DISCRIMINATION!

THE

FACTS

5p

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Discrimination, practised by Unionists against Catholics, has been widespread; particularly in the fields of unemployment and housing.

EMPLOYMENT OPPURTUNITIES

Discrimination in job oppurtunities occurs at all levels, both regionally and between types of employment.

Of the six counties in Northern Ireland, the three eastern ones, Antrim, Down and Armagh, are predominantly Protestant; the western three, Derry, Tyrone and Fermanagh, predominantly Roman Catholic. Industrialisation of the eastern counties has been encouraged by government policies and grants while there has been a calculated neglect of those in the west. This is despite the fact that the city of Derry is the second largest in Northern Ireland with a deep sea port.

To encourage the influx of industry the authorities build advance factories to let to incoming manufacturing concerns. The following details of where these are cited show the degree to which they favour the East:

Eastern Counties		Western Counties	
County Antrim	27	County Derry	10
County Armagh	10	Borough of Derry	1
County Down	17	County Tyrone	3
Borough of Belfast	5	Coutny Fermanagh	1
	59		15

The major "growth centres" planned for the future are all located on the Eastern side, while railway services in Fermanagh and Tyrone and practically all Co. Derry now no longer exist.

This bias is further reflected in Local Office Area unemployment rates. Although high, those of predominantly Protestant towns have not reached the alarming proportions attained in predominantly Catholic towns.

Male Unemployment, April 1972

Predominantly Catholic Towns		Predominantly Protestant Towns	
Kilkeel	26.7%	Ballymena	9.3%
Derry City	19.8%	Bangor	6.6%
Newry	21.6%	Larne	6.6%
Strabane	24.6%	Newtownards	6.4%

Northern Ireland Average 11.1%

Even figures such as these do not provide a full picture. In Belfast, with an average male unemployment rate of around 9 per cent, a recent survey ("Fortnight", 26.1.72) of the Catholic Whiterock area estimated its male unemployment rate to be 34 per cent and the unemployment rate among fathers to be 47 per cent. Of all jobs attracted to Northern Ireland from 1945 to 1966, 45 per cent went to the Belfast Urban Area. Yet the predominantly Catholic area of West Belfast received only 4.9 per cent of the total employment figure.

Emigration

Having lost any hope of obtaining employment in Northern Ireland many people emigrate in search of work. As would be expected from the above figures the majority of these are Catholic. From 1937 to 1961 a total of 90,000 Catholics emigrated from Northern Ireland, 21 per cent of their 1937 population; during the same period 69,000 non-Catholics emigrated, 8 per cent of their 1937 population. Although their birth rate is far higher than that of Protestants, the proportions of Catholics in the total population has remained virtually static as a direct result of emigration: 33.5 per cent in 1937 and 34.9 per cent in 1961.

Civil Service

Figures for 1961 reveal that Catholics, although just over a third of the population, were represented in the Departments of the Northern Ireland Government as follows:

(a) The Professional and Technical Grades.

	Total	Catholic
Cabinet Officers	5	-
Houses of Parliament	6	-
Ministry of Finance	62	3
Ministry of Agrioulture	29	1
Ministry of Commerce	9	2
Ministry of Education	7	-
Ministry of Health & Social Services	35	3
Ministry of Home Affairs	8	-
Exchequer and Audit Dept.	10	2
Parliamentary Draughtsmans Office	6	-
	177	11

(b) Administrative

	Total	Catholic
Cabinet Secretariat Prime Minister's Department Government Information Service	8	-
Ministry of Finance	56	6
Ministry of Agriculture	38	3

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(b) Administrative .... Continued.../

	Total	Catholic
Ministry of Commerce	37	4
Ministry of Education	31	4
Ministry of Health and S ocial Services	78	1
Ministry of Home Affairs	20	1
All Departments	268	19

Other categories of employment show similar trends:

Doctors

The Hospitals Authority administers Northern Ireland's 97 hospitals, practising religious discrimination in the way it chooses the specialist doctors who work in them. There are 387 specialists, only 31 of these are Roman Catholics. Of the 387, 61 hold teaching posts at the University. Of the 31 Catholics, three hold University posts. Excluding the University appointees, only 8.5% of the Hospital Authority specialist jobs go to Catholics. (1967 figures)

(In the general practics doctoring, where the patients are free to choose their own practicioner, one third of the G.P.'s are Catholic.)

These hospitals are run by Mana gement Committees. Total Committee members: 456; 72 are Roman Catholic.

Government Health Service

Chief Medical Officer and Deputy Chief are both Protestants. Medical Referees: There are eight full-time, all are Protestants; only six of the fifty part-time ones are Catholic. (1969 figures) Not one Catholic is employed as Chief County or Borough Medical Officer of Health. Neither is there a Catholic employed as Deputy Chief Medical Officer of Health. There is no County or Borough Public Health Inspector who is a Catholic. Of all the sixteen Public Health Inspectors, only three are Catholic.

Police

(a) Royal Ulster Constabulary.

Complement, just over 3,000, 10 per cent of which are Catholic; 50 Officers in the R.U.C., six are Catholic; 120 Head Constables, 16 are Catholic; 400 Sergeants, 50 Catholic. (1967 figures)

(b) Ulster Special Constabulary

All members were Protestant. The force was disbanded in 1969.

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Discrimination is also rampant in the choice of members for public administrative bodies:

Public Boards

The Government administered a large segment of public affairs through its official bodies, the members of which it appointed itself. Catholics, although comprising just over a third of the population, were represented only to the following degree:

	Total Membership	Catholics
Electricity Board for N. Ireland	5	0
Housing Trust	7	1
Craigavon Development Commission	9	1
Economic Council	18	2
Hospitals Authority	22	5
General Health Services Board	24	2
Medical Advisory Committee to the Ministry of Health	11	1
Pigs Marketing Board	14	2
Milk Marketing Board	13	1
Seed Potato Marketing Board	14	1
Agricultural Wages Board	15	2
Youth Employment Service Board	18	3
Fire Authority	16	0
Child Welfare Council	22	6
Ulster Folk Museum Trustees	20	1
Tourist Board	11	3
Advisory Council for Education	16	5
Council for Education Research	27	5
Youth and Sports Council	20	5
Industrial Court	22	1
1969 Commission to Overhaul Stormont Parliamentary Boundaries	3	1

Housing

In preparing a recently published comprehensive study of Northern Ireland housing, it was only natural that its authors (W.D. Birrell, P.A. Hillyard, A. Murie, and D. J. Roche. Housing in Northern Ireland. Centre for Environmental Studies, University Working Paper, 1971) should devote much of their time to the question of discrimination in housing. Their report is worth quoting extensively. While regretting that there has been a lack of research on this subject in the past, they add that "There are many cases in which the statistics quoted do seem to substantiate many of the charges" of discrimination.

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"A great number of allegations have been made against Unionist controlled councils concerning discrimination. These have implied either that council houses are not built in Catholic areas or that Catholics are not allocated council houses even when the need is apparent. The pages of the Northern Ireland Hansard contain a continual stream of complaints about housing allocations from opposition members of parliament against various local authorities. The following are some of the allegations made.

(a) On 11th March, 1950 it wass alleged that Omagh Rural District Council allocated forty houdes on a party vote to Protestants. These were the first council houses built for over thirty-five years in the area which has a Roman Catholic majority in the population. (H.C. Deb. (N.I.) Vol. 34 c. 112)

(b) In Stormont Mr. Currie M.P. alleged that in Cookstown urban district 17 out of 19 new houses were given to Government supporters . (H.C. Deb. (N.I.) Vol. 59 c. 713) In 1966 it was alleged that in the town of Markethill in Armagh rural district only 3 per cent of council houses had been given to Roman Catholics, and not one house allocated to a Catholic since 1951. (H.C. Deb. (N.I.) Vol. 62 c. 1003)

(c) On 21st October, 1965 Mr. Currie stated "The council built 194 houses in the east ward of Dungannon urban district and it allocated every single one of these 194 houses to to a Unionist, to a Protestant. Not one Catholic managed to slip through the net which shows how thoroughly the religious affiliations of the applicants were gone into." (H.C. Deb. (NI) Vol. 61 c.2372)

"These allegations almost automatically generated the same reply from the Minister-that allocation was the responsibility of each individual council."

Reasons Why Discrimination Takes Place

"There appears to be two main reasons. Firstly some Unionist controlled councils may decide not to allocate many council houses to Roman Catholics for a mixture of political and religious reasons....The second reason is that creating new estates causes population movement and therefore alteration of the political composition of electoral wards within local authorities. This becomes very important in a number of councils in the west of the province which have a Roman Catholic majority in their population but have a Unionist party majority on the Council. This is only possible because of the restricted franchise on which local elections have been conducted until the present. The restriction of voting to rate-payers excluded more Catholics than Protestants. In additon ward boundaries have been drawn to achieve electoral objectives. The redrawing of local government boundaries in 1923 lost to the Nationalists the possibility of controlling areas which they had held previous to this date. It is only in areas where Catholics form over 75 per cent of the population that Catholics can gain control of local councils....There are eleven districts in which Catholics have a majority but Councils are Unionist controlled."

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The only official investigation into allegations of housing discrimination was that of the Cameron Commission in 1969. On reaching its conclusions about the causes of disorder in Northern Ireland it listed complaints about housing policy and provision "as the first general cause."

It found that there was:

"A rising sense of continuing injustice and grievance among large sections of the Catholic population in Northern Ireland, in particular in Derry and Dungannon, in respect of (1) inadequacy of housing provision by certain local authorities, (2) unfair methods of allocation of houses built and let by such authorities in particular, refusals and omissions to adopt a 'points' system in determining priorities and making allocations, (3) misuse in certain cases of discretionary powers of allocation of houses in order to perpetuate Unionist control of the local authority."

The Commission concluded that the complaint that electoral arrangements were weighted against Non-Unionists was 'abundantly justified.'

The Report found that:

"Council housing policy has been distorted for political ends in some Unionist controlled areas, in each, houses have been built and allocated in such a way that they will not disturb the political balance."

The Report also stated that housing projects by local authorities, the Housing Trust and private housing associates were often officially delayed or turned down if they seemed likely to disturb electoral balance.

One conclusion reached by Birrell, Hillyard, Murie and Roche in their report was:

"That in Catholic areas, especially Catholic areas under Ulster Unionist party control, the housing conditions are so bad that it suggests a neglect of housing need."

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The examples quoted in this pamphlet are only touching the surface of the problem of discrimination.

Despite the fact that the NICRA has won certain concessions, like an Ombudsman, Commissioner for Complaints and the outlawing of religious discrimination in Public employment (in theory)- the fact is that religious discrimination still exists and is openly practised in the field of private employment and the means of redress offered in the Ombudsman and Complaints Commissioner are unwieldy and very difficult for the ordinary citizen to approach and use. However, despite these obstacles the NICRA will continue to fight to have any kind of discrimination completely outlawed and finished.