Title: Trust in Me: Allegiance Choices in a Post Split Terrorist Movement

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Abstract: This paper analyses exploratory research into how individual members form allegiances in the aftermath of a split in a terrorist movement, specifically the Irish Republican Movement. While the allegiance decision making is not a violent act in itself the decisions made often times constitute a choice between the retention of terrorism as a dominant tactic and the move towards a peaceful, political solution. It may be intuitive to believe that individuals will make such decisions based on the reasoning for the divide or the ideology for the groups. However, through the analysis of over forty interviews with leadership and rank and file members of the Irish Republican Movement the issue of personal trust is shown to be central to the decision-making process, especially in relation to the rank and file membership. This finding is concluded through the application of interpretative phenomenological analysis of four core splits in Irish Republicanism from 1969 to 1997.

> "It was not clear-cut hard political people deciding. It was human factors
> that was deciding why some people went with one side over another."
> (Interview with Mick Ryan, March 24, 2009)

1.1 Introduction

Trust is a concept familiar and integral to all. As individuals, but also as a society, we go through our everyday lives consciously and unconsciously trusting a variety of people, organisations, systems and entities to carry out their designated functions. As no one is fully self-sufficient everyone requires trust in others (Bluhm, 1987). From commuting to work to banking, eating out to posting a letter we place our trust in a range of people. However, when this trust dissipates so too does the effectiveness of the social structures supporting our society. Recent-times have seen a variety of social movements and protests arise due to a significant decline in the trust of institutions, individuals or principles. From the Arab Spring to Occupy Wall Street, the Ferguson protests to the London riots one of the central themes present was distrust; distrust in the political elite, financial institutions, the police or the judicial system.

While it is clear that trust is a vital component in our everyday decision-making the present article aims to analyse the role that it plays in the decision-making process of members of terrorist groups, and specifically allegiance decision-making within terrorist movements. This exploratory research is based on interviews with 43 rank and file and leadership members of the Irish Republican Movement, and analyses the role which trust played in their allegiance decisions in the lead-up to and aftermath of an organisational split. The research focuses

on 4 splits in the movement; 1969/70, 1974, 1986 and 1997. These four splits saw the birth of some of the most dangerous paramilitary groups in Ireland and Britain's history, the Official IRA, Provisional IRA, INLA, Continuity IRA and Real IRA (See Morrison, 2014).

Throughout this article there is continuous reference to terrorism, terrorists and terrorist groups. Each of these terms is contentious in their own right, and has justified chapters, article and books to debate their true meaning. The aim of this article is not to enter into this debate. However, it is recognised that it is necessary to define these first order principles. Therefore for the purpose of this article terrorism is defined as the employment of violence, or the threat of violence, to bring about political effect. The aim of this action is to bring about a state of fear in a wider audience than the direct physical victims of the initial act or threat of violence. A terrorist incident should be defined by the use of, or threat of, violence to bring about political effect. Therefore terrorism is a tactic that can be employed by any individual or group, whether they are state or non-state actors. However, in order to be defined as a terrorist or a terrorist group the utility of terrorism must be one of the dominant tactics used in order to achieve ones aims. Therefore not everyone or every group who has utilised terrorism once should automatically be classified as a terrorist or as a terrorist group.

In order to understand and appreciate terrorist groups, their strategies, tactics and evolution we must be able to analyse their decision-making processes and what influences them. McCormick posited that there are three theoretical

strands that can assist us in understanding terrorist decision-making; strategic, organisational and psychological theories (McCormick, 2003). Building on this the present article analyses decision-making from a psychological point of view. Shapiro rightly notes that any interpretation and analysis of decision-making requires a detailed knowledge of the people involved and their roles within the group (Shapiro, 2012). It is clear that this respect for role-specific heterogeneity is essential if we are to advance our understanding of terrorist actors and decisions they make (Gill and Young, 2011). Within terrorist groups, as with all other human organisations, individual actors have different levels of experience, knowledge, influence and skills as well as different duties within the organisation. Similarly the decisions they make are heterogeneous. These heterogeneities must be respected more within our research. It is out of respect for this that the analysis hosted within this article differentiates between the individual actors interviewed. It emphasises the importance of assessing the decision-making of leadership and rank and file members separately.

While McCormick (2003) and many others understandably focus on the decisions that lead to terrorist events it is also essential that in order to gain the full understanding of what it means to be involved in a terrorist group that we must also analyse those decisions that are not directly related to a violent act. Throughout the lifetime of a terrorist group, and the careers of its individual members, the acts of violence and the decisions leading to them only represent the sporadic peaks of activity. While it is clear that we need to understand these peaks of violence it is when we also understand the troughs of non-violence that we will be able to fully understand what it means to be involved in a terrorist

group (Morrison, 2013). The present article focuses on one of these 'troughs', the organisational split. Specifically it assesses how and why people decide their organisational allegiances in a post-split environment, and questions what role if any trust plays in these decisions. For some reading this the area of organisational split, and more specifically post-split allegiance decision-making, may seem like only a small sliver of the terrorist experience. This may be so. However, it is only when we truly understand each of these small slivers, and their relevance that we can even come close to fully understanding what it means to be involved in a terrorist organisation. As will be shown throughout the article it is often times these non-violent decisions that lead an actor to the persistent utility of violence.

Up until recently the academic community has largely ignored organisational splits in terrorist and insurgent groups. However, recent times has seen a modest growth in the analysis of the issue. Over the past few years it has been shown that a competing leadership structure, alongside the employment of tactical violence can expedite the splintering of an organisation (Asal, Brown and Dalton, 2012). It has also been demonstrated that splits can be an integral part of the politicisation of an erstwhile violent group (Morrison, 2014) and we now know that the length of civil wars are not necessarily extended as a result of organisational fragmentation (Findley and Rudloff, 2012). As can be observed from these stated examples, and across the broader literature, the majority of splits analysis focuses on the organisational and conflict related factors leading to and resulting from division. However, by examining individual decision-making the present article moves beyond the more common organisational

assessment. It aims to assess what influences an individual's allegiance choices. In doing so it attempts to come closer to understanding why the resultant parent and dissident factions emerge and how their overall levels of membership will be decided.

This article is therefore more in line with Ethan Bueno de Mesquita's (2008) article 'Terrorist Factions'. In this article Bueno de Mesquita develops a model to ascertain what factors may affect terrorist mobilisation and the likelihood of a splinter faction developing. However, in order to inform this organisational analysis Bueno de Mesquita also questioned why members of a continuum of potential terrorists would align themselves with one side over the other. In doing so he rightly states that the allegiance decision-making can be made as a result of ideological and/or non-ideological factors. Referencing Stern (2003) he states that these non-ideological factors may include the charisma of the leader and the level of private goods the faction can afford to provide. However, as has been previously stated the present article assesses a previously under-researched non-ideological factor bypassed by Bueno de Mesquita and others, the factor of trust. While the aim of both this article and Bueno de Mesquita's may seem similar, namely assessing why people will choose one side over the other, the approaches to answering this question are starkly different. While Bueno de Mesquita utilises algorithmic modelling the present article analyses data gathered through an extensive interview process. These should not be seen to be in competition with each other. On the contrary these, and other future research on the area, should be regarded as complimentary and developing our knowledge of the topic.

Terrorist groups the world over have defined, and legitimised, their existence based on their ideological and strategic foundations. It can therefore be at times intuitive to presume, and easy to find evidence to support, that individual members and supporters join, align and stay with the groups based on these same ideological beliefs and strategies. Bin Hassan (2006) claims that it is ideology that drives and motivates terrorists. Orsini (2012) in his research on the Italian Red Brigades cautions against making group wide generalisations, yet goes on to claim that all of the murders carried out by the Red Brigades draws one's attention to the causal power of ideology. However, as is acknowledged by each of Bin Hassan (2006), Bueno de Mesquita (2008) and Orsini (2012) ideological commitment on its own is insufficient to explain why an individual may become involved, and stay involved, with a terrorist group. Taylor and Horgan outline that irrespective of ideology, politics or social processes that engagement in terrorist behaviour essentially involves an individual having and taking an opportunity to partake in terrorist behaviour (Taylor and Horgan, 2006). Developing on this in order to align with, and join, a specific terrorist organisation irrespective of one's ideological beliefs and strategic support for the utility of violence, one must also have an opportunity. By accepting this we must then ask 'what creates this opportunity?' While there are a variety of factors which may bring it about the present article will focus on one of the most under researched. That factor is trust.

1.2 Trust

But what is trust? Diego Gambetta (2000, p.218) states that:

> *"...(t)rust (or, symmetrically, distrust) is a particular level of the subjective*
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> *probability with which an agent assesses that another agent or group of agents*
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> *will perform a particular action, both before he can monitor such action (or*
>
> *independently of his capacity ever to be able to monitor it) and in a context in*
>
> *which it affects his own action."*

This level of 'subjective probability' relies on an individual's belief that another agent not only has the ability, but also the intention, to perform an action expected. This action can be continuous or a once off. If evidence transpires in relation to their inability or lack of intent trust will need to be re-evaluated. Whether this is an evaluation of an individual, institution or principle relates to the form of trust under review.

Seligman (1997) believes that there are three varieties of trust; abstract, functional and personal. Abstract trust refers to the relationship between an individual or group and a system or principle. One of the key examples in this regard is a population's trust in the principle of democracy, and by contrast the distrust of autocracy. Functional trust relates to a practical relationship between individuals. For example a restaurant's patron has a functional trust in the waiters to pass on the correct information and trust in chefs to cook the food appropriately. The final form of trust described by Seligman (1997) is personal trust. This is a form of trust that exceeds any functionality and concerns the nature and quality of personal relationships between individuals. This is similar to moralistic trust (Rathbun, 2009), which is trust based on the assessment of an individual's inherent dependability due to their veracity and character. Rathbun

(2009) has also developed the notion of 'generalised trust' by which he refers to trust that is linked not to the individual trustee, but to their societal norms and the belief that they will conform to them.

In her analysis of terrorism and trust in Northern Ireland Fierke (2009) illustrates how the majority of the literature in relation to terrorism and trust is concerned with the question of 'whether terrorism increases in-group trust or leads to a shattering of distrust'. By applying this central question to The Troubles Fierke (2009) outlines how the case of Bloody Sunday in 1972 led to an automatic distrust in the British government and the security services, not just because of the resultant casualties, but also as a result of the related cover-up in the years after. This in turn was shown to strengthen the trust in the disenfranchised nationalist communities, and those choosing to represent them. Resultantly in the aftermath of Bloody Sunday the Provisional IRA saw a significant surge in recruitment (Gill and Horgan, 2013, p. 437). In contrast to this growing distrust in the state Fierke outlines that attacks by the non-state terrorist actors can in turn consolidate trust in the government, including the figureheads of national leadership. An example of this can be most clearly seen in the sudden rise from 51% to a high of 90% in the approval ratings of President George W. Bush in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 (Gallup, 2001). Without yet doing anything significant in response to the attacks support for, and trust in, Bush had dramatically risen.

Hosking agrees that there can be a rise in the trust of the democratic institutions in the aftermath of a non-state terrorist attack (Hosking, 2009). However, he also

points out that the threat of further attacks can result in an increased distrust of those around you, the broader community in which you are living. People can become paranoid, constantly wondering if nearby is the next terrorist. In a post 9/11 world this has seen the rise in influence of a number of groups and individuals with anti-Muslim policies, rhetoric and beliefs playing a pivotal role in their emergence, existence and popularity. This is central to the aim of terrorism, to induce fear and distrust in a wider community than those directly and physically affected by the attack(s). At its most acute this fear-induced distrust can significantly disrupt our everyday life (Hosking, 2009, p. 482).

While these forms of organisational and communal trust and distrust clearly need to be analysed further, so too does the role of personal trust internally in the terrorist groups. Within this analysis the internal influence of trust can be more readily assessed. In turn it can broaden our true understanding of the influence which trust has both internally within the groups, as well as external from them. This can also broaden the scope of our research away from solely looking at trust's relationship with acts of terrorism. It can incorporate non-violent actions and decision-making as well.

In their analysis of terrorist recruitment both Hegghammer (2013) and Vertigans (2011) both argue that personal trust plays a key role. Hegghammer (2013) puts forward the hypothesis that within the recruitment process the recruiter and the potential recruit are involved in a 'trust game.' He postulates that during this process the recruiter is assessing the trustworthiness of each potential new recruit. Within this trust game it is essential not only that the new

recruit is ideologically committed but that they also pose the lowest form of risk to the security of the existing network, while at the same time bringing the highest potential reward to the organisation. This is supported by Vertigans (2011) who says that the minimisation of risk and maximisation of effectiveness is reliant on the power of secrecy and trust. By drawing on the concepts of 'thick' and 'thin' trust (Putnam, 2000) Vertigans (2011) argues that terrorist groups need to generate trust both within the group and across members. New recruits to the group require evidence that they can trust the group they are putting themselves in danger to join. Likewise existing members need to be confident in abilities, morality and temperament of the new recruit (Ibid, p.97). This trust must be a 'thick trust' emphasised by strong interpersonal ties, rather than a 'thin trust' of weak ties (Putnam, 2000).

To date, outside of the examples already cited, there has been little research carried out in this form of trust-based analysis in relation to terrorism studies. However, we do not need to rely solely on research that has been carried out in regards to terrorist actors. In order to gain a broader understanding we need to look beyond political violence. There is much to be gained by also analysing non-political criminality as well as social movements.

The history of research has continuously shown the power that trust and familiarity have played in the initial engagement within a social movement. Whether one is looking at entrance into religious communities (Snow, Zurcher and Ekland-Olson, 1980) or secular movements (Diani and Lodi, 1988) the research demonstrates that the vast majority of individual members were

recruited through personal contacts. When the social movement being entered comes with a greater degree of risk or danger, stronger and more numerous ties to the movement are required (Della Porta and Diani, 2006). This has been shown in relation to involvement in African-American civil rights movements (McAdam, 1986) and Italian left-wing groups (Della Porta, 1988) amongst others. While starkly different in a number of ways the danger associated with membership of these organisations can be seen as analogous to the risks associated membership of a terrorist group. These heightened risks of membership necessitate heightened degrees of trust for involvement. The social connections formed, and the experience gained from previous affiliations and activities can in turn heighten the levels of trust displayed towards a potential new recruit by the existing membership. The role that trust plays in the recruitment process can be similarly seen when one analyses non-political criminality.

Von Lampe and Johansen (2004) outline how there are two key perspectives from which the relationship between organised crime and trust are analysed. The first relates to co-operation, with the second referring to acceptance. In essence these ask some ostensibly simple, yet vital, questions. Why do people take part in illegal activity together? And why are specific others accepted into the organisation? These questions are the bedrock of all organised illegal activity, and are similar to the questions raised by Hegghammer (2013) and Vertigans (2011) in relation to terrorism and trust. Without acceptance and co-operation organised criminal groups can neither survive nor thrive. Across the literature on trust in criminal groups the significance of kinship is consistently

emphasised in the discussion of co-operation, whether in reference to its somewhat obvious relationship with the Sicilian Mafia (Campana and Varese, 2012) or in drug dealing groups (Pearson and Hobbs, 1999; Denton and O'Malleu, 1999). In a clandestine world where the trust building safeguards of the courts and legal system are not a viable option to protect your interests trust in family can act as a replacement 'safety net.' By developing criminal organisations across family lines Mafiosi have increased compliance in the organisation as well as deterring any future defections (Campana and Varese, 2012). This is due to the fact that by either defecting or failing to comply members are potentially putting their own family and community at risk of any resultant legal intervention. The value of kinship is reflective of Shapiro's (2013) observations in relation to both Al Qaeda and Jemaah Islamiyah. He notes that within both groups members are encouraged to marry fellow affiliates. As with the organised crime groups those involved in 'intermarriages' face a larger cost if they are either caught acting against the wishes of the leadership or if they are prosecuted for membership, or terrorism related crimes.

In order for criminal organisations to expand there needs to be a broader recruitment strategy than one based on kinship. It has been found that when this is the case that the violence is used to assure the organisation can trust an individual, and can therefore both accept and co-operate with them. Schelling (1963) notes that by partaking in a violent action during their early membership a new member is by deed giving a promise of commitment to the group. Through their act of violence the group is gaining currency that they can use against them if there is ever a future threat of defection or failure to comply. However, the new

recruit is also demonstrating their willingness to contribute to the group's activities, and can therefore be trusted. A similar occurrence has been also observed within terrorist groups. Silke (1999) noted how some former prisoners returning to the Provisional IRA during the Troubles carried out acts of violent vigilantism to redeem their reputation if their behaviour while in custody was called into question. This role was also used by new recruits to cement their trustworthiness and ability to partake in more high-level activities, activities which required a higher degree of trust. As with the organised crime groups the information about these actions could be used against the new recruits if they posed a potential future threat against the group.

If one is to adhere to Gambetta's definition of trust in that it 'is a particular level of the subjective probability with which an agent assesses that another agent or group of agents will perform a particular action' (Gambetta, 2000, p.218) then these actions noted by Silke (1999) and Schelling (1963) fit within the operationalization of trust. However, it is posited here that these forms of predictable activity are less explained by the inherent trust between two individuals, or one individual and a group. In contrast this is better explained through the notion of coerced compliance, in that through their previous illegal activities within the group or relationship with other members of the group that they are forced to comply with the wishes of the leadership and the entire organisation.

What has been detailed in much of the criminal trust literature relates to how the senior membership can trust new recruits enough to allow them into an

organisation, or assist in their participation in illegal activity. As was noted by Moselli, Gigeure and Petit (2007) trust in criminal networks emerges most clearly when it is time to execute a crime. However, the present research reverses these questions and assertions. It is not only looking at the trust which the leadership may have in potential recruits but is also analysing the trust which potential recruits may have in the organisation they are joining. Similarly it is not looking at the role of trust within the execution of crime but is questioning the role which trust may have in relation to the starting point of allegiance decisions. By assessing the role of trust in relation to terrorist group allegiance the research is questioning whether those aligning with the groups make this decision as a result of ideological beliefs and/or their desire to partake in terrorist or paramilitary activity.

1.3 Methodology

This exploratory research is based on a series of interviews carried out with members of the political and paramilitary wings of the Irish Republican Movement. These took place between 2007 and 2013. The sample is a purposive sample. Participants were selected due to their involvement in one or more of the four selected splits: 1969/70, 1974, 1986 and 1997. The interviews were part of a wider project looking at the organisational and individual characteristics of splits.

In total 43 participants were interviewed, 8 on more than one occasion. Of these 5 were female and 38 were male. The ages, education, employment, marital status and other demographics of the participants were not recorded either in

relation to the time of the split, or at the time of the interview. Two interviewees

requested for their interviews not to be recorded, during these two meetings

detailed notes were taken and written up immediately afterwards. These were

checked and verified with the participants. Each of the other interviews were

recorded and transcribed verbatim.

Where possible individuals in both the national leadership and the wider

membership were interviewed. The ranking of the individuals, as well as their

allegiances, was fluid rather than static across the four splits analysed. This

information is illustrated in Tables 1-4 below. These demographics only refer to

those who were involved in the actual splits themselves. Other participants also

commented on the divisions from their external perspective.

Contacts were made through a variety of means, including correspondence with

the political wings, former prisoner groups and independent republican

organisations. Requests were made to speak to specific individuals and to

general members previously involved in splits. Trusted intermediaries, both

internal and external to the movement, proved an especially valuable resource.

Snowball sampling was used throughout the project. At the end of the interviews

participants were asked if they knew of anyone else with relevant experience

that might be willing to partake in the research. From these contacts gained

further interviews were organised.

Group	Leadership	Ordinary Member Involved Prior to the End of the	Entered Republican Movement in or around 1969/70	Joined the group after initially	Total

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		Border Campaign		joining the other group	
Official Republican Movement	3	2	4	1	10
Provisional Republican Movement	3	3	14	3	23
Other	1	0	0	0	1
Total	7	5	18	4	34

Table 1: Participants involved at the time of the 1969/70 split

Group	Leadership	Ordinary Member	Total
Official Republican Movement	2	4	6
Irish Republican Socialist Movement	1	4	5
Undisclosed	0	1	1
Total	3	9	12

Table 2: Participants involved at the time of the 1974 split

Group	Leadership	Ordinary Membership	Supporter	Total
Provisional Republican Movement	8	7	0	15
Republican Sinn Fein/Continuity IRA	6	3	2	11
Total	14	10	2	26

Table 3: Participants involved at the time of the 1986 split

Group	Leadership	Ordinary Membership	Total
Provisional Republican Movement	8	1	9
32 County Sovereignty Committee/ Real IRA	2	1	3
Total	10	2	12

Table 4: Participants involved at the time of the 1997 split.

Only four rank and file members and two leadership members refused to take part in the interview process when appraoched. It is believed that there was this positive response rate due to the fact that while the research was looking at

illegal organisations it was not looking at the illegal activity. It is also important to note that the majority of respondents were no longer involved in paramilitary activity. While this was not validated via law enforcement this assumption was made due to the affiliation of many with the Provisional Republican Movement who were on permanent ceasefire, or individuals' stated disengagement from other organisations.

Participants were informed that any discussion of open or live cases, or the planning of any future illegal activity would have to be reported to the police. Before each interview participants were asked to give their informed consent through the signing of a consent form. At the end of the interviews each participant was asked to reaffirm the consent for their interview data to be used.

While there was an appreciation of the importance of anonymity participants were given the opportunity to allow their name to be used. This was due to the fact that many of the interviewees are/were public figures, and the topic of the splits was often played out in the public eye. For the leaders their position within the movement was a key factor to be considered throughout the analysis. However, for those participants who did wish their identity to be known they were given aliases and the identifiable content within their interview data was removed. This is why the location of the interviews is not displayed in this article.

Each interview was conducted in a semi-structured manner. At no stage were participants asked specifically about trust. The results presented in this article

relate to when each of the interviewees described the rationale behind their allegiance decision-making. Semi-structured interviewing was chosen, as it was best suited to the analytical technique of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), a variation of which was employed to analyse the interviews.

IPA is a qualitative research technique originating from health psychology (Holmes, Coyle and Thomson, 1997). More recently this has been utilised in the analysis of accounts of terrorism (See for example Burgess, Ferguson and Hollywood, 2007; Morrison, 2014). The purpose of IPA is to gain a broad insight into an individual's lived experiences and their own personal perception of an object and/or event. It is not the aim of the technique to gain an objective record of the event itself, but to assess what people believed to be important about an issue. It is therefore appropriate to utilise this methodology to ascertain why people arrived at a specific decision.

In essence IPA is broadly concerned with how people think and what they believe to be important and relevant about the issue under discussion (Smith, Jarman and Osburn, 1999). Throughout the interview process the participant is trying to make sense of their world and the experiences and decisions they are being asked about. Therefore when it comes to the interpretation stages of the process the researcher is fundamentally trying to make sense of the participants trying to make sense of their world. It is not pertinent whether or not these beliefs contain an absolute truth of the situation, what is important is that the factors or themes which the participants deem important come to the fore in the research.

Upon completion of the interviews a detailed multi-stage interpretative analysis of the data was conducted. Within each stage the central themes arising from the analysis were documented. These were then further analysed with constant reference to the original interview transcripts. As the process progressed across the analytic stages themes and mechanisms which were originally broad evolved, where necessary, to become more refined and focused. What is presented here in relation to trust is representative of one of the over-arching themes concerning post-split allegiance decision-making.

1.4 Post-Split Allegiance

Throughout it's history militant Irish Republicanism has been beset by organisational split. The 30 years of the Troubles is book-ended by two of the most significant splits of all, the 1969 emergence of the Provisional IRA and the 1997 birth of the Real IRA. Between these two divisions saw the 1974 Official IRA splintering which saw the emergence of the Irish National Liberation Army and the 1986 split in the Provisionals which was the starting point for the still active Continuity IRA. Each of these splits originated at leadership levels before permeating out nationally across the movement. The majority ostensibly occurred due to a debate over the level of political and armed activity for the movement to partake in (see Morrison, 2014 for a more detailed examination of the splits). Therefore one would intuitively expect that with clear strategic defining lines between both sides that allegiance choices would be based on these differences. But, as will be displayed the present interview data challenges this intuitive assumption. As would be expected the leadership allegiances are to

a large extent defined by the strategic divide. However, this is not reflected when one analyses the lower-down rank and file data. The rank and file affiliation is critical to the survival of these groups. In terms of a move away from terrorist activity it is clearly important to have a leadership who advocate a refrain from violence. However, what is more important is that they can bring the vast majority of the organisation, if not the whole membership, away from terrorism too. Without the rank and file membership also denouncing terrorism the strategic shift has no effect, and can ultimately lead to the advent of a dissident organisation, continuing to advocate the role of violence in order to achieve their end goal. Ultimately this new organisation has the potential to emerge more violent than their predecessors in the parent group. This is most clearly illustrated in the birth of the PIRA in 1969. While the Cathal Goulding leadership of the erstwhile IRA were advocating politicisation the majority combination of new recruits and existing members sided with the emerging Provisionals. The PIRA were quickly becoming an organisation intent on heightening armed action, while simultaneously dismissing the power of politics.

The question then arises, why and how do the rank and file members align themselves with one side over the other in the post-split environment. While there are a variety of factors, including the strategic reasoning for the split, the dominant theme across the rank and file membership interviewed in this project is the dichotomous theme of trust/distrust. The tipping-point for the majority came when they assessed how those individuals they trusted, and distrusted, were aligning. For many this was a significantly more powerful factor than any strategic or ideological divide. As was intimated by the former intelligence officer

for the OIRA, Mick Ryan, it was 'human factors' which was often times deciding people's allegiances.

While this analysis is framed as post-split allegiance decision-making in reality the decision of allegiance is made at difference stages of the process of split dependent on experience levels and degrees of knowledge. For those leadership figures playing a central role in the split their allegiance is made in the time leading up to the split. This could be in the preceding months or even years. As a rank and file member depending on one's closeness to the leadership the decisions will be made at different stages. For the majority of the organisation the allegiance decision is made at the time of, or in the immediate aftermath of the split. However, if you are a new recruit or a relatively inexperienced member it may take a significant amount of time for your awareness of any divide to emerge. But even then your degree of knowledge as to why the schism has emerged may be limited.

1.4.1 Rank and File Membership

The emergence of the PIRA in 1969 coincided with an upsurge in the civil rights movement and calls for greater protection of the nationalist areas in Northern Ireland. There was a significant sense of victimisation within the nationalist and republican communities. In the summer of 1969 there were increasing calls for the IRA to provide protection and arms for the Catholic community. In light of these calls there was a surge of young people seeking to join up with the IRA in 1969 and 1970. In doing so they inadvertently first had to make an allegiance choice. Were they to join the politicising OIRA or the emerging paramilitary force

of the PIRA? For the majority of these new recruits they had little to no knowledge of the division within 'the army,' yet in-spite of this they still made allegiance decisions.

"I didn't really understand it until I went into prison. Then I started learning things about why the split occurred..." (Interview with Joe Doherty, February 1st, 2008)

Their initial allegiance choices were often times made due to circumstance and opportunity, even if they were one day to become leading members of the organisation. Martin McGuinness, the now deputy first minister of Northern Ireland, and former leading member of the PIRA, describes how he and his friend decided to initially join the OIRA:

"At that stage my knowledge of who was the IRA would have been like everyone else's, you would have thought there was only one IRA... For us we joined what we believed to be the IRA in Derry. Within a few short weeks of being involved in the IRA in Derry, as we believed, it became clear to us that the situation was more complicated than we initially thought." (Interview with Martin McGuinness, June 23rd, 2008)

It was only after his initial experience that McGuinness was to come to a more concrete and lasting allegiance decision. Through his analysis of the event, which saw him move from the Officials to the Provisionals, he does refer to the strategic differences between the two strands of Republicanism. However, he also places a

significant emphasis on the levels of trust and distrust he had in the members of both groups. It became clear to him that he was more familiar with members of the PIRA, people he trusted more than those in the Officials. Both his trust and distrust sees an overlap between functional and personal trust.

"I suppose it was mostly being unimpressed by the people that we met after we effectively joined. We were coming to the opinion that there was a much more effective, for want of a better word, approach to the situation by what was being offered by the Provisional IRA as they were then known after the split...In terms of then joining the Provisional IRA, I was familiar with some of the people who were associated with the Provisional IRA. In fact I realised that I was probably more familiar with some of the people who were in the Provisional IRA than I was with some of the characters I met in the Official Republican Movement."
(Interview with Martin McGuinness, June 23rd, 2008)

The power of the familiarity with, and subsequent trust in, other members is a recurring theme among many of the new recruits. This familiarity not only allowed individuals to trust their future comrades, but it also provided them with an opportunity to join. For many new recruits, even if they were aware of the differences, their choices were often led by who they knew, not what they knew.

"The Provisionals seemed to me to be the more popular. I was basically walking down the street and I seen this thing 'Join the Provisional Irish Republican

Army'…I was attracted to that for some reason. I think it was really because a lot of my friends were joining the Provisionals. I mean I didn't join the Provisionals, as opposed to joining the Officials because of abstentionism, or it was not as left as the left wing. It was nothing to do with that kind of politics. It was just a popular; it was more a popular group." (Interview with Joe Doherty, February 1st, 2008)

For those young members who sided, and stayed with, the Official IRA (nine rank and file members and three leadership figures who were interviewed here) they had another allegiance related decision to make in quick succession of their original one as their organisation split again in 1974. However, through their experience in the organisation, even if they had not reached the level to acquire first-hand knowledge of the leadership decisions leading to a split, they had transposed their loyalty and trust in significant figures within their local leadership. It was this trust that would assist their decisions. 'Denis' describes a local Divis Street (a widely Republican street in West Belfast) meeting with a local leader in the aftermath of the 1974 divide. He initially describes the importance of the individual sent to deliver the message about the split and the options he was presenting. This quote displays not only the importance of the individual but also how local rivalries were at the forefront of any decision-making.

"Now this guy I would have known from all my time in the Republican Movement and I would have had an affinity with him, and I trusted him. And again that was another thing there too, you could have sent somebody down

there who you didn't like or... if somebody from Leeson St had of come over...First of all you wouldn't have trusted them, second of all the friction would have made it dubious, and you would have then got a whack and got a second opinion, which could have turned you either way." (Interview with 'Denis', February 29th, 2008)

Over the years this local leader had gained such a level of trust in the group that the majority of that local unit would have potentially followed him no matter what he recommended. Due to their youth and lack of experience and knowledge they were more reliant on trust than the more experienced and mature members were.

"He was speaking to you as a comrade, a friend, a soldier, fellow volunteer, and somebody you would go around the corner with. Everything he said you could relate to...If he had of said [the options were to go] Provisional, Official, neutral and Bangladeshi. And he had said we are going Bangladeshi, the chances are you would have gone with that until you had figured it out. You were young you were immature, you were easily influenced." (Interview with 'Denis', February 29th, 2008)

As with the mafia organisations (Campana and Varese, 2012) kinship and community are important factors within Irish Republicanism. A significant number of interviewees referred to the fact that members of their family or their close community were members of the Republican Movement prior to their own

membership. Across the generations this has played a vital role in a number of them joining up.

> *"I grew up with these people, I was surrounded by these people. It was sort of a natural progression for me to go on to be a member of the IRA. If there hadn't of been the Troubles I dare say I would still have been a member of the IRA."*
> *(Interview with Richard O'Rawe, April 9th, 2008)*

For many new recruits this provided them with a higher degree of knowledge to base their decisions on than those recruits with no prior connections. They would hear an account, albeit potentially biased, of the internal debates and manoeuvrings within the organisation. While this familial bond is not the equivalent of trust it did facilitate the development of both trust and distrust in others both internal to and external from the family. It allowed potential recruits to closely observe actions and decision-making and from that form an opinion on who they could trust, and for that matter who they could distrust. One such member was the late Dolours Price who alongside her sister Marian and others was responsible for the Old Bailey bombing in London in 1973. The Price sisters came from a well-known Republican family in west Belfast. Throughout their youth they became accustomed to both leading and rank and file Republicans staying in or visiting their house. On one such occasion when the violence of the summer of 1969 was engulfing west Belfast Dolours Price was to find leading members of the IRA, members who would go on to form the Official IRA, in her home. She describes how her growing distrust in them and their potential for

defence was to play a significant role in her future allegiance choice, even if she did not necessarily disagree with the Officials politics.

"There sitting in our front room was Billy McMillen, Bobby McKnight and not one of the Sullivans, another Sticky (member of the OIRA), three of them sitting in our front living room. I remember, I was only a young girl, I remember saying 'do you not know what's going on out there? People are getting killed. Who is protecting us?' They were actually sitting waiting for their lift across the border…That is when I became a Provo (member of the PIRA), nothing to do with their policy, their ideals, not to do with the fact that I wasn't a Socialist, not to do with the fact that I thought that Stickies were all Communists, not to do with anything like that, just to do with disgust at their conduct and how they behaved and…My father when they went, I remember him saying 'Sure they sold all the guns to the Free Welsh, they gave all the guns away that crowd. They don't want to fight.' That was my initiation in to the Movement." (Interview with Dolours Price, April 21st, 2008)

For each of these new recruits, irrespective of their degree of prior knowledge of the groups personal trust was superseding abstract trust when it came to their allegiance decision-making. Theirs were not decisions based on the trust in abstract concepts or ideologies. They were basing their allegiance on their trust in, or distrust of, others.

1.4.2 The Appreciation of Trust by the Leadership

The power of trust and distrust is not just something observed when looking at new recruits and the broad membership. If a leader does not have enough trust from the membership, they will undoubtedly fail, no matter what their policy. For the member to join one side over the other they must have some degree of trust in those they are joining. For the leadership to succeed they need to guarantee the trust of their membership before making any significant strategic or tactical changes. Therefore we must assess how the leadership aim to guarantee the trust of their membership in order to come out as the dominant force in the aftermath of a split, or even avoid a split altogether. For them they must consider all levels and forms of experience within the organisation if they are to succeed in their goals. Therefore the assessment of trust must not just focus on those who trust, but also those who need to be trusted.

Throughout each of the splits analysed there are insightful descriptions given by the leadership that ascertains the importance they placed in gaining trust, as well as the tactics they utilised in achieving this. This is best exemplified in the 1986 division that saw the formation of the CIRA. In the aftermath of this split, and the removal of the abstentionist policy (a policy where candidates refused to take their electoral seats) to Dail Eireann (the Irish parliament), the Provisionals secured the support of approximately 90% of the pre-split membership. If one was to analyse Republicanism purely in relation to policies and traditions this would have come as a surprise, as abstentionism was one of the cornerstones and identifiers of what it was to be a Republican. However, by analysing the

leadership strategies and preparation for the change, on both sides of the divide, the result was to be expected.

All of the leadership figures interviewed on both sides of the split acknowledged the importance of a variety of factors relating to the preparation for change. Central to this, in relation to trust was the importance of the high profile supporters utilised by the Provisional leadership of Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness. They displayed the awareness that affiliation decisions are not only made in relation to the strategies and policies, they are often made in reaction to who is advocating not what is being advocated. At times this influential individual can be a local rather than national leadership figure. Therefore the leadership utilised a number of high profile advocates in the lead-up to and during the vote that ultimately brought about the split. Some of the most powerful of these came from the old-guard membership who could provide continuity with past Republican campaigns, the continuity that the CIRA still attempt to claim. As any constitutional change, such as the dropping of abstentionism, required a two-thirds majority to pass it was not only a factor of retaining membership numbers post-split the organisation required votes at both the Army Convention and Ard Fheis (political party convention) in order for the motion to pass. They therefore needed influential members to 'deliver' votes. Francie Mackey the president of 32CSM, believed to be the political-wing of the Real IRA, describes how and why this happened.

"If you have senior membership who were in the IRA saying that this leadership is 100% solid who on the ground was going to question that?... At key stages in

30

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> *all of this key people in local areas and at a regional area were wheeled out to*
>
> *say that this was 100% sound. If a key person known in the locality to be in the*
>
> *IRA, if that person says that something was right well then it was taken as*
>
> *right." (Interview with Francie Mackey, June 25th, 2008)*

The utilisation of a trustworthy old-guard member was exemplified in the case of the PIRA member John Joe McGirl from Leitrim in the northwest of Ireland, an influential figure whose importance was cited across both sides of the divide. The influence of McGirl is described here by Sean O'Bradaigh, a leading member of Republican Sinn Fein.

> *"They would never have got that through the Ard Fheis without McGirl, because*
>
> *McGirl delivered, I can't remember, but McGirl delivered something like 27 or 30*
>
> *votes to them at the Ard Fheis, with all the cumann (local branch) in Co. Leitrim.*
>
> *I mean that was major, it was a terrible disappointment to us of course."*
>
> *(Interview with Sean O'Bradaigh, August 17th, 2008)*

Securing the support of these influential individuals played a crucial role across each of the splits. The reliance on the support of one individual, and the subsequent support from others which they could deliver, is also demonstrated in the case of Brian Keenan and the 1997 split with the RIRA. In the lead up to the split it appeared that Keenan, a member of the PIRA Army Council, was siding with the dissenters against Adams and McGuinness. Throughout his years as a paramilitary strategist Keenan had gained the trust of some of theleading and most influential members of the PIRA. It is therefore speculated that if the

leadership had not secured his support then their tenure, and the entire peace

process, may have discontinued. Not only would Keenan have been able to

deliver people who trusted him, but those people were highly influential in their

own right and in turn would also be able to deliver those who in turn trusted

them and their judgement. It once again indicates the power of personal trust.

> *"If Kennan goes that was straight-forward. That was South Armagh [siding with*
>
> *him]. Absolutely fucking crucial. Belfast what would have happened there? You*
>
> *can take individuals. [Bobby] Storey, [Brian] Gillen, [Martin]Ferris,*
>
> *[Thomas]Slab [Murphy], [Brendan] Hughes all of them. Ah you're [Adams and*
>
> *McGuinness] gone then. Things have moved away then. Now you're in serious*
>
> *shit. It was key." (Interview with Sean O'Callaghan, March 19th, 2013)*

These examples should not be interpreted as stating that individual members did

not trust Adams and McGuinness. On the contrary both of them garner

significant levels of trust within Irish Republicanism. What it does illustrate

however is the fact that within an expansive membership a variety of individuals

are both trusted and followed.

1.4.3 Trust in the Media

It is not just the individuals who are trusted; their media has also gained trust

across the years. This has most notably included the organisations' mouthpieces

the Republican newspapers. In the 1970s for many Republicans their first port

of call for their internal news and analysis about the movement was either the

southern-based *An Phoblacht* or the northern *Republican News*. With tensions

building across the Republican leadership dividing lines were being drawn

between the old-guard southern leadership of O'Bradaigh and O'Conail and their

internal adversaries, 'the young Turks', led by Adams, McGuinness, Danny

Morrison and others. The northern leadership was gradually bringing about

changes in the movement, one step at a time. They restructured the PIRA into a

Northern and Southern Command, and in the mid to late 1970s they were

beginning to reopen the debate about the politicisation of the movement, the

debate that ultimately led to the split of 1986.

It is accepted by each of the key leadership figures interviewed that one of the

crucial turning points in this debate was the merger of the two newspapers in

1979 to form the all-Ireland publication *An Phoblacht/Republican News*. This was

not just a merger of two papers; this was the Adams leadership ousting the

influence of their leadership rivals. In doing so it enabled them to both promote

their beliefs, while simultaneously silencing those of their internal opponents.

The importance of this was not lost on Danny Morrison, who ultimately took

over the editorship of the newly merged paper. It allowed them to prepare the

ground for their intended change, while simultaneously stifling their opponents.

> *"I felt that Dave [O'Conail] and Ruairi [O'Bradaigh] (future leaders of*
>
> *Republican Sinn Fein and the Continuity IRA) felt that they were now going to*
>
> *get their hands on An Phoblacht, which would have been to reflect their picture*
>
> *of the world, and instead at that meeting I announced that the two papers were*
>
> *being united immediately and I would be the editor because I was National*
>
> *Director of Publicity. So they lost that influence as well. My point being is that*

therefore prior to 1986 debates were also carried out in An Phoblacht, in preparation for the ground, we were chipping away and the argument for continued abstentionism in the Twenty-Six Counties. So you had a debate going on inside the IRA, you had an An Phoblacht debate, you had a Sinn Fein debate over a period of years prior to '86." (Interview with Danny Morrison, January 21st, 2008)

In the aftermath of any split both sides are competing for support. In doing so they are trying to promote their interpretation of events and rationale for the split to their potential membership and support. In 1986 the most efficient way to do this was through the newspaper. Forming a new movement the dissidents were aware of this and placed the development of their paper, *Saoirse*, at the forefront of their agenda.

"We had been through it before, reorganise, get an organising committee there elected, link up the various cumann across the country, get a newspaper out, go on with the usual, get a premises for head office." (Interview with Ruairi O'Bradaigh, February 20th, 2008)

However, it was not enough to have a paper. What they needed was a paper that people trusted. This is something that their Provisional rivals had that they did not. According to Anthony McIntyre, a former PIRA member, it was in the aftermath of this split that the merger of the paper displayed new relevance.

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> *"Well I think it was an influential factor in that it brought Republicans a place*
>
> *for central ideas, but it killed off any attempt for another party paper. Saoirse*
>
> *[the Republican Sinn Fein paper] had no tradition; it started as a new paper.*
>
> *With no tradition who would read it? People often buy papers out of loyalty."*
>
> *(Interview with Anthony McIntyre, March 8th, 2008)*

With no tradition the new paper was slow to gain trust. In essence the 1979 merger was giving the leadership control of the trusted medium for their message and interpretation of events at both a political and paramilitary level. In contrast their opposition had to start developing this trust from scratch, a trust they have never been able to fully regain. With these newspapers being the first port of call for the majority of members to gain access to political and paramilitary statements and interpretations of events this proved to be critical in the affirmation of the Adams/McGuinness leadership. This would be the equivalent of one side of a feuding Al Qaeda leadership having full control of *Inspire* magazine, or a trusted website.

1.4.4 Dissident Distrust

Throughout the Troubles and into the peace process Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness garnered significant levels of personal trust across the movement. They have utilised this trust bringing about some of the most significant and dramatic changes in republicanism from the dropping of abstentionism to the comprehensive decommissioning of the PIRA, from power-sharing with their erstwhile adversaries in the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) to the support for the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). Each of these changes has been

historic and has fundamentally changed what it means to be a Provisional Republican. While there have been splits along the way the most striking aspect of this is that these splits have not been more significant and that the emerging dissidents have not been stronger.

In the minds of those dissidents one of the key reasons for this is the extreme trust the membership has in Gerry Adams, a trust that in the dissidents' interpretation leaves the Provisional population devoid of any critical analysis. For those dissidents the utility of this trust is portrayed in a negative manner. It is their belief that the leadership, and especially Adams, manipulated this trust and led the movement away from their core values. They utilise this emphasis on trust to portray Adams as an individual who has sold out republicanism, rather than as a leader of the movement.

> *"They believed in him [Adams]. They put their trust and their belief in a man who walked all over them, who used that belief and that trust to go in the direction he wanted to go, irrespective of the Republican Movement, a united Ireland." (Interview with Geraldine Taylor, January 23rd, 2009)*

This perceived manipulation of trust, and sell-out of republicanism, has permeated into the everyday existence among some of the more senior dissidents. It has led to considerable internal paranoia, and distrust of comrades, a distrust that could prove to be debilitating to any advancement they wish to achieve. This permeating paranoia is reflected in the following quote from 'Alex' a founding member of the PIRA and a supporter of the CIRA.

"The Brits got such a grip on the Provisionals God knows what way the dissidents as they call them are set up. They are bound to have people involved there [who are informing], it is common sense. My attitude would be you wouldn't know who the hell you are talking to or who to trust." (Interview with 'Alex', January 23rd, 2009)

While inherent trust can lead to evolution, a pervading distrust can destabilise any desired progress. With the emergence of a newly formed 'IRA' (a dissident merger of RIRA, Republican Action Against Drugs and other previously unaffiliated dissident republicans) the question of trust must once again be addressed. For the merger to succeed there needs to be trust within both the leadership and the rank and file membership. Without it there is always the potential for paranoia, infighting and even violent feuds. These are groups and individuals who have been rivals over a number of years. With this rivalry will have come significant levels of distrust. Only time will tell whether this distrust permeates into the new group. From developing a new leadership structure, and choosing those individuals to take on the roles, to carrying out attacks the internal trust within the organisation will be tested throughout the organisational evolution. It is, as yet, unclear if and how these issues have been dealt with or resolved. However, it is a research topic that needs to be returned to in the future.

1.5 Discussion

In 1987 Louis H. Bluhm posited that trust is but a 'secondary concept' on the edge of our analytical endeavours. This was true in 1987, and is still largely true today. Within terrorism research the analysis of trust is barely even a secondary concept. It is somewhat second nature to assume the primacy of ideological influences in terrorist decision-making, especially in relation to organisational affiliation. While ideology may play a primary role for some members it is both irresponsible and dangerous to assume the dominant role of ideology at the very naissance of their involvement with the group, or at any other stage of their involvement for that matter. Presuming its presence fails to acknowledge the complex heterogeneity of both terrorist involvement and engagement. The present analysis has demonstrated that within Irish Republicanism the influence of trust was most powerful for those new recruits, even superseding ideology, in relation to organisational affiliation. In light of this we must constantly look at the more holistic picture of what it means to engage and become involved with a terrorist group, and not just focus on one aspect of what it means to be part of a terrorist group.

It is important that if we are to advance our understanding of trust in terrorism that it is necessary for us to expand our analysis across groups and across time. We need to assess what role it plays across different stages of an individual terrorist's 'career' and across different roles within the organisation. The two key factors of kinship and utility of violence dominate much of the trust and crime literature, with kinship demonstrably important within the present

analysis as well. However, there are numerous other aspects of trust pertinent to both terrorism and non-political criminality. One would suspect trust and distrust to be central at all levels of terrorist decision-making, part of the everyday life within the organisation. Due to the (semi-) clandestine nature of the groups they would be constantly suspicious of those around them. They have to assess and reassess whether their comrades are informers supplying information elsewhere, either externally or internally within the group. If this is coupled with the constant threat of organisational fragmentation it in turn provides for an extremely paranoid environment.

With this intra-comrade suspicion an ever-present threat, and even without its presence, trust must become a vital component that binds and maintains an organisation. For a terrorist organisation to continue in operational existence trust is an imperative. Along each stage of the terrorist process trust is key both in violent and non-violent activity. Individuals must trust the group, its leaders and members in order to align themselves with them. Members planning an attack must trust their comrades' ability to complete the specific tasks they have been given, while also trusting them not to divulge information about the attack to the authorities. Leaders must have the trust of their membership to succeed in any tactical, strategic or ideological change. And in a post-split environment members need to trust the individuals they are siding with to achieve their stated or intended goals.

What is apparent from the present research is that personal trust has played a significant role in the allegiance decision-making of new recruits within a

terrorist organisation. If these findings are replicated elsewhere, and across the trajectory of terrorist group involvement, they may provide an important insight for anyone designing or implementing disengagement or deradicalisation programmes. While the content of these programmes is undoubtedly key it may not be effective if a trusted individual does not deliver it. Those administering the programmes must not presume the dominance of a radical ideology in the maintenance of organisational membership. Instead they must adequately assess the reality of membership, and appreciate the possibly that membership of terrorist organisations is not necessarily first based on ideological grounds (Bjorgo and Horgan, 2009, p.4). This assessment must factor in a number of issues including, but not exclusively, organisational experience, organisational position and the role of trust.

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