst intercommunal turmoil in the city of Belfast, Craig drew directly upon the events of 1912, as he alluded to the present-day potential need for the unionist cause to pick up arms to defend their interests.[970] The very contents of his speech was geared toward rallying his fellow unionists.[971] As part of his speech, Craig expressed disapproval both of the army's assumption of responsibility for security, and of the Stormont government's approach to 'law and order' in the region more broadly.[972] Craig even focused his critique directly on the new peace line, calling for its removal.[973] In particular, he asserted that the presence of the peace line risked exacerbating the potential for further incidents of rioting in the city.[974] He appeared to favor patrols conducted together by the army and the police rather than the use of the peace line.[975]

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[966] For further information regarding the UPA, see the Glossary.
[967] William Craig reportedly made his plan to hold the rally public shortly before the event. See: PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the Period 18th – 24th September 1969'].
[968] PRONI, D2560/4/7; *TT*, 29 September 1969; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 45.
[969] PRONI, D2560/1/10.
[970] *TT*, 29 September 1969; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 45.
[971] *TT*, 29 September 1969; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 45.
[972] *TT*, 29 September 1969; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 45.
[973] *TT*, 29 September 1969; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 45.
[974] *TT*, 29 September 1969.
[975] Ibid.; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 45.

Craig identified the threat to 'law and order' as emanating directly from the Catholic territory, which he felt was insufficiently addressed by the peace line as it served, in his eyes, to contain and protect the Catholic community.

Hours later rioting did again occur in Belfast in the immediate vicinity of the peace line. In the very early morning of September 28th, violence erupted along the flashpoint between the Protestant and Catholic communities at the Coates Street portion of the peace line.[976] The Protestant crowd gathered at the peace line managed to breach the barrier and gain access to the Catholic territory in Coates Street by 1.00am.[977] The crowd appears to have initially congregated in Townsend Street before they then emerged in Sackville Street where a group of Protestants first began attempts to breach the peace line in Sackville Street at 12:35am.[978] It is reported that they were able to cut through the wire of the peace line to gain access to Coates Street.[979] When the Protestant crowd broke through the peace line they were armed with petrol bombs, throwing them at both the Catholic houses and the troops.[980] Homes belonging to members of the Catholic community were destroyed by the fires set during the attack from the Protestant crowd. The use of petrol bombs at Coates Street bears a striking resemblance to the tactics used by a Protestant mob to level Bombay Street just a month previously.[981]

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[976] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland']; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 45.
[977] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Report by Chiefs of Staff Duty Officer 261800A to 290830A', 29 September 1969].
[978] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Confidential Message Defence Operations Centre MOD', 28 September 1969], ['Report by Chiefs of Staff Duty Officer 261800A to 290830A', 29 September 1969].
[979] PRONI, D2560/4/7.
[980] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Confidential Message Defence Operations Centre MOD', 28 September 1969], ['Report by Chiefs of Staff Duty Officer 261800A to 290830A', 29 September 1969].
[981] Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 39.; Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume* 1, 196-209.

It appears that the damaged houses were at the top end of Coates Street.[982] The precise number of Catholic homes damaged during the violence in Coates Street has been referred to as three, four and five.[983] The CCDC specifically claimed that four families were rendered homeless due to the damage sustained to their homes.[984] In response to the violence, the troops employed CS gas against the crowd of Protestants and members of the RUC were also reportedly present on the scene.[985] As the disturbances continued after 1.00am, the Protestant crowd on the north side of the peace line grew, while a significant number of Catholics were in the vicinity of Coates Street at about 2.00am.[986] Nearby, at Hastings Street, the RUC Station came under attack from a crowd of Catholics.[987] Meanwhile, the crowd of Protestants soon thereafter directed their violence towards the nearby Unity Flats.[988] Despite the late hour the violence managed to draw significant crowds from both sides of the divide at Coates Street. Furthermore, the violence in Coates Street, while localized and limited to a specific area along 'the Orange-Green line', appears to have contributed to the heightening of tensions between the opposing communities across the city with disturbances also occurring in other areas of the city that same weekend.[989] The eruption of violence at the peace line spread the

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[982] PRONI, D2560/4/7; *AEE*, 29 September 1969.
[983] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland']; NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Confidential Message Defence Operations Centre MOD', 28 September 1969]; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the Period 25th September – 1st October 1969']; PRONI, D2560/4/7; *AEE*, 29 September 1969; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 45.; Óg Ó Fearghail, *Law (?) and Orders*, 6.
[984] PRONI, D2560/4/7.
[985] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Report by Chiefs of Staff Duty Officer 261800A to 290830A', 29 September 1969]; PRONI, D2560/4/7.
[986] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Report by Chiefs of Staff Duty Officer 261800A to 290830A', 29 September 1969].
[987] Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 45.; Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 2 (Appendices)*, 'Map (M) Main Riot Areas of Belfast'.
[988] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Report by Chiefs of Staff Duty Officer 261800A to 290830A', 29 September 1969].
[989] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland']; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the Period 25th September – 1st October 1969']; NA, DEFE

existing resources of both the police and the army rather thin as they attempted to address the emerging disturbances.[990]

Although the available evidence does not directly imply that a precise, predetermined plan to breach the peace line existed, it does suggest that there was an intent from the Protestant side to engage in violence directed toward the Catholic community. For instance, when the Protestant crowd broke through the peace line they had to cut through the barrier and they came armed with petrol bombs,[991] which both suggest a certain level of preparation. The CCDC appeared under the impression at the time, according to the army, that "the Protestants were arming themselves and intended to have a go".[992] Meanwhile, the army reported that there seemed to be "a certain amount of stirring up of the situation is going on in the Shankill area".[993] The violence occurred in a tense atmosphere where elements from both communities were, that very evening, in the words of HQNI, "determined to have a go".[994] The occurrence of this outbreak of intercommunal violence in the early morning hours of a Sunday suggests that drink-fueled spontaneity may have played a role in the outbreak of violence.[995]

Therefore, it is possible to infer that the precise intent of the Protestant crowd that breached the peace line could have been any one or a combination of factors. First, the breach of the peace line may have been intended to enhance the existing buffer zone

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13/988 ['Report by Chiefs of Staff Duty Officer 261800A to 290830A', 29 September 1969]; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 45-46.

[990] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Report by Chiefs of Staff Duty Officer 261800A to 290830A', 29 September 1969].

[991] PRONI, D2560/4/7; NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Report by Chiefs of Staff Duty Officer 261800A to 290830A', 29 September 1969], ['Confidential Message Defence Operations Centre MOD', 28 September 1969].

[992] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Report by Chiefs of Staff Duty Officer 261800A to 290830A', 29 September 1969].

[993] Ibid.

[994] Ibid.

[995] Callaghan believed that a later outburst of violence following the announcement of the Hunt Report was influenced by alcohol as well. See: Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 111.

between the two sides by pushing the Catholics back from the line or to drive the Catholic inhabitants of Coates Street out. Given the heightened sense of threat experienced by the adjacent loyalist outcrop around Brown Square, the creation of an expanded buffer zone, albeit of burnt out buildings, was one way to render this portion of Protestant territory more secure as the violence continued. Second, the violence at Coates Street may have also been designed, even more simply, to send a menacing message to the Catholic community. A military map of the area as of October 1, 1969, notes that the five homes on the Catholic side of Coates Street closest to the Sackville Street junction remained unoccupied months later as they had been burnt out.[996] This would suggest that an enhanced buffer zone had indeed been created between the two sides and that the menacing message had been received by the Catholic community. The repetition of the use of petrol bombs further suggests a loyalist intent to burn the Catholics out of Coates Street as they had done successfully just a month previously in nearby Bombay Street.[997] Whatever the intent, the breach of the peace line at Coates Street, it did succeed in rupturing the fragile trust, particularly from the Catholic community, in the army's assurances of security.

As a direct result of the violence on September 28th at Coates Street, approximately fifty barricades were swiftly built by the Catholic community in the immediate vicinity of the peace line itself.[998] The precise timing of the construction of

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[996] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 [Six maps entitled 'Section of Belfast Shewing Proposed Peace Zone When Completed', c.December 1969].
[997] Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 39.; Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 2 (Appendices)*, 'Map (M) Main Riot Areas of Belfast'.
[998] NA, DEFE 13/988 [MOD Defence Operations Centre Confidential Message, 28 September 1969], ['Report by Chiefs of Staff Duty Officer 261800A to 290830A', 29 September 1969], ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee held at 5.30p.m. on Monday, 29th September, 1969, in Stormont Castle']; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 45.

the barricades by the Catholic community appears to have begun just after 3.05am.[999] The construction of new barricades approximately two hours after the breach of the peace line also indicates that the Catholic community had immediately lost confidence in the army's ability to provide them with adequate security. The Catholic community was able to muster swiftly the men and materials to build their own lines of defence, indicating that even prior to the violence the community remained wary of the official security provisions. The new barricades were thrown up in a context of mayhem and fear as intercommunal violence raged in the early morning hours along the dividing line between the two communities.

Despite the swift construction of new Catholic community barricades, government figures did not view their construction as significant compared to the use of community barricades earlier that same autumn. For example, Oliver Wright described the construction of barricades in response to the violence at Coates Street "as a sort of reflex action".[1000] When later reflecting on the events of that same autumn, Callaghan noted that "whenever there was any fresh outbreak of rioting at a later date, they [the community barricades] tended to reappear".[1001] Furthermore, the community barricades present in Belfast after the Coates Street incident were described by Oliver Wright as "much thinner" than they had been in August 1969.[1002] Given that the new community barricades were swiftly thrown up, in the middle of the night, it is understandable that these barricades would have been 'thin' compared to their predecessors. The seemingly

[999] NA, DEFE 13/988 [MOD Defence Operations Centre Confidential Message, 28 September 1969], ['Report by Chiefs of Staff Duty Officer 261800A to 290830A', 29 September 1969], ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee held at 5.30p.m. on Monday, 29th September, 1969, in Stormont Castle'].
[1000] NA, CJ 3/18 [letter from Oliver Wright to the Home Office, 1 October 1969].
[1001] Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 104-105.
[1002] NA, CJ 3/18 [letter from Oliver Wright to the Home Office, 1 October 1969].

blasé comments by both Callaghan and Wright indicate London's detachment from the actual situation on the ground in Belfast. This detachment may have led to politicians at the time failing to grasp the true, and devastating, impact of the violence at Coates Street, which played a pivotal role in not only further cementing the divide between the two communities, but also setting the stage for the emergence of a permanent wall between the two sides.

The next day the extent of the physical damage in Coates Street, as a result of the breach of the peace line, came to light as the army set about cleaning up the mess left behind by the violence.[1003] Meanwhile, violence continued in the city on the evening of September 28th, with the army responding in an attempt to address the disturbances.[1004] The presence of troops around the Coates Street area was enhanced that evening and a spokesman for the army described the area as "'bubbling with tension'".[1005] The tensions present on the streets of Belfast, as observed by the army, immediately after the violence at Coates Street offers a different assessment of the situation than the one put forward by Oliver Wright. Eventually, in the very early hours of September 29th the violence appears to have dissipated.[1006] Nevertheless, the reverberations of the weekend's violence would continue long after the rioting ceased.

The breach of the peace line at Coates Street dealt a serious blow to the British Army's assurances of security, which were crucial to the successful removal of the barricades in Belfast. In the aftermath of the violence in Coates Street, the CCDC asserted that the events resulted in a situation where "[t]he military guarantee of adequate

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[1003] *TT*, 29 September 1969.
[1004] Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 46. In 1969, Townsend Street intersected with Coates Street. See: IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'].
[1005] *AEE*, 29 September 1969.
[1006] Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 46.

protection was very severely tested".[1007] An even later account of the Coates Street incident in a CCDC publication directly accused the army of inaction, stating that "[d]espite these specific guarantees the army, on 28 September, stood by when a loyalist mob breached the 'Peace Line' and burnt five Catholic homes in Coates Street".[1008] Moreover, at the time, a resident of the nearby Unity Flats reportedly asserted that the barricades around Unity Flats would never be removed, stating: "'Without our barricades, this would be a repetition of Coates Street on a larger scale'".[1009] Thus, the breach of the peace line not only demonstrated the apparent fragility of the army's security provision, but also provided those behind the barricades with justification for the maintenance of the barricades elsewhere in Belfast, fearing a repeat of the violence at Coates Street if they removed their own barriers.

The disastrous consequences of the incident at Coates Street, particularly for the maintenance of the fragile trust in the security forces from amongst the Catholic community, appears to have been glossed over by the political leadership in London. While Callaghan did comment on the events in Coates Street the following day during a conference of the Labour party in Brighton, England,[1010] his own memoirs made no mention of the events in Coates Street when discussing his remarks in Brighton. Instead, he emphasized his message to the Catholic community "to make a gesture of reconciliation towards the Protestant majority".[1011] The timing of these remarks given the heightened tensions between the two communities in Belfast was less than ideal. Asking the Catholic community to reconcile with the Protestant community after the

[1007] PRONI, D2560/4/7.
[1008] Óg Ó Fearghail, *Law (?) and Orders*, 6.
[1009] PRONI, D2560/4/7.
[1010] *ILN*, 4 October 1969.
[1011] Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 106.

violence at Coates Street, demonstrates that London still did not sufficiently grasp the importance of the intercommunal dynamics along the streets of Belfast in September 1969. In Wilson's memoirs he described the Labour conference as "markedly more relaxed and friendlier than in previous years", which he attributed to a number of factors, including "Callaghan's handling of the Northern Ireland problem".[1012] Meanwhile, Healey noted in his respective memoirs that "[f]rom the autumn of 1969 even Northern Ireland receded into the background, as the Government became increasingly preoccupied with the need to face the electorate again".[1013] Callaghan's, Healey's and Wilson's recollections all suggest a serious detachment on the part of the government in London to the situation on the ground in Belfast in the early autumn.

For its part, the British Army did take swift action in response to the incident at Coates Streets. The violence of the early morning hours on September 28th had required the 39th Infantry Brigade to send its remaining reserves to address the situation in the city.[1014] This, in itself, succinctly demonstrated the resource constraints under which the army was operating, which had influenced the construction of the peace line in the first place. Following the violence at Coates Street, the decision was taken at HQNI to enhance the existing peace line by both inserting troops directly onto the streets and constructing additional barriers in some spots.[1015] The decision to strengthen the peace line demonstrates that the army was aware of the importance of the peace line not only to their own ability to address security concerns in the city, but also to the ongoing discussions over community barricade removal in Belfast.

[1012] Wilson, *The Labour Government 1964-1970*, 702-703.
[1013] Healey, *The Time of My Life*, 343.
[1014] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Report by Chiefs of Staff Duty Officer 261800A to 290830A', 29 September 1969].
[1015] Ibid.; PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the Period 25th September – 1st October 1969'].

Given the shortage of troops in the city and in direct response to the violence at the peace line, an additional 100 marines from the 41 Commando Royal Marines came to Belfast to bolster the existing army.[1016] The 41 Commando was brought to Belfast with the specific task of establishing the peace line and was stationed in Belfast from September 28, 1969 to November 10, 1969.[1017] The 41 Commando was a Spearhead Battalion, which denotes that its deployment constituted a limited tour for emergencies,[1018] indicating the seriousness with which the army viewed the incident at Coates Street. A further 500 troops arrived in Belfast the very next day as well.[1019] The introduction of the reinforcements brought the number of troops in Northern Ireland to only 7,600.[1020] The meager number of reinforcements not only underlines the limited resources at the disposal of the army in September 1969, but also reflects the competing priorities of the government, which oversaw the existing army assignments across the world, the largest of which was the British Army of the Rhine.[1021]

The reinforcement of the peace line was equally swift and on September 29th, the army completed the construction of the now reinforced peace line at Coates Street.[1022] Army engineers built the fortified peace line from corrugated sheets of iron that reached 10ft high and were 3ft in width, which were attached to a steel frame that was fixed

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[1016] Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 45-46.; *AEE*, 29 September 1969; *APJ*, 29 September 1969; *CET*, 29 September 1969; *TBP*, 29 September 1969.
[1017] Dewar, *The British Army in Northern Ireland*, 44.
[1018] Ibid.
[1019] *CET*, 29 September 1969; *TBP*, 29 September 1969.
[1020] PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the Period 25th September – 1st October 1969'].
[1021] For a concise discussion of the competing commitments of the British Army and the related division of labor among the 200,000 troops available in 1969, see: Charters, *Whose Mission, Whose Orders?*, 28-29.
[1022] Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 46.; *AEE*, 29 September 1969; *CET*, 29 September 1969.

directly into the street.[1023] The reinforced barrier appears to have replaced the barbed wire barricade that had previously sat where Coates Street and Sackville street met.[1024] A spokesman for the army explained this strengthening of the peace line by stating:

> "'It was decided to strengthen the peace line where it was breached on Saturday night. At this point security is a particular problem because the two communities are so close together'".[1025]

The swift strengthening of the peace line was an abrupt shift from the preliminary discussions that had taken place just days earlier on September 25th, in which the GOC had stated that while the military barricades in the nearby vicinity of Townsend Street remained necessary, their removal would occur when the conditions in the area were more safe.[1026] In the aftermath of the Coates Street incident it was clear that tensions between the two sides remained high, particularly along the dividing line.

After the Coates Street incident, the army continued to maintain a presence at the Coates Street portion of the peace line as the conflict continued towards the end of 1969.[1027] Just over a week after the violence at Coates Street, this portion of the peace line was described as "the most heavily-guarded point" along the barrier.[1028] Accounts of this part of the peace line described it as both 10ft and 15ft high.[1029] The barrier was built such that the army could patrol on the barrier itself.[1030] The visual separation of the communities on either side of the diving line appeared reminiscent of the use of the 1920s

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[1023] Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 46.; *AEE*, 29 September 1969; *CET*, 29 September 1969.
[1024] Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 46.; *AEE*, 29 September 1969; *CET*, 29 September 1969.
[1025] *AEE*, 29 September 1969; *CET*, 29 September 1969.
[1026] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held at 5.30p.m. on Thursday, 25th September, in Stormont Castle'].
[1027] *TBP*, 24 October 1969.
[1028] *TBP*, 8 October 1969.
[1029] Ibid.
[1030] Ibid.

barriers in east Belfast. The Shadow Home Secretary, Quintin Hogg, even visited the peace line at Coates Street just over a week after the violent incident,[1031] demonstrating the pivotal position of this particular street along the dividing line in Belfast.

In the aftermath of the Coates Street incident the army appears to have placed greater emphasis on the viability of separating the two communities in order to ensure security in the city. For example, in plans for a 'Proposed Peace Zone', it seems that the army was examining the possibility of demolishing not only the buildings in the adjacent streets around Coates Street, but Coates Street itself.[1032] This proposal for the demolition of Coates Street suggests that the army recognized the volatility of this area and felt that further separation would help to ensure peace and security between the two communities. A *Citizen Press* article from the middle of October 1969 suggests that the military was in fact exploring such an option in the immediate aftermath of the violence at Coates Street.[1033] However, according to the *Citizen Press*, this type of approach was reportedly not well received within the Catholic community:

> "In the event of the situation getting out of hand the military could be forced into a position where the only way to stop the spread of rioting would be to create a devastated "no-man's land" between trouble spots […] At the height of the trouble the military approached the leaders of the people in the Coates Street area and suggested to them that the remaining houses in the street should be demolished in order to create a buffer zone between Catholic and Protestant areas. This plan was, understandably enough, treated with the contempt which it deserved".[1034]

In addition to the physical changes suggested and made to the Coates Street portion of the peace line after the incident at the end of September, it also became the site of a

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[1031] Ibid.
[1032] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 [Six maps entitled 'Section of Belfast Shewing Proposed Peace Zone When Completed', c.December 1969].
[1033] PRONI, D2560/1/10.
[1034] Ibid.

holiday themed good relations initiative in December 1969.[1035] The Ministry of Agriculture donated a Christmas tree, which the army placed at the corner of Coates Street and Townsend Street.[1036] While the placement of the Christmas tree was certainly symbolic of the potential for the two sides to overcome their divisions, the barriers, both tangible and intangible, continued to harden in Belfast.

The attack on the peace line at Coates Street in 1969 was largely reminiscent of the violence at the barriers along Newtownards Road in the early 1920s. However, in 1969, the strengthening of the peace line took place much more swiftly in response to a single, albeit significant, instance of communal violence. The decision to augment security at the peace line in the immediate aftermath of a violent incident in 1969 demonstrates that this policy of 'security through separation' was no longer an auxiliary measure for authorities, as it had been in the 1920s and 1935-36, but rather a key aspect of the security apparatus in the city. Furthermore, the patterns and parallels with the previous iterations of the peace line are in themselves significant. For instance, similar to its predecessors, this barrier transformed from a permeable barbed wire barricade, into a solid wall, which prevented the two sides from seeing one another. In addition, as with the incident at nearby Dover Street, just a few weeks earlier, the authorities appeared to interpret the emergence of violence as a sign that the two communities could not live together, despite the fact that the two communities, up until the summer of 1969, had been living side by side in relative peace for some time. The reaction on the part of the authorities to address the short-term, surface level manifestations of division with a policy of 'security through separation' left a lasting legacy on the streets of Belfast.

[1035] *TBP*, 8 December 1969; *TT*, 8 December 1969.
[1036] *TBP*, 8 December 1969; *TT*, 8 December 1969. In addition to the Christmas tree, a helicopter flew above the peace line at Christmas time in 1969 playing carols. See: *BT*, 2 March 1971.

Building Barriers

The significance of the Coates Street turning point has not been widely appreciated.[1037] However, it demonstrates the crucial influence that events at the local level in Belfast had on broader policy and approaches to security at the start of the Troubles, amidst the divided political context in Northern Ireland. As demonstrated in the previous chapters, the British Army's efforts to remove the barricades in the autumn of 1969 relied on a policy of cooperation, persuasion and negotiation,[1038] while instilling confidence in the local population that their security concerns would be adequately addressed.[1039] Members of the Catholic community in Belfast were not initially convinced of the army's ability to provide security once the barricades were removed.[1040] Consequently, the success of negotiations to remove the barricades depended largely on the British Army's ability to put a stop to the intercommunal violence that had prompted their construction in the first place. The breach of the peace line at Coates Street on September 28th put the British Army's ability to provide security to all parties in Belfast to the test within weeks of the implementation of the new peace line policy.[1041] This incident, while localized to a specific street in Belfast, proved to be pivotal in the evolution of the overarching peace line policy in the city. This section of the chapter

[1037] When the events at Coates Street are mentioned directly, or even just alluded to indirectly in discussions over the weekend's disturbances more broadly, in the existing literature it tends to be as part of a wider commentary on another aspect of the violence in Northern Ireland at that time. For examples, see: Hamill, *Pig in the Middle*, 27-28; Van Der Bijl, *Operation Banner*, 22.
[1038] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland']; IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/4 ['Address to Belfast City Council'], ['Transcript This Week – "Five Long Years" Interview with General Sir Ian Freeland' by Thames Television]; NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Notes of Discussions Between the Defence Secretary and the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland on Thursday, 18th September; & Mr. Porter, Minister of Home Affairs and Mr. Faulkner, Minister of Development on Friday, 19th September, 1969']; *LAT*, 11 September 1969; *TT*, 15 September 1969; Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 101.
[1039] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Narrative of Events: 29 August – 14 September, 1969']; Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 101.
[1040] *LAT*, 11 September 1969.
[1041] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Report by Chiefs of Staff Duty Officer 261800A to 290830A', 29 September 1969].

situates the incident at Coates Street within the army's efforts to implement the peace line policy and remove community barricades as the intercommunal conflict persisted into the autumn of 1969.

The successful removal of the community barricades, particularly in the predominately Catholic areas of the city, was predicated on diminishing fears through the assured provision of security by the army. It often took time to build this all important trust within communities that the army would in fact uphold their end of the deal. A key part of instilling confidence amongst the city's residents for the successful removal of the community barricades was the provision of security,[1042] in which the peace line in particular played a key role.[1043] Even as the peace line was in the process of being built, members of the Catholic community asserted their belief that without their own barricades they would be left unprotected in their homes, despite the presence of the army.[1044] The words of an unnamed vigilante interviewed in September 1969, demonstrated the precarious situation present on the streets of Belfast at that time:

> "'If the Army show that they cannot protect us adequately they will go up again. We are taking them at their word and cooperating with them, but one small incident could spark things off again'".[1045]

The violence at Coates Street at the end of September 1969 did just that, resulting in not only a physical breach of the military defences, but a breach in the carefully built community trust and confidence in the security forces.

The army's existing approach to the removal of the community barricades, embodied in the peace line policy, had been swiftly improvised to build community level

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[1042] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events', 9 September 1969], ['Record of Conversation with Cardinal Conway', 10 September 1969].
[1043] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events', 9 September 1969], ['Londonderry', 25 September 1969]; *TBP*, 10 September 1969; *TT*, 11 September 1969; *LAT*, 11 September 1969.
[1044] Ibid.
[1045] *TT*, 18 September 1969.

confidence in the army and its ability to provide security. Amidst the political turmoil in the early autumn of 1969, the army sought to proceed with a gradual 'outside in' approach to the removal of the barricades, which leant heavily on the successful creation of the peace line to smooth the process of barricade removal in both its immediate vicinity and across the city.[1046] It appears that the army hoped to build confidence among community members by tackling the less sensitive barricaded areas first before proceeding with the more contentious areas of the city.[1047] However, communities were wary to dismantle their own barricades until they could be sure that the army's peace line provided sufficient security. For example, community members in one area along the peace line reportedly stated the following in response to army efforts to remove community barriers near the peace line: "'You put up your Army barricades, but ours stay until we are satisfied they are strong enough'".[1048] Consequently, much rested on the ability of the peace line to provide adequate security on both sides of the divide.

The army's strategy to encourage the voluntary removal of the community barricades was not only consistent with its previous practices with regards to community barricades earlier in its deployment,[1049] but also provided an opportunity for the army to build trust with the barricaded communities. In the words of Oliver Wright, the army had not planned "to start a crash programme at dead of night".[1050] Both the Northern Irish government and the British Army placed emphasis on encouraging communities to

[1046] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events', 9 September 1969], ['Narrative of Events: 29 August – 14 September, 1969'], ['Northern Ireland: Narrative of Events, Tuesday 16 September 1969'], ['Record of Conversation with Cardinal Conway', 10 September 1969]; *TDT*, 10 September 1969; *CET*, 11 September 1969; *DE*, 11 September 1969; *TT*, 11 September 1969.
[1047] *CET*, 11 September 1969.
[1048] *DE*, 11 September 1969.
[1049] *TT*, 21 August 1969.
[1050] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Operation "Peace Line" Narrative of Events', 9 September 1969].

remove barricades voluntarily.[1051] From London's political perspective, the community barricades appear to have been viewed as belonging to two distinct categories: barricades built as a means of security and barricades built in protest.[1052] In particular, Callaghan equated the barricades built for security purposes largely with the Catholic community barriers and the barricades built in protest with the Protestant community barriers.[1053] Callaghan later noted that the two types of barricades were tackled differently with those built for security purposes approached with a policy of persuasion, while those built for protest purposes were categorically viewed as needing to be removed.[1054] The voluntary removal of barricades on all sides was pivotal to maintain a sense of calm on the streets of Belfast. However, as shown in Chapters II and III, political interests did not always align perfectly with the implementation of a sensitive security operation.

It is clear that the GOC was aware that the optics of the army single-handedly demolishing barricades without first engaging with the residents behind them would be detrimental to their efforts to remove all the barricades in Belfast,[1055] which in turn risked the success of the army's broader task of restoring order in Northern Ireland. As explored in Chapter II, the army endured pushback against the strategy, particularly concerning the direct engagement of troops through negotiations with the organizations behind the barricades. However, Dennis Healey, the Defence Secretary himself, defended the troops noting "that the Army had been vindicated in getting the barricades down without bloodshed".[1056] The emphasis on persuasive negotiation over the use of force was seen

[1051] Ibid.; *APJ*, 10 September 1969; *TBP*, 11 September 1969; *TT*, 11 September 1969.
[1052] Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 101.
[1053] Ibid.
[1054] Ibid.
[1055] *BNL*, 9 September 1969.
[1056] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Notes of Discussions Between the Defence Secretary and the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland on Thursday, 18th September; & Mr. Porter, Minister of Home Affairs and Mr. Faulkner, Minister of Development on Friday, 19th September, 1969'].

by Healey as integral in preventing an escalation of violence.[1057] Furthermore, during his visit to Northern Ireland in the middle of September 1969, shortly after the initial completion of the peace line, Healey registered his approval of the army's approach to the security situation, noting that right from the troops on the ground all the way up to the leadership, the army had espoused a diplomatic and practical approach to the situation at hand.[1058] Despite periodic setbacks, the army had continued with their gradual efforts to facilitate the removal of the barricades in Belfast in the days after the construction of the peace line.[1059]

The process of barricade removal itself was a major challenge for the security forces and especially the army since they were tasked with ensuring peace in the city. When the new measures were announced at the start of September, discussions had swirled around concerns that the existing number of troops in the region would be insufficient not only to remove the barricades, but also to guarantee that their removal was undertaken in a peaceful manner.[1060] As seen, the insufficient number of troops present in Belfast for this type of operation was painfully evident in early September when, over the course of one day, the removal of a limited number of barricades in the city necessitated approximately one sixth of the entire force deployed in Northern Ireland at that time.[1061]

[1057] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Transcript of S of S Press Conference - 8p.m. Aldergrove, Friday, 19 September 1969'].
[1058] PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/1 ['Northern Ireland: Political Summary for the Period 18th September – 24th September 1969'].
[1059] For example, see: NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Report by Chiefs of Staff Duty Officer 171800A to 180830A', 18 September 1969]; *TT*, 17 September 1969.
[1060] *TBP*, 11 September 1969; *DM*, 11 September 1969.
[1061] Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 43.

The incident at Coates Street served to fuel the argument that there were not enough troops present in the city to address the intercommunal disturbances.[1062] Since the start of the army's deployment observers had expressed the concern that the number of troops was insufficient to address the violence. For instance, in the days following the initial deployment of army, and despite the arrival of reinforcements,[1063] the concern arose that there were insufficient numbers of troops in the city to address the disturbances across the city.[1064] The army leadership identified the need for further troops within less than twenty-four hours of the initial deployment and although a request for additional troops was granted, the numbers remained staggeringly low.[1065] Moreover, the images of troops, armed with bayonets, some even in camouflage gear with leaves on their helmets, positioned between communities,[1066] ominously foreshadowed the extent to which the abnormal would soon become normal in Belfast.

In the aftermath of the Coates Street incident the insufficient number of troops was painfully evident. Some informed observers at the time thought the military looked dangerously under-resourced and over-stretched. As one journalist remarked: "In such a situation it is folly to deploy too few men".[1067] While it is unclear if this was a widely held perception at the time, the inclusion of such an argument in a newspaper report suggests that it was at least a reasonably accepted perception among observers of the violence. In addition, the incident at Coates Street demonstrated to observers the vulnerability of the army's security assurances, with one newspaper report noting that it

[1062] For example, see: *TT*, 29 September 1969.
[1063] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland']; Hamill, *Pig in the Middle*, 18.
[1064] *TT*, 20 August 1969.
[1065] Dewar, *The British Army in Northern Ireland*, 33;37.
[1066] *TT*, 16 August 1969; Sanders and Wood, *Times of Troubles*, 4.; RTÉ, 'Belfast Burns 1969'.
[1067] *TT*, 29 September 1969.

took only a crowd, not committed terrorists, to break the "precarious trust".[1068] The limited number of troops not only served to constrain the army's ability to ensure security, but also limited the available options, beyond the peace line policy, for the army to address the mounting intercommunal violence. The incident at Coates Street served to underscore that the decision makers in London had misjudged the challenge posed by the situation in Northern Ireland by deploying only a limited number of troops in August. While additional troops were sent to Northern Ireland after the violence in Coates Street, the low numbers suggest that once again the authorities had failed to grasp the significance of the events on the ground in Belfast.

Not only was the army tasked with ensuring security in the city, which, as shown by the Coates Street incident, remained volatile, they also had to do so whilst working to dismantle the community barricades.[1069] The army tended to tackle the barricades in the predominately Catholic areas, while the RUC worked to dismantle the barricades in the predominately Protestant areas of the city.[1070] The related strain on the troops was apparent prior to the Coates Street incident. For instance, within a couple weeks of the implementation of the new measures, the Secretary of State for Defence, himself recognized the extent to which the barricade removal had placed a burden on the army.[1071] The troops had to remove barricades, while maintaining an overt and aware presence in the city to prevent further disorder.[1072] Consequently, in order to convince

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[1068] Ibid.
[1069] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Transcript of S of S Press Conference - 8p.m. Aldergrove, Friday, 19 September 1969'].
[1070] *TT*, 18 September 1969.; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 44.
[1071] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Transcript of S of S Press Conference - 8p.m. Aldergrove, Friday, 19 September 1969'].
[1072] *TT*, 18 September 1969.

local populations that they would be secure once the barricades were removed, there had been an increase in the number of troops visibly present in communities.[1073]

The peace line itself still required the presence of troops as well as in the immediate surrounding area.[1074] During the early weeks of the implementation of the barricade removal policy, plans were devised to put shelters for the troops in place along the peace line.[1075] The GOC later noted that a troop presence along the peace line was imperative for security during the early years of the conflict.[1076] While the British government viewed the burden on the troops in September 1969 as of a short-term nature, it was still anticipated "to put a strain on the forces".[1077] When the Coates Street peace line was overrun, the perceived 'strain' appeared all the more detrimental to the army's security efforts.

In the initial peace line policy it had been acknowledged that there would perhaps be instances where the army would have to build their own barricades to replace the community barricades.[1078] Furthermore, the GOC had asserted this option publicly, as part of the efforts to remove the community barricades in the city, in early September.[1079] The option to have the army construct the military barriers appeared, early on, to be viewed as something that would only be utilized in situations where it was viewed as "necessary" by the community.[1080] This component of the policy swiftly came to fruition

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[1073] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Transcript of S of S Press Conference - 8p.m. Aldergrove, Friday, 19 September 1969'].
[1074] *TT*, 18 September 1969; *ILN*, 20 September 1969.
[1075] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held at 5.30p.m. on Monday, 22nd September, 1969, in Stormont Castle'].
[1076] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/4 ['Comments by Lieutenant-General Sir Ian Freeland on the Galley Proofs of a Penguin Book entitled "Ulster" by the *Sunday Times* Insight Team'].
[1077] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Transcript of S of S Press Conference - 8p.m. Aldergrove, Friday, 19 September 1969'].
[1078] PRONI, HA/32/3/2 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held on Tuesday, 9th September, 1969, at Stormont Castle'].
[1079] *BNL*, 9 September 1969.
[1080] *AEE*, 13 September 1969.

as the process of barricade removal proceeded, again a policy decision largely influenced by the limited number of resources available to the army at that time.

The replacement of community barricades with military barricades appears to have tended to occur in situations where communities wanted further assurances of security.[1081] Earlier in their deployment the army had, on occasion, replaced community barricades with their own barriers. For example, the army removed city buses that had been coopted into community barricades and put in place army barriers at the end of August.[1082] This approach continued after the construction of the peace line. For instance, in the midst of the big push to remove the community barricades, on September 18th community members in the 'No-Go land'[1083] of Belfast requested the construction of formidable military barriers to replace three of their own barriers.[1084] The military barriers at this time tended to be built from barbed wire.[1085] However, the community barricades under consideration were reportedly bullet-proof and as such the community members requested equivalent bullet-proof military barricades to be built in their stead.[1086] In response to this request, the Lieutenant-General Sir Victor FitzGeorge Balfour, Vice-Chief of the General Staff's (VCGS),[1087] recommendation was that the army build sandbag barriers instead of using barbed wire, but that the more formidable barriers should not be allowed to prevent complete access to the road.[1088] Although the Secretary of State did agree to the construction of this type of sandbagged barrier, he did

[1081] Ibid.
[1082] *TT*, 21 August 1969.
[1083] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Northern Ireland – Barricades', 18 September 1969].
[1084] Ibid.
[1085] Ibid.
[1086] Ibid.
[1087] Charters, *Whose Mission, Whose Orders?*, 45.
[1088] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Northern Ireland – Barricades', 18 September 1969].

not want this procedure to become commonplace.[1089] Nevertheless, the construction of similar barriers, made of sandbags and even steel walls, were built at the behest of communities elsewhere in Belfast where sniping had been prevalent between the two sides.[1090] The construction of more formidable security barriers in 1969, particularly to prevent sniping, was starkly reminiscent of 1920s barriers in east Belfast. Although in the short-term this practice in 1969 may have augmented the official security apparatus in the city and assuaged some fears, it was not a sustainable solution and contributed to the environment of division in which the subsequent peace walls grew.

While clearly the construction of military barriers was an amenable option for the barricaded communities, still fearful for their security, it was not without its drawbacks. In particular, concern arose in the middle of September that providing reinforced barricades would set a dangerous precedent wherein more requests would be made for similar barriers to replace the barbed wire military barriers across the city.[1091] By mid-October, only a couple of weeks after the Coates Street incident, military barricades stood prominently between communities in areas that had once been riddled with community barriers.[1092] An observer at the time described the military barricades in some areas of the city as follows:

> "portable barriers of neatly-rolled barbed wire, manned by alert troops of a decidedly businesslike bearing. The former civilian barricades—consisting of overturned vehicles, old bedsteads, paving stones and probably a few kitchen sinks—are gone, and the crisp efficiency of the British army is in their place".[1093]

[1089] Ibid.
[1090] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held at 5.30p.m. on Thursday, 18th September, 1969']; PRONI, D2560/1/8.
[1091] The Secretary of State appears to be the one that expressed this concern, see: NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Northern Ireland – Barricades', 18 September 1969].
[1092] *THN*, 12-13 October 1969.
[1093] Ibid.

The reference to the use of portable barricades draws parallels with the use of similar barriers in 1935. While to some in 1969 the military barbed wire barriers signaled "crisp efficiency"[1094] compared to the ad hoc community barricades, the military barricades to others symbolized something much more sinister and sad.[1095] For instance, Hogg stated at the end of his visit to Northern Ireland:

> "'Imagine what it has meant to me to have to see barbed wire in the streets of part of our country, little homes and little shops burnt out with petrol bombs and places on street corners where men were kicked to death'".[1096]

Although built to provide assurances of security, the mere presence of the military barricades between communities reflected the entrenched instability on the streets of Belfast at the start of the Troubles in 1969.

The British Army was thrust into a deployment in their own backyard and despite the conflict occurring within the United Kingdom, they were largely unprepared to address the situation emerging in Northern Ireland. In particular, the colonial influence[1097] on the British Army's approach to the situation in Northern Ireland was symbolic of the uncomfortable position that the army found itself in while policing the streets of Belfast. Although at the political level in London, Northern Ireland may have been viewed as 'a place apart', it was still a part of the United Kingdom. Thus, the army could not engage in the same colonial policing techniques that it had used during previous deployments.[1098] The use of force on the streets of Belfast risked undermining the army's efforts to restore 'law and order'. Furthermore, the location of the conflict meant that it

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[1094] Ibid.
[1095] *TBP*, 8 October 1969.
[1096] Ibid.
[1097] MOD, *Operation Banner*, 5 – 14.
[1098] Earlier in the twentieth century the use of force in the colonies had been an accepted response. See: Townshend, *Britain's Civil Wars*, 34. For a comparative look at British counterinsurgency tactics in Northern Ireland and a selection of colonies, see: Newsinger, *British Counterinsurgency*.

could not be ignored or left to its own devices and each move taken by the army was subject to intense media scrutiny.[1099]

Meanwhile, the government ministers in London were not sufficiently knowledgeable about not only the events in Northern Ireland, but the region itself more broadly.[1100] Prior to 1969 and the outbreak of the Troubles, the government in London had, in the words of Smith, "deliberately insulated itself from the region's affairs".[1101] This self-segregation from the region meant that the government in London simply did not have their own people in place to assess the situation in the region as the violence escalated during the summer of 1969.[1102] This in turn limited the information available to the Cabinet to make an informed decision regarding the government's response to the violence.[1103] Furthermore, the priority in London was on finding a speedy resolution to the disturbances in order to withdraw the army quickly, which contributed to a series of decisions focused on implementing swiftly actionable goals, which only addressed the surface level manifestations of the intercommunal conflict,[1104] of which the peace line policy is a particularly poignant example.

Operation Banner from the very start placed a significant burden on the army's resources.[1105] This strain on the army's resources was apparent to the military leadership early in the army's deployment, with one assessment in December 1969 describing the troops as being "stretched to the extreme".[1106] The army's priority appears to have been

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[1099] Charters, *Whose Mission, Whose Orders?*, 4-5.
[1100] For a concise summary of this situation, see: Smith, *From Violence to Power Sharing*, 77-78.
[1101] Ibid., 77.
[1102] Ibid.
[1103] Ibid.
[1104] Ibid., 78.
[1105] MOD, *Operation Banner*, 7 – 1.
[1106] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['Study Period Held by LT GEN Sir Ian Freeland, KCB, DSO GOC Northern Ireland 5 Dec 69'].

to keep troop levels in Northern Ireland as low as feasible during Operation Banner, particularly due to existing commitments elsewhere, which in turn contributed to straining the army's resources.[1107] An analysis of Operation Banner by the MOD later noted that during the deployment:

> "[t]here was continuous pressure to reduce troop strength, with the result that numbers in the theatre were as low as was considered feasible and most units were worked very hard".[1108]

Thus, it is conceivable that the existence of a limited number of troops on the streets and the strain on military resources presented by the barricade removal and the subsequent patrolling of the city made decisions to swap community barricades for military barricades more acceptable in the autumn of 1969.

A confidential army assessment of the internal security operations in Northern during the final months of 1969 asserted that the new initiatives, such as the peace line, did serve to prevent further violence, which in turn facilitated the security forces' ability to persuade community members on both sides to dismantle the barricades.[1109] Furthermore, a review of the peace lines in 1971 stated the following:

> "We are satisfied that these physical measures have on the whole served their purpose of preventing further major sorties by hostile crowds from one area into another and conserving Security Forces's manpower. They have not achieved an end to disorder, but at least they have ensured that its general form would be that of confrontations between a homogeneous crowd and the security forces, rather than inter-communal disturbances. We accept that the degree of "sealing-off" which has been achieved would have been impossible without these physical measures, and that but for them it would have been extremely difficult to dissuade residents from constantly throwing up their own barricades at moments of tension".[1110]

[1107] This was particularly apparent during the Cold War period. See: MOD, *Operation Banner*, 7 – 1.
[1108] Ibid.
[1109] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'].
[1110] PRONI, DCR/1/111 ['Future Policy on Areas of Confrontation: Second (and Final) Report of the Joint Working Party on Processions etc', April 1971].

The perceived usefulness of the "tougher policy",[1111] in the form of a peace line to separate the opposing sides, appears to have outweighed any potential drawbacks from the perspective of the authorities who were focused on addressing the short-term ramifications of the disturbances.

In light of the demonstrated strain placed on the troops during the removal of the community barricades, it is curious why a substantial increase in the presence of the troops on the streets of Belfast did not occur during the autumn of 1969. The introduction of further troops and increased patrols was certainly an alternative solution to the intercommunal violence that was advocated for at the time. Such requests tended to come from local politicians and community members in Belfast.[1112] However, the government in London appeared under the impression that there were sufficient troops present in Belfast both to address the disorder and to facilitate the removal of the barricades.[1113] In addition, despite the drawbacks of having a limited number of troops on the ground in Belfast, the army itself was wary of an increase in the number of troops in Belfast lest their heightened presence in troubled areas have an adverse effect on the already tense situation.[1114]

It is worth noting that when, just a few years later, the army was again confronted with the large scale construction of community barricades, among other significant security issues, a substantial troop saturation was in fact chosen as a key mechanism to address the situation.[1115] This massive influx of troops was part of the 1972 Operation

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[1111] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland'].
[1112] PRONI, D3233/7/5 [Letter to GOC from V. Simpson, 21 August 1969], [Letter to GOC from V. Simpson, 23 September 1969].
[1113] Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 103-104.
[1114] PRONI, D3233/7/5 [Letter to V. Simpson from Lt Col P.F.A. Sibbald, 26 September 1969].
[1115] For an in-depth look at this period and Operation Motorman more broadly, see: Charters, *Whose Mission, Whose Orders?*, 155-178.

Motorman, which brought the number of troops in Northern Ireland to upwards of 28,000.[1116] This operation constituted "the largest deployment of infantry and infantry-roled troops since the Second World War".[1117] Operation Motorman was successful in its efforts to clear the barricades and reassert control over the 'No-Go' areas, which had once again emerged on the streets of Belfast and Derry/Londonderry.[1118] It is plausible that by this time, as the army's deployment had dragged on beyond the initially hoped for short intervention, the concerns over an increase in troop levels no longer carried the same weight when faced with already dicey relations between the army and communities in Northern Ireland.

The deployment of an initial 6,000 troops at the start of Operation Banner[1119] pales in comparison to the 28,000 troops that were sent to Northern Ireland with the onset of Operation Motorman.[1120] For the remainder of the Troubles, the troop levels never ventured nearly as low as they had been in 1969.[1121] Moreover, for the sake of comparison with previous deployments, when faced with intercommunal violence in the autumn of 1920 the authorities had deployed 9,500 troops stationed in Belfast.[1122] Despite the relative surge in the number of troops in Northern Ireland after the incident at Coates Street in 1969, the troop levels remained limited and thus continued to constrain the army's ability to provide security to the residents of Belfast. The reluctance of the British government to wade too far into the Irish bog at the outset of the Troubles, set the

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[1116] For key context regarding Operation Motorman see the MOD's own assessment: MOD, *Operation Banner*, 2 – 9 - 2 – 11.
[1117] Ibid., 1 – 1.
[1118] Ibid., 2 – 9 - 2 – 11.
[1119] Smith, *From Violence to Power Sharing*, 59.
[1120] MOD, *Operation Banner*, 2 – 9.
[1121] For a useful comparison of the strength of the security forces, both police and army, in Northern Ireland between 1969-1999, see: Neuman, *Britain's Long War*, 189-190.
[1122] Sheehan, 'The British Army in Ireland', 365. By June 1921, the troops levels dropped to 6,608. See: Ibid., 366.

stage for a prolonged military campaign in Northern Ireland, precisely the result that the authorities had attempted to avoid in the first place.

It is worth pausing to reflecting on an additional alternative approach that could have been taken in the autumn of 1969, one that appeared on the horizon until the fateful events of early September that prompted the unionist government to push for more forceful action against the barricades. Instead of the emergence of a policy of 'security through separation', had the army been able to proceed with their initial approach of negotiation, a policy of 'security through confidence' may have instead taken hold on the streets of Belfast. From the outset, as explored in Chapter II, the British Army, with GOC Freeland at its helm, appeared to favor a more nuanced approach to the community barricades in which the army would build confidence and rapport with the barricaded communities in order to facilitate the measured removal of the community barricades.

It is clear, for instance, based on the army's wariness of prompting a militarized response with the introduction of a large number of troops, that its operational preference was to exercise patience over force when faced with the community barricades. However, the competing political interests as well as the fears present both along the city's streets and within the echelons of government prompted the development of the peace line policy instead. While it is unknowable precisely what would have transpired had the army been allowed to continue with an approach of 'security through confidence', given the examples of successful negotiations for the removal of community barricades and the initially relatively warm reception of the army's arrival on both sides of the divide, as explored in Chapter II, it is plausible that restoring confidence behind the barricades as a catalyst for their removal could have emerged as an alternative approach to the situation of insecurity on the streets of Belfast in 1969.

As shown by the incident at Coates Street, an uptick in violence, could swiftly prompt a reconstruction of community barricades in flashpoint areas of Belfast. On October 1, 1969, Oliver Wright described the security situation in Northern Ireland as akin to the game snakes and ladders,[1123] demonstrating the tumultuous environment in which the army was working to remove the community barricades and build their own form of security. Prior to the incident at Coates Street, even as the barricades came down, the tense atmosphere on the streets of Belfast was palpable, with vigilantes refusing to discard barricade materials in the event that they would again be needed for protection.[1124] Images of community barricades in Belfast dated October 12th depict barriers built from cars and miscellaneous household items as well as more robust wood and metal materials.[1125] It is plausible that the Catholic barricades were able to be built so swiftly in the aftermath of the Coates Street incident, precisely because community members had kept such materials on hand in the event that the new army security provisions failed. This reluctance to cede security to the British Army signaled that the troops had yet to gain the complete trust of the barricaded communities, particularly pertaining to issues of security.

Community barricades had continued to emerge in the Falls Road area following the violence at Coates Street and by October 6th there were upwards of 100 community barricades in this part of the city.[1126] However, the swift response of the army to recent riots appears to have assuaged the concerns of some residents, leading to the subsequent voluntary dismantling of these Catholic community barricades.[1127] Jim Sullivan, CCDC

[1123] NA, CJ 3/18 [letter from Oliver Wright to the Home Office, 1 October 1969].
[1124] *TT*, 18 September 1969.
[1125] For example, see: PRONI, T3922/2/4; PRONI, T3922/2/5; PRONI, T3922/2/6; PRONI, T3922/2/7; PRONI, T3922/2/8; PRONI, T3922/2/9; PRONI, T3922/2/12; PRONI, T3922/2/13.
[1126] *TBP*, 7 October 1969.
[1127] *CET*, 7 October 1969.; *TBP*, 7 October 1969.

chairman, reportedly asserted that "the barricades were coming down because the committee and the people, especially in east Belfast, where the trouble broke out, were happy and satisfied at the way in which the Army and the police had dealt with the situation".[1128] In particular, the army had "sealed off Short Strand to prevent Protestants entering" in response to the eruption of intercommunal violence during the weekend of October 4th.[1129] An earlier statement, likely issued by the CCDC, had indicated that the Catholic community barricades would be removed on October 6th if the army's "assurances of protection seemed to be 'operational and effective after testing'".[1130]

The intercommunal violence during weekend of October 4th and the subsequent response of the security forces appears to have passed the 'test'. Jim Sullivan seemed confident that the community barricades would be dismantled voluntarily, stating: ""I have no doubt that the people will accept the committee's recommendation that they [the barricades] should come down"".[1131] Ultimately, the Catholic community barricades built in the aftermath of the Coates Street incident were dismantled voluntarily beginning on October 7th, following an announcement by the CCDC.[1132]

By October 13th, according to Callaghan, barricades on both the Falls and Shankill Roads had been removed.[1133] However, an unspecified number of Catholic barricades continued to stand along the route of the peace line.[1134] Meanwhile, as the week continued, barricades were erected on the city's streets in limited and localized

[1128] *TT*, 7 October 1969.
[1129] Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 46.
[1130] Ibid.
[1131] *TBP*, 7 October 1969.
[1132] Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 47.
[1133] Ibid., 48.
[1134] Ibid.

incidents, in particular, by Protestant community members.[1135] Although the Catholic community barricades were subsequently dismantled, the sheer number and immediacy with which they were will built signals that the Catholic community remained wary and ready to implement their own measures of defence, despite the presence of the army's peace line. Nevertheless, these events in mid-October marked the end of robust community barricade construction for the remainder of 1969.[1136]

A military threat assessment from November of 1969, reflecting on the events of the previous months in the region, asserted that the amount of community barricades in the city "at any given time became a temperature gauge as to the gravity of the situation".[1137] Furthermore, the threat assessment identified the potential risk, as the conflict continued into late 1969, of the barricades being leveraged by "IRA/republican elements", specifically:

> "Attempts to revert to the "barricade" situation of September/October 1969 in order that IRA members who have infiltrated into Citizen's Defence Committees can re-assume the leadership and "kudos" that they exercised at that time".[1138]

Despite the perceived threat, the barricades did not regain the same notoriety for the remainder of 1969 as they had between August and early October of that year. However, the autumn of 1969 would not be last time that community barricades would appear on the streets of Belfast. Even as the conflict continued into 1970 and then 1971, by almost exactly two years after the deployment of the army, community barricades re-emerged

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[1135] PRONI, CAB/9/B/312/5A ['Duty Officers' Report for the period ending 9 a.m. Thursday, 16th October, 1969'], ['Commissioner's Information Sheet for 24 hours ending 9a.m. 15/10/69'], ['Duty Officer's Report for period ending 9 a.m. on Tuesday, 14th October, 1969'], ['Commissioner's Information Sheet for 24 hours ending at 9.00a.m. Tuesday, 14th October, 1969'], ['Duty Officer's Report for period ending 9.00a.m. on Monday, 13th October, 1969'].; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 48.
[1136] Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 49-55.
[1137] NA, DEFE 13/904 ['An Assessment of the Threat to Military Security as at 5th November, 1969'].
[1138] Ibid.

as a key component of the ongoing intercommunal violence in the city.[1139] The continued presence of community barricades underlines the failure of the authorities to address adequately this community defence mechanism at the very start of the conflict.

The removal of the community barricades, the emergence of the peace line and the construction of military barricades during the early autumn of 1969 did not completely alleviate concern amongst the Catholic community about the perceived dearth of security for the nationalist areas. During the early months of the Troubles, dissension had been brewing from within the republican ranks, including specifically the appropriate methods of protection for the Catholic community.[1140] Out of this dissension emerged the birth of the Provisional IRA on December 18, 1969.[1141] The persistent atmosphere of instability, distrust and fear on the streets of Belfast, particularly after the dismantling of the Catholic community barricades during of autumn of 1969 served to create the conditions conducive to the rise of a more militant republican response. In particular, it is plausible that the dismantling of the Catholic community barricades, the imposition of a British Army led security measure in place of Catholic community defences and the continued intercommunal violence, directly contributed to the emergence of the Provisional IRA and the perpetuation of violence as the conflict continued into the ensuing years.

Although the long-term ramifications of the peace line policy have become clear with the benefit of hindsight, in the early years of the conflict the focus appears to have centered on the short-term concerns presented by the intercommunal violence. With the

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[1139] For example, see the following accounts from September 1970 and August 1971: *BNL*, 28 September 1970; *BT*, 28 September 1970; *TIN*, 28 September 1970; *TIT*, 29 September 1970; *TIT*, 11 August 1971; *BNL*, 11 August 1971.
[1140] English, *Armed Struggle*, 101-108.
[1141] Ibid., 106.

emphasis in London on finding a swift resolution to the situation in Northern Ireland, the opportunity to implement a long-term solution was bypassed in favor of short-term expediency. The negligence on the part of the government in London to engage actively with Northern Ireland prior to start of the Troubles appears to have influenced not only the deployment of a limited number of troops, but also the disengagement with the dynamics of the conflict at the local level in Belfast. This in turn contributed to narrowing the policy options available to address the situation of insecurity embodied in the community barricades and thus created a situation in which a policy of 'security through separation' was seen by the authorities as a viable solution. Furthermore, whilst implementing the peace line policy during the autumn of 1969, the army had to grapple with existing political divisions, which hindered its ability to undertake security efforts. Although it is unrealistic to assume that in a state of conflict, the government and its security forces would be able to craft a perfect policy, the case of the peace line policy demonstrates the extent to which a reaction to short-term security concerns can have unanticipated long-term consequences.

Conclusion

As September 1969 came to a close, Oliver Wright asserted: "we were able to get the Army in and the barricades down by offering those behind the barricades security instead of fear".[1142] While it is true that the community barricades were largely removed from the streets of Belfast at the end of September 1969, albeit only for a short period, even more formidable officially sanctioned barriers were built in their stead in the form of both the peace line and the additional military barriers. Thus, one type of barrier

[1142] NA, CJ 3/18 ['Londonderry', 25 September 1969].

wound up being exchanged for another as the conflict continued into the autumn of 1969. Although the community barricades ceased to occupy such a pivotal position in Northern Irish politics by the end of 1969, the impact of the negotiations over these barriers and the ensuing peace line policy, left a lasting legacy between communities in Belfast. The peace line policy, whilst an attempt to address the intercommunal conflict, only sought to tackle the surface level manifestation of the division, which in turn further engrained the existing divisions that had contributed to the outburst of intercommunal violence in 1969.

The incident at Coates Street at the end of September 1969 proved to be a pivotal turning point in the trajectory of the peace line policy. This breach of the peace line was reminiscent of the violence that occurred along the dividing line in east Belfast during the Troubles of the 1920s: however, during the 1920s the reinforcement of the official barriers was not as swift. Instead, in 1969, the stakes were higher for the British Army as its credibility was on the line in the midst of precarious negotiations regarding the removal of the community barricades across the city. Furthermore, with its resources already spread thin, reinforcing the peace line was viewed as a viable alternative to troop saturation on the streets of Belfast. The introduction of a limited number of troops constrained the policy options available to the authorities to address the mounting intercommunal violence at the start of the Troubles in 1969. Not only did the limited resources of the army lead to the development of the peace line policy itself, but the continued resource constraints placed on the army led to the expansion of this approach of ‘security through separation’, embedding the physical barriers of division into the streets of Belfast. The incident at Coates Street in particular served to cement the presence of the peace line along the dividing line in Belfast.

Although the local level incident at Coates Street has largely been glossed over in studies of this period, the significance of the events along this particular interface at the end of September 1969 was not lost on the army at the time.[1143] With the strengthening of the peace line at Coates Street, the policy of 'security through separation' became further incorporated into the army's tool box of accepted responses to intercommunal violence in Northern Ireland. By the end of September 1969 the peace line was no longer an auxiliary measure for the authorities in Northern Ireland, instead it sat at the very heart of the security forces' efforts to address the mounting intercommunal violence in the region.

[1143] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['Study Period Held by LT GEN Sir Ian Freeland, KCB, DSO GOC Northern Ireland 5 Dec 69'].

CONCLUSION

A TEMPORARY SOLUTION?

"This will be a very temporary affair. We will not have a Berlin Wall or anything like that in this city."
- Sir Ian Freeland, GOC for Northern Ireland, 1969[1144]

Although Sir Ian Freeland may have been correct that a Berlin Wall would never appear in Belfast, the peace walls have grown in size and number,[1145] while the Berlin Wall has since crumbled.[1146] What began as a temporary barrier between two waring communities in 1969, grew to become one of ninety-seven security barriers across the streets of Belfast nearly fifty-years later.[1147] As 1969 came to a close, there were already signs that the initial Belfast peace line was not destined to be a temporary solution to the ongoing intercommunal violence. By December 1969, the GOC had already shifted gears, acknowledging that the presence of the peace line was set to endure "for some time".[1148] According to the GOC, the peace line remained the army's "main method of keeping the two rival factions from clashing".[1149] The necessity for the maintenance of this once 'temporary' barrier in Belfast rested on the persistent lack of confidence in the police among community members as well as the army's significant resource

[1144] GOC Sir Ian Freeland quote cited in this newspaper article: *THT*, 25 February 2004.
[1145] BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*.
[1146] Nolan, *Northern Ireland Peace Monitoring Report Number Two*, 81.
[1147] BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*, 7.
[1148] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['Study Period Held by LT GEN Sir Ian Freeland, KCB, DSO GOC Northern Ireland 5 Dec 69'].
[1149] Ibid.

commitments on the streets of the city.[1150] Unlike its earlier temporary predecessors built during the intercommunal violence of 1922-23 and 1935-36, the first peace line that emerged in September 1969 set a concrete precedent for a persistent policy of 'security through separation' that stands in Belfast to this day.

Within less than a year of the construction of the initial 'temporary' peace line between the Falls and Shankill communities in Belfast, this first structure was joined by additional peace lines in Belfast. First, a so-called "mini peace line" was built in the Ardoyne area of Belfast.[1151] This new peace line emerged in response to intercommunal violence in the Crumlin Road area, particularly in May and June of 1970. Troops were deployed to this area to address clashes between Catholic and Protestant crowds on more than one occasion.[1152] The areas where Hooker Street and Disraeli Street met along the dividing line at Crumlin Road in particular experienced violent altercations between the two sides.[1153] The intercommunal violence in this area, including instances of shooting and rioting, acted as a key impetus for the construction of the new peace line.[1154] Despite the presence of the army at nearby Leopold Street,[1155] the dividing line remained a serious flashpoint.

This area of Belfast along the Crumlin Road marked a boundary between perceived Catholic and Protestant territory.[1156] Predominately Protestant streets, including Disraeli Street, ran directly onto the Crumlin Road, where immediately on the

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[1150] Ibid.
[1151] PRONI, DCR/1/111 ['Future Policy on Areas of Confrontation: Second (and Final) Report of the Joint Working Party on Processions etc', April 1971].
[1152] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland']; *II*, 19 May 1970; *TBP*, 30 May 1970; *CET*, 4 June 1970.
[1153] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['IS Operations Northern Ireland']; *TBP*, 30 May 1970; *CET*, 4 June 1970.
[1154] *TG*, 21 August 1970.
[1155] IWM, Documents.18782 [Memoir by T. Friend, *With a Pause of Two-Three*, (1992-1993)].
[1156] NA, WO 305/3763 ['Belfast Town Plan' MOD 1969 map].

other side sat Catholic streets, including Hooker Street.[1157] In the aftermath of the violence in this area in the late spring of 1970, the GOC announced his plan, at a meeting of Joint Security Committee, on June 30th, for the construction of a new peace line between the two communities.[1158] The GOC's proposed plan was as follows:

> "to create a mini Peace Line at the top of the Crumlin Road and 'blind' Hooker Street and Disraeli Street from one another by means of a fairly high barricades. He also proposed to stop people lining the footpaths at this point on the occasion of parades etc".[1159]

The plan to prevent the two communities from being able to see one another was starkly reminiscent of the use of the similar barriers in east Belfast in 1922-23. Furthermore, the visual separation of the two communities had already been applied in Coates Street following the serious incident of intercommunal violence at the end of September 1969. This suggests that by the summer of 1970, less than ten months after the construction of the first peace line, the policy of 'security through separation' was an accepted official response to intercommunal violence. Furthermore, the decision to construct formidable walls between the two sides, rather than beginning with barbed wire barricades, demonstrates the assumption of the authorities that the two sides simply could not live together in peace.

The new peace line was designed to seal the two communities off from one another through a series barricades built along each side of the Crumlin Road, which not only would be high, but would also be accompanied by additional fortifications, such as search lights.[1160] The building of the new peace line proceeded quickly after the GOC's

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[1157] Ibid.
[1158] PRONI, HA/32/3/3 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held on Tuesday, 30 June 1970 in Stormont Castle at 12 noon'].
[1159] Ibid.
[1160] PRONI, HA/32/3/3 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held on Thursday, 2 July 1970 in Stormont Castle at 11.30 am'].

initial proposal with construction of the barrier getting under way on July 3, 1970.[1161] By the end of July 1970 the peace line comprised of corrugated iron fences that reached approximately 12-15ft high and prevented access to the side streets leading off the Crumlin Road.[1162] While access to the side streets was prevented by the presence of the peace line, each section of the barrier did contain doors to allow pedestrians to pass between the two sides on and off the Crumlin Road.[1163] Troops and members of the RUC were posted at these doorways along the new peace line.[1164] The so-called 'mini peace line' persisted as the conflict continued into 1971.[1165]

A third peace line was proposed by the GOC around the same time as the Crumlin Road peace line at the start of July 1970.[1166] While the proposed construction of this additional barrier was described at the time as "a similar operation on a smaller scale",[1167] it still represented a resignation on the part of the authorities that the two communities needed to be separated from one another in order to preserve a semblance of security in the city. The location of the additional peace line was anticipated to be in the 'Bone' area of Belfast in Louisa Street.[1168] In the early years of the Troubles, Louisa Street was perceived by the army to be situated directly on the border of a mixed area and a

[1161] *TBP*, 4 July 1970; Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1*, 67-68. The Royal Engineers had been tasked with constructing the new peace line. See: IWM, Documents.18782 [Memoir by T. Friend, *With a Pause of Two-Three*, (1992-1993)].
[1162] Ibid.; *TBP*, 21 August 1970; *TG*, 21 August 1970.
[1163] IWM, Documents.18782 [Memoir by T. Friend, *With a Pause of Two-Three*, (1992-1993)].
[1164] Ibid.
[1165] PRONI, DCR/1/111 ['Future Policy on Areas of Confrontation: Second (and Final) Report of the Joint Working Party on Processions etc', April 1971].
[1166] PRONI, HA/32/3/3 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee Held on Thursday, 2 July 1970 in Stormont Castle at 11.30 am'].
[1167] Ibid.
[1168] Ibid.

predominately Catholic area of Belfast.[1169] The 'Bone' was no stranger to intercommunal conflict, having experienced significant levels of violence during the 1920s.[1170]

This area had been the site of tense intercommunal disturbances in September 1969, but the army had initially succeeded in preventing an escalation of violence at this location whilst serious outbreaks of violence were simultaneously occurring along 'the Orange-Green line'.[1171] By the summer of 1970, Louisa Street and the immediately adjacent area had experienced further bouts of violence during which crowds from the two communities confronted one another along the dividing line.[1172] As with the locations of the other peace lines, the intercommunal violence had necessitated the introduction of troops to the area to address the disturbances.[1173] The construction of a peace line along this dividing line suggests that the authorities viewed these barriers as a viable policy option given the pressure such flashpoints placed on the limited resources of the security forces. Nevertheless, despite the presence of the peace line, intercommunal violence persisted at this interface as the conflict continued.[1174]

In spite of the strengthening of the initial peace line and the construction of further peace lines, the army expressed a willingness, should the conditions permit, to consider a so-called "relaxation" of this policy of 'security through separation'.[1175] Initially, in the spring of 1970, the army examined "[a] relaxation of some of the restrictions" along the

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[1169] NA, WO 305/3763 ['Belfast Town Plan' MOD 1969 map].
[1170] Parkinson, *Belfast's Unholy War*, 173.
[1171] NA, DEFE 13/988 ['Confidential Message Defence Operations Centre MOD', 28 September 1969], ['Report by Chiefs of Staff Duty Officer 261800A to 290830A', 29 September 1969].
[1172] *II*, 19 May 1970.
[1173] Ibid.
[1174] *TBP*, 6 February 1971.
[1175] PRONI, HA/32/3/3 ['Conclusions of a Meeting of the Joint Security Committee held on Thursday, 19 March, in Stormont Castle at 1200noon']; IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['Army/RUC Study Day Closing Address', 28 April 1970].

first peace line.[1176] The army appeared to view the incremental re-opening of routes across the peace line as a key component of "a policy of a gradual return to normality".[1177] However, the persistent violence and limited resources available to the security forces acted to prompt not only the retention of the existing peace line, but the emergence of separate peace lines just a short time later.

Attempts were again made at the end of August 1970 to reduce the restrictions along the peace line at the Crumlin Road by opening the access points in the barriers to allow for the freedom of movement of residents.[1178] However, it was made clear by the army that the lessening of restrictions was contingent upon a continued improvement in intercommunal tensions.[1179] Although there was a willingness on the part of the authorities to 'relax' the restrictions to the peace line, the short-term security situation of persistent intercommunal violence rendered the retention of such restrictions necessary for the maintenance of a semblance of security in the city. Ultimately, the strengthening of the first peace line, along with the construction of a further two peace lines, demonstrated that the policy of 'security through separation' embodied in these walls not only had been accepted swiftly by the authorities, but also that it was seen as an increasingly viable official policy approach to security concerns as the Troubles persisted.

The potential negative long-term ramifications of the presence of the peace lines on the streets of Belfast was not entirely lost on the authorities in the very early years of the Troubles. In particular, Anthony Hewins, the United Kingdom's Representative in

[1176] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['Army/RUC Study Day Closing Address', 28 April 1970].
[1177] Ibid.
[1178] *TBP*, 21 August 1970; *TG*, 21 August 1970.
[1179] Ibid.

Northern Ireland in 1971,[1180] a member of the working group tasked with examining areas of confrontation in 1971, issued the following warning: "When a city is re-developed a pattern of life is laid down for at least a century".[1181] His critique of the policy of 'security through separation' underlined the desolation embodied in the resignation of the authorities that the two communities could only live 'together' if they did so separately:

> " […] I find myself in disagreement on the proposals that the divisions in the community should be accepted as a feature of life which must inevitably persist for a hundred years or more. This seems a counsel of despair. A despair which it is proposed should be expressed in terms of bricks and mortar".[1182]

Hewins also recognized the existing priority of the authorities to focus on the immediate term rather than the longer term implications of the policy of separation, asserting:

> "There is always a danger that a government's separate policies may conflict, and that short-term demands of an urgent nature may conflict with long-term objectives. On the one hand the Northern Ireland Government has embarked on a reform policy, of which an integral feature is the healing of divisions within society. On the other hand, the sectarian confrontations which have taken place in Belfast and elsewhere, particularly in the past two years, make the concept of 'separate and equal development' in the troubled areas temporarily attractive".[1183]

Hewins's 1971 assessment of the situation highlights the inherent paradox embodied in the peace lines. Nevertheless, the persistent violence meant that these barriers, along with the accompanying intangible lines of division between communities, became further embedded in the streets of Belfast.

An examination of the early years of the existence of the policy and the peace lines themselves demonstrates how quickly the 'temporary' peace line barriers became

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[1180] PRONI, DCR/1/111 ['Future Policy on Areas of Confrontation: Second (and Final) Report of the Joint Working Party on Processions etc', April 1971].
[1181] Ibid.
[1182] Ibid.
[1183] Ibid.

entrenched into the landscape of the city. As explored in this thesis, 'the narrow ground' in Belfast upon which the intercommunal conflict raged set the stage for the introduction of a policy of 'security through separation'. Unlike the earliest iterations of the peace line barriers explored in Chapter I, the policy of 'security through separation' embodied in the peace line at the start of the Troubles was no longer an auxiliary measure for the authorities. Faced with a series of structural constraints and a crisis embodied in the preponderance of community barricades across the city in the autumn of 1969, de facto separation of the opposing communities served as a seemingly efficient way for the authorities to address the situation of insecurity in the short-term. Since the early years of the Troubles, the construction of peace walls has emerged as an increasingly accepted and widespread response to situations of intercommunal violence across the city of Belfast.

To better understand the sheer extent to which the once 'temporary' barriers have become engrained in the very fabric of Belfast society it is worth re-visiting the flashpoints along the dividing line between the two communities where the authorities first attempted to implement a policy of 'security through separation' to address the disturbances. As Chapter I demonstrated, the historical legacy of barrier building between communities began long before the outbreak of the Troubles in 1969. While the earliest iterations of the peace lines in the 1920s and in 1935-36 may have been temporary, top-down approaches to the intercommunal violence, they did not address the root causes of the conflict between the two communities. Thus, when intercommunal conflict broke out again during the Troubles, the very same lines of division emerged as contentious flashpoints between the two communities.

As the violence of the Troubles escalated in August 1969, Seaforde Street yet again became a flashpoint for confrontation between the Protestant and Catholic communities of Belfast.[1184] As the conflict progressed the two communities became increasingly sealed off from one another along this historic flashpoint through redevelopment and the construction of the peace walls.[1185] Today, Seaforde Street no longer intersects with Newtownards Road and instead remains contained within the Short Strand with houses and a peace wall standing where the two streets once intersected.[1186] Young's Row, quite simply, no longer exists.[1187] The pattern of residential segregation present in this area of east Belfast during the 1920s Troubles persisted throughout the twentieth century with even more clearly defined territorial boundaries in the shape of peace walls between the Catholic enclave of the Short Strand and the surrounding Protestant community emerging in the twenty-first century.[1188]

[1184] Scarman, *Violence and Civil Disturbances in Northern Ireland in 1969: Report of Tribunal of Inquiry Volume 1*, 223.
[1185] Bartholomew, *Belfast Street Atlas*; BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*, 62-66.; DOJ, *List of Structures*; Kernaghan, *Watching for Daybreak*, 114.
[1186] Ministry of Agriculture of Northern Ireland, *Colour Map of Belfast and Districts Showing Wards*; NA, WO 305/3763 [MOD map of Belfast in 1969, color coded with community territorial claims]; Environmental Design Consultants, *Belfast peacelines study*, 38-41.; BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*, 62.
[1187] NA, WO 305/3763 [MOD map of Belfast in 1969, color coded with community territorial claims]; BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*, 62.
[1188] Heatley, *Interface*, 81-82.; BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*, 62-66.

Image 1: **Bryson Street peace wall in 2017.** A formidable series of peace walls now surround the Catholic enclave of the Short Stand, including at Bryson Street. Source: Midness, Brita. *Bryson Street peace wall*. 2017.

Similar to the situation in east Belfast at the start of the Troubles, across the city in the York Street area of Belfast, this historic flashpoint once again experienced intercommunal violence.[1189] However, it was also the site of an instance of positive cross-community action early on in the disturbances.[1190] During August of 1969, amidst the mounting tensions across the city, fear emerged that an attack on the Catholic population of Sailortown was imminent.[1191] As it turns out those on the other side had thought an attack was soon to be directed against them instead.[1192] In the face of mounting tension a meeting took place between the opposing sides along the same interface where the formidable barrier of 1935-36 had previously stood at the intersection where Dock Street and Nelson Street met.[1193] As a result of this meeting, instead of an eruption of intercommunal violence, the communities worked together until late 1969 to prevent the occurrence of violence in Sailortown.[1194] While the actions of the community ensured that a peace line was not built in the area during the early days of the Troubles, the present-day placement of the motorway acts as its own line of division between the communities today.[1195] It seems to be no coincidence that the area of Belfast around York Street, which had been the site of such serious intercommunal violence, was chosen as the site of the current motorway.

As Chapter II demonstrated, the most severe outbreak of intercommunal violence at the start of the Troubles occurred along the dividing line between the Falls and Shankill

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[1189] Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 64.
[1190] Smyth, *Days of Unity in the Docklands of Sailortown, 1907-1969*, 26.
[1191] Ibid.
[1192] Ibid.
[1193] Ibid.
[1194] Ibid.
[1195] BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*, 37. For a detailed study of the development and the construction of the existing motorways in Belfast, see: Johnston, *The Belfast Urban Motorway*.

communities of Belfast. Not only did the micro-level confrontations between the two communities along 'the Orange-Green line' yield reverberations of violence across the city of Belfast in 1969, but they also served to influence the very landscape of the city today. As explored in Chapter III, local level dynamics between communities along the dividing line at Dover Street played a direct role in the placement of the peace line outside house number 87, while pitching the might of the British state into a dispute over conflicting territorial claims on the streets of Belfast. Today, almost fifty years later, Dover Street ends shortly after it intersects with Cumberland Walk, no longer running as a direct route between the Falls and Shankill communities as it did in 1969.[1196]

In the place of what once was a section of Dover Street is a park and where Dover Street and Beverley Street used to intersect in 1969 sits the current location of the peace wall.[1197] It would take only, an arguably, less than two minute walk to traverse the park in order to reach the corner where 87 Dover Street once stood. While houses do still stand in the immediate vicinity of the wall, vegetation and the barrier itself have replaced what was once house number 87 on Dover Street.[1198] Despite the construction of the peace line in September 1969, Dover Street continued to be a site of persistent sectarian violence during the Troubles.[1199] What began as a 'temporary' barbed wire barricade in 1969 to separate the two communities has grown into a formidable barrier reaching a height of 23-26ft and built from concrete, metal as well as mesh fencing, with an imposing and permanent presence that rises above the rooftops of the homes on either side.[1200]

[1196] BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*, 22.; NA, WO 305/3763 ['Belfast Town Plan' MOD 1969 map].
[1197] BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*, 22.; NA, WO 305/3763 ['Belfast Town Plan' MOD 1969 map].
[1198] BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*, 22;28.
[1199] For example, see: *BT*, 11 August 1975.
[1200] BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*, 28.

Image 2: **87 Dover Street in 2018.** Source: Midness, Brita. *87 Dover Street*. 2018.

Despite the construction of the first peace line in 1969, violence continued along the dividing line between the two communities. As explored in Chapter IV, the peace line itself even became a target for violence at Coates Street. At the start of the Troubles, the area around nearby Coates Street comprised a patchwork of conflicting territorial claims and in the midst of heightened intercommunal tensions, the presence of the initial peace line was insufficient to secure the two sides through separation. By 1971, just a few years after the 1969 Coates Street incident, a map of the peace line indicates that the barrier extended down the length of Coates Street on the Shankill Road side of the street.[1201] The structure at the contentious junction of Sackville Street and Coates Street was built out of corrugated iron walls and cat wire fences and did not permit any access between the two sides.[1202] Today in 2019 Coates Street no longer exists. In its place runs the Westlink, plowing a direct path through this historic flashpoint in the city.[1203] Where the junction of Coates Street and Sackville Street used to be now stands a children's play park.[1204] On the other side of the Westlink, the present-day peace wall begins, cutting directly across Townsend Street.[1205] What began as a policy of 'security through separation' in the shape of barbed wire barricades in 1969 has gone on to alter drastically the very landscape of the city of Belfast.

The peace walls have persisted for nearly fifty-years, affecting multiple generations, and yet the security situation in the immediate vicinity of the walls remains precarious. The security concerns that led to the construction and subsequent

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[1201] The peace line began at the junction where Sackville Street and Coates Street met. See: PRONI, DCR/1/111 ['Future Policy on Areas of Confrontation: Second (and Final) Report of the Joint Working Party on Processions etc', April 1971].
[1202] Ibid.
[1203] BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*, 22.; Wiener, *The Rape & Plunder of the Shankill*, Motorway Route Map;131.
[1204] Google Maps, 'Melbourne Street, Belfast'.
[1205] BIP, *Interface Barriers, Peaceline and Defensive Architecture*, 22.

strengthening of the peace walls continue to be relevant for those who live in the shadow of the walls in 2019. The precise actors and machinery of violence may have changed since September 1969, but the intertwined issues of fear and security between the two communities have not yet been resolved. Instead, the very divisions between communities that contributed to the emergence of the peace walls have become further engrained in the fabric of society.

Nevertheless, discussions over the removal of the Belfast peace walls are currently ongoing today in 2019 and thus it is important to understand not only why the precise location of the walls were chosen beginning in 1969, but also the pivotal interaction of competing local and political level factors that influenced their construction. This thesis sought to understand why division and the construction of walls persists as an ubiquitous response to concerns over security between communities. A detailed analysis of the impact of local level and political level factors at the start of the Troubles in 1969 amidst the wider historical legacy of division in Northern Ireland, demonstrates that the interaction of violence, fear and negotiation along the dividing line produced a policy of 'security through separation' in the form of the Belfast peace walls. The case of the Belfast peace walls shows that is certainly easier to put up a wall than it is to take one down. Armed with a clearer understanding of the impetus behind the construction and subsequent strengthening of the first peace lines in Belfast, we have an opportunity to engage in a more nuanced discussion of the walls, cognizant of the historical legacy of the micro-level divisions between communities, which remain prominent to this day.

While the construction of the very first Belfast peace wall may have taken place almost fifty-years ago, there are stark parallels between the argument of 'security through

separation' used in 1969 and the justifications employed today for the construction of similar barriers worldwide. Although the construction of walls may serve political expediency in situations of insecurity, the case of the Belfast peace walls demonstrates that seeking a short-term solution risks contributing to the construction of long-term barriers to more sustainable solutions. As political leaders worldwide mull over the efficacy of walls as solutions to their perceived pertinent problems of the day, it is worth reflecting upon the unintended consequences of the policy of separation embodied in the Belfast peace walls. Is 'security through separation' an adequate response to security concerns or by undertaking such policies are we simply kicking the proverbial can down the road and leaving it to another generation to clean up our mess? As walls continue to be proposed as solutions to situations of insecurity from Baghdad to the Rio Grande Valley,[1206] the case of the Belfast peace walls serves as a cautionary tale for choosing short-term expediency in times of conflict. Before turning to barriers as a perceived quick fix to present-day security concerns, it is worth reflecting on the emergence of the peace line policy in 1969 and the ninety-seven barriers still standing between communities in Belfast today.

[1206] *TG*, 27 April 2007; *TG*, 14 September 2007; *TG*, 31 March 2018.

University Teaching and Research Ethics Committee

15 April 2019

Dear Brita Midness

Thank you for submitting your ethical application which was considered at the IR School Ethics Committee. The following documents were reviewed:

1. Ethical Application Form
2. Consent Forms
3. Debriefing Form
4. Information Sheet
5. External Permissions
6. Sample Questions

The IR School Ethics Committee has been delegated to act on behalf of the University Teaching and Research Ethics Committee (UTREC) and has granted this application ethical approval. The particulars relating to the approved project are as follows -

Approval Code:	IR12716	**Approved on:**	14.04.17	**Approval Expiry:**	14.04.22
Project Title:	From Barricades to Peace Walls: Barriers to Peace in Belfast				
Researcher(s):	Brita Midness				
Supervisor(s):	Dr Timothy Wilson				

Approval is awarded for five years. Projects which have not commenced within two years of approval must be re-submitted for review by your School Ethics Committee. If you are unable to complete your research within the five-year approval period, you are required to write to your School Ethics Committee Convener to request a discretionary extension of no greater than 6 months or to re-apply if directed to do so, and you should inform your School Ethics Committee when your project reaches completion.

If you make any changes to the project outlined in your approved ethical application form, you should inform your supervisor and seek advice on the ethical implications of those changes from the School Ethics Convener who may advise you to complete and submit an ethical amendment form for review.

Any adverse incident which occurs during the course of conducting your research must be reported immediately to the School Ethics Committee who will advise you on the appropriate action to be taken.

Approval is given on the understanding that you conduct your research as outlined in your application and in compliance with UTREC Guidelines and Policies (http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/utrec/guidelinespolicies/). You are also advised to ensure that you procure and handle your research data within the provisions of the Data Provision Act 1998 and in accordance with any conditions of funding incumbent upon you.

Yours sincerely

Convener of the School Ethics Committee

cc Supervisor

The University of St Andrews is a charity registered in Scotland: No SC013532

APPENDIX I:

GLOSSARY

Derry/Londonderry: This thesis uses the name Derry/Londonderry to acknowledge that the city is recognized by two separate names by different members of the population. The name Derry is used by Irish nationalists, while the name Londonderry tends to be used by members of the unionist population who do not live in the city.[1]
B Specials: See Ulster Special Constabulary.
Irish Republican Army (IRA): The paramilitary arm of the Republican movement.[2]
Orange Order: The Protestant Orange Order was founded in 1795 and constitutes a political society.[3] One of its key activities is the July 12th parade, which is held annually.[4]
Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC): The police force present in Ireland whilst the island was under the control of the British government until 1922 when the RIC was dissolved.[5]
Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC): The police force that succeeded the RIC in Northern Ireland.[6]
Ulster Loyalist Association (ULA): As the name, Ulster Loyalist Association, suggests, the organization espoused hardline unionist views and engaged in expressly sectarian tinged activities during the early period of the Troubles.[7] William Craig was one of the leaders of the ULA during its active years from 1969-1972.[8]
Ulster Protestant Association (UPA): The UPA was known to operate in Belfast working-class neighborhoods before its activities were halted by the Northern Irish authorities in the autumn of 1922.[9] The activities of the UPA likely account for the increase in violence in east Belfast beginning in the autumn months of 1921.[10] The organization had initially emerged in 1920 as a means to protect loyalists and the broader Protestant community from the perceived threat of Sinn Féin.[11] The imprisonment of the group's leadership by the early months of 1923 eventually contributed to a lessening of violence in east Belfast.[12]
Ulster Special Constabulary (USC): This section of the police force was designed to strengthen the existing RIC police force in 1920. It was comprised of the A, B and C Specials. The A Specials worked as full-time police officers with pay, while the B Specials were a part-time paid force and the C Specials made up a reserve force for use

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[1] McGarry and O'Leary, *Explaining Northern Ireland*, 508.
[2] Ibid., 511.; Wilson, *Frontiers of Violence*, 224.
[3] Ibid.; Bardon, *A History of Ulster*, 225-226.
[4] Wilson, *Frontiers of Violence*, 224.
[5] Ibid., 225.
[6] Ibid.
[7] For a snapshot of the ULA activities and assertions during this period, see: Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969*-71, 45;83;107;113;123;129.
[8] Flackes, *Northern Ireland*, 142.
[9] Wilson, *Frontiers of Violence*, 224.
[10] Martin, 'Migration Within the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, with Special Reference to the City of Belfast, 1911 – 1937', 89.
[11] Farrell, *Arming the Protestants*, 28;68.; Kernaghan, *Watching for Daybreak*, 61.
[12] Ibid.

solely in emergency situations. Recruits for the USC tended to be members of the local loyalist community.[13]

[13] Wilson, *Frontiers of Violence*, 224.

APPENDIX II:

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

James Callaghan: The Home Secretary of the United Kingdom from December 1967 to 1970 when the Labour Party relinquished its leadership position in government.[14] Callaghan participated directly in the discussions over the Belfast barricades in the autumn of 1969.

Lieutenant-General GOC Sir Ian Freeland: Lieutenant-General Sir Ian Freeland began his tenure as GOC on July 9, 1969,[15] just over a month before the army was deployed in Northern Ireland. He was expected to remain in the post from July 1969 to August 1971, but instead served only until February 1971.[16] He was described as an individual with extensive experience who exuded authority and provided reassurance during a tumultuous time.[17] He reportedly was concerned about events in the region in 1969, particularly due to the insufficient initial responses to the evolving situation from both the Northern Irish government and the RUC.[18]

James Dawson Chichester-Clark: The Prime Minister of Northern Ireland from May 1969 to March 1971.[19] He was the Northern Irish Prime Minister who presided over the development of the peace line policy.

Oliver Wright: Oliver Wright served as the first United Kingdom Representative in Northern Ireland.[20] His office was right next to the Prime Minister's at Stormont and he was tasked with translating British policy for the Northern Irish government, while also influencing the Prime Minister's administration.[21] Wright took up this post in Belfast on August 26, 1969.[22] Wright's role in Belfast was described by Sir Edward Peck in September 1969 as a "watch dog on the Belfast Government".[23] Wright had previously worked in the Foreign Office,[24] a subtle indication perhaps of London's view of Northern Ireland as 'a place apart' from the rest of the United Kingdom.

Sir Richard Dawson Bates: He was the Minister of Home Affairs from 1921 to 1943[25] during which period he supervised the officially sanctioned use of barricades by the security forces to address the occurrence of intercommunal violence on the streets of Belfast in both 1922-23 and 1935-36.

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[14] Callaghan, *A House Divided*; Flackes, *Northern Ireland*, 34.
[15] Dewar, *The British Army in Northern Ireland*, 32.
[16] IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/6 [MOD letter to Freeland, 3 April 1969]; IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/3 ['Message Form', 3 February 1971]; Flackes, *Northern Ireland*, 62.
[17] Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 50-51.; IWM, Documents.26258, 79/34/6 ['Sir Ian Freeland' Radio 4-World at One transcript, 20 August 1969].
[18] Hamill, *Pig in the Middle*, 8;11-12.
[19] Flackes, *Northern Ireland*, 90.
[20] Ibid., 155.
[21] Callaghan, *A House Divided*, 65-66.
[22] Deutsch and Magowan, *Northern Ireland 1968-73: A Chronology of Events Volume 1 1969-71*, 41.
[23] NAI, TSCH, 2000/6/660 ['Note of Conversation with Sir Edward Peck, Deputy Under Secretary of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office', 11 September 1969].
[24] Rees, *Northern Ireland*, 8.
[25] Buckland, *The Factory of Grievances*, 10-11.; Farrell, *Arming the Protestants*, 305.

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