

***ATTEMPTING TO END VIOLENCE IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND  
THE BASQUE COUNTRY:***

***THE MISREPRESENTATION OF THE IRISH MODEL***

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**SUMMARY**

*This article focuses on the reasons why the attempt to achieve the end of ETA's violence in the Basque Country during the mid to late 1990s was unsuccessful when compared to the IRA's case in Northern Ireland. It argues that the different roles played by Basque and Irish nationalism in that decade and the distortion of the Irish model by Basque nationalist parties and the terrorist organization ETA were decisive in this outcome. The radicalisation of constitutional nationalism in the Basque region, as opposed to the constitutionalisation of radical nationalism that was a key factor in the achievement of the consensus enshrined in the 1998 Belfast Agreement, contributed to the continuation of terrorism. Contrary to the spirit of this Agreement, Basque nationalists moved away from an existing consensus with non nationalist parties around the principle of full development of the Basque autonomy strengthening ETA's will to carry on with their campaign.*

## **Introduction**

After thirty years of violence,<sup>1</sup> in September 1998 the Basque terrorist group ETA (*Euskadi Ta Askatasuna*, Basque Homeland and Freedom) declared an indefinite ceasefire that broke down in late 1999. The resumption of terrorism inaugurated a period of bitter political confrontation between democratic parties in the Basque Country unprecedented since the inception of Basque autonomy in the late 1970s. The autonomous parliament set up in 1980, five years after the end of Francisco Franco's dictatorship in which violence by ETA emerged, constituted the main piece of an elaborated framework aimed at transforming the conflict.<sup>2</sup> The 1979 Statute of Autonomy for the Basque Country and the devolved administration created by it were conceived as creating the framework for a broad political consensus which would contribute to overcome nationalists' grievances. Conversi has described the process of administrative decentralisation undergone by Spain in the last decades as 'unparalleled in the rest of Western Europe' and 'tantamount to a revolution'.<sup>3</sup> The decentralisation did effectively contribute to the erosion of the support of violence in the Basque Country and to the consolidation of democracy in the region.<sup>4</sup> Under the Statute of Autonomy the Basque provinces of Guipúzcoa, Álava and Vizcaya, received high levels of self-government within the Spanish state. Not only did the Basque Parliament enjoy tax autonomy and very wide powers in areas such as the economy, the justice system, education and culture, but a Basque police force – *Ertzantza*- was created and the Basque vernacular, also known as *euskera*, was recognized as one of the official languages. The flag and the anthem of the main nationalist party, the PNV (*Partido Nacionalista Vasco*, Basque Nationalist Party)<sup>5</sup>, became the official symbols of the Autonomous Community known as Euskadi. In

addition to this, between 1975 and 1979 a full amnesty was granted to 900 members and collaborators of ETA.<sup>6</sup>

This political normalization also manifested itself in the Basque party system. The first democratic elections confirmed the hegemonic control of government institutions by the PNV. However, the 1984 electoral results forced nationalists to negotiate a coalition agreement with PSOE (*Partido Socialista Obrero Español*, Spanish Socialist Workers Party). In 1986 the decrease in the PNV's vote was followed by a split in the party that led to the creation of a new nationalist formation, Eusko Alkartasuna (EA). The electoral victory of the PSOE opened up a new period in Basque politics in which only coalition governments were possible.<sup>7</sup> A wider political consensus led to the signing of the 1988 Antiterrorist Pact of Ajuria Enea by all the political parties represented in the Basque Parliament with the exception of ETA's political wing, HB (*Herri Batasuna*, United People). However, this agreement between nationalist and non nationalist which guaranteed a common approach against terrorism was replaced in the mid to late 1990s by a new system of alliances following the PNV's decision to build a pan-nationalist front with HB in exchange for a cessation of violence by ETA. Effectively ETA's truce in 1998 coincided with a radicalisation of constitutional nationalism. ETA's ceasefire came about after the terrorist organisation secretly reached a pact with the PNV in which the nationalists agreed to 'abandon all the agreements with the forces whose objective is the destruction of Euskal Herria<sup>8</sup> and the building of Spain (PP and PSOE)'.<sup>9</sup> This significant shift was complemented by a historical departure in the PNV's policy when the party's National Assembly of January 2000 approved a new programme explicitly recognising the right of self-determination as its supreme aspiration.<sup>10</sup> These controversial decisions demonstrated

that Basque nationalism was moving in the opposite direction to Irish nationalism despite the claims by the *Lehendakari* –Basque president- Juan José Ibarretxe that the Irish peace process was a model of solution for Euskadi.<sup>11</sup>

### **The Distortion of the Northern Ireland Peace Process**

Nationalist politicians in the Basque Country have regarded the Northern Ireland peace process as a model for the resolution of their own conflict. However, the search for a similar strategy towards peace in the Basque Country has been characterised by the distortion of the Irish model. Basque nationalism's interpretation of the Irish process is based on the following two wrong assumptions:

- The formation of a pan nationalist front offered the Republican movement, made up of the IRA and Sinn Fein, an alternative through which they could achieve their objectives and compensate for the weakness evidenced in their electoral and social support.
- The IRA's cessation of violence was a direct consequence of the British and Irish government's recognition of the right to self-determination.

### ***Nationalists' Unity***

The analysis contained in the *Lizarra Declaration*, a document signed in September 1998 by the main Basque nationalist parties and trade unions, with the addition of the Basque section of the communist party IU (*Izquierda Unida*, United Left), is indicative of the problem. The signatories, gathered in what they named 'the Ireland Forum', drafted a declaration setting out seven points which they defined as the 'Factors that propitiated the Peace Agreement in the north of Ireland'.<sup>12</sup> The document constituted a mainly nationalist blue print that ignored the key issues that

had been instrumental in reaching the Belfast Agreement, paramount among them the IRA and Sinn Fein's willingness to accept a settlement that did not guarantee their main political aspirations.<sup>13</sup> Basque nationalists misrepresented the reality of the Irish context ignoring that, as prominent republican figures such as Jim Gibney and Danny Morrison admitted, the peace process had required republicans to swallow very 'bitter pills'.<sup>14</sup> Gibney himself recognised that from a rigid republican perspective the Stormont Agreement should be torn up<sup>15</sup> for the reasons that Morrison summarised:

The deletion of Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish constitution (the territorial claim over the North); the return of a Northern Assembly; Sinn Fein abandoning its traditional policy of abstentionism; reliance on British-government-appointed commissions on the equality and human rights issues and on the future of policing; and the implicit recognition of the principle of unionist consent on the constitutional question.<sup>16</sup>

The extent of the republican movement's revisionism can be appreciated by comparing it with Morrison's rejection of constitutional politics in 1982. His view then was that armed struggle represented the only effective means to achieve a united Ireland, because 'even if Sinn Fein was in government in Dublin and even if Sinn Fein were to become the undisputed nationalist representatives in the North, Britain would still refuse to go and the loyalists would still have a veto over Irish unity'.<sup>17</sup>

The omissions of the Lizarra Declaration are relevant because ETA's ceasefire, which was declared only days after the document was made public, came about on the basis of the same erroneous interpretation of the Irish peace process. As explicitly acknowledged by the terrorist organization after the breakdown of the truce, ETA did

not want a ‘peace process’ but a ‘process of nation building’.<sup>18</sup> It was with that intention that the group sought and reached a pact with constitutional nationalists which preceded the cessation of violence. Subsequent developments confirmed the fears expressed by many Spanish democrats that in the Basque Country democratic nationalists were being seduced by ETA, contrary to what happened in Ireland, where the SDLP (Social Democratic and Labour Party) won over Sinn Féin to democracy, as an Irish journalist put it at the time.<sup>19</sup>

The elections to the Basque parliament in October 1998 demonstrated the PNV’s intention to unite the different forces of Basque nationalism. Once more the electoral results had made it necessary for the PNV to get the backing of another party if the nationalist candidate was to be elected president of the region. On this occasion constitutional nationalists rejected a coalition with the socialists and, in fulfillment of their pact with ETA, signed an agreement with its political wing EH (former Herri Batasuna). In 1999, a new body was set up under the name of *Udalbiltza*, which, as stated in point one of the pact between ETA and the PNV would be a ‘sovereign and supreme institution’ with the objective of ‘overcoming the current institutional and state framework’.<sup>20</sup> *Udalbiltza* brought together nationalist councillors representing municipalities from all ‘Euskal Herria’, the ethno-linguistic unit claimed by Basque separatists as their homeland. As Llera has observed, the ‘homogenous ethnicity’ of such a space left no room for the political pluralism that dominates Basque society.<sup>21</sup> Therefore this new institutional expression of the pan nationalist front attempted to replace the consociationalism that Basque society requires to reflect its plural outlook with a political cleavage based on opposing national allegiances.<sup>22</sup>

It is revealing to compare Basque nationalism with the different behaviour of Irish constitutional nationalism in its approach to the peace process. Unity of action among nationalists did not form the basis of the Northern Irish peace process, where the IRA and Sinn Fein failed in their attempt to build a solid nationalist front and were compelled to accept an Agreement that falls short of meeting the traditional republican objectives. Sinn Fein's Francie Molloy summed it up when he admitted that: 'Republicans are prepared to work an executive. We are really prepared to administer British rule in Ireland for the foreseeable future. The very principle of partition is accepted, and if the Unionists had had that in the 1920s they would have been laughing'.<sup>23</sup> The lack of nationalist's unity has led to republican leaders such as Martin McGuinness criticising nationalism in the Republic for not defending 'Irish national rights'.<sup>24</sup> This lack of unity of action was also reflected during the campaign which preceded the 2001 British general election. During these elections constitutional nationalism represented by John Hume's SDLP rejected an electoral pact proposed by Sinn Fein stating that they would not accept a coalition which, if it came about, would have deepened the divisions between the Northern Irish communities.<sup>25</sup> Another prominent leader of the SDLP dismissed such a nationalist alliance because it 'ghettoized' the voter restricting him to a politics of blocs which was precisely what the peace process wished to do away with.<sup>26</sup> In the same vein the *Taoiseach*, or Irish Prime Minister, Bertie Ahern, ruled out the inclusion of Sinn Fein in a coalition government in the 2002 electoral campaign in the Republic of Ireland. The existence of the IRA and the still fragile democratic credentials of a party linked to an organization which until a few years ago continued to be involved in an intense terrorist campaign led to a decision which Sinn Fein considered 'an insult'.<sup>27</sup>

In order to fully appreciate the gap between republicans' aims and achievements it is also useful to contrast the IRA's attitude in the 1990s and 1970s.<sup>28</sup> In July 1972 an IRA delegation which included Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness, secretly met representatives of the British government. The IRA's maximalism at that time was later summed up by McGuinness, who indicated that the ceasefire which made the meeting possible would be broken immediately if the republican's demands were not met.<sup>29</sup> This absolutist and defiant republican attitude contrasts with the position they have held during the current peace process. The 1994 cessation was not followed by the substantial negotiations 'on the root causes of the conflict' desired by republicans. In fact quite a considerable period of time elapsed before a process of multiparty talks got under way. As McGuinness acknowledged, republicans were this time 'more patient than many commentators would have predicted'<sup>30</sup> even accepting a 'decontamination process'.<sup>31</sup> In April 1997, a year after the breakdown of the IRA's ceasefire, republicans offered to the British government through an intermediary the restoration of the cessation expanding at the same time the definition of what an IRA ceasefire would constitute. According to a secret memo, if Sinn Fein were allowed into all-party talks, the party would 'publicly and officially' endorse the Mitchell Principles which committed parties to decommissioning.<sup>32</sup> In spite of the official resumption of the ceasefire in July 1997, Sinn Fein was once again temporarily excluded from the multi party talks at the beginning of 1998 as a result of IRA activities. As has been already stated, republicans endorsed an Agreement that didn't satisfy their fundamental aspirations which was followed by the IRA's historic decision to 'put arms beyond use' in October 2001. Even in 2003 the IRA and Sinn Fein remained engaged in the process despite the successive suspensions of the Northern Ireland Assembly as well as of the elections to this institution imposed by

the British government and strongly criticised by republicans.<sup>33</sup> There is, therefore, a clear contrast between the flexibility of Republicans in the 1990s' peace process and their intransigence in the two previous decades.

### ***The right to self-determination***

A similar intransigence on ETA's part is a key factor in the failure of what many nationalists call 'the Basque peace process'.<sup>34</sup> In 1997 an internal document circulated by ETA showed that the group did not want to mirror the compromises made by the IRA. The Basque organization was mainly interested in the Irish model as a means to portray as legitimate and necessary negotiations between Governments and political representatives of terrorist groups.<sup>35</sup> The same view emerged in another internal document dated June 2001 in which ETA made the following appraisal of the Belfast Agreement: 'The whole Irish nation has been denied the right to self-determination and on the other hand the government of the 26 counties has to change its constitution and renounce the six counties until its citizens decide otherwise. The Irish must accept the division of their people.'<sup>36</sup> ETA's private analyses of the Irish peace process were more accurate than the public discourses of many nationalists, among them Jon Salaberria, a Batasuna member of the Basque Parliament, who insisted in April 2002 that the IRA only ended its armed struggle because the British government recognised the Irish people's right to self-determination.<sup>37</sup>

Constitutional nationalists represented by the PNV and EA have also articulated a public discourse which contradicts ETA's private and more realistic views on the issue of Irish self-determination. As a result, Basque nationalism has exaggerated the importance of the Downing Street Declaration, signed in 1993 by the British and Irish governments, using it as a reference point to demand the acknowledgement of the

right to self-determination for the Basque people as a fundamental requisite of a peace process.<sup>38</sup> Consequently, when the PNV was confronted with the fact that Basque Autonomy represents a much more ambitious system of devolved government than the one envisaged in the Belfast Agreement, the party defined self-determination as the stepping stone in a peace process and stressed that ‘in Northern Ireland the question is not about greater or lesser autonomy, but the reality of a solemn recognition of the Right to Self Determination’.<sup>39</sup> However, this analysis is mistaken as Gerry Adams acknowledged in his assessment of the Declaration: ‘the British [have] merely conceded the wording of certain irresistible concepts, and then, by qualification, rendered them meaningless’.<sup>40</sup>

Both the IRA and Sinn Fein publicly rejected the Downing Street Declaration, because, as in the case of the Belfast Agreement in 1998, the right to self-determination was not recognised in the terms demanded by republicans. Thus when republicans announced their cease fire in 1994 the IRA had already stated that ‘the Downing Street Declaration is not a solution’,<sup>41</sup> as it did not guarantee the right to self-determination of the Irish people as a whole acting as one unit in the island of Ireland. As a senior official in the Northern Ireland Office observed at the time, the Downing Street Declaration gave the impression that nationalists had made a gain. However, in reality this was not the case, because although the right to self-determination had been formally recognised, this was devoid of any meaning from a republican point of view as it was subject to the ‘principle of consent’.<sup>42</sup>

The ‘principle of consent’ can be considered as one of the basic pillars of British policy towards the region. It assumes that a united Ireland can only come about with

the consent of a majority of the population in Northern Ireland. Throughout its history, Irish republicanism, represented by the IRA and Sinn Fein, had rejected such a possibility. However, ‘constitutional nationalism’, represented by the government of the Republic and the SDLP in Northern Ireland, had accepted this principle. As Adams put it in 1988, ‘All Irish democrats, republicans and socialists as well as nationalists, deny that unionists have any right of veto over the partition of Ireland and the British connection. This is a matter of principle’. Therefore, in his view, ‘the “unity by consent” formula’ was simply a ‘confused fudge’.<sup>43</sup> Just months away from the Belfast Agreement the IRA declared that this was still its view: ‘the idea that a minority grouping in Ireland, situated within the Six Counties, should have a veto over political progress in the island as a whole is anathema to republicans’.<sup>44</sup> This was the reason why in October 1996 Gerry Adams maintained that ‘you can not fracture the right to self-determination’.<sup>45</sup> The Downing Street Declaration and the Belfast Agreement did not fulfil this premise, as Adams explicitly acknowledged when he declared in March 2000:

Remember how we were told by leading partitionists and others that the Good Friday Agreement, endorsed in referendum north and south, is the exercise of self-determination by the Irish people. Sinn Fein took a more measured and accurate view. We said it wasn't. (...) Self-determination for the people of this island has yet to be achieved. And this party and others of similar mind must set our sights on achieving that objective.<sup>46</sup>

This is a point he emphasised in 1998 when he assured that ‘It is clear the referendums do not constitute the exercise of national self-determination’.<sup>47</sup> The IRA’s own assessment of the Belfast Agreement exposes the group’s inability to

achieve its main objective: ‘Viewed against our republican objectives or any democratic analysis this document clearly falls short of presenting a solid basis for a lasting settlement. In our view the two imminent referenda do not constitute the exercise of national self-determination.’<sup>48</sup>

Therefore, and in contrast to what the main representatives of Basque Nationalism have stated, the reasons for the end of IRA violence are neither the Downing Street Declaration nor the recognition of the right to self-determination, but other factors which have made possible the political defeat of the IRA. A republican commentator depicted with accuracy the intentions of Basque nationalists when in relation to the referenda held after the Belfast Agreement he explained:

In fact, to portray the votes of 22 May 1998 as an instance of self-determination by the people of Ireland is an attempt at a massive exercise in public deception along the lines of Joseph Goebbels that if you tell a lie, tell a big enough one and tell it often enough, especially through mass media, it will come to be believed through a process of sheer mental weariness.<sup>49</sup>

### ***The political defeat of the IRA***

To describe the peace process as the political defeat of the IRA will be contested by commentators who insist that it arose out of a military stalemate. The notion of a military stalemate, widely accepted as the basis for the IRA’s ceasefire and subsequent Sinn Fein’s constitutionalisation,<sup>50</sup> serves to obscure the fact that even during their most ‘militaristic’ phase in the early 1970s republicans had already recognised that the IRA could not militarily defeat the British. As a member of the IRA put it: ‘I don’t agree that we had reached a stalemate. The IRA had to win this war. The British government only had to prevent the IRA from winning the war. So in

a sense there wasn't a stalemate. I think that the ceasefires can be viewed as a victory for the British government.'<sup>51</sup>

The peace process has not guaranteed republican aspirations and is based rather on parameters which were already outlined at the beginning of the 1970s. In 1972 the British government suspended the autonomous Stormont administration established in 1922 and controlled throughout its existence exclusively by Unionists. Suspension was followed by the introduction of *Direct Rule* from London. The administration of Northern Ireland became the exclusive responsibility of the government in London and Northern Irish politicians had very little part in the running of the region. Coinciding with the outbreak of violence that started off the Troubles, between 1969 and 1973 the British Government established the principles on which its policy towards the region would be based for the next three decades.<sup>52</sup> This policy was based on three pillars:

- Firstly, the so called 'principle of consent'. In accordance with this the British government accepted as legitimate the possibility of the unification of the North and South of Ireland as long as the majority of Northern Irish people offered their consent.
- Secondly, the need to introduce what was known as the 'Irish dimension' recognising Northern Ireland's position within Ireland as a whole and considering 'desirable' that, in so far as it was possible, the provisions for governing Northern Ireland were also accepted by the Irish state. This would require some institutional expression of the Irish dimension.

- Thirdly, decentralisation which would lead to the devolution of powers to an autonomous government which would be based on a greater consensus than that which existed in the past. This would mean that the executive would not be controlled by a party representing only one of the communities in the divided Northern Irish society.

When the above parameters, laid out at the beginning of the 1970s, are compared with the current Belfast Agreement, accepted by the IRA and Sinn Fein, we can see that the current peace process rests on principles which were already put forward decades ago: a system of government based on the devolution of powers from Westminster, in which the Irish dimension, through which nationalists wished to see their national aspirations recognised, would be institutionalised. These aspirations would be considerably restricted due to the consolidation of the principle of consent.<sup>53</sup> Consequently it is necessary to conclude that, as Donald Horowitz has pointed out, the Belfast Agreement was not so much the end result of a process of negotiation but of ‘filtering the past’.<sup>54</sup> Merlyn Rees, Northern Ireland Secretary of State between 1974 and 1976, accurately described the nature of the talks process that preceded the 1998 Agreement: ‘The point is [that] there is nothing that the IRA can get now that they couldn’t have had anytime in the last twenty years’.<sup>55</sup> Before the process began there was a ‘tacit consensus’ of what was possible. Consequently, the agreement was mainly the result of a consensus between those parties who represented the majority of the nationalist and the unionist blocs, the SDLP and the UUP (Ulster Unionist Party).<sup>56</sup>

Basque nationalism has preferred to disregard such a useful lesson of the Northern Irish peace process. In so doing they have ignored the reality of the political defeat of

a terrorist organisation like the IRA. Important sections of Basque nationalism reject this interpretation and argue that it is not possible to achieve the ‘political defeat’ of ETA. This was the analysis put forward in 1998 by José Antonio Ardanza, former Basque *Lehendakari*, in an unsuccessful peace proposal. This is the premise that has guided Basque constitutional nationalists in the last decade, an attitude manifested in the search for a pan nationalist front as outlined above. In fact, Basque nationalism has opted for an alternative path which some republicans would have preferred for Northern Ireland. Nonetheless it is highly unlikely that it would have brought a political normalization had it been applied in Northern Ireland as I will demonstrate.

### **The Pan Nationalists Front versus the Redefinition of Nationalism**

Numerous accounts have praised the role played by Fr Alec Reid in the Northern Ireland peace process, some claiming that he was actually responsible for starting it.<sup>57</sup> Reid, a member of the Redemptorist Order based in Clonard Monastery, situated in West Belfast, had been closed to republicans since the onset of the Troubles. His personal relationship with Gerry Adams led him to act as an intermediary between the IRA and the British and Irish Governments. According to some observers, in the mid 1980s Reid was convinced of the IRA’s desire to put an end to their campaign of violence and of Adams’ readiness to accept the unionist veto. In Reid’s view, ‘the opportunity was there to end the armed struggle’.<sup>58</sup> The literature on the peace process has tended to be uncritical of Fr Reid’s role in the peace process. However, a detailed analysis of his endeavours raises serious doubts about their viability suggesting that in fact peace was advanced because of the rejection with which the British and Irish Governments as well as the SDLP responded to Reid’s ambitions. As Gerry Adams has written, Fr Reid’s ‘sine qua non condition’ for what the priest called ‘an

alternative method' for the IRA, was 'an agreement between the nationalist parties around a united policy of aims and methods for solving the conflict'. Reid believed that the only credible alternative approach which might interest the IRA was a 'political coalition between the main nationalist parties –especially between the SDLP and Sinn Fein', since together they could 'create a political force sufficiently powerful to persuade the IRA to desist from the armed struggle'.<sup>59</sup> This is a point corroborated by Reid himself, who understood that if Sinn Fein, the SDLP and the main political parties in Dublin 'could come together and agree on a common democratic strategy, that would provide an alternative strategy that could credibly be sold to the IRA'.<sup>60</sup>

Therefore, what Reid was suggesting was the creation of a pan nationalist front similar to the one that Basque nationalists have attempted to create. Reid's influence behind the strategy pursued by Basque nationalism is manifested in his involvement with nationalist's formations there since the 1990s. As the nationalist trade unionist Germán Kortabarria revealed, Reid was responsible for drafting the Lizarra Declaration.<sup>61</sup> In 2003 Reid was awarded the 'Sabino Arana' prize, an annual award that carries the name of the founder of Basque nationalism. Reid is also adviser to the group Elkarri, one of the signatories of the Lizarra Declaration. Although Elkarri has attempted to position itself as a mediator in the Basque conflict some actors identify it as 'a PNV's NGO'.<sup>62</sup> Elkarri's agenda fully coincides with that of the main nationalist parties, frequently establishing a parallel between ETA and the state in an attempt to explain terrorism as the result of the alleged refusal of the Spanish government to 'dialogue', this being understood in the most ambiguous and generic form.<sup>63</sup> Reid's interpretation of the Irish peace process has been accepted to a great degree by Basque nationalism. His interviews with the Basque media are revealing. In his view, 'the

IRA stopped when it was presented with a real alternative dynamic'.<sup>64</sup> Although the Irish priest has admitted that he doesn't understand 'the Basque problem enough to know if ETA are Republicans'<sup>65</sup>, he is in no doubt that 'generally speaking there is a conflict between Basques and Spaniards'<sup>66</sup> and consequently he considers that 'now the Spanish government is the greatest problem'.<sup>67</sup> Reid's interpretation of the Irish context and its application to the Basque Country suits the interests of those Basque nationalists who are trying to build a coalition of forces as a means of avoiding the defeat of ETA. A knowledgeable interviewer raised the issue when he asked Reid: 'Are you and your associates in the Basque Country not trying to prevent ETA's defeat when it is against the wall?' The priest's elusive response is revealing: 'I think that if a conflict throws violence into the streets for a long time, and in the Basque Country it has lasted for quite long, there is something to do with human rights deep inside it. And if there is something to do with human rights, it can't be defeated because nothing can defeat the human spirit.'<sup>68</sup>

Reid's analysis relieves the IRA and ETA from the responsibility of resolving the conflict by making other agents responsible and in so doing fudges the obligations which should befall those who use violence to stop it. However, it is possible to show that the reason the IRA ended violence is not due to this apparent alternative which others had created and offered to the terrorist group. As I have pointed out, the peace process has not guaranteed the realisation of republican aspirations, and is based rather on parameters which were already outlined at the beginning of the 1970s. That is to say, thirty years ago the IRA had a practically identical alternative which it rejected then but has now accepted after realizing that violence was ineffective due to both its political and human cost. This alternative does not in any way consist of a

grouping of national forces which Alec Reid and Basque nationalism have pursued for the Basque country. In contrast to what Reid has stated, it is not correct to attribute the peace process to the creation of an alternative political dynamic based on a common strategy of Irish nationalism. The alternative that the IRA opted for in 1994 had existed for a long time and the catalyst was not this apparent unity of action of the nationalist forces. Therefore the fundamental change that made the peace process possible is not to be found in a change of attitude of the non-violent agents, but in the revisionism assumed by the IRA and by Sinn Fein who now accept what they had previously rejected.

There are serious shortcomings in Reid's belief that a pan nationalist alliance would bring peace. First of all, Reid's interpretation of the IRA's allegedly peaceful intentions was simply based on what Gerry Adams was telling him. As a participant in the process observed, 'The difficulty was that it was so hard to take Reid seriously; he was passionate about things [but] with no evidence of change'.<sup>69</sup> Private meetings sponsored by Reid in 1988 between IRA leaders and representatives of the Irish government and the SDLP failed to convince constitutional nationalists that republicans were genuine about ending their campaign. Sinn Fein's objective in these talks was primarily to convince the SDLP to move away from any political initiative that didn't guarantee the unification of Ireland.<sup>70</sup> The SDLP's Eddie McGrady viewed Father Reid's invitation to talks as 'a ploy by Sinn Fein to get off the hook in the aftermath of the Enniskillen massacre'.<sup>71</sup> This was also the view of Martin Mansergh, the Taoiseach's adviser who met republicans in 1988. After two meetings Mansergh did not see any willingness on the IRA's side to put an end to violence. In his opinion republicans were not interested in peace but in breaking their

marginalisation,<sup>72</sup> so he considered it ‘politically dangerous’ to pursue the contacts and these were called off.<sup>73</sup> As McGrady put it, those talks ‘might jeopardize the prospect of fruitful dialogue with the Unionists’.<sup>74</sup> Such an evident risk did not seem to affect Reid’s strategy who insisted on forging a pan nationalist front in spite of what unionists would think of it and of the fact that Adams would only consider ‘calling on the IRA to implement a ceasefire if the Irish Government would pursue the issue of Irish unification’.<sup>75</sup> Therefore, Reid’s idea for the resolution of the conflict seems to have amounted to a way of giving the IRA precisely what they were lacking: the legitimacy and popular support that violence was denying them. It is useful to remember that in 1986 Adams described Sinn Fein’s position in the Republic as ‘a party apart from the people, proud of our past but with little involvement in the present and only dreams for the future’.<sup>76</sup> This is why Adams welcomed a united nationalist front that would supplement the republican movement’s weaknesses, as he had articulated in 1985 when he called for ‘a united Nationalist approach to the whole question of the British involvement in this country’.<sup>77</sup>

If the armalite and ballot box strategy was going to be successful Sinn Fein had to increasingly win a considerable share of the nationalist vote in Northern Ireland. Republican’s had failed to achieve this essential condition although a pan nationalist front would make it unnecessary rendering their strategy effective. This nationalist alliance would have provided the IRA a way out of an isolation that prevented republicans from succeeding in their objectives. Nonetheless it was hardly going to bring about a peace process with the unionist community. The peace process finally came about when republicans looked for a way out of that isolation, as acknowledged in a 1994 IRA’s internal document in which the leadership accepted their lack of

‘strength to achieve the end goal’ and the need for a ceasefire.<sup>78</sup> Therefore, and as an insightful commentator has put it, ‘what brought about Adams’ search for a way out was not that people were prepared to welcome Sinn Fein into the larger nationalist family and give them an alternative to violence. (...) The real engine of change was the unremitting efforts of the *securocrats* in two states to understand the IRA, to frustrate its campaign and to guide it to a cessation.’<sup>79</sup>

It is very significant that both ETA and the IRA were in a position of weakness when their representatives engaged in talks with constitutional nationalists. In 1992 the Basque group suffered a massive setback when its leadership was arrested in the South of France. That year political representatives of constitutional and radical Basque nationalism met to discuss a ceasefire that ETA refused to declare. When the truce finally came in 1998 it was in the wake of very damaging events for ETA. In July 1997 the organization kidnapped a young Basque councillor from the party in government, PP (*Partido Popular, Popular Party*) and threatened to kill him in forty-eight hours if ETA’s prisoners were not brought back to prisons in the Basque Country. ETA’s murder of Miguel Ángel Blanco was met with an unprecedented response in the streets of the Basque Country. The massive demonstrations and expressions of outrage were followed by internal dissent in the organization when important activists demanded the end of the ‘armed struggle’ acknowledging ETA’s lack of support and ineffectiveness.<sup>80</sup> It is in this context that the PNV entered into negotiations with ETA that concluded in the pact that preceded the group’s ceasefire. Contrary to Irish nationalism’s response to the IRA’s isolation, Basque nationalism decided to help ETA to supersede its marginalisation with a pan nationalist front as described above. Although some authors believe that constitutional nationalists were

motivated to pursue such a method by the ‘honorable intention’ to create favorable conditions that would help ETA to end its violence,<sup>81</sup> the opinions of two important nationalists suggest a different rationale. Txema Montero, former member of the European Parliament for HB and now close to the PNV, expressed in 1998 his fears that ‘ETA’s military defeat’ would have negative political consequences for the Basque people.<sup>82</sup> Koldo San Sebastián, a member of the PNV, admitted that in the summer of 1997 many activists feared that without ETA the party would become ‘insignificant’. He believed that those were the most critical moments for constitutional nationalism since 1936.<sup>83</sup> It is extremely significant that constitutional nationalists equated ETA’s weakness and difficulties with a profound crisis for what had been regarded until then as moderate nationalism. To some extent this crisis had already manifested itself in the electoral map since in the two previous legislative elections non-nationalists had overcome constitutional nationalists. These circumstances would have convinced constitutional nationalists of the need to look for votes in the nationalist constituency that traditionally had given its support to ETA’s political wing. This strategic shift demanded a radicalization that was at odds with the constitutionalisation that Irish republicans embarked upon as a requisite for the peace process.

As the Ulster Unionist Party leader, David Trimble, admitted, the influence of John Hume, until recently leader of the SDLP, has been fundamental in the ‘redefinition of Irish nationalism’.<sup>84</sup> This redefinition of nationalist ideology has led some academics to refer to Hume as a post nationalist<sup>85</sup> or neo nationalist<sup>86</sup> rather than a nationalist in the traditional sense.<sup>87</sup> It is true, as pointed out by Michael Cunningham, that some tension existed between Hume’s advocacy of post-nationalism and nationalist

assumptions which characterised some of his language.<sup>88</sup> However, the nationalism he advocated lacked the historical determinism of traditional Irish nationalists which demanded the unification of the North and South of the island irrespective of the wishes of those inhabitants who were against it. We can appreciate the extent of this revisionism when we assess Hume's previous approaches to the conflict. In 1972 the SDLP, stated that Great Britain should immediately declare that the unification of Ireland was the best solution for all communities. Consequently Nationalists proposed that during the process of unification a transitional government would be established for Northern Ireland under joint British and Irish sovereignty.<sup>89</sup> This was not the only time that Hume proposed a system of joint sovereignty. In 1992, he once again took up an idea destined for failure when he suggested a system of government based on a six members commission. Three of them would be elected within Northern Ireland, while the British government, the Irish government and the European Community would individually designate each of the remaining members. The rest of the political parties immediately rejected this formula of sovereignty with a strong Irish dimension. Even the Alliance Party accused the SDLP of obstructing the all-party talks with such a plan.<sup>90</sup> These ambitious but ineffective proposals had to be abandoned as a prerequisite for a peace process that finally provided a framework for government based on very simple power sharing arrangements. In contrast with this formula the president of the Basque Government put forward in 2002 a plan aimed at establishing a new status between the Spanish state and the Basque Country based on 'joint sovereignty' after the Basque people decide in referendum whether they accept their 'free association' with Spain.<sup>91</sup> This plan, widely criticised by a whole range of opinion in Basque society, is a continuation of a historical departure from the PNV which has declared as its objective to overcome the Statute of Autonomy from which

the authority of the *Lehendakari* emanates. Therefore, the strategy used by the PNV to integrate radical Basque nationalism into the democratic arena and which, as approved at this party's III General Assembly, should focus on 'promoting awareness of territorial integrity',<sup>92</sup> contradicts the principles on which the Northern Irish peace process has been built.

### **Self-Government, Self-Determination and a Framework for Peace**

The Northern Irish peace process, based on the conviction that a system of shared autonomous government offers the best framework for resolving the conflict, is attempting to move towards an scenario which is not very different to that which the Basque Statute of Autonomy put into operation in the late 1970s. This is why the consolidation of the autonomous framework, as opposed to self-determination, is the main objective of the main Northern Irish players. It is within this framework that they need to create a space for coexistence in which the national question ceases to dominate political life. Contrary to this tendency, the former president of the PNV, Xabier Arzalluz, believes that 'for nationalists the way forward is with the left *abertzale*<sup>93</sup> and not exactly with the PP or PSOE', parties with which he has refused to co-operate, because he considers that with them they would be 'more and more in a increasing lukewarm autonomy'.<sup>94</sup> However, it is precisely this 'lukewarm autonomy' which Northern Irish nationalism has opted for in an attempt to break down the politics of ethnic-blocs.

The acceptance of the Belfast Agreement by violent nationalism has inaugurated a new phase in the conflict. One of its consequences has been the participation of Sinn Fein in the autonomous government of Northern Ireland. In this way a subversive and

violent organization like the IRA has been incorporated into the structures of the State which it once fought. Autonomy, therefore, has turned into the framework within which agents should undertake to bring about the democratic normalisation absent for decades. Consequently, it is necessary to question the belief expressed by Arzalluz that he would exchange Basque independence ‘for the status of Northern Ireland’.<sup>95</sup> The fact is that the institutions resulting from the Belfast Agreement have not been able to solve the conflict definitively. They have simply created a new framework in which opposing nationalist ideologies will have the opportunity to settle their differences. The significant transformations within militant nationalism have contributed to creating a political context in which violence has decreased considerably, although it is still not possible to talk about a complete disappearance. In such a context it is easier than in the past to bring about the political normalisation of a region which hopes for the coexistence of the ‘two truths, unionism and nationalism’.<sup>96</sup> However, the potential for conflict still exists, given that the Agreement has an open structure in which theoretically neither of the nationalist ideologies have forsaken their aspirations. The document includes the possibility of holding referendums which would determine the state of the ‘national question’ respecting the principle of consent which has formed the basis of British policy towards the region and the peace process. In this way the destiny of Northern Ireland has been reduced to mere numerical criteria. The implicit danger is clear and has led prominent nationalist figures to point out that a hypothetical reunification would not only require the consent of the majority of the Northern Irish population, but also the approval of unionists even if they were in a minority. In spite of the dangers of engaging in the politics of majoritarianism Basque nationalists have moved to what Keating has described as ‘a more overtly pro-independence position’, renewing its

attacks on the Basque Statute of Autonomy as an illegitimate imposition.’ As Keating puts it, ‘this contrasts with the situation in Northern Ireland, where the SDLP has sought a consociational government of all parties and not a nationalist front. There is now fear in the Basque Country that this nationalist front could produce a communitarian cleavage, which so far has largely been avoided’.<sup>97</sup>

This fear is shared by nationalist academic Javier Elzo who has warned that Basque society is now more divided and polarised as a result of the replacement of the set of alliances that had dominated politics until the PNV’s shift.<sup>98</sup> The centre of gravity of Basque politics is not anymore the alliance between democrats against those who advocate violence, but a confrontation between nationalists and non-nationalists. The danger of this approach mirrors the challenges that Stephen Farry contemplates for Northern Ireland: ‘With no common bonds or overarching loyalties, it is relatively easy for separate communities to go their different ways. Unless the platform provided by the Agreement is used to build a shared, non-sectarian society, these divisions will eventually undermine the Agreement and cause its collapse.’<sup>99</sup> Basque nationalism is questioning the ‘common bonds’, ‘the overarching loyalties’ enshrined in the Statute of Autonomy that had avoided the division of Basque society into opposing communities. Thus the nationalist’s discourse has in recent years focused on de-legitimising that Statute, as illustrated by a PNV’s document published in April 2003 which called for the restoration of democracy since it alleged that the Basque people are ‘ruled against their will’ by an ‘external majority’ represented by the non nationalist parties.<sup>100</sup> This represents an attempt to constrain the multiplicity of Basque identities that characterises society into opposing and exclusive nationalist allegiances.

The framework introduced after the signing of the Belfast Agreement places its hopes of success in the consolidation of a type of consociationalism like that which some observers propose for the Basque Country. The search for consensus emerges as a priority to guarantee the survival of the new political structures. This is why self-determination under the terms of traditional nationalism makes no sense in a heterogeneous society like that of Northern Ireland. All of this shows the preeminence of the endogenous factors of the conflict providing a valuable lesson for the Basque situation which has been overlooked by Juan José Ibarretxe's proposal of free association with the Spanish state. The plan put forward by the head of the Basque government identifies the Basque Country's relationship with Spain as the main source of conflict, and this is why he demands a new 'agreement for co-existence' with the Spanish state. However, he ignores the fact that it is in a different and much closer arena, that between Basques themselves, that co-existence must first be restored. Contrary to what Northern Ireland shows, Ibarretxe avoids the internal conflict within the Basque country. He underestimates the fact that, as in Northern Ireland, the conflict is mostly internal and the main obstacle to normalisation is the disappearance of the violence that continues to divide and intimidate Basque society.<sup>101</sup> The Northern Ireland example illustrates how difficult it is to contemplate sovereignty being ceded by the state in a context conditioned by persisting terrorism. In such a scenario, proposals which imply any derogation of sovereignty, are interpreted as a mere instrument of nationalist aspirations and not as efficient mechanisms for the improvement of self-government. This is why it is difficult for them to lead to a consensus which would make them viable.

## Conclusion

For the last thirty years academics have paid very little attention to the relationship between nationalist terrorist groups like the IRA and ETA and nationalist political parties that have rejected violence in Ireland and the Basque Country. In fact, the redefinition of Irish traditional nationalism experienced by the main nationalist formations in the island has been a key factor in the IRA's decision to abandon its terrorist campaign. Previous to the IRA's 1994 ceasefire and contrary to what the Irish terrorist group would have desired, constitutional nationalism in the North and the South of Ireland rejected a pan nationalist front which would have included Sinn Fein as an exchange for the IRA's cessation. Had republicans been successful in their attempts, a peace process with the Unionist community would have been impossible to develop. This factor, together with the defeat of the IRA is the basis of the peace process in Northern Ireland. Although many academics and politicians have defined the Northern Ireland peace process as a model in conflict resolution that should be used around the world, the main lessons that emerge from the Irish experience have been ignored by nationalist parties in another terrorist conflict within Europe: the Basque Country. The distortion of the Irish model by the main Basque nationalist parties and the terrorist organisation ETA is one of the main reasons behind the failed attempt to end violence in the region during the mid to late 1990s.

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<sup>1</sup> For a statistical analysis of the violence perpetrated in the Basque Country since the mid 1970s see José Luis Barbería and Patxo Unzueta, *Cómo hemos llegado a esto. La crisis vasca* (Madrid: Taurus 2003) p.304. On the history of ETA, see Florencio Domínguez, *De la negociación a la tregua: El final de ETA?* (Madrid: Taurus 1998); Florencio Domínguez, *ETA: Estrategia Organizativa y Actuaciones 1978-1992*

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(Bilbao: Universidad del País Vasco 1998); Antonio Elorza *et al*, *La historia de ETA* (Madrid: Temas de Hoy 2000).

<sup>2</sup> For an excellent historical overview of the politics of the Basque Country see Francisco J. Llera, 'Conflicto en Euskadi Revisited', in Richard Gunther, ed., *Politics, Society, and Democracy. The Case of Spain* (Colorado: Westview Press 1993) pp.169-195.

<sup>3</sup> Danielle Conversi, 'Domino Effect or Internal Developments? The Influences of International Events and Political Ideologies on Catalan and Basque Nationalism', *West European Politics*, Vol. 16, Nº 3 (July 1993) p.264.

<sup>4</sup> Benjamín Tejerina, 'Protest cycle, political violence and social movements in the Basque Country', *Nations and Nationalism*, 7, Nº 1, (2001) pp.39-57; Ludger Mees, 'Between votes and bullets. Conflicting ethnic identities in the Basque Country', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 24, Nº 5, (September 2001) pp.798-827.

<sup>5</sup> On the history of the PNV, Santiago de Pablo, Ludger Mees y José A. Rodríguez Ranz, *El péndulo patriótico. Historia del Partido Nacionalista Vasco, Vol. I and II* (Barcelona: Crítica 1999, 2001).

<sup>6</sup> Fernando Reinares, 'Democratization and State Responses to Protracted Terrorism in Spain', p.59, in Marianne van Leeuwen, ed., *Confronting Terrorism. European experiences, threat perceptions and policies* (The Hague: Kluwer International 2003) pp.57-70.

<sup>7</sup> Llera, 'Conflicto en Euskadi Revisited' (note 2) p. 174. See also Francisco Llera, 'La polarización vasca: entre la autonomía y la independencia', in William Safran and Ramón Maiz, eds., *Identidad y autogobierno en sociedades multiculturales* (Barcelona: Ariel 2002) pp.165-185. Percentages of the evolution of the vote in the

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Basque Country can be found in Barbería and Unzueta, 'Cómo hemos llegado a esto' (note 1) pp.306-315.

<sup>8</sup> Euskal Herria, the ethno-linguistic unit claimed by Basque separatists as their homeland, is made up of the three Spanish provinces that conform the Basque Country (Guipúzcoa, Álava and Vizcaya), as well as another Spanish province outside the Basque Autonomous Community, Navarra, and the French Departments of Labour, Soul and the Lower Navarra portions of Pyrénées Atlantiques.

<sup>9</sup> *Gara*, 30 April 2000.

<sup>10</sup> *Reconocer el ser para decidir*, Annex approved in the III PNV's National Assembly, *El País*, 14 Jan. 2000.

<sup>11</sup> *El Correo*, 1 Nov. 2001.

<sup>12</sup> *Declaración de Lizarra*, *El País*, 13 Sep. 1998.

<sup>13</sup> For a more detailed analysis of the contents of the Lizarra Declaration see Rogelio Alonso, *Irlanda del Norte. Una historia de guerra y la búsqueda de la paz* (Madrid: Editorial Complutense 2001) pp.407-424.

<sup>14</sup> *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, 17 Dec. 1998; *The Guardian*, 13 July 1999.

<sup>15</sup> Anthony McIntyre, 'Is Sinn Fein a victim of its own design?', *Parliamentary Brief*, Vol.5, N°6, (May/June 1998) pp.13-14.

<sup>16</sup> *The Guardian*, 13 July 1999.

<sup>17</sup> *Fortnight*, Dec. 1982.

<sup>18</sup> ETA's communiqué in *Gara*, 29 April 2000.

<sup>19</sup> *The Irish Times*, 17 Sep. 1998.

<sup>20</sup> *Gara*, 30 April 2000.

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<sup>21</sup> Francisco Llera, 'La red terrorista: subcultura de la violencia y nacionalismo en Euskadi', p.292, in Antonio Robles Egea, ed., *La sangre de las naciones. Identidades nacionales y violencia política* (Granada: Universidad de Granada 2003) pp.265-296.

As social surveys consistently show, the majority of Basque society opts for a dual and non exclusive Basque and Spanish identity.

<sup>22</sup> According to a social survey carried out in 2000 only 29 per cent of Basques favoured independence. This option was favoured by 95 per cent of EH voters and 43 per cent of PNV and EA supporters. The majority of Basque society, as well as the majority of those who support the PNV, were in favour of autonomy. Llera, 'La red terrorista: subcultura de la violencia y nacionalismo en Euskadi' (note 21) p. 287.

<sup>23</sup> *The Sunday Times*, 28 March 1999.

<sup>24</sup> *Irish Examiner*, online edition, 31 March 2003.

<sup>25</sup> *Irish News*, 13 April 2001.

<sup>26</sup> *The Irish Times*, 12 April 2001.

<sup>27</sup> 'Ahern remarks provoke dispute', *RM Distribution, Irish News Round-Up*, 26-28 April 2002, <http://irlnet.com.rmlist>.

<sup>28</sup> See Rogelio Alonso, 'The Modernization in Irish Republican Thinking Toward the Utility of Violence', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Vol.24, (2001) pp.131-144.

<sup>29</sup> M.L.R. Smith, *Fighting for Ireland? The Military Strategy of the Irish Republican Movement* (London: Routledge 1997) p.108. See the IRA's demands in *Hansard*, Volume 840, 10 July 1972, col. 1179-1180.

<sup>30</sup> *Belfast Telegraph*, 19 June 1995.

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<sup>31</sup> This is how Gerry Adams described it in June 1995. Paul Bew and Gordon Gillespie, *The Northern Ireland Peace Process 1993-1996. A Chronology* (London: Serif 1996) p.104.

<sup>32</sup> *The Sunday Tribune*, 5 May 2002.

<sup>33</sup> According to Gerry Kelly, prominent Sinn Fein's figure, 'The stroke of a colonial pen has overturned the democratic wishes of the electorate north and south and has ripped apart an international agreement'. Quoted in *The Irish Times*, 24 April 2000. Elections were finally held in November 2003, although at the time of writing –April 2004- the Northern Ireland Assembly remained suspended.

<sup>34</sup> As Reinares has argued, the process of democratization the Basque Country experienced after the death of Franco constitutes the real 'Basque peace process'. Reinares (note 6).

<sup>35</sup> Domínguez, *De la negociación a la tregua* (note 1) p.172. For an analysis of previous contacts between ETA and the Spanish government see Robert P. Clark, *Negotiating with ETA. Obstacles to Peace in the Basque Country. 1975-1988*, (Reno: University of Nevada Press 1990).

<sup>36</sup> *Zutabe 91*, June 2001.

<sup>37</sup> Quoted in *El Correo*, 12 April 2002.

<sup>38</sup> See for example the declaration issued by the PNV's executive on 31 October 2001, *Vasco Press*, Bilbao; as well as numerous articles in the PNV's newspaper, *Deia*, and the newspaper identified with ETA, *Gara*: 'La lógica de la guerra', Joaquín Navarro in *Deia*, 2 Nov. 2001; 'Apuntes vasco-irlandeses', Maite Ubiria in *Gara*, 25 October 2001; Radio interview with Arnaldo Otegi, leader of Batasuna, in *Hoy por Hoy*, *Cadena SER*, 25 Oct. 2001; ETA's communiqué in *Gara*, 16 Nov. 2001; 'Ibarretxe cree que el irlandés es un 'modelo de solución' para Euskadi' (*Ibarretxe believes that*

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*the Irish is a model for the resolution of the conflict*), in *El Correo*, 1 Nov. 2001; Interview with Arnaldo Otegi published in *Deia*, 18 Nov. 2001, *Gara*, 7 Dec. 2001 and *Deia*, 9 April 2004; ETA's *Zutabe* –ETA's internal publication- quoted in *Gara*, 30 Jan. 2002.

<sup>39</sup> Declaration issued by the PNV's executive on 31 Oct. 2001, *Vasco Press*, Bilbao.

<sup>40</sup> Peter R. Neumann, 'Bringing in the Rogues: Political Violence, the British Government and Sinn Fein', p. 166, *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol.15, N°3 (Autumn 2003), pp.154-171.

<sup>41</sup> *Irish Republican Army (IRA) Ceasefire Statement*, 31 August 1994, *An Phoblacht/Republican News*.

<sup>42</sup> Roger MacGinty *et al*, p.475, 'The Principle of Consent and Northern Ireland's Constitutional Future', *Government and Opposition*, Vol.36, N°4, (2001) pp.472-492.

<sup>43</sup> Gerry Adams, *A Pathway to Peace* (Cork: Mercier 1988) p.11.

<sup>44</sup> Interview with IRA spokesperson, *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, 11 Sept.1997.

<sup>45</sup> *Author's interview with Gerry Adams*, Belfast, 1 Oct. 1996.

<sup>46</sup> 'Take ownership of the peace process', Speech by Gerry Adams, *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, 2 March 2000.

<sup>47</sup> Address by Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams at 1998 Ard Fheis, *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, 14 May 1998.

<sup>48</sup> *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, 30 April 1998.

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<sup>49</sup> ‘Republicanism after Good Friday’, Extract from Daltún Ó Ceallaigh’s book *Irish Republicanism-Good Friday and After, An Phoblacht/Republican News*, 28 Sept. 2000.

<sup>50</sup> See for example Richard English, *Armed Struggle. A History of the IRA* (London: Macmillan 2003); Brian Feeney, *Sinn Féin. A Hundred Turbulent Years*. (Dublin: O’Brien 2002); Peter Taylor, *Provos: The IRA and Sinn Fein* (London: Bloomsbury 1997); Eamonn Mallie and David McKittrick, *The Fight for Peace* (London: Heinemann 1996). Other authors have questioned this ‘stalemate theory’ pointing out that the IRA and Sinn Fein’s weakness and the superiority of the state are at the centre of the peace process. See for instance, Ed Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA* (London: Penguin 2003); Liam Clarke and Kathryn Johnston, *Martin McGuinness. From Guns to Government*. (Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing Company 2001); Jack Holland, *Hope Against History: The Ulster Conflict* (London: Hodder & Stoughton 1999).

<sup>51</sup> *Author’s interview with IRA member*. Quoted in Rogelio Alonso, *Matar por Irlanda. El IRA y la lucha armada* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial 2003) p.246.

<sup>52</sup> *Northern Ireland Constitution Act 1973*. London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 18 July 1973; *Northern Ireland Constitutional Proposals*. London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, March 1973, Cmnd. 5259; and *The Future of Northern Ireland. A Paper for Discussion*. Belfast: Northern Ireland Office, Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 30 October 1972. See also the parliamentary debate on this last document in *Hansard*, Volume 846, 13 November 1972, p.43 *seriatim*.

<sup>53</sup> In 1973 the main nationalists and unionists parties in Northern Ireland agreed to share power in an autonomous Assembly. At the end of the year the Sunningdale

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Agreement was signed by the Northern Ireland executive and the British and Irish Governments. This Agreement was based on the same basic principles of British policy towards the region outlined above. This is the reason that led Seamus Mallon, a prominent figure in the SDLP, to define the 1998 Belfast Agreement as ‘Sunningdale for slow learners’. Quoted in Steve Bruce, ‘Peace in our time? The 1998 Agreement’, p.26, *Scottish Affairs*, N° 25, (Autumn 1998) pp.21-38. See also *Sunningdale Communiqué*, December 1973. Northern Ireland Office Information Service. For a comprehensive analysis of the main contents of the Belfast Agreement see Rick Wilford, ed., *Aspects of the Belfast Agreement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2001).

<sup>54</sup> Donald L. Horowitz, ‘Explaining the Northern Ireland Agreement: The Sources of an Unlikely Constitutional Consensus’, p.205, *British Journal of Political Science*, 32, (2002) pp.193-220.

<sup>55</sup> *Author’s interview with Lord Merlyn Rees*, London, 4 Dec. 1996.

<sup>56</sup> Seamus Mallon in *Hansard*, 22 February 1995, Volume 255, cc. 366-367. It is revealing to see the gap between what Sinn Fein finally endorsed in the Belfast Agreement and the party’s negotiation agenda, which was summarized in *Ireland on Sunday*, 8 March 1998.

<sup>57</sup> See for example Moloney, ‘A Secret History of the IRA’ (note 48), and Kevin Rafter, ‘Priests and Peace: The role of the Redemptorist Order in the Northern Ireland Peace Process’, *Études Irlandaises*, N° 28-1, 2003 pp.159-176.

<sup>58</sup> Rafter, ‘Priests and Peace’ (note 55) p.168.

<sup>59</sup> Gerry Adams, *Hope and History. Making Peace in Ireland* (Dingle: Brandon 2003) p.36.

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<sup>60</sup> Rafter, 'Priests and Peace' (note 55) p.168.

<sup>61</sup> Transcript of a seminar held in Bilbao at which Alec Reid spoke: 'Testimonio del proceso de paz en Irlanda', Alec Reid, *Seminario organizado por la Fundación Manu Robles-Arangiz Institutua*, Palacio Euskalduna, Bilbao, 29 June 2000.

<sup>62</sup> '¿Todos los proyectos, ideas y personas?', José Ignacio Herranz, *Gara*, 8 Jan. 2003.

<sup>63</sup> For a very coherent criticism of Elkarri see Carlos Martínez Gorriarán, 'El discurso del medio. Retóricas comprensivas del terrorismo en el País Vasco', in Kepa Aulestia *et al*, *Razones contra la violencia. Por la convivencia democrática en el País Vasco* (Bilbao: Bakeaz 1998) pp.83-132.

<sup>64</sup> *Gara*, 15 Dec. 2002.

<sup>65</sup> *El Correo*, 20 May 2002.

<sup>66</sup> *Gara*, 25 Jan. 2002.

<sup>67</sup> *El Correo*, 20 May 2002.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> Moloney, 'A Secret History of the IRA' (note 48) p.256.

<sup>70</sup> Ciaran Bradley, *Consensus in Contemporary Ireland? The Sinn Fein/SDLP Talks and Related Issues* (MSc Thesis, Queen's University of Belfast, 1989) p.61.

<sup>71</sup> Gerard Murray, *John Hume and the SDLP* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press 1998), p.174.

<sup>72</sup> *Author's interview with Dr Martin Mansergh*, Dublin, 13 February 1998.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> Murray, 'John Hume and the SDLP' (note 69) p.175.

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid, p.171.

<sup>76</sup> Henry Patterson, *The Politics of Illusion. A Political History of the IRA*. (London: Serif 1997) p.205.

<sup>77</sup> Murray, 'John Hume and the SDLP' (note 69) p. 161.

<sup>78</sup> The document is reproduced in Eamonn Mallie and David McKittrick, *The Fight for Peace* (London: Heinemann 1996) pp.381-384.

<sup>79</sup> Liam Clarke, 'Republicans will never grow up if we excuse bad behaviour', *The Sunday Times*, 13 October 2002. The term *securocrats* started to be widely used by republicans during the peace process as a means of describing those in favour of implementing tough security measures against the IRA. Contrary to Irvin's view, the relegation of Sinn Fein to the sidelines of the political arena can be seen as beneficial since it forced the IRA to abandon violence in order to end the party's exclusion. Cynthia L. Irvin, *Militant Nationalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 1999) p.209.

<sup>80</sup> Domínguez, *De la negociación a la tregua* (note 1) pp.165-171.

<sup>81</sup> Ludger Mees, *Nationalism, Violence and Democracy. The Basque Clash of Identities* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan 2003) p.169.

<sup>82</sup> Domínguez, *De la negociación a la tregua* (note 1) p. 174.

<sup>83</sup> *Deia*, 24 July 2001.

<sup>84</sup> David Trimble, 'The Belfast Agreement', p. 1150, *Fordham International Law Journal*, Vol.22, N°4 (April 1999) pp.1145-1170.

<sup>85</sup> Gerard Murray, *John Hume and the SDLP* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press 1998), p. 256.

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<sup>86</sup> John McGarry and Brendan O’Leary, *Explaining Northern Ireland. Broken Images* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers 1995) pp.19-20,56-60.

<sup>87</sup> Nationalism in the Irish State also shows post nationalist or neo-nationalist traits. See for example Gareth Ivory, ‘Revisions in nationalist discourse among Irish political parties’, *Irish Political Studies*, 14, (1999) pp.84-103.

<sup>88</sup> Michael Cunningham, ‘The political language of John Hume’, *Irish Political Studies*, 12 (1997) pp.13-22.

<sup>89</sup> *The Future of Northern Ireland. A Paper for Discussion*. Belfast: Northern Ireland Office, Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 30 October 1972, pp.72-82, Anex 7, ‘Towards a New Ireland’, Social Democratic and Labour Party.

<sup>90</sup> *Belfast Telegraph*, 9 December 1992.

<sup>91</sup> The *Lehendakari*, Juan José Ibarretxe, formalised his proposal in the Basque Parliament in 2002 and 2003. The parliamentary speeches on this initiative can be read in full in *El Correo*, 28 September 2002, 26 September 2003, and 26 October 2003.

<sup>92</sup> *Reconocer el ser para decidir*, Annex approved in the III PNV’s National Assembly, *El País*, 14 January 2000.

<sup>93</sup> The term *abertzale* –patriot- is generally used to refer to nationalist parties such as ETA’s political wing. Arzalluz has been a dominant figure in Basque nationalism for the last thirty years. He was replaced as PNV’s president in January 2004 and is still highly influential within the party.

<sup>94</sup> Interview with Xabier Arzalluz, *Deia*, 10 Dec. 2000.

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<sup>95</sup> Interview with Xabier Arzalluz, *El Tiempo*, 11 Dec. 2000.

<sup>96</sup> Arthur Aughey, *Nationalism, Devolution and the Challenge to the United Kingdom State* (London: Pluto Press 2001) p.131.

<sup>97</sup> Michael Keating, 'Northern Ireland and the Basque Country', p.204, in John McGarry, ed., *Northern Ireland and the Divided World. Post-Agreement Northern Ireland in Comparative Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2001) pp.181-208.

<sup>98</sup> Javier Elzo and Gema Bizkarrondo, eds., *La convivencia en la sociedad vasca II. Los puentes de Deusto. Actas de un debate universitario* (Bilbao: Universidad de Deusto 2002).

<sup>99</sup> *The Irish Times*, 4 Jan. 2003.

<sup>100</sup> 'De la ofensiva electoral a la guerra político judicial', April 2003, <http://www.eaj-pnv.com>. There are plenty of examples of speeches and articles by nationalists politicians comparing Spanish democracy with Franco's dictatorship as a means of attacking the legitimacy of the Statute of Autonomy. See for example Xabier Arzalluz's remarks when he claimed that the Spanish prime minister, José María Aznar, was unable to 'shoot' Basques 'like Franco' because of the country's membership of the European Union. Quoted in *El Correo*, 14 June 2002.

<sup>101</sup> According to *Gesto por la Paz* (Gesture for Peace), a prominent NGO in the Basque Country, more than forty thousand people suffer ETA's threat in the region. 'Gesto por la Paz estima que 42.000 personas sufren la amenaza directa de los etarras', *El País*, 9 November 2002.