

CONFIDENTIAL

LONDONDERRY - WEST BANK PROBLEM

NOTE BY THE DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

1. The drift of Protestant families from West Bank of the Foyle (Donegal side) to East Bank has been continuing since about 1970 and has been of considerable proportions.
2. There have been unfortunate consequences for schools, Churches and clubs. In political terms there has been a complete turnaround in certain areas.
3. SCHOOLS Prior to "the Troubles" the Model Primary School had a full enrolment, Christ Church PS was well attended and the County Borough Education Authority was considering the provision of a new primary school.

Today Christ Church School is closed, the Model PS has many empty classrooms, Greehaw PS has become a "mixed" school, Ballangry PS has an enrolment of around 20, and the other 4 schools serving Protestant children have a combined enrolment of about 200.

4. This has important implications for post primary education. The West Bank accommodates Foyle and Londonderry College (Grammar School Boys/Girls/2 campuses) and Templemore Intermediate School. The East Bank accommodates Clondermot Intermediate School and Faughan Valley IS - both of which are being extended.
5. The Governors of Foyle and Londonderry College fear that if comprehensive education becomes a reality then there is no future for their school(s) since there will be a totally inadequate catchment of Protestant pupils on the West Bank (probably less than 500 primary pupils in all). Clearly Templemore IS alone could deal with this and the situation is most serious in its implications for the future.
6. CHURCHES All Protestant Churches have very much reduced congregations and most keep going only out of a sense of tradition and in many cases because of the loyalty of members who have moved to East Bank but continue to attend their (former) Churches. Carlisle Road Methodist Church is without a Minister and no replacement is to be made. Presbyterian Churches have had very great difficulty in filling vacancies. The situation will not be helped by attacks recently on the building of First Derry Church and on some of the members going to a service there.
7. CLUBS Here the latest casualty is City of Derry Cricket Club - the only one on the West Bank - which has closed after many years existence. YMCA is closed, PWMI destroyed and not to reopen, CITY CLUB closed, NORTHERN COUNTIES CLUB ready to close if the building could be sold. Many other smaller clubs and societies are closed or moribund.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

8. **GENERALLY** There is a good deal of apprehension on the part of remaining Protestants who feel increasingly isolated and very little would induce many more to leave. Recent evidence of a more overt political line in City Council affairs has unsettled many as have the First Derry incidents (6 above) and stoning of Fountain Street area around Easter. Many people having moved to Waterside have ceased to shop in City Centre - most of them being put off by, for example, regular Saturday afternoon demonstrations by Republicans in Waterloo Place area.

9. **POLITICALLY** One indicator of the turn around is that now there are only two Protestant councillors returned from the West Bank. At the previous election there were three (plus an alliance councillor who failed in 1977 election). Previously (prior to 1968) there was a very strong Unionist West Bank representation which was very influential on both County Borough and Rural Councils.

10. **BUSINESSES** There has been a very great change in business control and relatively few Protestant owned businesses remain. This has resulted in the opening up of many new small businesses in Waterside thus reinforcing the sense of separation.

11. **PROSPECTS** I regard the RICHMOND AND FOYLE STREET developments as essential steps towards a partial reversal of this unhappy situation. FOYLE AND LONDONDERRY COLLEGE provides a vital cross river link.

CONFIDENTIAL