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# Paul Arthur Politics of the Troubles Part 1

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**Talk Title from the Program Schedule: History of the Troubles from 1970 to the Present.**

**Paul Arthur, Professor of Political Science and Director, Masters Programme in Peace and Conflict Studies, Magee College, University of Ulster, Derry/Londonderry, Northern Ireland.**

**This lecture took place Monday, May 27, 2002, in the Council Chamber, Main Building, Magee College, University of Ulster, Derry/Londonderry, Northern Ireland. The lecture session began at 9:00 am and ran until to 11:00 am. This is the second part of that lecture. The first part is a tape running 32 minutes. The third part of the lecture takes place the following day. We have technical problems with the fourth part of the lecture. We intend to find a lecture by Professor Arthur from a later year that covers the substance of that fourth part of the lecture.**

00:00 Paul is sitting at the end of a table in a classroom setting. Paul: "The first thing I want to do is rather than simply give you a chronological of events since 1970, I want to put it in some sort of context, and the context I want to put it in is, the political culture which has dominated the politics of Northern Ireland, ever since was established in 1928, the political culture which the agreement of 1998 is trying to alter. I use four words to sum-up the political culture in Northern Ireland: it is intimidatory, it is intimidatory, it is fragmented, it is under developed, it is- I always forget the fourth- (long pause) it will come to me let's just deal these and let me begin with the third one under developed."

01:30 Paul stands up. "And this is the place Northern Ireland gets its geographical space as much as anything else. Northern Ireland was created by the British government because it knew no other solution. In 1920, after centuries of a very uneasy relationship with Ireland, the British decided it wanted out of Ireland and it was through militarily, politically, and psychologically where it's clear the government of Ireland lack in 1920. Now the Government of Ireland Act did allow northern part with Northern Ireland. But it also allowed that need not necessarily need to be permanent. The Government of Ireland Act could have foreseen the day when all the people of Ireland would come together. One of the things it established was the Council of Ireland. Which was to allow good relationships between government and parliament in Northern Ireland and government and parliament in Southern Ireland."

02:41 Paul: "It did not result from Northern Ireland part for a number of reasons. One was in the 20th century, that Ireland strategically was very important to Britain as one of the great empires of the world. Strategically Ireland was there to protect England's western flank. There are people who have described Northern Ireland as Britain's Cuba. That just as you have this off shore island off the United States, which has seen as an ideology which runs contrary to American stature, and there is a threat to American security. Ireland had to remain to some extent inside British sphere of control because if not it would be used by Britain's enemies to attack Britain. And that had been the case in the 17th and 18th centuries. Britain's traditional enemies were in particular the French and the Spanish, and both had tried to use Ireland as launch pad for the attacks on Britain."

04:03 Question: "Was that where the Spanish Armada happened?"

04:05 Paul: "The Spanish Armada precisely and French revolutionary as well, were involve in precisely these exercises in the 1798 uprising the French sent over huge troop reinforcement. So Britain was always conscious of you know, all it had on its flank was this island, which could be use against it. But secondly, Ireland was geographically placed where it could act as a bulwark for the free world. Both the British and the Americans recognized the geographic significance of Ireland. And one of the things that was built into the union of Britain and Ireland in 1920, was that that even though Britain withdrew militarily from the island of Ireland, it had control over Northern Ireland and it also had control over three ports in southern Ireland. That was very very important because it meant that the Atlantic could be protected. If you were to bother to go across the river there is a hotel just outside Derry called the Beeches House Hotel and that hotel, during the 2nd World War, was the headquarters of the American military presences in Western Europe because there was recognition that U-boats could do very serious damage once the Americans entered the war.

05:33 Paul: "And if you would read the history of the 2nd World War you will find from the likes of general Eisenhower and all the rest of them, you will find, a recognition that by this same time when the ports of southern Ireland had been handed back, that Northern Ireland, and particularly this port of Derry/Londonderry, played a major role in protecting the west. The U.S. Navy was based very, very strongly in Lough Foyle (the river that runs through the middle of Derry/Londonderry). So I start this simple geographic fact of where we were and how significantly we were strategically, to the Allied cause. But Britain did withdraw psychologically, and militarily, and politically from what is known as the Republic of Ireland. I note that she withdrew psychologically from Northern Ireland. You have to remember that Britain had for centuries been trying to control this small part of territory. In the 19th century, one British trade paper said, " We're at peace with 9 tenths of the world yet two thirds of our troops are in Northern Ireland trying to keep the peace." Always the realization that Ireland was above bare and during the 20th century, particularly during the 1st World War, when huge pressure was put on Woodrow Wilson before the Americans entered the war huge pressure was put on Wilson to try and bring about Irish unity. Because Irish Americans were opposed to the United States entering the war unless Irish unity could be guaranteed.

07:21 Paul: "So the Irish question is something that played farther afield to explain and I will deal with it in some detail a little later on when I talk about the peace process. In 1920, Northern Ireland was established with the proviso, that if its people want to join the rest of Ireland it could happen. In 1923, at Westminster—where Northern Ireland sends at that time 13 MPs, it's now 18 MPs—a convention was established that Northern Ireland matters should not be discussed on the floor of the House of Commons. You know, it is as if in your House of Representative the affairs of Alabama could not be discussed in the House in any shape or form. But that was convention and what it meant in practice was a huge degree of ignorance on the part of British politicians about what was happening in Northern Ireland. An amazing amount of ignorance.

Again I don't want to get to the details, but let me put it to you this way when the Troubles broke out in 1968, British politicians had no conception of what was happening in Northern Ireland."

08:50 Paul: "There was one cabinet minister, a man called Richard Crossman dwelled on the written word, he published three volumes, and he described the total an apprehension, bewilderment when trouble broke out in Northern Ireland. And he says, after the most serious trouble, which was in August of 1969, he writes in his diary he says, "Its dirty, dirty Protestant boys and girls are flinging stones and rocks at dirty Catholic boys and girls. This is August 1969, he says, "It must be St. Patrick's Day." This is a prejudice. For those of you who don't know, St. Patrick's Day is the 17th of March. The prejudice is that the Irish like nothing more than having a good fight, getting drunk and having a good fight and this is precisely what they're doing in this case (referring to the people British people holding the prejudiced view)."

09:49 Paul: "And in the end he goes on to say (referring to Mr. Crossman), when the troops move into Northern Ireland he had this to say, (short pause) he has this to say, this is something we can hardly mismanage and it has deflected attention away from the pound. What he was saying was the British currency was, yet again under great threat, particularly from the dollar and the International Monetary Fund had been brought in to try and rescue the British exchequer. But there was this nasty little civil war happening in Northern Ireland and so (this is the British government's thinking), this is one we can clean up, maybe not today or tomorrow, we can clean up. We can go through this and people will forget that we have bigger problems such as the state of our currency. And that was the mind set in Britain in the beginning of the Troubles."

10:40 Paul: "Now one of the outcomes of this psychological withdrawal from Northern Ireland was that unionist governments in Northern Ireland recognized that they could get a great deal out of the British government in London. Because the last thing the British government wanted to do was to intervene again in Irish affairs. And if you look at the records from the 1920s onwards you will find succession of prime ministers from Northern Ireland going across to London and saying, this is our shopping list we expect you to meet it, and pretty much that's basically what it was and the British government did meet the shopping list. Because it was cheaper to do that, than to have to take control of Northern Ireland. And that's what I mean, in the first instance, by under development. There was no proper politics in this part of the world, oh by the way the fourth one I remember is "demotic", the market is under developed."

11:49 Question: "Demotic?"

11:50 Paul: "Demotic I will explain that in a few minutes, yeah. So under developed, you have the, have you visited the parliament...Stormont...at all? You will? It's an amazing building. First of all where it's actually sited, most parliament in virtually every country in the world, any country I know the parliament is in the center of the city. You go to D.C.; there you have the House and the Senate up there with the Supreme Court opposite it. You go to Belfast and you have to drive 7 miles outside the city to see this magnificent Palladian building on the hill, and it was build deliberately that way because if you were going to storm that build you had to be really fit

because you would have to go up a gradient between one and three for at least a mile. And that was deliberately done, in the suburbs, so that it wasn't easy, the realization by the people who had that built for us, you had to have a parliament that could not be easily physically overturned."

13:02 Paul: "So you have this magnificent building and you'd go look at it you would say, "Gee these guys must have, they must have like to work!" It is very very imposing. And up there, from the 1920s onwards, you have one party in actual control. The nationalist party, where the party rule was what was known as intermittent abstentionists. Sinn Fein stood for a couple of elections with them but then gave up. Nationalist contested seats and won seats and would go to Stormont basically to complain. In all the period between 1921 and 1972 when Stormont was paroled, Nationalists succeeded in passing only one act of parliament, only one, and that was 1931, and symbolically it was the single act they could pass. It was the Wild Birds Protection Act and here was one "endangered species" taking care of another endangered species and it was literally the only act of parliament they could manage to get through."

14:11 Paul: "So that Parliament or Congress is suppose to be a place where political negotiation political dialogue takes place, give and take, it never happened. It literally never happened. You had one party in control, you had another party, which realized that there was never any possibility it could take control. So in any political culture, in any political system in any political activity, the first activity that is important is the skill to negotiate. We never had to learn that in Northern Ireland. Never. Literally never had to learn that. Because there was no negotiations, I have it, you don't have it, you're not going to get it. So in one side there was this notion that they would rule in perpetuity. On the other side, that was on the nationalist side, there were two views about how to get Irish unity."

15:15 Paul: " One was what was known as the revenge of the cradle. We will outbreed them. And Catholics traditionally did have much larger families than Protestants; I mean I came from a family where there were ten of us that was not unusual that is no longer the case though. Certainly that would have been one of the highest birth rates; the Bogside had a birth rate, which you now find in developing world, incredibly bad. But what happened was we didn't have jobs. See I was in a family of ten. One guy very very young (talking about himself) ... of the other nine I was the only one living in Northern Ireland until recent years. Scattered, as most families will tell you, scattered all over the place because there was no work for us and I was fortunate, working in academic life. So you have this position where, nationalist said we will outbreed them or eventually they will, whereas republicans said we will outgun them. And somewhere in between there was this notion of manifest destiny in the Catholic side and manifest destiny was that God had created an island of Ireland. It was never meant to be divided and someday it would be re-united."

16:41 Paul: " And so nationalists looked to Dublin to look after their interests and unionists looked to London to look after their interests. In that sense you have a political culture, which was under developed. The two warring parties did not have to deal with each other. And so much of that in Northern Ireland ... there is a very very good book written by a social

anthropologist, and she wrote it before the Troubles were bad, called, *Prejudice and Tolerance In Ireland*, Rosemary Harris. Rosemary Harris came to Northern Ireland in the 1960s before The Troubles broke out and she did her field research in a border village. And what she discovered very early on this is a society totally without empathy. I don't have any understanding of my Protestant neighbor; my Protestant neighbor has no understanding of me. And she gives example after example. In a poor rural community she said, there were times when Protestant and Catholic farmers had to work together. Bringing in the harvest, or whatever, they only had a limited amount of machinery and so they had to help each other out for their mutual benefit."

18:09 Paul: "And she said at times like this it becomes difficult when you're working with your neighbor not to talk about politics, but there was a rule that you didn't talk about local politics because if you talk about politics you are going to disagree, fall out, and you wouldn't be able to use your neighbor's machinery...whatever. So they would talk about world politics and these were people who were not sophisticated and the only part of the world they would have known anything about was the United States. So they talked about politics it would be about what was going on in America. A lot of them would have had people who emigrated to America and America, through Hollywood and everything, would have been as close to them as anything else. But once John F Kennedy was elected President of the United States they couldn't talk about American politics because you had a Mick in the White House, to use their own expression, you had a Catholic in the White House, which meant Catholics in Northern Ireland felt pretty good about this and Protestants felt pretty bad. And this is what I mean by a society without empathy. No understanding, this is what I mean by underdeveloped political culture we don't deal with politics as politics is understood. So that's the first point that you have to realize when dealing with our politics."

19:32 Paul: "The second point, fragmented I already alluded to this. This means that the INTRA-ethnic was very important. That the divisions inside Protestantism and the divisions inside Catholicism were very important for a number of reasons. Let me begin with Protestantism because it was the one with the biggest problems. Catholics were commonly much more self-confident than Protestants. Up until 1960s Catholics at least attended to their religious duties by going to mass every Sunday or whatever, over 90% were doing so. Catholics were united around the one church, and a hierarchical church at that. And Catholics also were united in their sense of victimhood. So there weren't the same class differences in Catholicism that there were in Protestantism. So whether you were a rocket scientist or a road sweeper, if you were a Catholic you had something in common."

20:49 Paul: "The big division in Catholicism, was again as I mentioned, how do we bring about Irish unity? Do you do it by constitutionalism or in the physical force tradition, which has been in Irish politics for centuries."

21:11 Protestantism, much more complex. One of the reasons why you have an order known as the Orange Order Northern Ireland was that the Orange Order had as one of its rules a charter had as one of its rules a social and political emollient for all the different Protestant

denominations. There are serious differences between Episcopalians and Presbyterians or have been historically. We have Episcopalians and Presbyterians in Northern Ireland. And Northern Ireland has a whole gamut of small churches, there are always the 57 varieties (playing on the slogan of the Heinz ketchup company) and so Protestants were not united along religious dimensions and the Orange Order had to fill that particular gap.”

22:01 Paul: “ Protestants also were also divided geographically. By that I mean those Protestants that were in the border counties and particularly in the west where there was a Catholic majority felt a degree of threat. Virtually until the 1960s, 90% of all industry was in the greater Belfast area and so it meant that the Protestants in the west tended to be small farmers and they certainly weren’t involved in industry in any way. Secondly, if you look at the actual delineation of the border between Northern Ireland in the Republic of Ireland, it is a crazy crazy border. It cannot be defended. It’s over 300 miles long and one of the reasons the IRA had such success was that it was so porous you could get through at any stage.”

23:09 Paul: “ And the reason for that was that in 1920, the unionists had to make a decision whether they wanted to run a country called Northern Ireland or a Province called Ulster. If they had taken Ulster they would have controlled 9 counties of the 32 counties in Ireland. If they went for Northern Ireland, they were saying to Protestants in the three border counties of Cavan, Monaghan, and Donegal; they were saying to them you are on your own. And they went for 6 rather than 9 counties because while they still would have a majority in the 9 counties the majority would have been that much smaller (Paul makes a gesture with his hands to indicate smaller) and there was danger that they could be bullied into a united Ireland and they were always worried about that. And the result was that those Protestants living in counties like Fermanagh and this county, Derry/Londonderry, were now in the front lines for IRA attacks. And for this reason, historically, there was a difference with the Protestants of west Ulster and the Protestants of the greater Belfast area.”

24:18 Paul: “So that’s basically what I mean by fragmentation. Now should we worry about fragmentation the answer quite clearly... if you were a British secretary of state who arrived in Northern Ireland 1972 once direct rule was imposed, and you were looking for a solution to the problem, to get a solution you have to have people who can sell a solution, and what they found, particularly in the Protestant community, was that there was no one there strong enough to speak for the Protestant community. So there was no one political leader strong enough. So that presented particular problems. So fragmentation became part of the problem.

24:58 Intimidatory, a culture based on political intimidation. There was not a generation nor for that matter a decade where there was not a form of political violence from the 1920s onwards. And one of the outcomes of all this was, uh, Richard Rose who was a very distinguished American political scientist who worked in British colonial settings all of his life, Richard Rose compared political activity here to a Latin American banana republic. We don’t like the politics so we’ll take up the gun. And in some Latin American republics the army is always ready to step in because politicians are mistrusted. It was the same in Northern Ireland.

25:58 Paul: "If you take the two iconic documents of the republicans and loyalists. For republicans it is the 1916 Declaration. And in the 1916 declaration the republicans say they will use all means necessary to get what they want. Those three words are very important. All means necessary. Precisely the same words are used by loyalists when they stood against the British in 1912. All means necessary. So an intimidatory culture is one where violence doesn't have to be overt. People realize that is just beneath the surface. And you would see this in the summer months with the Orange Marches and the protest against the Orange marches, not everywhere very few places but it will be there and it is part of our culture."

27:06 Paul: "One result of this notion of intimidatory culture is that many good people did not feel the urge to go into politics. Many of the people in political life were, to put it mildly, mediocre. But secondly, an intimidatory culture demeans politics, no great emphasis is put on the political process because there always this other way forward. And again when it came to looking for a solution it became very very difficult to get people to accept that a political process could work. And this is a difficulty we are facing now that again I will talk about later."

27:58 The fourth category I use to describe the political culture is what I call the demotic, and here I am borrowing from the Greek word *demos*, *demos* meaning the crowd. And since what I mean...politics here was from the bottom up, it was bottom up rather than top down."

28:20 Paul: "The Orange Order is one of the reasons you have bottom up politics. The very first prime minister of Northern Ireland, a man called Sir James Craig, who became Lord Craigavon, had a policy, which he described, to use his own words, a policy of "distributing bones." He realize that he needed to keep his rank and file happy. So he'd go to the treasury in London and demand money for his various schemes and then he'd come back and deliver it to the people. The politicians listen very closely to what their grassroots told them. You have this to some extent in the United States where the power of lobbyists is incredibly high. I have studied American politics in relation to the Irish question and I've seen what a lobbyist can do. In our system, particularly inside the unionist community because unionist leaders were always very afraid of fragmentation, they listen very closely to what the grassroots were telling them. And the people at the grassroots who speak tended to be the zealots, the people with the strongest opinions. And they created a participatory sort of politics."

29:40 Paul: "I'm just going to give you give you one example taken from a social science survey taken in the 1960s, a questionnaire which was conducted in Belfast, wanted to look at relations between elected politicians in Belfast and their constituents. The survey was taken when relations Catholics and Protestants were beginning to diminish. Richard Rose called it the year of good feelings, when community relations were improving. So the surveyors wanted to know, you know, what the constituents felt about the work their political leaders were doing. And they came up at the end of all the work with a very belated, circular argument. What they discovered was that the constituents for the most part were moderates, that they wanted things to continue without any violence and they wanted to see better community relations. But their political leaders didn't realize there was that moderation around. So the political leaders to get



elected were making immoderate statements, they were working in fear, they were working in paranoia inside the communities.”

31:13 Paul: “ And by making these immoderate statements, the constituents were hearing these horrible remarks and so therefore they assumed that things were much worse than they imagine. And because they assumed that things were much worse than they imagine they would then seek the political leaders to make even more immoderate statements, it’s a vicious circle of perception, misperceived perception; hardened by extremist, the only way they're going to elect us is if we make extreme noises, we make extreme noises, and our moderates hear those extreme noises and people think things are really bad and they move on to another cycle. And that is the demotic culture. For so long, political leaders listened to the noises at the grassroots, ruckus noises, and for that reason they were not prepared to make any form of compromise.”

32:18 Cross-Dissolve to second tape

32:30 Arthur: Let me just say briefly what I will be dealing with. I've been looking at the run up to direct rule, which as you know began at the beginning of March 1972. The period after direct rule, there were, as you know, many attempts at an internal settlement to the Northern Ireland conflict, I'll look very very briefly at those attempts. Thirdly, I look at the changing political climate and impartial, the rise of Sinn Fein and I may touch on the American dimension in the Peace Process. One of the things I said this morning was the immense ignorance of the British government about what was going on in NI, who are the players that need to be wooed and influenced, what is the political culture? Because if you remember the first real action of the then Labor Government to the civil rights movement was simply to propose a reform program and they believe that what you wanted to do was to make Northern Ireland a bit more like the rest of the United Kingdom, get the same sort of politics, the same sort of political dialogue going.

Milofsky: Was this in reaction to 1969? The Labor Government was then the government.

Arthur: \*nodding\* 1968 and 1969. The Labor Government were in office until 1970. Jim Calhoun, who would become Prime Minister at a later date was the secretary who had to respond to the Northern Ireland conflict . Now Harold Wilson who was the labor Prime Minister, when he became the Labor Prime Minister in 1964, he recognized that there was something rotten in Northern Ireland and recognized that something needed to be done to change it. So what he did was he proposed a reform program, we will meet the reasonable demands that the civil rights movements put up. For example, we will make sure everyone in Northern Ireland has a vote for local government elections, we will improve housing and have more jobs for Catholics and do away with "special legislation....security legislation and the Special Powers Act.

35:15 Again, I don't expect you to absorb all of this detail I'm just making a couple of big points. The first big point is that reform programs, in nature, lead to a revolution of raising expectations. The best will in the world, you have to allow for time scales for formal government to actually kick in . When its not kicking in, there's going to be frustration on the ground. You know,

Catholics were saying that nirvana has not arrived, there's no sign of it and Protestants were saying that this reform program is directly against us. We live in a scarcity society, so if there are more houses for Catholics, there are fewer houses for Protestants. You can see the city as an example, I don't know if you've walked through some of the Protestant areas on this side any of the estates on this side of the river, Protestants were able to see this wonderful housing scheme going up for Catholics and then they look at their own and they drew the lesson that the only way to get on is to protest, is to be against the government. And so you have one of the reasons that allowed for the rise of Ian Paisley, he drew on these Protestant fears that Catholics are getting everything, we are getting nothing and that we will be driven into a United Ireland. He pointed out that the reform program had been initiated by Civil Rights Association, the CRA, and again, in a very clever bit of symbolism, Paisley said, "If you take that C and straighten it out it becomes an I. CRA equals IRA." So that was one of the things happening on the Protestant side.

35:25 On the Catholic side the IRA were able to resurrect themselves as a result of the frustration in the Catholic community. Firstly the reform program was not delivering and secondly after June of 1970 when the Conservative government came into office...\*someone's phone rings and he gets distracted\*... when the government changed in London from labor, from Harold Wilson to Ted Heath as Prime Minister, policy changed in relation to Northern Ireland. And policy changed from trying to concede to Civil Rights' demands to one of a much tougher security policy. The Conservatives believed that they could destroy the IRA on the outset, so much more emphasis was placed on the rule of the police and the army and that backfired very badly. The role of the security forces acted as a recruiting agent for the IRA. The more repressive the security forces became, the larger the number of people who wanted to join the IRA.

38:45 Let me say that when the Troubles broke out the IRA represented nothing. Their numbers were maybe about 50-100 and most of them were in it for social reasons, they would go to the clubs and drink and talk about the old days, but they had no weapons. They had sold their weapons earlier. There were a couple of rusty machine guns. And interestingly when loyalists attacked parts of Northwest Belfast in 1969 and 8 people were killed in the first serious rioting, slogans were put up on the walls of the Belfast ghettos which said, "IRA = I Ran Away." These were Catholics against their own so-called defenders, "IRA = I Ran Away." IRA didn't run away because there was no IRA to run away, but as a result of that the folk memory in the Catholic community came into play. They said, "We need our defenders." They remembered programs in the 1920s and the 1930s and they recognized that much of the violence that was revisited in 1969 had been led by the state police force by the Royal Ulster Constabulary. So they flocked to join the IRA and people like Gerry Adams and in this city Martin McGuinness were the new generation that came into their own.

40:31 I mean...small anecdote. I was involved in the civil rights movement at the time. One of the things we thought we had to do was to get the unemployed united...on class lines. And so I remember going down one day to the Labor Exchange, where people signed on...people who didn't have work...and getting up and making a speech and saying, "There's a need for Catholic

and Protestant unemployed to come together. It's the only way we're going to defeat this government." And one guy came up to me and talked to me at some length and said that he was totally behind what we were doing. And I said, "We are students. We do not want to organize this. You need to organize it." And he said he would, and he said he could be contacted...he was a barman...and he could be contacted at a particular bar. Why he was at the Labor Exchange when he was working full time is another matter. And he told me his name was Gerry Adams. So they were thinking from the very start that they had to change the methods of the old IRA. The old IRA was simply thinking aimed at taking on the Brits, and they simply were going to be defeated in any conventional warfare.

41:50 So the IRA, and this is unique about the IRA to this generation, the IRA sprung as ghetto defenders. They did not spring as a vanguard, as an elite. They came from the people. They were the people. Now if you think...none of you are old enough to remember this...but In the late 60s in both Europe and the United States you had an outgrowth of radical movements...Bader Meinhof in Germany, the Red Brigades in Italy, the Minutemen in the United States...different groups. What distinguished the IRA from all of these was that the IRA were people who sprung from those ghettos. (Q. Were they more like the Black Panther Party? A. More like the Black Panther Party.) They were totally representative of the ghettos that they were trying to protect. Unlike the men of 1916, they rose on behalf of the Irish people, they did not consult those people, they said we know what you want and we will represent you. Whereas the men of 1969 said, we are the same as you, we need to protect ourselves and in protecting ourselves we are protecting you. So for the first time in the history of the IRA, the IRA became kind of the people's army rather than a vanguard and that was the first serious problem the British government had to face. They weren't taking on a group of mindless militants, they were taking on a group of people who had taken on an ideology that was similar to those in the terrain in which they fought.

43:40 Milofsky: In the first hour you talked about the demotic aspect of political culture; is that before 1969 with the IRA and Ian Paisley on the other side is that the place where the demotic was given expression?

Arthur: The (demotic) had always been there but it didn't make any difference in the Catholic community because the Catholic community were powerless.

44:10 Milofsky: Well they had no way of being represented in the government anyway so it didn't much matter.

Arthur: No. And when the Catholic community perceived that their arcane civil rights victories were going to be snatched away from them and that they were going to be again "oppressed by the Brits" to use their own term, when they saw that the people in the ghettos automatically shifted to the IRA. The amazing thing about the IRA, as I say, is that it didn't exist...it was a couple of old men reminiscing about earlier campaigns, but it grows incredibly rapidly. One of the chroniclers of the IRA is an American called J. Boyer Bell, he wrote a book in 1970 talking about how the IRA had no infrastructure, no weaponry and no intellectual leadership. He said all they had was attitude and the attitude they had was precisely the attitude of ghetto Catholics. We must not allow ourselves to be caught short again, we have to defend ourselves. So the IRA

grows initially as a defense organization and in response to them on the other side, there formed the UDA, Ulster Defense Association and the word defense for the loyalists was very important. They were arguing that they were there to defend their own communities against the rise of the IRA and their leaders said ... saw themselves as a "counterterrorist" group, we will use terrorism to counter the terrorism of the other side.

46:00 Student with question: You were saying more and more people were pushed to join the IRA. How exactly did people go about joining the IRA? Is there an office that people walk into and say I want to join the IRA, I guess I'm sort of confused.

Arthur: Good point. Basically they started up, that's a bit what it was like. As I say, I grew up in the city (Belfast) and there were certain pubs I knew and if I wanted to join the IRA I would go to a pub...and I won't tell you what they were... I'd go into one myself and say "I want to talk to so and so." For example Martin McGuinness, who soon rose to the top, came from an old Republican family. I played Gaelic football in this town (Derry) and a lot of people involved in Gaelic football would also have been involved and had family like this. If people were in these families you just knew those families had been part of the old Republican movement. You would first talk to one of these people as your first port of call, then you would be vetted to see if you were suitable material, and if it was felt you were suitable material you would join up and then you would take an oath of loyalty. But it had to be done in total secrecy.

47:12 For example, in one of my involvements in in the civil rights campaign in the city, I was asked to set up a pirate radio station. We wanted to broadcast to broader numbers and I picked up a radio from a house in Creggan and the house I picked it up at the guy who owned it I soon discovered was a top IRA man. My whole being was nonviolent and I was always totally opposed to these guys, but they were just part of the warp and woof of the community. And as I say you would knock on somebody's door, and as I was saying a neighbor of mine, and not two blocks away his whole family were stigma and that's the way it happened. Now what happened as the IRA became more successful, they began to be infiltrated very badly by the security forces. So they moved from this open organization to a cellular structure where you would know maybe 5 other people at most and you would work very discretely in different boxes, but that was to come later.

48:20 Milofsky: How were they infiltrated by the security forces?

Arthur: One simple way would have been, you know a lot of people in a very economically depressed area would have been into petty thieving, they would be pulled in for something, and they are told the charge will be dropped if they join the IRA. They get into the IRA, they're paid a retainer by the by the police or the army, and in that way information is given over. There's a famous book written about the KGB infiltrating the western world and they talk about the KGB in Dublin and the KGB said, there's no need to have a secret organization. Dublin is so open and so porous that all you need to do in walk into a pub and you'll know exactly what's going on. I'll tell you into a particular pub and you'll know exactly what is happening. It was the same in Belfast and Derry. I can tell you a pub, if you wanted to know the next place likely to be blown up, you walk into the pub and these guys would be there openly talking about it because the

assumption was that the whole community was with them and that nobody was going to tell on them or anything.

Student: Would it be a fair comparison of looking at the IRA and the UDA as rival gangs like we have in America? Very community oriented and interested in protecting their turf. Its a similar situation?

Arthur: It's a similar situation and more so in that if you look at the UDA today, the UDA today is heavily involved in rackets, dope dealing and that sort of thing. But, the IRA has always been careful to not to seem to be involved in that. It is part of the old Catholic asceticism that we are not criminals, this is an important thing and I'll come on to this later. There's an expression used in Northern Ireland, ODC that means "ordinary decent criminal". There's a distinction made between political prisoners and ordinary decent criminals. The ordinary decent criminal could be in for a house burglary or joy riding or whatever, whereas the guys who joined the IRA were politicals who weren't criminals and they always wanted to make that very clear.

50:40 Arthur: Okay right.

Flack: Where does the UVF fit in there?

Arthur: The UVF is the oldest loyalist paramilitary organization. The UVF was always up and running, in fact the UVF were the people who did the first killings in 1966, long before the civil rights campaign began and they shot a couple of Catholics who worked in a Protestant bar, the UVF Brotherhood in 1966 were very worried about Terence O'Neill as being moderate and a liberal. They began themselves as the elite among the Protestant paramilitaries. The UDA are just gangsters and scum, that's the sort of expression you will hear them using. I taught in their prisons, I was asked to teach the political prisoners. I had to give the same class 4 times, to the official IRA, the provisional IRA, the UDA and the UVF and it was quite clear the difference between the UDA and UVF in terms of caliber and influential output was huge. The UDA aware they were the lumpenproletariat, the UVF were the vanguard, the true heirs of 1912 and everything else. So the UVF was always there, but came into its own in 1966. And there's always been a deep rivalry between the UVF and the UDA. Now I'm not going to go into the splits in the Republican movement between the official IRA and the provisional IRA, simply say that the provisional IRA, that is the people who are now in control, Adams, McGuinness and company, simply wiped out the rivals on the other side. Anyone who called themselves a Republican and wasn't apart of their organization was just taken out over a few years. There were turf wars of some ferocity. But, like I said, I don't want to get involved in that because we are still only in 1969. \*laughter\*

52:40 Arthur: That's the first point I want to emphasize, that the problem with 1970 there now was, on top of frustration, there was a serious security threat arising from the paramilitaries, the freedom fighters, the terrorists, call them what you will. And as a result of that the British government had never wanted to intervene in NI, so what they tried to do was what is called direct rule by proxy. Once the civil rights campaign got established the Labor government (in London) was telling the Unionist government in NI what it had to do. And the labor government sent over 2 very senior officials who sat at the Prime Minister's office and the Minister of Public Affairs...that is the man who would be interested in security and would be equivalent to Tom

Ridge in your country (Secretary of Homeland Security) who sat in their offices to oversee a London program which would be implemented by the Unionist government in Belfast.

The tape skips and it seems as though the camera might have been turned off and back on or that perhaps part of the lecture has been stricken from the tape. Arthur is in a new sitting position seemingly having moved on to a new topic.

53:45 Arthur: Put them away for as long as it takes to defeat them. And in one night on the 9th of August 1971, the army swooped and lifted over 300 people and put them into internment camps. The trouble was that the people they lifted were mostly innocents, the intelligence in which they were working was very very bad and the interment was a security disaster. On top of internment you have allegations of torture against some of the people who had been lifted. And these allegations on behalf of 14 internees went all the way to Europe in front of the Court of Human Rights, which decided by 1978 that the British were guilty of brutality. But this was a huge embarrassment that in Europe Britain's actions were being judged by other European countries and again this is an issue that I need to come back to.

So interment was one security disaster. The wrong people were lifted and it persuaded the whole country population, even those that did not support the IRA, that a Unionist government was intent on wiping them out. Middle class Catholics who in fact were involved in the government to some extent all withdrew from government and so for the first time in the history of NI the whole Catholic community withheld its support for the government in Belfast. And that made it difficult for the government to continue to rule in the sort of equitable manner that they wanted to.

55:35 The second major disaster was Bloody Sunday. Now you're going along to the Saville Inquiry tomorrow. One of the roles that I've played is that I've been an expert witness to the Saville Inquiry. I've written a report on the social and economic conditions on the ground in Derry at the time. I won't bore you with that, its on the web if you want to read it. But, Bloody Sunday was an attempt by the NI government in conjunction with the British army to deal with what were known as the "Derry young hooligans." The security forces believed that were getting on top of the IRA everywhere in NI except for the Bogside and Creggan. The Bogside and Creggan were totally out of their control. They were going to teach them a lesson and Bloody Sunday was the lesson, but it went horribly wrong. On top of Bloody Sunday you had what the British government established as the Widgery Tribunal that was a 1972 version of the Saville Inquiry. It was chaired by just one man the Lord Chief of Justice for the United Kingdom and the document that he produced was viewed as a complete whitewash and all of that reinforced the Catholic sense of victimhood. As a result of Bloody Sunday and the international outcry about Bloody Sunday, the British decided that they would no longer rule through a Unionist government. So, in March of 1972 after the unionist Prime Minister Brian Faulkner refused to hand over security authority to London, his government was stood down and we were for the first time we were ruled directly from London. There was no Parliament, no government in NI, that's why its called direct rule, rule direct from London. And the British government had to make all of the decisions.

57:53 Arthur: And London believed direct rule brought in March of 1972 was to last for only 1 year. The assumption was that the government would get enough people on the ground here to agree to a future form of government and they would then withdraw. And when the army went in in 1969 in NI, the GOC officer commanding said there will be a honeymoon period of 6 months. We will be treated well for about six months. So it's up to you politicians to come up with an answer in 6 months because after that there will be warfare and he was remarkably accurate. The honeymoon period did last for about 6 months but after that the IRA and the Catholic ghettos turned on them very strongly just as the British army turned on the Catholic ghettos very strongly. So direct rule was something unique in the history in NI. It was the first time since 1920 that we took orders directly from London.

Student: Is that what London would prefer? Did they want to have direct rule?

Arthur: It was the last thing they wanted. They didn't want to do it. They had contingency plans to do it in 1969 but they didn't want to do it. I mean, that psychological withdrawal from NI I talked about in 1920 is still there to this day. They do not see us as a normal part of the UK. When they come here they talk about "going out" to Northern Ireland, like they are going into extraterrestrial space. They do not "go out" to Scotland or Wales, but they "go out" to Northern Ireland because...those guys over there are different from the rest of us. So they didn't want to give in.

Student: Was it considered to be not ruled by Dublin, not ruled by London, but to have a separate state altogether?

Arthur: So independence? Ulster independence? There was a movement for Ulster independence around the mid-1970s, but it got nowhere. Interestingly if you look at those in favor of independence it was people who lived on the British mainland because they wanted to get rid of NI. So opinion poll after opinion poll showed Ulster independence is the answer, but that was only on the British mainland. In NI, and I had to write a position paper on this at the time, it was realized that the gap between Republican and Loyalist was too far apart although IRA members were talking to some loyalist leaders in the 70s about whether this could be a transition toward a United Ireland if they could agree to Ulster independence for a period. But, Loyalists didn't buy into it and secondly the economics of independence just didn't work, we relied so much on London. It never was really a runner.

1:01:00 Arthur: What the British decided from the start, they tried on 4 occasions between 1970-1986 they tried four attempts at what was called an internal solution. The British attitude toward Dublin was mind your own business, this has got nothing to do with you, what goes on in NI is purely a matter of domestic jurisdiction. For example, in August 1969 the Irish tried to raise, Dublin tried to raise, the question of NI at the United Nations Security Council and there was a half-day debate on it. But essentially it came to nothing because at the end of the day the United Nations accepted that Northern Ireland was a part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and it felt matters were internal to NI and it was up to the government in

London and in the government in Belfast to solve things. So, the relationship between Dublin and London in this period was very, very frosty indeed. London was telling Dublin that Dublin should control the borders so that the IRA could not infiltrate from south of the border and that basically all that Dublin had to do was act as a sort of police force to round up the IRA. But Dublin was saying there is so much discrimination against Catholics that your government should be encouraging Irish unity. So Dublin and London had a bad relationship to begin with, relations between the two prime ministers was very bad. It began to improve slowly. So by 1973 the British government recognized that British politics did not work in NI. British politics are like the American system, one party in government, one party in opposition. The British government recognized that for government to work in NI you have to have power sharing, you must have Catholics and Protestants in government together. Coalition government.

1:03:25 You know there, you have had at the moment in the United States, though it is starting to breakdown since 9-11, a great bipartisanship in Congress in terms of the best way to defend the United States' territory. Now Democrats are starting to raise questions about what Republicans didn't do before 9-11 and so bipartisanship is starting to break down with these questions being raised. But in an emergency, this was the British government's argument, in an emergency and Northern Ireland was constantly in a state of emergency, the only form of government to be had would be one where Democrat and Republican were working together, or in our case Nationalists and Unionists.

So they said that they have to devise a system of government where Catholics would automatically be in government. They also said they recognized because Dublin and the international community was impressing this upon them, there had to be what they called an "Irish dimension." These were the cornerstones of the British success in their policies, power sharing and an Irish dimension. And the Irish dimension meant a couple of things: from a London perspective very much closer security cooperation, whereby the IRA can be defeated with the help of Dublin. It also meant functional cooperation, we are talking there about just how small NI is. The island is tiny and the argument was that it's crazy on an island of this size to have 2 separate agricultural policies competing against each other, two separate energy policies, two separate industrial development policies, etc. That on this small an island you should pool resources and get proper economies of scale. So it made sense without talking about political unity, you could have unity in the form of functional cooperation. That was also what the Irish dimension was about. But, people like Ian Paisley saw this as the beginning of the movement toward Irish unity. Thirdly the Irish dimension meant that the government of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the government of the Republic of Ireland were part of the European Union together. They needed to cooperate much more closely.

This started with a government paper coming out of London in October 1972, it was called a Green Paper, which was a paper for the discussion of the parties, it was followed by a White Paper in March 1973 which is the government's intent of what it was going to do. The outcome of all that is that on the first of January 1974 a power sharing government was established in Northern Ireland composed of SDLP representing the Catholics and the Ulster Unionist Party



representing the Protestants and the Alliance Party representing the bi confessional, so you have 3 parties in government for the first time. There was also an in-built Irish dimension in this.

1:07:15 Student: Could you repeat these three parties?

Arthur: SDLP representing mainly Catholics, the Alliance party representing the center ground, and the Ulster Union represented the Protestant people.

Milofsky: Now that word you use, bi confessional?

Arthur: Bi Confessional, that means that its a party made up of more than one religion unlike the other parties. I mean the SDLP didn't exclude those of Protestant faith and there were a few in very senior ranks, but they did have a very heavy percentage of Catholics. What is interesting about this power sharing arrangement, there was one major party outside of it. It was the Democratic Unionist Party. What they found from the outset is that 47% of the people of Northern Ireland were still not represented in the power sharing government. 47% of the people would have supported the Democratic Unionist Party and other loyalist parties and people who would have supported Sinn Fein. Because the IRA was opposed to party sharing and the Irish dimension because they saw it as a way to wipe them out. But loyalist's paramilitaries were fundamentally opposed to it and by May 1974 the power sharing government had collapsed. It had been brought down by what was known as the Ulster Workers' Council Strike.

1:09:00 The Ulster Workers' Council Strike was a classic example of the intimidatory culture. At that time in 1974, I was living in a very Protestant community. I was teaching in a State school that was a Protestant school. I was the only Catholic in the school and I felt very vulnerable indeed. In fact, I resigned from my job before I got another job ... and I couldn't get any work. What the Ulster Workers' Council did was to take over all the gas stations and they took over the power stations and shut down industry. They literally cut off the energy because the Protestant working class were the people who controlled all of these jobs. They had for example in all of NI there were only 26 gas station where you could go and get petrol and to get your juice you needed to have a voucher from the UDA. So, they literally controlled and shut down NI day by day and it got to a stage where if they turned off the power anymore, soon sewage is going to be swooping down the streets of Belfast. The whole of industry was going to be wrecked because for heavy industry they were going to turn off the machinery. As a result of that the British government had to concede. The British government, the Unionist Party resigned when they realized it couldn't go any further. NI in that period... I actually went for a job interview for the job I got and I remember having to talk my way through 14 sets of barricades just to get to my interview and that's the way it was in many places. But what it demonstrated was that the Protestant working class showed what clout they had with some of the paramilitary groups, showed what power they had in demonstrating that the British government could not rule without them.

Milofsky: Was that mostly in Belfast or...

Arthur: Everywhere.

Milofsky: Were there really only 14 gas stations in Northern Ireland?

Arthur: No, I meant that there were 14 gas stations in Belfast alone, but places like the Bogside would have been operating as normal because there were no Protestants here and since nobody worked and no one had to get to work, it didn't really matter. I lived in a small Protestant town and the feeling in that place was one of Mardi Gras. You know because they were in control of their own destiny. They didn't have to go to work. They knew they were going to win.

1:12:00 Student: How big of a time frame is this?

Arthur: We are talking about literally a couple of weeks. As I was saying the 1st of January was the date for establishment of the government. In February of 1974 there were elections for the Westminster Parliament, which meant that the seats of NI that went to Westminster were set up and the Prime Minister was urged not to call a general election. The British Prime Minister wanted a general election because he was concerned about the power of the trade unions in Britain. He felt they were getting too strong in Britain and he was warned that if he called an election it would backfire in Northern Ireland. The result was that of the 12 people returned to the Westminster Parliament from NI, 11 were against power sharing. Only 1 was in favor. Now those 11 went in with less than 51% of the vote. But that gave the no count, those against power sharing, it gave them a huge impetus so that by May they had established this thing called the Ulster Workers Council, and the Ulster Workers Council gave an ultimatum to the government in London and said if you don't agree with us in the next fortnight, we will bring down the government,. And that is precisely what they did. It was a huge lesson for one of the most sophisticated governments in the Western World that they could not take on this handful of key workers. For example, the British government looked at the possibility of sending in engineers from the army and the navy to operate the power stations and they found that they couldn't do it. They found that these guys weren't up to speed with how the system worked and that if they got in there, they wouldn't get out. So, that was the end of the first experiment in moving away from Westminster.

1:14:22 Now I'm not going to any great detail on the others. There were 3 others. One of the concerns of the British government after the collapse of power sharing in 1974 was that power was now falling into the hands of the Protestant paramilitaries particularly the UDA. So they thought they had to do something to revise the fortunes of the mainstream political parties. So experiment 2 was the Northern Ireland Constitutional Convention, which ran from 75 to 76. What the government did on this occasion was it held elections for what was called a "convention" just as you would hold for the House of Representatives. And the people who were elected to the convention didn't have to do the job of legislators, they had one task and one task alone and that was to devise a Constitution for Northern Ireland that would represent both communities, that was all they were asked to do. So the London government wanted to take power away from the streets and get it back into a formal setting. The formal setting was this convention and the rationale behind this thinking was that London was saying to the people in NI, "you said we imposed power sharing, we aren't going to impose anything, it is up to you to come up with a system that will work, so we are sending you the ultimate examination question: can you devise a constitution for NI that will work?" Of course it couldn't. Because the

Protestants weren't prepared to share power with the Catholics and the Catholics were not prepared to support anything less than power sharing.

The collapse of experiment 2. That was by 1976. A Labor government was in office until 1979 and Labor tried nothing else. It just continued with direct rule. When Margaret Thatcher became Prime Minister in 1979 she tried the 3rd experiment.

1:16:55 The 3rd experiment was known as the Atkins Initiative. It was named after the Secretary of State she imposed, Paul Humphrey Atkins and Atkins said we are not going to have an election, we are not going to have 108 people out there devising a constitution, we are going to have a round table and 20 people around the table representing all of the points of the constitutional spectrum and those 20 or whatever number it was will devise a new constitution. And Atkins failed. It failed from the very beginning because the Ulster Unionist Party even refused to join it and the Democratic Unionist party wouldn't join it. So you didn't have that critical mass of Protestant people around the table to even begin to get it to work.

1:18:05 The fourth and last experiment had an internal settlement, and I'm stressing internal settlement, it was known as Rolling Devolution, devised by a man called Jim Prior who succeeded Humphrey Atkins as Secretary of State. In 1982. The background is interesting, Prior was considered to be a very powerful and skilled politician in the Conservative government of Margaret Thatcher, so much so that Thatcher feared him as a political rival to her. She was afraid, you must remember in her early years, was deeply unpopular even among conservatives and what rescued her was the Falklands War, and she came out of that as a great war leader. Until then her premiership was seen as a complete disaster and she was conscious that her rivals were beginning to gang up against her, and her strongest rival was this man Jim Prior. So she decided the way to get rid of him was to send him to Northern Ireland (laughter) I mean this literally, send him "out there" because once he was in NI his hands will be so heavily tied dealing with this messy little squabble that he wouldn't be able to intervene in affairs in Westminster. Prior firstly refused to take the post. That made him look as if he was unpatriotic. Secondly he only agreed to take the post if (a) he could nominate the junior ministers he could bring with him to NI because the Secretary of State had a team of 3 or 4 ministers. And secondly if he could stay on the key economic committees inside of the British cabinet, in other words he could continue to play a key central role. She readily agreed to both of them, because she knew that once he got involved in the mire of NI politics he wouldn't have time to play these key economic roles. And she also knew that the type of people he would ask for his ministers were the type of people she didn't want anyway, because they were the type of person she called "wets". Wets were the type of people who weren't tough. They were people who would have sold out. She would rather they in Northern Ireland, so she agreed to this. Prior having come to NI had to make his name to keep his profile high, so he went for this novel way of trying to solve the problem. Prior had been employment secretary and he was a very skilled negotiator. He was good at having round tables between employers and trade unions and knew how to get the best out of it. He tried the same thing in NI. He said okay lets put the big constitutional question to one side, whether you're British or Irish, if you look at the government of NI it has 6 separate departments: agriculture, education, environment, finance, etc. What I

will do is make a Parliament in NI, a Northern Irish Assembly, an assembly with elections. The job of that assembly will be to overlook the work of the departments. So they would set up an Agriculture Committee, an Education Committee, and Environment Committee, etc. And if you can demonstrate to me in these various committees that you can work in a cross-community way, that Nationalists and Unionists can work together, I will devolve power to you so that you get control over agriculture. Why should there be disagreement between Unionists and Nationalists on agriculture? Or on education? Or environment? If you can demonstrate to me that you are prepared to work together I will devolve power to you in that particular remit. That's how it became known as Rolling Devolution. If you agree on agriculture, then I will give you power on that. If you can do it on education you can have education. That way I will build a culture of trust. It was ingenious! But, there was one huge flaw, and it was that the SDLP and Sein Fein refused to have anything to do with it. Sein Fein demanded that the SDLP boycott the elections, the SDLP did not boycott the elections, stood for it, but then boycotted the outcome. They would not take their seats. I'm not going to get into any more of this, because that gets into the Peace Process, which I will deal with tomorrow.

1:23:25 Three things you have to realize:

From 1980 onwards, the question was beginning to change from being a NI conflict to being an Anglo-Irish problem. That's one thing, it was moving from being a Northern Irish conflict, that is it was moving from being internal to recognizing that there is an external dimension.

Secondly, as part of this external dimension, Irish America was beginning to play an overtly influential role.

Thirdly, as a result of the hunger strikes in 1980-81, the security situation was becoming even more contractible, it was becoming very difficult to control the IRA in particular.

This in a sense is really a trailer for what I'm doing tomorrow with the Peace Process. I'm not going to go past the 1980s. I just wanted to take what was happening from 1970 to 1981 as the beginning of a new chapter in the politics of Northern Ireland.

1:24:56 Arthur: When Margaret Thatcher became Prime Minister in 1979 Unionists were absolutely delighted because here was a woman who said that she was rock solid on the union, to use her own expression. If you look at the Conservative Party manifesto, and in British politics when parties go to elections they all have manifestos which actually are meant to mean what they want to do when they go into government, if you look at the Conservative Party manifesto for the 1979 general election, Northern Ireland is covered in 2 paragraphs in the document of, I think, about 140 pages. It's covered in 2 paragraphs and it's covered in the section that is concerned with maintaining law and order. So NI from the conservative perspective was simply a law and order problem, which fitted in with the Unionist perspective. And what she argues in terms of politics is that she would try to integrate NI even more closely into the mainstream of British politics. In other words, that there would be no possibility of an evolved parliament of your own parliament and own government back in Belfast. Now that fitted in very closely with what the leader of the Ulster Unionist Party wanted. He believed the union could not be saved unless I was fully integrated into mainstream British politics. So he welcomed her and her victory and he saw this as a new era in which the IRA was going to be

defeated through strong law and order policies and the union was going to be saved. That's one side of the equation.

1:26:56 Milofsky: I've heard various places that NI is very important to the Conservative Party in Britain and maybe that goes back to even the 1890s there was an explicit promise to NI that they would never give into the nationalist movement. I gather that that continues to be a part of what was going on under Thatcher.

Arthur: Yes. The simplest way I can look at this is that the full name of the Conservative Party was really the Conservative AND Unionist Party. So there were formal links between the unionist party in Northern Ireland and the conservatives in Britain and the conservatives always took the... I'm sorry the unionists at Westminster always took the conservative party vote. So the relations were very, very close indeed and Margaret Thatcher reinforced that relationship when she became Prime Minister.

Student: Was Pryor Conservative as well?

Arthur: Pryor was Conservative, yeah.

Student: And his devolution plan, how was it received as part of that?

Arthur: That's actually very interesting actually, his own leaders set out to destroy it. His own leaders set out to destroy the central plank of the Secretary of State's plan for Northern Ireland. She made known that she was opposed to it and she got her ministers to vote against it, I mean it got through eventually, but it was diluted. So here was the Prime Minister saying to a senior minister, "This policy is nonsense. I will go along with it but I will dilute it." So that was one thing.

1:28:36 But the second thing was Thatcher changed her policy. During the 1979 Westminster election who turned up in Northern Ireland but a man called Tip O'Neill. Tip O'Neill arrived in middle of the...

(Someone in the audience says, "You ought to tell the students who he was.")

Arthur: Tip O'Neill was the Speaker of the House in the U.S. House of Representatives and the Speaker is the third most powerful person in your system. President, Vice President and Speaker. A Congressman from Boston, he came from an old Irish-American family. Particularly when Ronald Reagan became president, O'Neill he was crucial to Jimmy Carter ...well, really, he was crucial to Ronald Reagan as well because of the arithmetic in Congress at the time. Carter was scared of Tip O'Neill because he and Ted Kennedy were potential rivals to Carter in the run up to the 1980 presidential election. So Carter was very conscious of doing what Tip O'Neill wanted them to do in NI. Reagan needed Tip O'Neill because the Democrats controlled the House of Representatives from 1981 onward, he needed them very badly. The point was that Tip O'Neill came here. One side of Tip O'Neill's family was born less than 10 miles from

here and John Hume, the leader of the SDLP had built very strong relations with Democrats and particularly with O'Neill. He was like a father to John Hume. And Hume persuaded O'Neill to bring a group of Congressmen over during the 1979 election and O'Neill said categorically that you, the British government, are not to treat Northern Ireland like a political football. This was the expression he used. We in the United States will be looking very carefully to see what you do after this election. And he was told to mind his own business. Fleet Street and everyone else...the media went into overdrive with this. Who are these interfering Yanks to tell us what to do? One leading opponent of Irish nationalism, a man called Conor Cruise O'Brien attacked O'Neill very strongly. O'Brien was in Ireland's leading intellectual at the time and O'Neill, called, and I quote, "O'Brien "senile son of a bitch." To which O'Brien pointed out, that he may be senile but he's actually younger than Tip O'Neill. But this was the first overt example of American interference and that's something I'm flagging a great deal because that's something I want to deal with the next day, ah, tomorrow with the Peace Process.

1:31:41 But Thatcher did change her policy. She changed her policy through the Atkins Initiative because the Atkins Initiative was going to look at devolution and she changed her policy by her solid acceptance of the priority. She moved from being an integrationist into saying there'd have to be devolution. And the argument given for that by a Unionist was American covert influence on her was very, very powerful. That then Secretary... your Secretary of State (referring to the students being mainly American)...I think his name might have been Rogers (he's wrong...William P. Rogers was Secretary of State under Nixon; Cyrus P. Vance was Secretary of State in 1979) put huge pressure on the United Kingdom government to go for devolution. I'm not going to go into the reasons today for why the reasons for that were. Remind me I'll start with that tomorrow. That's number 2. The policy began to change. Anglo-Irish relations as a result of what typically people were saying...what they were arguing was that there was not an internal solution for Northern Ireland that the Irish government had to be involved. From 1980 onward there began a series of Anglo-Irish summits. So that decisions were shifting away from Belfast toward Dublin and London working together and again I will deal with that in greater detail tomorrow. I just wanted to flag it up.

1:33:19 The third issue was the hunger strikes. Now the hunger strikes were an. The hunger strikes, now I say hunger strikes because there were two attempts at them. The first was in 1980 and the second was in 1981. In fact I don't want to even start talking about that today, I would need 15 minutes explanation, its too big an issue.

Tape Ends 1:33:49