Campaign Service Medal with 'Northern Ireland Clasp 14th August 1969 – 31st July 2007

Qualifying Period – Awarded to personnel involved in varying operations in Northern Ireland during The Troubles. The general qualifying period is a minimum of 30 days' service between the above dates. The 30 days' service need not be composed of consecutive days. Should the qualifying period be cut short due to injury or death, then the completed days are counted as sufficient for the award of this clasp.

The Troubles

(Irish: *Na Trioblóidí*) is the common name for the ethno-nationalist conflict in Northern Ireland during the late 20th century, which spilled over at times into parts of the Republic of Ireland, England and mainland Europe. The conflict began in the late 1960s and is deemed by many to have ended with the Belfast "Good Friday" Agreement of 1998, although there has been sporadic violence since then.

Internationally, it is also commonly called the Northern Ireland conflict and is sometimes described as a "guerrilla" or "low intensity war".

The conflict was primarily political, but it also had an ethnic or sectarian dimension, although it was not a religious conflict. A key issue was the constitutional status of Northern Ireland. Unionists / loyalists, who are mostly Protestants who consider themselves British, generally want Northern Ireland to remain within the United Kingdom. Irish nationalists/republicans, who are mostly Catholics who consider themselves Irish, generally want it to leave the United Kingdom and join a united Ireland. Another key issue was the relationship between these two communities. The conflict began amid a campaign to end discrimination against the Catholic/nationalist minority by the Protestant/ unionist-dominated government and police force.

The main participants in the Troubles were republican paramilitaries such as the Provisional Irish Republican Army(IRA) and Irish National Liberation Army (INLA); loyalist paramilitaries such as the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and Ulster Defence Association (UDA); British state security forces – the British Army and Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC); and political activists and politicians. The security forces of the Republic of Ireland played a smaller role. More than 3,500 people were killed in the conflict, of whom 52% were civilians, 32% were members of the British security forces, and 16% were members of paramilitary groups. Overall, 60% of the casualties were killed by republicans, 30% by loyalists and 10% by the security forces.

Overview

"The Troubles" refers to the most recent instalment of violence over three decades (1969–1997) between nationalists (mainly self-identified as Irish and/or Roman Catholic) and unionists (mainly self-identified as British and/or Protestant). The term "the Troubles" was previously used to refer to the Irish revolutionary period; it was adopted to refer to the escalating violence in Northern Ireland after 1969. The conflict was the result of discrimination against the nationalist/Catholic minority by the unionist/Protestant majority and the question of Northern Ireland's status within the United Kingdom. The violence was characterised by the armed campaigns of Irish republican and Ulster loyalist paramilitary groups and British state security forces—the British Army and the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC). It thus became the focus for the longest major campaign in the history of the British Army.

The British government's position is that its forces were neutral in the conflict, trying to uphold law and order in Northern Ireland and the right of the people of Northern Ireland to democratic self-determination. Nationalists regard the state forces as forces of occupation and/or partisan combatants in the conflict. The "Ballast" investigation by the Police Ombudsman confirmed that British forces did on several occasions collude with loyalist paramilitaries, were involved in murder, and furthermore obstructed the course of justice when claims of collusion and murder were investigated.

The Troubles were brought to an uneasy end by a peace process that included the declaration of ceasefires by most paramilitary organisations, the complete decommissioning of the IRA's weapons, the reform of the police, and the corresponding withdrawal of the British Army from the streets and sensitive Irish border areas such as South Armagh and Fermanagh, as agreed by the signatories to the Belfast Agreement (commonly known as the "Good Friday Agreement"). One part of the Agreement is that Northern Ireland will remain within the United Kingdom unless a majority of the Northern Irish electorate vote otherwise. It also established the Northern Ireland Executive, a devolved power-sharing government, which must consist of both unionist and nationalist parties.

Although the number of active participants was relatively small, the Troubles touched the lives of many in Northern Ireland on a daily basis, sometimes spreading into England, the Republic of Ireland, and, occasionally, parts of mainland Europe.

Background 1609–1791

In 1609, Scottish and English settlers, known as *planters*, were given land confiscated from the native Irish in the Plantation of Ulster. Coupled with Protestant immigration to "unplanted" areas of Ulster, particularly Antrim and Down, this resulted in conflict between the native Catholics and the "planters", leading in turn to two bloody ethno-religious conflicts known as the Irish Confederate Wars (1641–53) and the Williamite war (1689–91), both of which resulted in Protestant victories.

Anglican dominance in Ireland was ensured by the passage of the Penal Lawsthat curtailed the religious, legal, and political rights of anyone (including both Catholics and Protestant Dissenters, such as Presbyterians) who did not conform to the state church, the Anglican Church of Ireland. As the Penal Laws started to be phased out in the latter part of the 18th century, there was more competition for land, as restrictions were lifted on the Irish Catholic ability to rent. With Roman Catholics allowed to buy land and enter trades from which they had formerly been banned, tensions arose resulting in the Protestant "Peep O'Day Boys" and Catholic "Defenders". This created polarisation between the communities and a dramatic reduction in reformers among Protestants, many of whom had been growing more receptive to democratic reform.

1791–1912

Following the foundation of the Irish republican Society of the United Irishmen by Presbyterians, Catholics, and liberal Anglicans, and the resulting failed Irish Rebellion of 1798, sectarian violence between Catholics and Protestants continued. The Orange Order (founded 1795), with its stated goal of upholding the Protestant faith and loyalty to the heirs of William of Orange, dates from this period and remains active to this day.

With the 1801 Act of Union, a new political framework was formed with the abolition of the Irish Parliament and incorporation of Ireland into the United Kingdom. The result was a closer tie between Anglicans and the formerly republican Presbyterians as part of a "loyal" Protestant community. Although Catholic Emancipation was achieved in 1829, largely eliminating official discrimination against Roman Catholics (then around 75% of Ireland's population), Dissenters, and Jews, Daniel O'Connell's long-term goal of Repeal of the 1801 Union was never achieved. The Home Rule movement served to define the divide between most nationalists (usually Catholics), who sought the restoration of an Irish Parliament, and most unionists (usually Protestants), who were afraid of being a minority under a Catholic-dominated Irish Parliament and tended to support continuing union with Britain. Unionists and Home Rule advocates were the main political factions in 19th and early 20th century Ireland.

1912–1922

Partition of Ireland

By the second decade of the 20th century, Home Rule, or limited Irish self-government, was on the brink of being conceded due to the agitation of the Irish Parliamentary Party. In response, unionists,

mostly Protestant and concentrated in Ulster, resisted both self-government and independence for Ireland, fearing for their future in an overwhelmingly Catholic country dominated by the Roman Catholic Church. In 1912, unionists led by Edward Carson signed the Ulster Covenant and pledged to resist Home Rule by force if necessary. To this end, they formed the paramilitary Ulster Volunteers (UVF).

In response, nationalists led by Eoin MacNeill formed the Irish Volunteers, whose goal was to oppose the UVF and ensure enactment of the Third Home Rule Bill in the event of British or unionist recalcitrance. The outbreak of theFirst World War in 1914 and Ireland's involvement in the war temporarily averted possible civil war in Ireland and delayed the resolution of the question of Irish independence. Home Rule, although passed in the British Parliament with Royal Assent, was suspended for the duration of the war.

The Irish Volunteers split, with a majority, called National Volunteers, joining Irish regiments of the New British Army. Many of those who stayed were radical nationalists, among them Irish Republican Brotherhood infiltrators. From these ranks came those who launched the Easter Rising in Dublin in 1916, led byPatrick Pearse and James Connolly. Two and a half years after the executions of fifteen of the Rising's leaders, the separatist Sinn Féin party won the December 1918 Irish general election with a majority of seats in Ireland, and set up the 1919 First Dáil (Irish Parliament) in Dublin. Their victory was aided by thethreat of conscription for World War I service. The Irish War for Independencefollowed, leading to eventual independence in 1922 for the Irish Free State, which comprised 26 of the 32 Irish counties. In Ulster, particularly in the six counties which became Northern Ireland, Sinn Féin fared poorly in the 1918 election, and unionists won a majority.

The Government of Ireland Act 1920 partitioned the island of Ireland into two separate jurisdictions, Southern Ireland and Northern Ireland, both devolved regions of the United Kingdom. This partition of Ireland was confirmed when theParliament of Northern Ireland exercised its right in December 1922 under theAnglo-Irish Treaty of 1921 to *"opt out"* of the newly established Irish Free State.

A part of the treaty signed in 1922 mandated that a boundary commission would sit to decide where the frontier of the northern state would be in relation to its southern neighbour. After the Irish Civil War of 1922–23, this part of the treaty was given less priority by the new Dublin government led by W.T. Cosgrave, and was quietly dropped. As counties Fermanagh and Tyrone and border areas of Londonderry, Armagh, and Down were mainly nationalist, the Irish Boundary Commission could reduced Northern Ireland to four counties or less.

Northern Ireland remained a part of the United Kingdom, albeit under a separate system of government whereby it was given its own Parliament and devolved government. While this arrangement met the desires of unionists to remain part of the United Kingdom, nationalists largely viewed the partition of Ireland as an illegal and arbitrary division of the island against the will of the majority of its people. They argued that the Northern Ireland state was neither legitimate nor democratic, but created with a deliberately gerrymandered unionist majority. Catholics initially composed about 35% of its population.

A total of 557 people were killed in political or sectarian violence from 1920 to 1922 in the six Northern Ireland counties, during and after the Irish War of Independence, most of whom were Catholics. The result was communal strife between Catholics and Protestants, with nationalists characterising this violence, especially that in Belfast, as a "pogrom" against their community, although historian Peter Hart argues that the term is not appropriate given the reciprocity of violence in Northern Ireland.

1922–1966

A legacy of the Irish Civil War, later to have a major impact on Northern Ireland, was the survival of a marginalised remnant of the Irish Republican Army. It was proscribed on both sides of the border and remained ideologically committed to overthrowing both Northern Ireland and the Free State by force of arms to unify Ireland. The Northern Irish government passed the Civil Authorities (Special Powers)

Act (Northern Ireland) 1922; this gave sweeping powers to the government and police to do virtually anything seen as necessary to re-establish or preserve law and order. The Act continued to be used against nationalists long after the violence of this period had come to an end.

The two sides' positions became strictly defined following this period. From a unionist perspective, Northern Ireland's nationalists were inherently disloyal and determined to force Protestants and unionists into a united Ireland. This threat was seen as justifying preferential treatment of unionists in housing, employment and other fields. The prevalence of large families and a more rapid population growth among Catholics were seen as threats. The Republic of Ireland's *Taoiseach* (equivalent to Prime Minister), Charles Haughey, whose own family had fled County Londonderry during the 1920s Troubles, described Northern Ireland as "a failed political entity". The unionist government ignored Edward Carson's warning in 1921 that alienating Catholics would make Northern Ireland inherently unstable. After the early 1920s, there were occasional incidents of sectarian unrest in Northern Ireland. These included severe rioting in Belfast in the 1930s and 1950s, the brief Northern Campaign in the 1940s, and the Border Campaign between 1956 and 1962, which did not enjoy broad popular support among nationalists. In 1962, the IRA called off its campaign. Northern Ireland became relatively stable for a brief period.

Late 1960s

There is little agreement on the exact date of the start of the Troubles. Different writers have suggested different dates. These include the formation of the modern Ulster Volunteer Force in 1966, the civil rights march in Derry on 5 October 1968, the beginning of the 'Battle of the Bogside' on 12 August 1969 or the deployment of British troops on 14 August 1969.

Civil rights campaign and unionist backlash

In the mid-1960s, a non-violent civil rights campaign began in Northern Ireland. It comprised groups such as the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association(NICRA), the Campaign for Social Justice (CSJ), the Derry Citizens' Action Committee (DCAC) and People's Democracy, whose stated goals were:

- An end to job discrimination – it showed evidence that Catholics/nationalists were less likely to be given certain jobs, especially government jobs
- An end to discrimination in housing allocation – it showed evidence that unionist-controlled local councils allocated housing to Protestants ahead of Catholics/nationalists
- One man, one vote – in Northern Ireland, only householders could vote in local elections, while in the rest of the United Kingdom all adults could vote
- An end to gerrymandering of electoral boundaries – this meant that nationalists had less voting power than unionists, even where nationalists were a majority
- Reform of the police force (Royal Ulster Constabulary) – it was over 90% Protestant and criticised for sectarianism and police brutality
- Repeal of the Special Powers Act – this allowed police to search without a warrant, arrest and imprison people without charge or trial, ban any assemblies or parades, and ban any publications; the Act was used almost exclusively against nationalists

Some unionists suspected NICRA was a republican front whose ultimate goal was to unite Ireland. Although republicans and some members of the IRA (then led by Cathal Goulding and pursuing a non-violent agenda) helped to create and drive the movement, they did not control it and were not a dominant faction within it.

In March and April 1966, Irish nationalists/republicans held parades throughout Ireland to mark the 50th anniversary of the Easter Rising. On 8 March, a group of Irish republicans dynamited Nelson's Pillar in Dublin. At the time, the IRA was weak and not engaged in armed action, but some unionists warned it was about to be revived to launch another campaign against Northern Ireland. In April 1966, loyalists led by Ian Paisley, a Protestant fundamentalist preacher, founded the Ulster Constitution Defence Committee (UCDC). It set up a paramilitary-style wing called the Ulster Protestant Volunteers (UPV) in order to oust Terence O'Neill, Prime Minister of Northern Ireland. Although O'Neill was a unionist, they viewed him as being too 'soft' on the civil rights movement and opposed his policies.

At the same time, a loyalist group calling itself the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) emerged in the Shankill area of Belfast. It was led by Gusty Spence, a former British soldier. Many of its members were also members of the UCDC and UPV. In April and May it petrol bombed a number of Catholic homes, schools and businesses. A firebomb killed an elderly Protestant widow, Matilda Gould. On 21 May, the UVF issued a statement declaring "war" against the IRA and anyone helping it. On 27 May the UVF fatally shot a Catholic civilian, John Scullion, as he walked home. A month later it shot three Catholic civilians as they left a pub, killing a young Catholic from the Republic, Peter Ward. Shortly after, the UVF was proscribed (made illegal) by the Northern Ireland government. The Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) was formed in January 1967.

On 20 June 1968, civil rights activists (including Austin Currie, a nationalist MP) protested against housing discrimination by squatting in a house in Caledon. The local council had allocated the house to an unmarried 19-year-old Protestant (Emily Beattie, the secretary of a local UUP politician) instead of either of two large Catholic families with children. RUC officers – one of whom was Beattie's brother – forcibly removed the activists. Two days before the protest, the two Catholic families who had been squatting in the house next door were removed by police. Currie had brought their grievance to the local council and to Stormont, but had been told to leave. The incident invigorated the civil rights movement.

On 24 August 1968, the civil rights movement held its first civil rights march, from Coalisland to Dungannon. Many more marches were held over the following year. Loyalists (especially members of the UPV) attacked some of the marches and held counter-demonstrations in a bid to get the marches banned. Because of the lack of police reaction to the attacks, nationalists saw the RUC, almost wholly Protestant, as backing the loyalists and allowing the attacks to occur. On 5 October 1968, a civil rights march in Derry was banned by the Northern Ireland government. When marchers defied the ban, RUC officers surrounded the marchers and beat them indiscriminately and without provocation. More than 100 people were injured, including a number of nationalist politicians. The incident was filmed by television news crews and shown around the world. It caused outrage among Catholics and nationalists, sparking two days of rioting in Derry between nationalists and the RUC.

A few days later, a student civil rights group – People's Democracy – was formed in Belfast. In late November, O'Neill promised the civil rights movement some concessions, but these were seen as too little by nationalists and too much by loyalists. On 1 January 1969, People's Democracy began a four-day march from Belfast to Derry, which was repeatedly harassed and attacked by loyalists. At Burntollet Bridge the marchers were attacked by about 200 loyalists, including some off-duty police officers, armed with iron bars, bricks and bottles in a pre-planned ambush. When the march reached Derry City it was again attacked. The marchers claimed that police did nothing to protect them and that some officers helped the attackers. That night, RUC officers went on a rampage in the Bogside area of Derry, attacking Catholic homes, attacking and threatening residents, and hurling sectarian abuse. Residents then sealed off the Bogside with barricades to keep the police out, creating "Free Derry", which was briefly a no-go area for the security forces.

In March and April 1969, loyalists bombed water and electricity installations in Northern Ireland, blaming them on the dormant IRA and elements of the civil rights movement. Some attacks left much of Belfast without power and water. Loyalists hoped the bombings would force O'Neill to resign and bring an end to any concessions to nationalists. There were six bombings between 30 March and 26 April. All were widely blamed on the IRA, and British soldiers were sent to guard installations. Unionist support for O'Neill waned, and on 28 April he resigned as Prime Minister.

August 1969 Riots and Aftermath

On 19 April there were clashes between NICRA marchers, the RUC and loyalists in the Bogside. RUC officers entered the house of Samuel Devenny (42), an uninvolved Catholic civilian, and ferociously beat him along with two of his teenage daughters and a family friend. One of the daughters was beaten unconscious as she lay recovering from surgery. Devenny suffered a heart attack and died on 17 July from his injuries. On 13 July, RUC officers beat a Catholic civilian, Francis McCloskey (67), during clashes in Dungiven. He died of his injuries the next day.

On 12 August, the loyalist Apprentice Boys of Derry were allowed to march along the edge of the Bogside. Taunts and missiles were exchanged between the loyalists and nationalist residents. After being bombarded with stones and petrol bombs from nationalists, the RUC, backed by loyalists, tried to storm the Bogside. The RUC used CS gas, armoured vehicles and water cannons, but were kept at bay by hundreds of nationalists. The continuous fighting, which became known as the Battle of the Bogside, lasted for two days.

In response to events in Derry, nationalists held protests at RUC bases in Belfast and elsewhere. Some of these led to clashes with the RUC and attacks on RUC bases. In Belfast, loyalists responded by invading nationalist districts, burning houses and businesses. There were gun battles between nationalists and the RUC, and between nationalists and loyalists. A group of about 30 IRA members was involved in the fighting in Belfast. The RUC deployed Shorland armoured cars mounted with heavy Browning machine guns. The Shorlands twice opened fire on a block of flats in a nationalist district, inadvertently killing a nine-year-old boy, Patrick Rooney. RUC officers opened fire on rioters inArmagh, Dungannon and Coalisland.

During the riots, on 13 August, Taoiseach Jack Lynch made a television address. He condemned the RUC and said that the Irish Government "can no longer stand by and see innocent people injured and perhaps worse". He called for a United Nations peacekeeping force to be deployed and said that Irish Army field hospitals were being set up at the border in County Donegal near Derry. Lynch added that Irish re-unification would be the only permanent solution. Some interpreted the speech as a threat of military intervention. After the riots, Lynch ordered the Irish Army to plan for a possible humanitarian intervention in Northern Ireland. The plan, Exercise Armageddon, was rejected and remained classified for thirty years.

On 14–15 August, British troops were deployed in Derry and Belfast to restore order, but did not try to enter the Bogside, bringing a temporary end to the riots. Eight people had been shot dead, more than 750 had been injured (including 133 who suffered gunshot wounds) and more than 400 homes and businesses had been destroyed (83% Catholic-owned). 1,505 Catholic and 315 Protestant families were forced to flee their homes. The Irish Army set up refugee camps in the Republic near the border. Many, but not all, nationalists initially welcomed the British Army, as at first they provided a bulwark against the RUC. However, relations soured due to the British Army's heavy-handedness and discrimination.

After the riots, the 'Hunt Committee' was set up to examine the RUC. It published its report on 12 October, recommending that the RUC become an unarmed force and the B Specials be disbanded. That night, loyalists took to the streets of Belfast in protest at the report. During violence in the Shankill, UVF members shot dead RUC officer Victor Arbuckle. He was the first RUC officer to be killed during the Troubles. In October and December 1969, the UVF carried out a number of small bombings in the Republic of Ireland.

1970s

Violence peaks and Stormont collapses

1970 through 1972 saw an explosion of political violence in Northern Ireland, peaking in 1972, when nearly 500 people, just over half of them civilians, lost their lives. 1972 saw the greatest loss of life throughout the entire conflict.

By the end of 1971, 29 barricades were in place in Derry, blocking access to what was known as Free Derry; 16 of these were impassable even to the British Army's one-ton armoured vehicles. Many of the nationalist/republican "no-go areas" were controlled by one of the two factions of the Irish Republican Army—the Provisional IRA and Official IRA. There are several reasons why violence escalated in these years.

Unionists claim the main reason was the formation of the Provisional Irish Republican Army (Provisional IRA), and the Official Irish Republican Army(Official IRA), particularly the former. These two groups were formed when the IRA split into the 'Provisional' and 'Official' factions. While the older IRA had embraced non-violent civil agitation, the new Provisional IRA was determined to

wage "armed struggle" against British rule in Northern Ireland. The new IRA was willing to take on the role of "defenders of the Catholic community", rather than seeking working-class ecumenical unity across both communities.

Nationalists pointed to a number of events in these years to explain the upsurge in violence. One such incident was the Falls Curfew in July 1970, when 3,000 troops imposed a curfew on the nationalist Lower Falls area of Belfast, firing more than 1,500 rounds of ammunition in gun battles with the Official IRA and killing four people. Another was the 1971 introduction of internment without trial (of 350 initial detainees, none were Protestants). Moreover, due to poor intelligence, very few of those interned were actually republican activists at the time, but some internees became increasingly radicalised as a result of their experiences. A third event, which led to increased recruitment to the Provisional IRA and support from nationalists, was the shooting dead of thirteen unarmed civilians in Derry on Bloody Sunday, 30 January 1972 (a fourteenth person died of his injuries some months later).

Following the introduction of internment there were numerous gun battles between the British army and both the Provisional and Official IRA. Between 1971 and 1975, 1,981 people were interned; 1,874 were Catholic/republican, while 107 were Protestant/loyalist. There were widespread allegations of abuse and even torture of detainees, and in 1972, the "five techniques" used by the police and army for interrogation were ruled to be illegal following a British government inquiry.

The Provisional IRA, or "Provos", as they became known, sought to establish itself as the defender of the nationalist community. The Official IRA (OIRA) began its own armed campaign in reaction to the ongoing violence. The Provisional IRA's offensive campaign began in early 1971 when the Army Council sanctioned attacks on the British Army.

In 1972, the Provisional IRA killed approximately 100 members of the security forces, wounded 500 others, and carried out approximately 1,300 bombings, mostly against commercial targets which they considered "the artificial economy". The bombing campaign killed many civilians, notably on Bloody Friday on 21 July, when 22 bombs were set off in the centre of Belfast killing seven civilians and two soldiers.

In the same year, the Official IRA killed dozens of soldiers and wounded several more, mostly through gun attacks, according to the CAIN project's Sutton database. The Official IRA called off its campaign in May 1972.

Despite a temporary ceasefire in 1972 and talks with British officials, the Provisionals were determined to continue their campaign until the achievement of a united Ireland. The UK government in London, believing the Northern Ireland administration incapable of containing the security situation, sought to take over the control of law and order there. As this was unacceptable to the Northern Ireland Government, the British government pushed through emergency legislation (the Northern Ireland (Temporary Provisions) Act 1972) which suspended the unionist- controlled Stormont Parliament and Government, and introduced "direct rule" from London. Direct rule was initially intended as a short-term measure; the medium-term strategy was to restore self-government to Northern Ireland on a basis that was acceptable to both unionists and nationalists. Agreement proved elusive, however, and the Troubles continued throughout the 1970s, 1980s, and the 1990s within a context of political deadlock. The existence of "no-go areas" in Belfast and Derry was a challenge to the authority of the British government in Northern Ireland, and the British Army demolished the barricades and re-established control over the areas in Operation Motorman on 31 July 1972.

Sunningdale Agreement and UWC strike

In June 1973, following the publication of a British White Paper and a referendum in March on the status of Northern Ireland, a new parliamentary body, the Northern Ireland Assembly, was established. Elections to this were held on 28 June. In October 1973, mainstream nationalist and unionist parties, along with the British and Irish governments, negotiated the Sunningdale Agreement, which was intended to produce a political settlement within Northern Ireland, but with a so-called "Irish dimension" involving the Republic. The agreement provided for "power-sharing"—the creation of an executive containing both unionists and nationalists—and a "Council of Ireland"—a body made

up of ministers from Northern Ireland and the Republic, designed to encourage cross-border co-operation. The similarities between the Sunningdale Agreement and the Belfast Agreement of 1998 has led some commentators to characterise the latter as "Sunningdale for slow learners". This assertion has been criticised by political scientists one of whom stated that "..there are... significant differences between them [Sunningdale and Belfast], both in terms of content and the circumstances surrounding their negotiation, implementation, and operation".

Unionists were split over Sunningdale, which was also opposed by the IRA, whose goal remained nothing short of an end to the existence of Northern Ireland as part of the UK. Many unionists opposed the concept of power-sharing, arguing that it was not feasible to share power with those (nationalists) who sought the destruction of the state. Perhaps more significant, however, was the unionist opposition to the "Irish dimension" and the Council of Ireland, which was perceived as being an all-Ireland parliament-in-waiting. Remarks by a young SDLP councillor,Hugh Logue, to an audience at Trinity College Dublin that Sunningdale was the tool "by which the Unionists will be trundled off to a united Ireland" also damaged chances of significant unionist support for the agreement. In January 1974, Brian Faulkner was narrowly deposed as UUP leader and replaced by Harry West. A UK general election in February 1974 gave the anti-Sunningdale unionists the opportunity to test unionist opinion with the slogan "Dublin is only a Sunningdale away", and the result galvanised their opposition: they won 11 of the 12 seats, winning 58% of the vote with most of the rest going to nationalists and pro-Sunningdale unionists.

Ultimately, however, the Sunningdale Agreement was brought down by mass action on the part of loyalist paramilitaries (primarily the Ulster Defence Association, at that time over 20,000 strong and workers, who formed the Ulster Workers' Council. They organised a general strike: the Ulster Workers' Council strike. This severely curtailed business in Northern Ireland and cut off essential services such as water and electricity. Nationalists argue that the British Government did not do enough to break this strike and uphold the Sunningdale initiative. There is evidence that the strike was further encouraged by MI5, a part of their campaign to 'disorientate' British prime minister Harold Wilson's government. Faced with such opposition, the pro-Sunningdale unionists resigned from the power-sharing government and the new regime collapsed. Three days into the UWC strike, on 17 May 1974, two UVF teams from the Belfast and Mid-Ulster brigades detonated three no-warning car bombs in Dublin's city centre during the Friday evening rush hour, resulting in 26 deaths and close to 300 injuries. Ninety minutes later, a fourth car bomb exploded in Monaghan, killing seven additional people. Nobody has ever been convicted for these attacks.

Proposal of an independent Northern Ireland

Wilson had secretly met with the IRA in 1971 while leader of the opposition; his government in late 1974 and early 1975 again met with the IRA to negotiate a ceasefire. During the meetings the parties discussed the possibility of British withdrawal from an independent Northern Ireland. The failure of Sunningdale led to the serious consideration in London until November 1975 of independence. Had the withdrawal—which Wilson supported but others, including James Callaghan, opposed—occurred, the region would have become a separate Dominion of the British Commonwealth.

The British negotiations with an illegal organization angered the Irish government. It did not know their proceedings but feared that the British were considering abandoning Northern Ireland. Foreign Minister Garret FitzGerald discussed in a memorandum of June 1975 the possibilities of orderly withdrawal and independence, repartition of the island, and/or a collapse of Northern Ireland into civil war and anarchy. The memorandum preferred a negotiated independence as the best of the three "worst case scenarios", but concluded that the Irish government could do little.

The Irish government had already failed to prevent the IRA from burning down the British Embassy in 1972. It believed that it could not enlarge the country's small army of 12,500 men without negative consequences. A civil war in Northern Ireland would cause many deaths there and severe consequences for the Republic, as the public would demand that it intervene to protect nationalists. FitzGerald warned Callaghan that the failure to intervene, despite Ireland's inability to do so, would

"threaten democratic government in the Republic", which in turn jeopardized British and European security against Communist and other foreign nations.

The Irish government so dreaded the consequences of an independent Northern Ireland that FitzGerald refused to ask the British not to withdraw—as he feared that openly discussing the issue could permit the British to proceed—and other members of government opposed the Irish Cabinet even discussing what FitzGerald referred to as a "doomsday scenario". He wrote in 2006 that "Neither then nor since has public opinion in Ireland realised how close to disaster our whole island came during the last two years of Harold Wilson's premiership."

Mid-1970s

Merlyn Rees, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, had lifted the proscription against the UVF in April 1974. In December, one month after the Birmingham pub bombings which killed 21 people, the IRA declared a ceasefire; this would theoretically last throughout most of the following year. The ceasefire notwithstanding, sectarian killings actually escalated in 1975, along with internal feuding between rival paramilitary groups. This made 1975 one of the "bloodiest years of the conflict".

On 31 July 1975 at Buskhill, outside Newry, the popular Irish cabaret band "The Miami Showband" was returning home to Dublin after a gig in Banbridge when it was ambushed by gunmen from the UVF Mid-Ulster Brigade wearing British Army uniforms at a bogus military roadside checkpoint on the main A1 road. Three of the band members, two Catholics and a Protestant, were shot dead, while two of the UVF men were killed when the bomb they had loaded onto the band's minibus detonated prematurely. The following January, eleven Protestant workers were gunned down in Kingsmill, South Armagh after having been ordered off their bus by an armed republican gang, which called itself the South Armagh Republican Action Force. One man survived despite being shot 18 times, leaving ten fatalities. These killings were reportedly in retaliation to a loyalist double shooting attack against the Reavey and O'Dowd families the previous night.

The violence continued through the rest of the 1970s. The British Government reinstated the ban against the UVF in October 1975, making it once more an illegal organisation. When the Provisional IRA's December 1974 ceasefire had ended in early 1976 and it had returned to violence, it had lost the hope that it had felt in the early 1970s that it could force a rapid British withdrawal from Northern Ireland, and instead developed a strategy known as the "Long War", which involved a less intense but more sustained campaign of violence that could continue indefinitely. The Official IRAceasefire of 1972, however, became permanent, and the "Official" movement eventually evolved into the Workers' Party, which rejected violence completely. However, a splinter from the "Officials"—the Irish National Liberation Army—continued a campaign of violence in 1974.

Late 1970s

By the late 1970s, war-weariness was visible in both communities. One manifestation of this was the formation of group known as "Peace People", which won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1976. The Peace People organised large demonstrations calling for an end to paramilitary violence. Their campaign lost momentum, however, after they appealed to the nationalist community to provide information on the IRA to security forces.

The decade ended with a double attack by the IRA against the British. On 27 August 1979, Lord Mountbatten while on holiday in Mullaghmore, County Sligo, was killed by a bomb planted on board his boat. Three other people were also killed: Lady Brabourne, the elderly mother of Mountbatten's son-in-law; and two teenagers, a grandson of Mountbatten and a local boatman. That same day, eighteen British soldiers, mostly members of the Parachute Regiment, were killed by two remote-controlled bombs at Warrenpoint, County Down.

Successive British Governments, having failed to achieve a political settlement, tried to "normalise" Northern Ireland. Aspects included the removal ofinternment without trial and the removal of political status for paramilitary prisoners. From 1972 onward, paramilitaries were tried in juryless Diplock courts to avoid intimidation of jurors. On conviction, they were to be treated as ordinary criminals. Resistance to this policy among republican prisoners led to more than 500 of them in the Maze

prison initiating the "blanket" and "dirty"protests. Their protests culminated in hunger strikes in 1980 and 1981, aimed at the restoration of political status, as well as other concessions.

1980s

In the 1981 Irish hunger strike, ten republican prisoners (seven from the Provisional IRA and three from the INLA) died of starvation. The first hunger striker to die, Bobby Sands, was elected to Parliament on an Anti-H-Block ticket, as was his election agent Owen Carron following Sands' death. The hunger strikes resonated among many nationalists; over 100,000 people attended Sands' funeral mass in West Belfast and thousands attended those of the other hunger strikers. From an Irish republican perspective, the significance of these events was to demonstrate potential for a political and electoral strategy.

In the wake of the hunger strikes, Sinn Féin, which had become the Provisional IRA's political wing, began to contest elections for the first time in both Northern Ireland (as abstentionists) and in the Republic. In 1986, Sinn Féin recognised the legitimacy of the Irish Dáil, which caused a small group of members to break away and form Republican Sinn Féin.

The IRA's "Long War" was boosted by large donations of arms from Libya in the 1980s (see Provisional IRA arms importation) due to Muammar Gaddafi's anger at Thatcher's government for assisting the Reagan government's bombing of Tripoli, which had allegedly killed one of Gaddafi's children, as well as from monies from pro-IRA partisans in the United States and elsewhere throughout the Irish diaspora.

The INLA was highly active in the early and mid-1980s. In 1982, it bombed a disco frequented by off-duty British soldiers, killing 11 soldiers and six civilians. One of the IRA's most high profile actions in this period was the Brighton hotel bombing on 12 October 1984, when it set off a 100-pound bomb in the Grand Brighton Hotel in Brighton, where politicians including Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher were staying for the Conservative Party conference. Five people were killed, including Conservative MP Sir Anthony Berry and the wife of Government Chief Whip John Wakeham, and thirty-four others were injured, including Wakeham, Trade and Industry Secretary Norman Tebbit, and Tebbit's wife, Margaret who was left paralysed.

On 28 February 1985 in Newry, nine RUC officers, seven Protestants and two Catholics, were killed after a mortar attack on the police station in Corry Square. The attack was planned by the IRA South Armagh Brigade and an IRA unit in Newry. Nine shells were fired from a Mark 10 mortar which was bolted onto the back of a hijacked Ford van in Crossmaglen. Eight shells overshot the station, but the ninth hit a Portakabin which was being used as a canteen. On 8 November 1987, in Enniskillen, County Fermanagh, a Provisional IRA time bomb exploded during a parade on Remembrance Day to commemorate victims of World War One. The bomb went off by a cenotaph which was at the heart of the parade. Eleven people (ten civilians, including a pregnant woman, and one serving member of the RUC) were killed and 63 were injured. A twelfth fatality died after spending 13 years in a coma. The IRA eventually apologised for what it claimed had been a mistake and that its target had been the British soldiers parading to the memorial. The unit which carried out the bombing was disbanded. Loyalist paramilitaries responded to the bombing with revenge attacks on Catholics, mostly civilians. Another bomb had been planted at nearby Tullyhommon at a parallel Remembrance Day commemoration but failed to detonate.

Three IRA volunteers were shot dead at a Shell petrol station on Winston Churchill Avenue in Gibraltar in 1988. This became known as Operation Flavius. Their funeral at Milltown Cemetery in Belfast was attacked by Michael Stone, a UDA member who threw grenades and fired shots as the coffin was lowered. The attack killed 3 people, one of whom was an IRA volunteer. When two British soldiers, David Howes and Derek Wood, drove into the joint funeral in Andersonstown being held for the three men killed by Stone, they were found to be armed, and were captured, taken away and shot dead. This became known as the Corporals killings.

In the 1980s loyalist paramilitary groups, including the Ulster Volunteer Force, the Ulster Defence Association and Ulster Resistance, imported arms and explosives from South Africa. The weapons obtained were divided between the UDA, the UVF and Ulster Resistance, and led to an escalation in

the assassination of Catholics, although some of the weaponry (such as rocket-propelled grenades) were hardly used. These killings were reportedly in response to the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement which gave the Irish government a "consultative role" in the government of Northern Ireland. In 1987, the Irish People's Liberation Organisation (IPLO), a breakaway faction of the INLA, engaged in a bloody feud against the INLA which weakened the INLA's presence in some areas. By 1992, the IPLO was destroyed by the Provisionals for its involvement in drug dealing thus ending the feud.

Around this time republicans alleged that a "shoot-to-kill policy" had been formed in Northern Ireland, in which tens of republican paramilitaries and one loyalist paramilitary were killed on active duty, usually by the SAS and/or RUC.

1990s

Since the late 1980s, while the IRA continued its armed campaign, its political wing Sinn Féin, led since 1983 by Gerry Adams, sought a negotiated end to the conflict, although Adams accurately predicted that this would be a very long process. In a statement, attributed to a 1970 interview with German filmmaker Teod Richter, he predicted that the war would last another 20 years. He conducted open talks with John Hume — the SDLP leader — and secret talks with government officials. Loyalists were also engaged in behind-the-scenes talks to end the violence, connecting with the British and Irish governments through Protestant clergy, in particular the Presbyterian minister, Reverend Roy Magee and Anglican Archbishop Robin Eames.

When a French TV crew filmed the IRA at a training camp in Donegal, a representative for the General Headquarters Staff of the IRA was interviewed. He said the IRA would "Eventually sap the political will of the British government to remain in Ireland".

Situation worsens in South Armagh

The IRA's South Armagh Brigade had made the countryside village of Crossmaglen their stronghold since the 1970s. The surrounding villages of Silverbridge, Cullyhanna, Cullaville, Forkhill, Jonesborough and Creggan were also IRA strongholds. In February 1978, a British Army Gazelle helicopter was shot down near Silverbridge, killing Lieutenant Colonel Ian Corden-Lloyd of the British Army.

In the 1990s, the IRA came up with a new plan to restrict British Army foot patrols near Crossmaglen. They developed two sniper teams to attack British Army and RUC patrols. They usually fired from an improvised armoured carusing a .50 BMG caliber or M82 sniper rifle. Signs were put up around South Armagh reading "Sniper at Work". The snipers killed nine: seven soldiers and two constables. The last sniper victim to be killed before the Good Friday Agreement (GFA), was a British soldier, bombardier Steven Restorick. The IRA had developed the capacity to attack helicopters in South Armagh and elsewhere since the 1980s, including the 1990 shootdown of a Gazelle flying over the border between Tyrone and Monaghan; there were no fatalities in that incident.

Another incident involving British helicopters in South Armagh was the Battle of Newry Road in September 1993. Two other helicopters, a British Army Lynx and a Royal Air Force Puma were shot down by improvised mortar fire in 1994. The IRA set up checkpoints in South Armagh during this period, unchallenged by the security forces.

First ceasefire

After a prolonged period of background political manoeuvering, both loyalist and republican paramilitary groups declared ceasefires in 1994. The year leading up to the ceasefires was a particularly tense one, marked by atrocities. The UDA and UVF stepped up their killings of Catholics (in 1993, loyalists killed more people than republicans). The IRA responded with the Shankill Road bombing in October 1993, which aimed to kill the UDA leadership, but killed eight Protestant civilian shoppers and a low-ranking UDA member, as well as one of the perpetrators who was killed when the bomb detonated prematurely. The UDA retaliated with mass shootings in nationalist areas such as Greysteel and Castlerock, killing many people, all but two of whom were Catholic.

On 16 June 1994, just before the ceasefires, the Irish National Liberation Army killed a UVF member in a gun attack on the Shankill Road. In revenge, three days later, the UVF killed six civilians in a shooting at a pub in Loughinisland,County Down. The IRA, in the remaining month before its ceasefire, killed four senior loyalist paramilitaries, three from the UDA and one from the UVF. On 31 August 1994, the Provisional IRA declared a ceasefire. The loyalist paramilitaries, temporarily united in the "Combined Loyalist Military Command", reciprocated six weeks later. Although these ceasefires failed in the short run, they marked an effective end to large-scale political violence, as they paved the way for the final ceasefires.

In 1995, the United States appointed George Mitchell as the United States Special Envoy for Northern Ireland. Mitchell was recognised as being more than a token envoy and someone representing a President (Bill Clinton) with a deep interest in events. The British and Irish governments agreed that Mitchell would chair an international commission on disarmament of paramilitary groups

Second ceasefire

On 9 February 1996, less than two years after the declaration of the ceasefire, the IRA revoked it with the Docklands bombing in the Canary Wharf area of London, killing two people and causing £85 million in damage to the city's financial centre. Sinn Féin blamed the failure of the ceasefire on the British Government's refusal to begin all-party negotiations until the IRA decommissioned its weapons.

The attack was followed by several more, most notably the 1996 Manchester bombing, which destroyed a large area of the centre of the city on 15 June. It was the largest bomb attack in Britain since World War II. While the attack avoided any fatalities due to a telephone warning and the rapid response of the emergency services to it, over 200 people were injured in the attack, many of them outside the established cordon. The damage caused by the blast was valued at £411 million. Lance Bombardier Stephen Restorick, the last British soldier killed before the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) was finalised, was shot dead at a border crossing on 12 February 1997 by the "South Armagh sniper".

The IRA reinstated their ceasefire in July 1997, as negotiations for the document that became known as the Good Friday Agreement began without Sinn Féin. In September of the same year Sinn Féin signed the Mitchell Principles and were admitted to the talks. The UVF was the first paramilitary grouping to split as a result of their ceasefire, spawning the Loyalist Volunteer Force (LVF) in 1996. In December 1997, the INLA assassinated LVF leader Billy Wright, leading to a series of revenge killings of Catholics by loyalist groups. A group split from the Provisional IRA and formed the Real IRA (RIRA).

In August 1998, a Real IRA bomb in Omagh killed 29 civilians. This bombing discredited "dissident republicans" and their campaigns in the eyes of many who had previously supported the Provisionals' campaign. They became small groups with little influence, but are still capable of violence.[117] The INLA also declared a ceasefire after the Belfast Agreement of 1998. Since then, most paramilitary violence has been directed at their "own" communities and at other factions within their organisations. The UDA, for example, has feuded with their fellow loyalists the UVF on two occasions since 2000. There have been internal struggles for power between "brigade commanders" and involvement in organised crime.

Provisional IRA members have since been accused or convicted of involvement in the killings of Robert McCartney, Matthew Burns, James Curran, and Andrew Kearney, among others, for a variety of reasons

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Political process

A republican mural in Belfast during the mid-1990s. It bids "safe home" (Slán Abhaile) to British troops. Security normalisation was one of the key points of the Good Friday Agreement. After the ceasefires, talks began between the main political parties in Northern Ireland to establish political agreement. These talks led to the Good Friday Agreement of 1998. This Agreement restored self-

government to Northern Ireland on the basis of "power-sharing". In 1999, an executive was formed consisting of the four main parties, including Sinn Féin. Other important changes included the reform of the RUC, renamed as the Police Service of Northern Ireland, which was required to recruit at least a 50% quota of Catholics for ten years, and the abolition of Diplock courts under the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007.

A security normalisation process also began as part of the treaty, which comprised the progressive closing of redundant British Army barracks, border observation towers, and the withdrawal of all forces taking part in Operation Banner – including the resident battalions of the Royal Irish Regiment – that would be replaced by an infantry brigade, deployed in ten sites around Northern Ireland but with no operative role in the province.

The power-sharing Executive and Assembly were suspended in 2002, when unionists withdrew following "Stormontgate", a controversy over allegations of an IRA spy ring operating at Stormont. There were ongoing tensions about the Provisional IRA's failure to disarm fully and sufficiently quickly. IRA decommissioning has since been completed (in September 2005) to the satisfaction of most parties.

A feature of Northern Ireland politics since the Agreement has been the eclipse in electoral terms of parties such as the Social Democratic and Labour Party and Ulster Unionist Party, by rival parties such as Sinn Féin and the DUP. Similarly, although political violence is greatly reduced, sectarian animosity has not disappeared. Residential areas are more segregated between Catholic nationalists and Protestant unionists than ever. Thus, progress towards restoring the power-sharing institutions was slow and tortuous. On 8 May 2007, devolved government returned to Northern Ireland. DUP leader Ian Paisley and Sinn Féin's Martin McGuinness took office as First Minister and deputy First Minister, respectively.

Collusion between British forces and loyalists

In their efforts to defeat the IRA, there were many incidents of collusion between the British state security forces (the British Army and RUC) and loyalist paramilitaries. This included soldiers and policemen taking part in loyalist attacks while off-duty, giving weapons and intelligence to loyalists, not taking action against them, and hindering police investigations. The *De Silva Report*found that, during the 1980s, 85% of the intelligence loyalists used to target people came from the security forces. The security forces also had double agents and informers within loyalist groups who organized attacks on the orders of, or with the knowledge of, their handlers. Of the 210 loyalists arrested by the Stevens Inquiries team, 207 were found to be state agents or informers.

The British Army's locally recruited Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR) was almost wholly Protestant. Despite the vetting process, some loyalist militants managed to enlist; mainly to obtain weapons, training and intelligence. By 1990, at least 197 UDR soldiers had been convicted of loyalist terrorist offences and other serious crimes, including 19 convicted of murder. This was only a small fraction of those who served in it, but the proportion was higher than the regular British Army, the RUC and the civilian population.

During the 1970s, the Glenanne gang—a secret alliance of loyalist militants, British soldiers and RUC officers—carried out a string of gun and bomb attacks against Catholics/nationalists in an area of Northern Ireland known as the "murder triangle". It carried out some attacks in the Republic. *Lethal Allies: British Collusion in Ireland* claims the group killed about 120 people, mostly uninvolved civilians. The *Cassel Report* investigated 76 murders attributed to the group and found evidence that soldiers and policemen were involved in 74 of those. One member, RUC officer John Weir, claimed his superiors knew of the collusion but allowed it to continue. The *Cassel Report* also said some senior officers knew of the crimes but did nothing to prevent, investigate or punish. Attacks attributed to the group include the Dublin and Monaghan bombings (1974), the Miami Showband killings (1975) and the Reavey and O'Dowd killings (1976).

The Stevens Inquiries found that elements of the security forces had used loyalists as "proxies". Through their double-agents and informers, they helped loyalist groups to kill people, including civilians. It concluded that this had intensified and prolonged the conflict. The British

Army's Force Research Unit (FRU) was the main agency involved. Brian Nelson, the UDA's chief 'intelligence officer', was a FRU agent. Through Nelson, FRU helped loyalists target people for assassination. FRU commanders say they helped loyalists target only republican activists and prevented the killing of civilians. The Inquiries found evidence only two lives were saved and that Nelson/FRU was responsible for at least 30 murders and many other attacks – many on civilians. One victim was solicitor Pat Finucane. Nelson also supervised the shipping of weapons to loyalists in 1988. From 1992–94, loyalists were responsible for more deaths than republicans, partly due to FRU. Members of the security forces tried to obstruct the Stevens investigation.

A 2007 Police Ombudsman report revealed that UVF members had been allowed to commit a string of terrorist offences, including murder, while working as informers for RUC Special Branch. It found that Special Branch had given informers immunity by ensuring they weren't caught or convicted, and blocking weapons searches. Ombudsman Nuala O'Loan said that this led to "hundreds" of deaths and said senior British Government officials pressured her into halting her investigation. UVF member Robin Jackson has been linked to between 50 and 100 killings in Northern Ireland, although he was never convicted for any. It is alleged by many, including members of the security forces, that Jackson was an RUC agent. The Irish Government's *Barron Report* alleges that he also "had relationships with British Intelligence".

The Disappeared

During the 1970s and 1980s, republican and loyalist paramilitaries abducted many individuals, many alleged to have been informers, to be interrogated under torture and then executed. Fifteen individuals, all in this case having been abducted by republicans, disappeared. Among these victims, called "The Disappeared", nine bodies, out of fifteen, have been retrieved as of 2015.

British government security forces, including the Military Reaction Force (MRF) carried out what have been described by some sources as "extrajudicial killings" of unarmed civilians. Their victims were often Catholic or suspected Catholic civilians unaffiliated with any paramilitaries, such as the 12 May 1972 Andersonstown shooting of seven unarmed Catholic civilians and the 15 April 1972 Whiterock Road shooting of two unarmed Catholic civilians by British soldiers. A member of the MRF stated in 1978 that the Army often attempted false flag sectarian attacks, thus provoking sectarian conflict and "taking the heat off the Army". A former member stated that "[W]e were not there to act like an army unit, we were there to act like a terror group"

Shoot-to-kill allegations

Republicans allege that the security forces operated a shoot-to-kill policy rather than arresting IRA suspects. The security forces denied this and point out that in incidents such as the killing of eight IRA men at Loughgall in 1987, the IRA members who were killed were heavily armed. Others argue that incidents such as the shooting of three unarmed IRA members in Gibraltar by the Special Air Service ten months later confirmed suspicions among republicans, and in the British and Irish media, of a tacit British shoot-to-kill policy of suspected IRA members.

Parades issue

Inter-communal tensions rise and violence often breaks out during the "marching season" when the Protestant Orange Order parades take place across Northern Ireland. The parades are held to commemorate William of Orange's victory in the Battle of the Boyne in 1690, which secured the Protestant Ascendancy and British rule in Ireland. One particular flashpoint which caused continual annual strife is the Garvaghy Road area in Portadown, where an Orange parade from Drumcree Church passes through a mainly nationalist estate off the Garvaghy Road. This parade has now been banned indefinitely, following nationalist riots against the parade, and also loyalist counter-riots against its banning.

In 1995, 1996 and 1997, there were several weeks of prolonged rioting throughout Northern Ireland over the impasse at Drumcree. A number of people died in this violence, including a Catholic taxi driver, killed by the Loyalist Volunteer Force, and three (of four) nominally Catholic brothers (from a mixed-religion family) died when their house in Ballymoney was petrol-bombed.

Social Repercussions

The impact of the Troubles on the ordinary people of Northern Ireland has been compared to that of the Blitz on the people of London. The stress resulting from bomb attacks, street disturbances, security checkpoints, and the constant military presence had the strongest effect on children and young adults. There was also the fear that local paramilitaries instilled in their respective communities with the punishment beatings, "romperings", and the occasional tarring and feathering meted out to individuals for various purported infractions.

In addition to the violence and intimidation, there was chronic unemployment and a severe housing shortage. Many people were rendered homeless as a result of intimidation or having their houses burnt, and urban redevelopment played a role in the social upheaval. Belfast families faced being transferred to new, alien estates when older, decrepit districts such as Sailortown and thePound Loney were being demolished. According to social worker and author Sarah Nelson, this new social problem of homelessness and disorientation contributed to the breakdown of the normal fabric of society, allowing for paramilitaries to exert a strong influence in certain districts. Vandalism was also a major problem. In the 1970s there were 10,000 vandalised empty houses in Belfast alone. Most of the vandals were aged between eight and thirteen.

According to one historian of the conflict, the stress of the Troubles engendered a breakdown in the previously strict sexual morality of Northern Ireland, resulting in a "confused hedonism" in respect of personal life. In Derry, illegitimate births and alcoholism increased for women and the divorce rate rose. Teenage alcoholism was also a problem, partly as a result of the drinking clubs established in both loyalist and republican areas. In many cases, there was little parental supervision of children in some of the poorer districts. The Department of Health has looked at a report written in 2007 by Mike Tomlinson of Queen's University, which asserted that the legacy of the Troubles has played a substantial role in the current rate of suicide in Northern Ireland.

Casualties

According to the Conflict Archive on the Internet (CAIN), 3,532 people were killed as a result of the conflict, from 1969–2001. Of these, 3,489 were killed from 1969–1998. According to the book *Lost Lives* (2006 edition), 3,720 people were killed as a result of the conflict, from 1966–2006. Of these, 3,635 were killed from 1969–1998. In *The Politics of Antagonism: Understanding Northern Ireland*, Brendan O'Leary and John McGarry point out that "nearly two per cent of the population of Northern Ireland have been killed or injured through political violence [...] If the equivalent ratio of victims to population had been produced in Great Britain in the same period some 100,000 people would have died, and if a similar level of political violence had taken place, the number of fatalities in the USA would have been over 500,000". In 2010 it was estimated that 107,000 people in Northern Ireland suffered some physical injury as a result of the conflict. On the basis of data gathered by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, the Victims Commission estimated that the conflict resulted in 500,000 'victims' in Northern Ireland alone. It defines 'victims' are those who are directly affected by 'bereavement', 'physical injury' or 'trauma' as a result of the conflict.

Responsibility

Approximately 60% of the dead were killed by republicans, 30% by loyalists and 10% by British security forces.

Responsibility for killing	
Responsible party	**No.**
Republican paramilitary groups	2058

Loyalist paramilitary groups	1027
British security forces	363
Persons unknown	79
Irish security forces	5
Total	**3532**

According to Malcolm Sutton's *Index of Deaths from the Conflict in Ireland.*

Of those killed by British security forces:
- 187 (~51.5%) were civilians
- 145 (~39.9%) were members of republican paramilitaries
- 18 (~4.9%) were members of loyalist paramilitaries
- 13 (~3.5%) were fellow members of the British security forces

Of those killed by republican paramilitaries:
- 1080 (~52%) were members/former members of the British security forces
- 723 (~35%) were civilians
- 187 (~9%) were members of republican paramilitaries
- 57 (~2.7%) were members of loyalist paramilitaries
- 11 (~0.5%) were members of the Irish security forces

Of those killed by loyalist paramilitaries:
- 878 (~85.4%) were civilians
- 94 (~9%) were members of loyalist paramilitaries
- 41 (~4%) were members of republican paramilitaries
- 14 (~1%) were members of the British security forces

Status

Approximately 52% of the dead were civilians, 32% were members/former members of the British security forces, 11% were members of republican paramilitaries, and 5% were members of loyalist paramilitaries. About 60% of the civilian casualties were Catholics, 30% were Protestants, and the rest were from outside Northern Ireland.

Of the civilian casualties, 48% were killed by loyalists, 39% were killed by republicans, and 10% were killed by the British security forces.

It has been the subject of dispute whether some individuals were members of paramilitary organisations due to their secretive nature. Several casualties that were listed as civilians were later claimed by the IRA as their members. One Ulster Defence Association (UDA) and three Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) members killed during the conflict were also Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR) soldiers at the time of their deaths. At least one civilian victim was an off-duty member of the Territorial Army.

Deaths by status of victim	
Status	**No.**
Civilians (inc. Civilian political activists)	1841
British security force personnel (serving and former members)	1114
British Army (inc. UDR, RIR and TA)	757
Royal Ulster Constabulary	319
Northern Ireland Prison Service	26
English police forces	6
Royal Air Force	4
Royal Navy	2
Irish security force personnel	11
Garda Síochána	9
Irish Army	1
Irish Prison Service	1
Members of Republican paramilitaries	396
Members of Loyalist paramilitaries	170

Location

Most killings took place within Northern Ireland, especially in Belfast. Most of the killings in Belfast took place in the west and north of the city. Dublin, London and Birmingham were also affected, albeit to a lesser degree than Northern Ireland itself. Occasionally, the IRA attempted or carried out attacks on British targets in Gibraltar, Germany and the Netherlands.

Conflict-related deaths by location	
Location	**No.**
Belfast	1,541
West Belfast	623
North Belfast	577
South Belfast	213
East Belfast	128
County Armagh	477
County Tyrone	340
County Down	243
Derry City	227
County Antrim	209
County Londonderry	123
County Fermanagh	112
Republic of Ireland	116

England	125
Continental Europe	18

Chronological Listing

Conflict-related deaths by year	
Year	**No.**
2002	20
2001	16
2000	19
1999	8
1998	55
1997	22
1996	18
1995	9
1994	64
1993	88
1992	88
1991	97

1990	81
1989	76
1988	104
1987	98
1986	61
1985	57
1984	69
1983	84
1982	111
1981	114
1980	80
1979	121
1978	82
1977	110
1976	297
1975	260
1974	294

1973	255
1972	480
1971	171
1970	26
1969	16

Additional Statistics

Additional estimated statistics on the conflict	
Incident	**No.**
Injury	47,541
Shooting incident	36,923
Armed robbery	22,539
People charged with paramilitary offences	19,605
Bombing and attempted bombing	16,209
Arson	2,225