

DEMOCRATIZATION, STATE FORMATION, AND CIVIL WAR, IN FINLAND AND IRELAND: A REFLECTION ON THE DEMOCRATIC PEACE HYPOTHESIS.

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It is a well-founded hypothesis that countries that have undergone a recent change of regime are more likely to experience civil war than countries whose political system has remained stable. In authoritarian regimes repression is so high that the costs of opposition discourage rebellion. If repression is low the benefits of peaceful accommodation exceed the benefits of violent conflict. It is argued that transitional states, where repression decreases and the opportunities for protest increase, are more prone to civil war (Hegre et al, 2001). This perspective can be juxtaposed to another theory which emphasises the capacity of democracies to resolve differences peacefully. 'The democratic peace hypothesis' posits that wars between democratic states will not occur when political elites have internalised norms of peaceful conflict resolution or where institutional constraints lead elites to seek non-violent solutions to conflicts (Russett, 1993; Morgan and Campbell, 1991). There is no reason why the same factors might not prevent internal civil wars (Krain and Myers). Dahl suggests that societies with a democratic political culture would make their way through crises that would lead to breakdown in countries with a less supportive political culture (Dahl, 1989, 263). Analogously, Snyder argues that in advanced democracies voters can avail of strong institutions to ensure politicians stick to agreements while during the early stages of democratisation weak institutions can result in polarisation and violence (Snyder, 2000, 54).

From either perspective Finland and Ireland are two interesting exceptions. Their civil wars were fought in societies with long-standing constitutional traditions, where there was a consensus on the value of democracy in public life, and where political elites, not military figures, traditionally played the pivotal role in resolving political disputes (Renvall 1957, pp.9-14; Farrell 1973, pp.13-26). Paradoxically, this democratic consensus was unable to provide a means of resolving the issues that arose in their move to independence. Moreover, in both cases electoral institutions, political parties, the media, and the bureaucracy, were all well-developed by independence, but were insufficient to prevent their civil wars. In short, both cases run counter to theoretical expectations and regional trends, and might provide a tougher test of the 'endogenous' democratic peace hypothesis, as well as delineating the circumstances in which transitions can lead to civil wars.

Hegre et al have established a statistical probability that democratisation will lead to civil war, but don't explain why elites cannot reach the compromises

that enable some transitional states avoid civil war. In both cases democratisation did lead to nationalist protest and the collapse of the imperial repressive apparatuses, but in its early stages conservatives and radicals were united behind demands for independence. What proved crucial was that the course of democratization was blocked by the Imperial centre, which did not allow the devolution of legislative authority to take place until conservatives were in power. As a result, the transfer of power created a constitutional crisis over who should inherit the Empire's legislative authority and when this crisis becomes interlinked with the question of public order, violent conflict ensued. Increased mobilisation and the collapse of the apparatuses of repression were necessary but insufficient causes of civil war, but the blockage of democratisation by the imperial centre was the decisive factor. It meant that Finnish Social Democrats and Irish republicans were deprived of the fruits of their early electoral victories, and that the reconstruction of the domestic repressive apparatus could not be accomplished consensually. The coincidence of constitutional crises over who should inherit the Empire's legislative authority with a public order problem, meant that the logics of democratisation and state formation now worked against each other, since the latter could only be achieved at the expense of the former.

LIBERALISATION AND INCLUSIVENESS.

Between 1800 and the First World War both Finland and Ireland went from being closed hegemonies to states with high degrees of both contestation and inclusiveness. After the formation of a Finnish Grand Duchy in 1809 the Finnish political system was gradually liberalised, with an elected Diet being convened in 1863, a party system of the Scandinavian type taking shape before 1906, and a recognisably modern civil society being formed in the last decades of Russian rule (Alapuro, 1992, p.154). In Ireland elections to Westminster became national events in the 1820s, an extension of the suffrage in 1885 saw the emergence of a mass Home Rule and Unionist party the following year, and the period between 1884 and 1914 saw the growth of a strong civil society with cultural, labour, and religious organisations all being formed at a rapid rate (Kissane, 2002, pp.103-112).

Nevertheless, democratisation was still fundamentally affected by external events. In Finland the 1905 revolution in Russia led to the replacement the following year of the Estates system with a unicameral assembly based on universal adult suffrage. In the process the number entitled to vote increased tenfold, from 126,000 to 1,273,000 persons (Alapuro, 1985, p.98). In Ireland Britain's decision to extend the suffrage to most adults in 1918 led to a dramatic increase in those entitled to vote, from less than 700,000 to almost two million. Of those 2 million people entitled to vote in the 1918 election it has been estimated that only 360,00 had previously voted in a parliamentary election (Coakley, 1994, p.36). The result of these changes was that in Finland, the Social Democrat Party, formed as recently as 1903, gained 80 of the 200

seats in the 1907 general election, becoming the largest party in their parliament. In nationalist Ireland almost four decades of electoral dominance by the Home Rule party was ended when the separatist party, Sinn Fein, formed in 1917, won 69 out of 72 seats in the future area of the Irish state.

In both cases inclusiveness did not initially lead to the kinds of counter-mobilisation one associates with such transitions. Between 1906 and 1914 the prestige of the Finnish parliament was greatly increased as a result of the stand it took against Russification and the harmony between the parties reflected the fact that the parliament still did not have the authority to pass reform bills demanded by the left (Renvall, 1957, p.17). In Ireland Sinn Fein encountered little opposition outside of Unionist-dominated Ulster, it initially devoted its energies to the establishment of a Westminster style system for the island as a whole, and even the representatives of the Anglo-Irish minority were eventually forced to come to terms with it (Buckland, 1973, p.39).

The one complicating factor was the continued dependence of these polities on the imperial power. In Finland the parliament was repeatedly dissolved by the Tsar's representative and frequently clashed with the Senate over the funding of reform: the parliament considered that no special grant was necessary for these reforms since the Government had funds at its disposal, while the Government was unwilling to spend money on reforms voted for by the parliament (Renvall, 1957, p.17). In Ireland Sinn Fein concentrated its efforts on securing legitimacy for its parliament, *Dail Eireann* and to this end it formed several Dail departments to rival those of the British administration. However, if Sinn Fein's aim was the foundation of a Republican Government, by June 1921 it was clear that this would not be conceded by the British Government or recognised internationally. Indeed it had already led to the partition of the country in 1920, and the Irish Republican Army had not succeeded in removing the British army from the country.

In summary, the first democratic elections opened up possibilities for radical change but in neither case would a parliamentary majority result in effective parliamentary government. In the 1916 Finnish general election the Social Democrats gained 103 seats out of 200 seats, but the parliament was not allowed to convene. In 1921 the British government held elections to the 'parliament of southern Ireland' created by the Government of Ireland Act of 1920 but Sinn Fein candidates were returned unopposed in all constituencies and instead attended the Second Dail, a parliament which remained unrecognised by the British.

THE EMERGENCE OF CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS

The possibility that democratization could proceed smoothly was shattered by the Russian Revolution in 1917 and Britain's decision to negotiate a peace agreement with Irish nationalists in 1921. The external factor, a source of

unity initially, now divided nationalists. The initial gains, by Social Democrats and republicans, were soon reversed as fresh elections deprived them of their electoral majorities. Since this change in their fortunes was attributed by them to external factors the legitimacy of the new electoral results was contested.

The decision of the Russian Provisional Government to restore Finland's autonomy in February 1917 increased hopes that a functioning democracy could emerge. For the Social Democrats this was accompanied by the hope that those reforms it had failed to get implemented over the previous decade, the eight-hour workday, the democratisation of local government, and the enfranchisement of the crofters and other tenant farmers, could now be achieved (Alapuro, 1988, p.151). However, although the *Eduskunta* was convened in March, the powers previously exercised by the Tsar, such as the right to dissolve parliament, were transferred to the Provisional Government. It is not surprising that the Social Democrats' answer to the issue of who would inherit the Tsar's prerogatives - was to transfer power (except in foreign policy and military affairs) to the parliament. With the support of some non-socialist deputies this 'power law' was pushed through the parliament on 17 and 18 July 1917. This law had two aspects - power was to be transferred St. Petersburg to Helsinki and also from the Senate to the parliament (Jussila, Hentila and Nevakivi, 1999, p.97).

This law, if accepted by the Russians, would have consolidated the position the party gained in the 1916 election by enabling a purely Social Democratic government to be formed. Moreover, since such constitutional amendments required a two thirds majority, it was inconceivable that the party would lack the votes to maintain it (Upton, 1980, p. 103). However, the Provisional Government refused to approve the law, dissolved the parliament, and ordered fresh elections to be held. The bourgeois parties then co-operated with the Provisional Government to make sure that new elections took place. A constitutional crisis ensued. Social democrats continued to attend the parliament but the Senate, from which their members had resigned, refused to pass their bills into law. A major blow came on August 29 when a majority of the members of the dissolved parliament were prevented from attending a session called by the Social Democratic speaker of parliament. In the October elections the party lost its majority, this time gaining only 92 seats.

The reversal of fortune for Irish republicans after the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty on December 6 1921 was even more dramatic. The Treaty allowed for the formation of a 26-county Irish dominion of the British Empire and was immediately denounced by the President of the Dail, de Valera, as 'in violent conflict with the wishes of the majority of this nation, as expressed freely in successive elections during the past three years' (Coogan and Morrison, 1998, p.25). Nevertheless, the Treaty was accepted by the Dail on January 7 1922, by 64 votes to 57. Generally, public opinion was in favour of

the settlement, although the majority of the IRA were not. After the Dail vote, a Provisional Government, which was elected by 'the parliament of southern Ireland' and which derived its authority from the Treaty, was formed. It consisted entirely of pro-Treaty members and slowly began the process of building a new army under its authority. During the Treaty negotiations it had also been agreed that a new general election would take place, but in May pro-Treaty and anti-Treaty leaders agreed to put forward a joint panel of candidates for the election and to form a coalition government afterwards. Despite this, the poor performance of the anti-treaty candidates in the 'pact election' on June 16 led the Provisional Government to interpret the election as giving a clear mandate for the Treaty. Either way, the Republican position, upheld by 124 members in the Second Dail, would only be represented by 36 members out of 128 in the Third Dail.

Despite these set-backs neither the Social Democrats or the Republicans immediately resorted to violent action. Despite their claim that the election was illegitimate, the Social Democrats contested the October election, on November 1 1917 they issued demands for concrete economic and political reforms in order to stave off the possibility of a revolution, and they attended the parliament until January 25 1918 two days before the civil war started. Even the demands of the general strike called on 14 November 1917 reiterated the demands made by the party two weeks earlier. In other words, while rejecting the legitimacy of the October elections, they were essentially concerned with restoring the rights won after the February revolution (Alapuro, 1988, pp.167-176). In Ireland anti-treaty Republicans continued to attend the Dail until June 1922, their leaders joined peace discussions with their opponents in February, in April, and again in May, and while the ranks of the IRA outnumbered the troops in the National Army before July, it didn't press home its early military advantage. Indeed once the electoral pact was signed, the Executive of the IRA entered into talks on 'army unification' on May 4 and these ended on the understanding that they would be resumed when the new coalition government was formed on July 1 1922 (Kissane, 2002, p.135).

On the other hand, a number of factors were strengthening the position of radicals outside parliament. In Finland workers militias had been formed as early as 1905 and in the first half of 1917 rising unemployment and falling food supplies were accompanied by increased trade union militancy (Alapuro, 1988, p.156). After the October election a Worker's Security Guard was formed, and with trade union membership having dramatically increased since 1916, this threatened the dominance of the established socialist leaders (ibid, p.154). Then the worsening food situation, the Social Democrats withdrawal from the Government, and a general strike between November 14 and 19 1917, created a revolutionary situation on the ground. In the strike 22 people were killed and to radicals it was a demonstration of the potential power of the workers militias. (Jussila, Hentila and Nevakivi, 1999,

p.107). In early December a Social Democrat official complained that the party was no longer in control of the situation and that the Red Guards were making all the decisions (Rintala, 1962,p.11). In Ireland the IRA had never been under the effective control of the Dail, its large first southern division rejected the Treaty before the Dail vote on January 7 1921, and once the British forces began withdrawing from the country in February, the majority of local barracks were taken over by brigades hostile to the Treaty. The occupation of buildings in the centre of Dublin by a section of the IRA leadership on April 13, was a clear challenge to the authority of the Provisional Government and when negotiations on army reunification began on May 4 a section of the IRA Executive began making plans for military action against the British in order to undermine those negotiations (Kissane, 2002, pp.122-124).

Both the Red Guards and the IRA could look back respectively to the 1905 general strike in Finland and the 1916 Rising in Ireland, when political gains had followed radical action, as inspiration for rebellion. The crucial factor determining whether such precedents were acted upon was whether their political leaders were capable of finding solutions to the constitutional crises. However, these crises exposed the existence of rival interpretations of constitutional legality which had existed under the surface in both nationalist movements. Social Democrats argued that the 'power law' should remain the cornerstone not only of parliamentary democracy but of independence itself, while Republicans argued that an Irish Republic had been established by the votes of the people and could only be disestablished by the votes of the people, freely expressed. All the social democrats and the Republicans could hope for was that institutional changes would re-establish their influence in the system, but this couldn't conceal the fact that by refusing to acknowledge the legitimacy of the new parliamentary arithmetic, they were justifying the positions taken by radicals on their side. The constitutional crises then became interlinked with the increasingly pressing question of the maintenance of order and once this issue could not be resolved peacefully it was resolved by force.

STATE FORMATION AND CIVIL WAR

If in the initial stages of democratization the prerogatives of statehood had unified the political spectrums, once some parties took responsibility for the exercise of state power, that same factor worked against political unity. Since Finnish independence was not recognised by the western powers until 1919 and since the Irish Free State existed only in provisional form until the House of Commons accepted its constitution in December 1923, the imperatives of statehood remained foremost in the minds of the new governments. When practical independence came, on December 6 in Finland, and with the formation of the Provisional Government on January 14 1922 in Ireland, their central legislative institutions were suffering from profound legitimacy

crises, with the major opposition parties refusing to accept the authority of the new executives.

Moreover, neither the Senate nor the Irish Provisional Government had a monopoly of the legitimate means of coercion within their territories and this was linked to their continued dependence on the imperial centre. The presence of large numbers of Russian troops on Finnish soil after the Bolshevik revolution, combined with the existence of a disaffected socialist movement which hoped to get arms from them, was an obvious threat to Finnish independence. In Ireland, the fact that British troops remained in Northern Ireland and were still in possession of several ports south of the border, also threatened the independence project, since it was feared that continued tolerance of the republican intransigents could bring the British army back into action.

A crucial factor in both cases was the absence of state institutions specifically tasked with the maintenance of public order. Until the end of 1917 Finland was not to have a properly constituted police force or a body that was capable of protecting individual rights and the property order (Alapuro, 1988, p.152). In a largely spontaneous process militias, later called 'red guards' on the workers side, and civil guards were formed with increasing rapidity in 1917. The former saw themselves as protectors of workers rights and the latter were motivated partly by the need to protect bourgeois interests against a radicalised labour movement (Jussila, Hentila and Nevakivi, 1999, p.108). By the end of 1917 there were about 40,000 civil guards and 30,000 red guards in the country (ibid). The rapid growth of the former in the second part of 1917 was a crucial factor drawing even the most devoted parliamentarians in the Social Democrat Party towards the Red Guards (Rintala, 1962, p.11). On January 25, two days before the revolution was launched, the Senate declared the civil guards to be government troops despite strong opposition from the Social Democrats. The order for the red guards to mobilise on January 27, which came from the executive committee of the Social Democrat's trade union organisation, coincided with the spontaneous clashing of red guards with civil guards in the Viipuri area on the same day.

In Ireland the traditional police force, the Royal Irish Constabulary, had been discredited during the War of Independence, and the new Civic Guard did not begin operating until after the civil war began. In the meantime most of the countryside was under the control of the IRA but the Provisional Government was slowly building up the National Army. Years of political turmoil had created a situation of lawlessness in the countryside, leading pro-treaty politicians to fear that the social fabric was unravelling (Kissane, 2002, p.152). In the spring of 1922 two rival armies existed side by side, and the truce between the National Army and the IRA on May 4 1922 did not resolve matters in the eyes of the Provisional Government. The decision by the Provisional Government to attack the Four Courts on June 28 was

undoubtedly prompted by an ultimatum delivered by the British Government two days previously, but also reflected the failure of efforts at maintaining unity that had been going on since February. The Provisional Government's justification for the attack on the Four Courts was the kidnapping of their Assistant Chief of Staff by the IRA on June 26.

Although the Irish civil war has usually been attributed to the elite split which resulted from the Treaty, and the Finnish civil war to the pent-up frustrations of the rural poor, both were rooted in micro as well as macro conditions. Rural soviets, mass strikes, and land grabbing had punctuated the Irish War of Independence, leading ministers to conclude in the spring of 1922 that only the vigorous assertion of central authority would prevent the disintegration of the social fabric. By January 1923 mass executions were being proposed to prevent the possibility of a land war and the army was employed to crush land grabbing and labour unrest (Regan, 1999, 120). In Finland the *Eduskunta* attempted to pass a land reform measure in the months preceding the civil war but failed to take any concrete steps to arrest the increasing impoverishment of the rural poor. According to an official enquiry around 14,000 evictions had taken place between 1909 and 1915 (Peltonen, 1995, 32-33). Although the Finnish reds were more clearly drawn from the poorer classes than Irish Republicans there is no doubt that anxiety about the social fabric fed into the urgency with which conservatives regarded the public order question in both states. After all it was the absence of security forces that made revolution possible on the ground.

Indeed in both cases the governments actually started the civil wars, by disarming the reds guards in Ostrobothnia and attacking the anti-Treatyites in the Four Courts. Finnish historiography has tended to stress the links between the Social Democrats and the Bolsheviks and emphasises the Whites' determination to prevent the 1917 revolution extending itself to Finland (Wuorinen, 1965, 202-230). In Ireland the pro-Treatyites also viewed their opponents as a collection of nationalist irreconcilables and social revolutionaries and their clampdown has been interpreted as 'a counter-revolution' (Regan, 1999). Nevertheless, the organizational and ideological links between the Social Democrats and the Bolsheviks were actually weak and only a minority of the anti-Treatyites were revolutionaries (Kirby, 1974, 106). Both were pushed into revolution by external circumstances and their strategies only became dictated by their radical elements after they failed to find solutions to the constitutional crises.

Both cases confirm the hypothesis that civil war is likely in states that 'begin the process of state building with modest amounts of power relative to the groups they seek to govern' (David, p.571), but this situation has to be related of the constitutional crises of the previous months. The difficulty the Senate and the Provisional Government had with the red guards and the IRA respectively, was clearly compounded by the positions taken by their

political leaderships. Conscious of their increasing loss of control over their own followers, neither the Social Democrat or the anti-Treatyite political leaders could be moved to publicly accept the authority of the Senate and the Irish Provisional Government. As in Finland after the collapse of the imperial power, in Ireland the need for public order had been initially catered for by the spontaneous emergence of organisations that blurred private/public distinctions (Alapuro, 1988, p.152). However, the decision of the Senate and the Provisional Government to establish official organisations to provide for public order obviously threatened the interests of the workers militias and the IRA, stripping them of their 'public' character. In neither case did the opposition leadership accept the need for these changes seeing the red guards and the IRA respectively as legitimate parts of their whole movement.

In short the 'violent creation of order', has to be related to the initial constitutional crises. In the run up to both conflicts a situation of 'multiple sovereignty' had emerged, where governmental authority was fragmented into two or more centres, each claiming exclusive legitimacy (Alapuro, 1988, pp.160-167; Coakley, 1987). In Finland the Social Democrats continually referred to 'the power law' as the basis for an alternative political order, while Irish Republicans maintained that neither the Dail vote on the Treaty or the June election had disestablished the Republic. Both leaderships subsequently adopted a defensive attitude during the civil wars. In Finland, the Social Democrat leadership, in their draft constitution (modelled on the Swiss system), did not depart much from their original parliamentary aims, promising for example to enfranchise tenant farmers. Theirs was 'a defensive revolution' intended to secure the advantages gained in 1917 rather than to create a totally new society (Alapuro, 1988, p.167). Irish Republicans on the other hand, saw themselves as defending the Republic and when they established a Government in October 1922, civil and military powers were formally separated as they were with the Finnish 'revolutionaries'. In other words, despite fighting governments with strong claims to legality, neither movement could forsake their own claims to governmental legitimacy, suggesting that the roots of their civil wars lay in the constitutional crises of the previous year. (Hentila, and Nevakivi, 1999, p.109).

A COMMENT ON THE DEMOCRATIC PEACE HYPOTHESIS.

The Finnish and Irish conflicts occurred in societies where democratic norms had widespread currency but their presence did not prevent the civil wars. The basic norm of democratic theory is that 'disputes can be resolved without force through democratic political processes that in some balance ensure both majority rule and minority rights' (Russett, p.31). The key problem that could not be resolved consensually was that of public order, but the majority rule-minority rights formula cannot be applied where the existence of the minority compromises the basic prerogative of the state, and where the subsequent

centralisation of state power on the part of the majority threatens the vital interests of the minorities.

The crucial norm is that elections confer governmental legitimacy of the majority in parliament, but to provide a stable basis for parliamentary life this principle must be applied consistently. Since their parliamentary majority in 1916 was not translated into parliamentary government Social Democrats could well ask why the bourgeois majority in October 1917 should confer that advantage? Since the majorities for the Republic in 1918 and 1921 were not respected by the British, why should the majority for the Treaty be respected? The dilemma was especially pronounced since electoral defeats occurred in elections which would not have occurred but for the intervention of the imperial centre. In short the legitimacy problem overrode the existence of democratic norms.

In most of the European conflicts that emerged after the first world war, the legality of the regime change had been sufficiently ambiguous for the losers to claim a moral victory afterwards (Coakley, 1987). The Social Democrat's interpretation of the civil war was that the Provisional Government's dissolution of the parliament on July 31 was the key event leading them away from parliamentarism and towards social revolution. This decree was never accepted as constitutional by the left and could not have had effect without the active support of the bourgeois parties. Accordingly, their loss of power after the October elections was regarded as 'a bourgeois coup d'etat' (Kirby, 1975, p.229). In Ireland de Valera argued that it had never been within the competence of the Dail to disestablish the Republic, which could only be done through the votes of the people. The electoral pact with his opponents ensured that 'the Treaty as such was not an issue in the election', but instead of convening the coalition government after the election, the Provisional Government, under British pressure, attacked the Four Courts, cancelled the last meeting of the Second Dail and did not convene the third Dail until September. In effect 'by what can only be called an Executive coup d'etat they proceeded to change the established state and substitute another' (De Valera, 1936).

In consolidated democracies electoral changes do not usually result in radical shifts of policy and the gradual way the Social Democratic and Republican agendas were implemented in 1930s Finland and Ireland bears evidence of this. In 1917 and 1921 political elites, after making initial gains in the transition to democracy, suddenly saw real or imaginary barriers erected in the way of the realisation of their objectives. De Valera's allusion 1922, to the 'well-known weakness' of democracy; its lack of effective checks and balances against 'sudden changes of opinion and hasty ill-considered actions', would have found favour with the Finnish social democrats, but external factors were crucially important in both cases (Coogan, 1993, p.317). Even enthusiasts for majority rule, such as Locke and Rousseau, thought that while

majority rule should be binding once a state has been established, the original contract which establishes a state should require something like unanimity (Dahl, 1989, p.135). In Finland and Ireland this was impossible. In the Finnish case even the conservative Attorney General, P.E. Svinhufvud, agreed with the Social Democrats that the dissolution in July was unconstitutional, while in Ireland it was unclear whether the new parliament convened in September 1922 was the successor to the 'parliament of southern Ireland' which had elected the Provisional Government, or to the revolutionary second Dail, which was the parliament for the whole island. It was called the third Dail (Rintala, 1962, p.10-11; Regan, 1999, p.76).

The Finnish and Irish cases do little to support the argument that norms can provide a basis for conflict resolution in the absence of a strong central authority (Axelrod, 1986, 1095). As Russett argues, norms can only become binding over time, with the repeated practice of bargaining and conciliation, but in the absence of any real measure of self-government between the first democratic elections and the devolution of legislative power, such practices could not become habitual (p.34). The paradox is that such practices were present after the civil wars, as reformist Social Democrats and 'constitutional Republicans' found their way back into the system. However, this fact only suggests that once the issue of state authority was resolved, the losers saw the merits of recognising the new political reality, while the winners could believe in the integrative power of democracy, secure in the knowledge that it no longer threatened their vital interests.

Norms aside, the hope might have been that institutional constraints - other than the existence of a strong coercive power - would prevent these constitutional crises resulting in civil war. Morgan and Cambell argue that the greater the number of individuals and institutions that must approve a decision for war within a state, the less likely its leadership is to decide for interstate war (1991, pp.187-211). In Finland efforts at mediation continued even after the Civic Guards were declared government troops, while in Ireland the Provisional Government was still contemplating convening the Dail as late as June 26 1922 (Upton, 1980, p.273; Kissane, 2002, p.135). However, neither the Finnish Senate or the Irish Provisional Government sought parliamentary approval for their prosecution of their civil wars at the outset, arguing in both cases that civil war was necessitated by the actions of the Red Guards and the IRA respectively. In Finland the executive committee of the social democrat's trade union decided to strike for power unilaterally on January 24 in contravention of the ruling of the party conference that the parliamentary party and the party council should jointly take such a decision (Kirby, 1975, p.229). In Ireland the IRA was divided on whether to provoke a showdown with the Provisional Government with a small majority still placing their trust in the coalition government idea and a minority publicly determined to provoke conflict rather than let that happen.

Russett argues that in democracies 'the constraints of checks and balances, division of power, and need for public debate to enlist widespread support' will slow decisions to use violence and reduce the likelihood that such decisions will be made (Russett, p.40). However, in both cases the diffusion of decision-making power was an ineffective check because of the split between parliament and the executive that resulted from the constitutional crises of the previous months. Revealingly, both countries had multi-party systems, but in Finland most of the bourgeois parties formed a bloc for the October election while the high vote for third parties in the June 1922 election in Ireland was interpreted by the Provisional Government as support for the Treaty. In neither case did the governments refer to the electorate for approval of a war policy and the support that was actually crucial to the governments came not from the public, but from Germany in Finland and the United Kingdom in Ireland.

Ultimately, both civil wars were the products of frustrated democratic transitions. The sudden shift to inclusive elections had given a mandate for radical change but the imperial powers were not willing to devolve legislative power until conservatives had a majority. In Finland the Governor General was opposed to reform throughout the period between 1906 and 1917 and the Provisional Government's attitude after February 1917 was no different. In Ireland the British Government did not recognise the revolutionary Dail in the Treaty and insisted that the devolution of legislative power was dependent on the full implementation of its terms. Crucially, neither country had experienced an effective transfer of power before independence and since the first nominal transfer of power was dictated by the imperial centre, the legitimacy of the process was contested. On the other hand conservatives argued that the issues of the *valtalaki* and the Republic had simply been referred to the nation which could express its opinion in elections (Upton, 1980, p.98).

CONCLUSION

Snyder and Mansfield see the weakening of central authority in the course of democratisation as one of the factors increasing the risk of inter-state war, and the argument can be applied to internal conflicts (1995, p.30). Indeed both the Finnish and Irish civil wars emerged after the imperial repressive power had declined *vis a vis* the groups it sought to govern, but where the new democratic institutions lacked the strength to integrate their contending interests (Mansfield and Snyder, p.30). The collapse of imperial power led the first incumbents to feel they lacked the mutual security guarantees so essential to democratic politics, while the opposition forces felt denied the influence their electoral successes in the early stages of democratisation entitled them to. In this way a combination of reduced repression and increased mobilisation, as hypothesised by Hegre et al, did lie behind the civil wars.

The hypothesis about the link between the constitutional crises and the public order problem can be related to Dahl's analysis of polyarchy as a system of mutual security guarantees between incumbents and oppositions (Dahl, 1971, 15). In the early stages of democratisation the need for unity in the face of Russian and British repression meant that the costs of tolerating radical nationalists for conservatives were far less than the costs of repressing them. However, once the need to reconstruct an apparatus of repression emerged with the achievement of legislative independence, the existence of rival organisation for the provision of order meant that the costs of toleration exceeded the costs of repression. In both cases the presence of foreign troops that threatened the independence project was an obvious catalyst for this clampdown.

The coincidence of polarisation on the constitutional issues with an inability to agree common institutions for the maintenance of order reveals the weakness of the democratic peace hypothesis when applied to internal politics. In the same way that anarchy in the international system prevails when 'there is no central authority capable of making and enforcing rules on the international system's units', political behaviour in countries with weak central institutions becomes fundamentally competitive (Layne, 1994, p.11). In Finland the key decision that turned the Social Democrats towards revolt was the Senate's decision to make the Civil Guards an official force, while negotiations between the anti-Treaty and pro-Treaty IRA collapsed because the former wanted to ensure that the new army be not used to undermine the Republic (Kissane, 2000, 131). In short domestic actors in an unstable context cannot escape the security dilemma - steps taken in self-defence have the unintended consequence of threatening others and fear and distrust becomes the prevailing mood between parties.

Ultimately democratisation in Finland and Ireland occurred 'in the wrong order' with universal suffrage preceding the establishment of parliamentary government, whereas elsewhere in the first wave the reverse was true (Karvonen, 2000, 131). This led to socialist and republican frustration with democracy and ultimately to conservative suspicion of their democratic credentials. If the sequence had been the other way round, the enhanced authority of parliament might have meant that common coercive institutions could have been agreed before the radicalisation of the nationalist movements and the constitutional crises been less destabilising. Instead a power vacuum emerged and in both cases only a violent contest determined who would fill it.

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