

Catholic Memorial Model United Nations Committee:
The 1990s Irish Peace Process



Chairs: Brian Duffy, Owen Duffy

Introductory Remarks from the Chairs

Welcome delegates to our committee on the 1990s Irish Peace Process at CMMUN XVIII. This committee will examine the many different issues that plagued Ireland between the 1960s and 1990s, known as the Troubles, and will bring together many opposing voices. The circumstances of this committee are very similar to those involved in the actual resolution of the Troubles, although some other roles were included for a more contentious debate, such as the British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher or Patrick Magee, an Irish political prisoner. We hope to have an open debate and we look forward to leading this fine committee.

Hello Delegates,

My name is Brian Duffy, and I will be your chair for this committee on the 1990s Irish Peace Process to resolve the Troubles. I am a current sophomore at Catholic Memorial, and this is my second year participating in Model UN. In school I take part in Debate, Student Council, First Robotics, Cross Country, and Track and Field. I am excited to be hosting my first Model UN committee, and I look forward to seeing all of you there!

Hello Delegates,

My name is Owen Duffy, and I am the co-chair of this committee and the brother of the chair, Brian Duffy. I am a sophomore here at Catholic Memorial as well, and this is my second year in Model UN. In school I participate in Cross Country, Speech and Debate, First Robotics, and Model UN. I look forward to hosting this council and moderating this interesting topic with you all!

If you have any questions, feel free to contact us at:

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Introduction

This committee will address the period of distress and warfare in Ireland known as “the Troubles.” The Troubles were a period of violence during the late 1960s to the late 1990s that was fueled by religious sectarianism and systemic oppression, political and physical divisions, and a desire for full Irish sovereignty. At this point in time, Ireland had been split between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland under the Anglo-Irish Treaty signed in 1921 which declared that Northern Ireland would remain a territory under the direct rule of the British, while the Republic of Ireland would become independent (Torrance). The Troubles occurred primarily in Northern Ireland and began with the independence and civil rights movements of several groups such as the Irish Republican Army and its factions, who felt oppressed by the primarily Protestant British government. The goal of this committee is to find a beneficial solution to the Troubles that will end the war and distress of the public and set up a long-term government structure for Northern Ireland to come in accordance with the Republic of Ireland (Torrance).

Historical Background:

In order to understand how the Troubles came about, it is important to first examine the role of the United Kingdom in Ireland. The history of Britain in Ireland is one of imperialism and war, all starting with the Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland. The island of Ireland had been inhabited by a clan-based society known as the Gaels. Ireland was invaded several times between the seventh and eleventh century by Vikings, until the eventual invasion in 1179 by the English known as the Anglo-Normans at the time. By the year 432 CE, Gaelic religious leaders known as druids had already been massacred, and people like Saint Patrick spread Christianity to the Irish (Gershon). This English invasion and colonization lasted until the seventeenth century, when

Ireland was fully under English control. In 1534, King Henry VIII split off from the Catholic Church and formed the Anglican Church. In 1603, a territory known as the Plantation of Ulster allowed English settlers to kick the native Gaels out of their homes, and a notion of English superiority over the natives was further propagated with governmental support going as far back as the Statute of Kilkenny in 1367 (The Irish Post).

A religious split developed in Ireland after the creation of the Church of England, although the number of Anglicans in Ireland was very small after its creation. This was in part due to the group of English political elites in Ireland known as Palesmen who wanted to protect their interests in Ireland against the crown, by sticking to the old faith. As more and more Protestants were being brought into Ireland by order of the crown, many Catholic leaders were executed and viewed as traitors. In 1613, boundaries were redrawn in Ireland to make Protestants the majority in the Irish Parliament (Moorhouse). As a result of the institutional Protestantism, approximately fifty Catholic shrines were shut down in Dublin and Meath, and many Catholic Palesmen and their supporters were executed. Two wars sprung out of the disparity between the Catholics and Protestants: the Irish Confederate War and the Williamite War. The Irish Confederate War started with the Irish Rebellion of 1641, in which Catholic grievances about massive land redistribution to the English and Scottish led to the massacre of Protestants in Dublin in the hope of greater religious freedom. This led to a bloody war and further justification for the English to suppress Catholics in Ireland.

The Williamite War started with the Glorious Revolution in England, in which the Catholic King James II was deposed; he then fled to Ireland. His Protestant daughter Mary and her Dutch husband William of Orange (the reason for the color orange on the Irish flag as to symbolize the Protestant part of Ireland) then came to rule England, however in Ireland James II

would lead opposition to the English throne and Anglican Church. William of Orange crushed the initial opposition, but war waged on between the Catholic Irish and English troops. This Williamite War ended with the Treaty of Limerick after the English defeated the supporters of James II and he found refuge in France. The Treaty of Limerick led to the further subjugation of the Catholics, being viewed as dangerous to society and decreased Catholic political representation in Parliament (Moorhouse).

After centuries of systemic oppression, a turning point in Irish history came with the Easter Rising and Irish War of Independence of the early 20th century. In 1914, Irish Parliament diplomatically formed an Irish system for “Home Rule,” but this was faced with Protestant and English loyalist fears as they did not want to be under a Catholic regime. This led to the implementation of several paramilitary groups on both sides of the conflict with the British having the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and the Irish having the Irish Volunteer Force (IVF) and Irish Citizen Army. The First World War would also split the Irish Volunteer Force between who was for joining the war effort with the British and those who were against it. The Easter Rising happened on the Easter Monday in 1916 and was an armed revolt against the British by the Irish nationalists, also known as the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB). This uprising was primarily confined to Dublin, where nationalists would claim Ireland as the Republic of Ireland. The British would defeat the rebels, and over 180 civilians died, excluding fallen British soldiers and Irish rebels. This rebellion would go on to inspire many other Irish citizens to join the Nationalist Movement, including the notorious Michael Collins (National Army Museum).

The Irish War of Independence, also known as the Anglo-Irish War, would ensue in 1919 and last until 1921. It would begin with the previous nationalist inspirations against the British along with an attempt for Irish conscription with the British army, which both led to the creation

of the Sinn Fein Party, meaning “We Ourselves.” The Sinn Fein then held the first independent assembly from Britain, called the Dail Eireann in Dublin which declared independence from Britain (National Army Museum). The IRB and IVF joined forces under the name of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), with Michael Collins as the Head of Intelligence. The IRA utilized guerilla warfare and propaganda to discredit and weaken the British, while fostering a sense of national pride. The British would respond to the IRA through the utilization of police forces, along with expanding their police forces with the “Black and Tans,” who were ex-policemen and ex-soldiers. These “Black and Tans” became notorious for their employment of violent tactics against the Irish, like arson and looting. After massive escalation and heavy death tolls on both sides, the Anglo-Irish Treaty ended the war. The main part of this treaty was partitioning Ireland between the counties who wanted to stay under the British and those who did not, by giving the six counties in northeastern Ireland the opportunity to decide whether to stay under the British or to join the free state. Another civil war sprung out of the treaty among Irish who were for the treaty or against it. Then in 1969 the Troubles started! (Sproule)

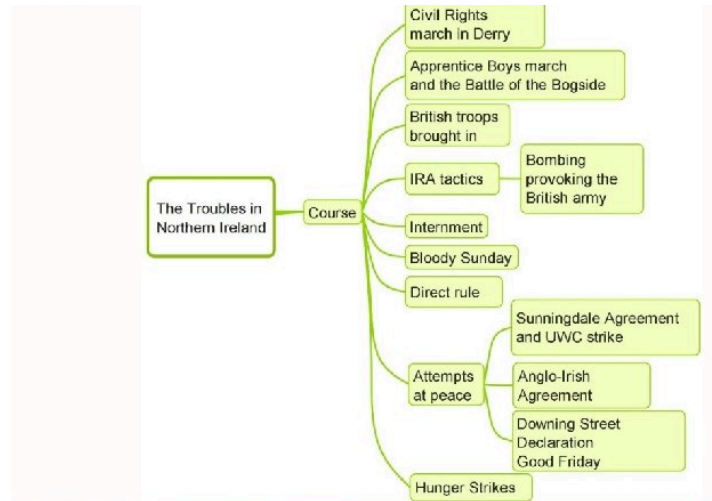
By 1969 in Northern Ireland the British had deployed peacekeeping soldiers, and although some went on to believe that they would be neutral policing forces, others believed that they were pawns to support the Protestant rule. This led to a faction of the IRA forming, known as the Provisional IRA (PIRA), who used increasing levels of violence and terrorism in some instances to completely try and get the British out of England. The UVF also increased their violence to oppose the growing PIRA. A cycle of increasing militarization formed to constantly oppose the other side, and violence had become a part of society. No-go areas formed primarily in Derry and Belfast, in which British or Unionist soldiers would avoid the areas because it was just too dangerous for them. The infamous Bloody Sunday in 1972 played an important role in

rallying more IRA soldiers together, as British troops killed 14 people in a civil protest. This also led to further escalation on both sides, such as car bombings, arson, and tremendous acts of prejudice and violence which characterize the Troubles (National Army Museum).

Important Visuals



Map of Northern Ireland and important cities (Source: National Army Museum)



Effects of the Troubles in Northern Ireland (Source: Slide to Doc)

| Northern Ireland 1610 - 1998 | | |
|--|--|------|
| Summer | Ulster Plantation began | 1610 |
| October | Ulster Rebellion | 1641 |
| 11 th September | Massacre of Drogheda | 1649 |
| 1 st July | Battle of the Boyne | 1690 |
| 1695 to | Penal Laws against Catholics | 1728 |
| January | Act of Union united Ireland and Great Britain | 1801 |
| Summer | Irish Potato Famine began | 1845 |
| 8 th April | First Home Rule Bill introduced | 1886 |
| 28 th November | Sinn Féin formed | 1905 |
| April | Third Home Rule Bill introduced | 1912 |
| January | Ulster Volunteer Force formed | 1913 |
| 25 th November | Irish Volunteers formed | 1913 |
| 24 th - 29 th April | Easter Rising | 1916 |
| December | Partition - Government of Ireland Act | 1920 |
| 6 th December | Irish Free State Treaty | 1921 |
| 21 st December | Republic of Ireland Act | 1948 |
| January | Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) formed | 1967 |
| 12 th - 15 th August | Battle of the Bogside | 1969 |
| 28 th December | IRA split - Official IRA and Provisional IRA | 1969 |
| 9 th August | Internment introduced | 1971 |
| 30 th January | Bloody Sunday | 1972 |
| 29 th November | Prevention of Terrorism Act | 1974 |
| 5 th May | Bobby Sands - first IRA prisoner to die on hunger strike | 1981 |
| 15 th November | Anglo-Irish Agreement | 1985 |
| 15 th December | Downing Street Declaration | 1993 |
| 10 th April | Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement | 1998 |

Timeline of Northern Ireland (History on the Net)

Current Issue:

The Troubles have been raging in Northern Ireland for 30 years now and it is June 1996. There are talks of a temporary ceasefire, and several political factions are meeting together to discuss an end to the Troubles. The Troubles have left Northern Ireland in a state of political turmoil, military factions, economic instability, and civilian fear, with the massive loss of life. While some Irish want to continue fighting until Ireland is fully emancipated from British rule, others become more willing to settle and stop the violence. Many British are also becoming opposed to the increased deployment of soldiers, as that has created many more issues and death amongst their forces, and some have even considered withdrawing from Ireland. Now, as many different leaders and diplomats come together to form an agreement, it must be decided how to end the Troubles.

Focus Questions:

- What is the best way to resolve this sectarian conflict?
 - o Is the presence of the British military necessary for the stability of Ireland, with the increased radical groups?
 - o Should there be a demilitarization of Ireland, and if so, how?
 - o How should political prisoners be dealt with?
 - o How should Northern Ireland's government change with the needs of the citizens, and how should the tensions of national identity be settled?

Possible Resolutions:

- Decommissioning all paramilitaries (PIRA, UVF, etc.)
- Releasing all political prisoners and giving them their original freedom before the conflict.
- Changing government order to have equal representation of all parties.
- Reforming the police forces in Northern Ireland to ensure the equality of all Northern Irish citizens, despite political beliefs.
- Uniting the continent of Ireland – this would give in to the Irish republican wishes for a unified Ireland.
- Keeping the government of Northern Ireland under the control of the British government and unionists.
- Declaring martial law in Northern Ireland to destroy any rebellion.

Documentaries:

[Why the Troubles Started in Northern Ireland:](#) This is a very good documentary to watch that is only 16 minutes long and explores the history behind the Troubles and the implications of the Troubles on Northern Ireland.

[Issues in Northern Ireland that Lingered from the Troubles:](#) This video explains issues that plagued areas in Northern Ireland, especially Belfast, after Troubles. This would clearly take place after the committee chronologically, but this points out issues that hadn't been addressed by the government, which might influence some members in this committee to explore different resolutions, especially when considering the massive divisions and unsolved terrorism within current Northern Ireland.

Roles:

- **David Trimble:**

David Trimble was a Northern Irish politician who was the leader of the Ulster Unionist party (UUP), and he agreed to negotiate with Sinn Fein. Earlier he led the Orange Order Protestant March, which many Catholics saw as offensive, and Protestants saw as a sign of defense. He was the leader of the UUP's delegation with Sinn Fein.

- **John Hume:**

John Hume was the leader of the Social Democratic and Labor Party. He was very persistent in his belief of civil rights, and he spoke to different parties such as the unionists and nationalists to help make a dialogue and a consensus.

- **Gerry Adams:**

Gerry Adams was the leader of Sinn Fein, and he was very set on finding a political way to peace. He spoke to many leaders to help create a dialogue to help negotiate peace.

- **Martin McGuinness:**

Martin McGuinness was the chief negotiator of the Irish Republican Army during peace talks. As the leader of the IRA, he led a transition from militarization to political negotiations within the Irish Nationalists, and he was vital to keeping nationalists at the negotiations, instead of continuing the warfare.

- **David Ervine:**

David Ervine was a Unionist politician who backed the notion of decommissioning the paramilitaries, like the UVF, unlike most of the unionists. This helped to create a dialogue with other communities such as the nationalists.

- **Bill Clinton:**

Bill Clinton was the 42nd president of the United States who encouraged the negotiations for peace. He appointed George Mitchell to go to Northern Ireland to help with these negotiations. He also made many trips to Northern Ireland to further encourage the troubles to be resolved.

- **Tony Blair:**

Tony Blair was the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, and he worked very close to those such as Bill Clinton and Bertie Ahern. He was very dedicated to achieving peace and he was even willing to take big risks to do so.

- **Jeffrey Donaldson:**

Jeffrey Donaldson played a key role in the Ulster Unionist party team that negotiated during the peace talks. He was staunchly in favor of the British government, and he feared that the IRA and other nationalists wouldn't decommission terrorist weapons, even if that was agreed upon. He had a close relationship to several people killed in Nationalist terrorism, and he pushed that political prisoners should still be prosecuted for their atrocities and not released.

- **Reverend Ian Paisley:**

Ian Paisley was a very strong opponent to the Catholic Nationalists and he saw it as the Unionists conceding to the IRA and Sinn Fein. He caused a lot of division among the unionists about whether the peace process was good or not, and if the Unionists were making unnecessary concessions in a war that they may win.

- **George Mitchell:**

George Mitchell was an envoy sent to Northern Ireland by Bill Clinton. His job was to help mediate and facilitate the peace process and help to reach a consensus on the agreement.

- **Bertie Ahern:**

Bertie Ahern was the Taoiseach of Ireland and he worked very closely with Bill Clinton and Tony Blair. He provided strong political support, as he was the leader of the government.

- **Mo Mowlam:**

Mo Mowlam was the secretary of state for Northern Ireland, and she acted as a mediator of the peace process. She made many difficult decisions and built support for the peace process through meeting both political leaders and the public.

- **Margaret Thatcher**

Margaret Thatcher was the former Prime Minister of England and a staunch opponent of the IRA. She was the target of several assassination attempts, and was originally against any sort of negotiations with the Irish Nationalists. Her policies would reluctantly shift with the escalation of both sides and political backlash, however, her indirect involvement with the situation was very controversial for Irish nationalists.

- **Monica McWilliams**

Monica McWilliams was a representative of the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition and she advocated for the inclusion of women's issues such as integrated education to be included agreement. She was able to get the concerns of the normal people to the peace talks.

- **Reg Empey**

Reg Empey was the leader of the Ulster Unionist Party and played an important role in advocating for decommissioning the paramilitaries on both sides of the conflict. He would have been in agreement with the British stance, however he saw the massive toll that the increased militarization took on Northern Ireland and was urging for the need of demilitarization.

- **Seamus Mallon**

Seamus Mallon was the deputy leader of the Social Democratic and Labor Party (SDLP) and worked closely with the SDLP leader John Hume. He advocated for the civil rights of both groups and worked to connect the nationalist and unionist parties; he was also committed towards ending the violence, in accordance with the SDLP ideals.

- **Chris Patten**

Chris Patten had been the chairman of the Conservative Party for the British Parliament, and played an important role in discussing the corruption of the Northern Irish government. He led the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland, which was meant to bring equality to civilians under the police.

- **Gusty Spence**

Gusty Spence was a leading member of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and actively fought against the Irish nationalists, leading to his eventual arrest. He advocated for the decommissioning of paramilitaries to end the violence, including his own UVF, although he was a proponent of the British influence in Northern Ireland. He had an important influence over the ceasefire which was necessary in bringing several unionists to negotiations.

- **Patrick Magee**

Patrick Magee was a former terrorist of the IRA, who was imprisoned after the Brighton bombing of 1984 and assassination attempt of Margaret Thatcher. He would have been against any British intervention and was devoted to the IRA cause. Although he lightly reformed from his terrorist stance, he was a strong figure in Irish Nationalism.

- **David Andrews**

David Andrews was the Irish Minister of Foreign Affairs and he helped to negotiate and mediate the peace process. He was able to use his government status to provide strong political support for the peace process.

- **Mark Durkan**

Mark Durkan was a member of the negotiating team for the Social Democratic and Labour party and he helped to create policies including issues such as human rights and equality. He helped to build support through engaging with other in the media.

- **Jonathan Powell**

Jonathan Powell worked closely with Tony Blair as his Chief of Staff, along with being his Chief Negotiator. He fostered a dialogue between several opposing groups and would go on after the Accords to ensure their implementation, as an advocate for civil rights.

- **May Blood**

May Blood was a founder of the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition, helping to advocate for women in the peace process. She is a part of the Labor Party and served as an intermediary between the political parties.

- **Liz O'Donnell**

Liz O'Donnell was a Junior Minister of Foreign Affairs during the development of a resolution to the Troubles. Liz emphasized the importance of women's roles in the Irish Peace Process, and played an important role in ensuring a dialogue between groups. She attempted to bridge the intense division between the Irish Nationalists like the IRA and the British leaders and unionists.

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