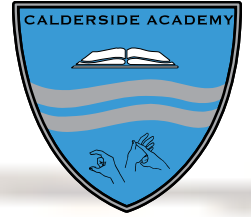


Department of Deaf Education



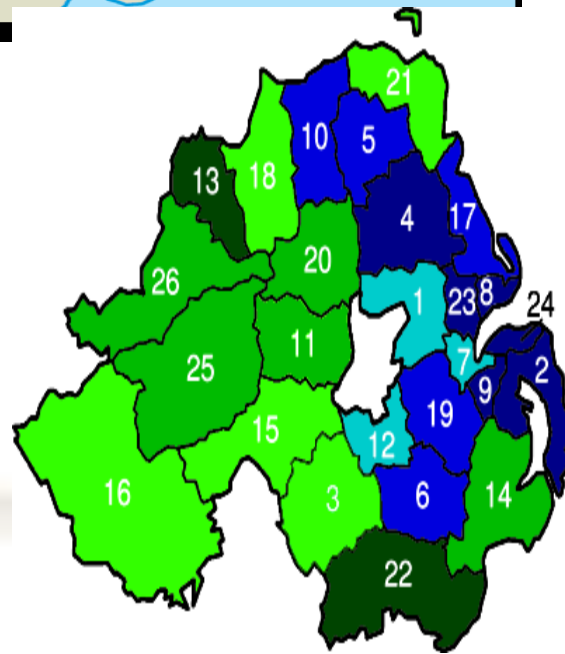
Across the Barricades by Joan Lingard

Background to the troubles in Northern
Ireland





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	Protestant majority over Catholic	Catholic majority over Protestant
0-25%		
25-50%		
Over 50%		



Life in Northern Ireland

From their early years, children in Northern Ireland can see the slogans and ballads (songs) and sermons that tell the righteousness of the Protestant or the Catholic religion. They are aware that there could be trouble and violence at any street corner.



ON PATROL:

British armored vehicles were a common sight on the streets of Belfast, the capital of Northern Ireland.



What's behind the Troubles?

- The community in Northern Ireland is divided into roughly two groups:

Unionists

who are mainly Protestants and have traditionally wanted Northern Ireland to stay part of the UK

Nationalists

who are mainly Catholics and have wanted the area to join the Republic of Ireland (the rest of Ireland) and form a united Ireland





What problems has this caused?

The conflict has led to fighting in the province for more than 30 years. More than 3,500 people have died in terrorist bombings and shootings in what's known as the Troubles.

A long history of hate

- A long time ago, in the 12th century, Catholic Ireland was ruled by England. Many English protestant **nobles** settled in the north of Ireland and they drove local Catholic **peasants** off their land. This created hatred and bitterness among the local population and led to **riots** and wars.
- The violence in Northern Ireland went on for centuries, and the Irish Question became a permanent and difficult problem for the British.





- The Catholics in Ireland, led by Sinn Fein, were only happy with full independence. However, the Protestants did not want to be ruled by the Catholic **majority**.

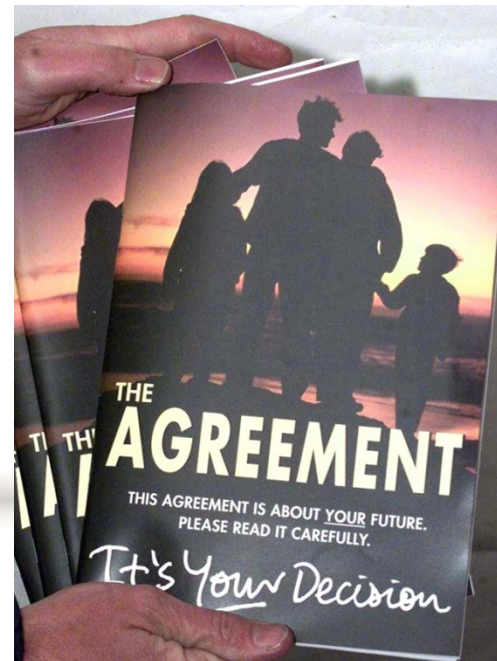


- In the 19th century the conflict grew to be more and more tense. Terror actions like **bombing** and **burn outs** have been carried out by both parties. Today, the Catholic **minority** in Northern Ireland are trying to be **reunited** to Ireland, whereas the Protestants majority don't want to be separated from England.



Can there ever be peace?

- In 1998 the Good Friday Agreement was signed which was aimed at ending the fighting. It keeps Northern Ireland part of the UK. The majority of people in Northern Ireland and the Republic voted in favour of the Agreement.





Is the Agreement working?



- The Agreement said that both sides had to give up violence completely. There have been problems making it work as both sides have been disagreeing on issues like when and how terrorist weapons should be given up.



- On 14 October 2002 the British government suspended the new assembly and Northern Ireland is again being run from London.

Separate terrorist groups like the Real IRA haven't agreed with the **ceasefire** and have carried on bombing in places like Omagh



and London