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# The Troubles in Northern Ireland

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*The Troubles in Northern Ireland*

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### **Abstract**

This thesis examines the history of the conflict involving Ireland, Northern Ireland, Great Britain, and the United Kingdom that eventually led to the period of time in history known as the Troubles (1968-1998). Within this span of time, a war was fought in Northern Ireland between the Republicans and the Unionists / Loyalists. The Republicans had a strong sense of Irish national identity. They believed and still believe that Northern Ireland should be united with Ireland. The Unionists and Loyalists, on the other hand, were loyal to Britain and the Queen. They believed and still believe in Northern Ireland's union with Great Britain. Religion was not the cause of the Troubles; however, it was an underlying tone in many paramilitary attacks and was and still is a line of divide in many towns across Northern Ireland. Republicans were generally Catholic while Unionists and Loyalists were predominantly Protestant. This thesis aims to determine if the Troubles are over and, if they are, who won and who lost. It will achieve these goals through the use of personal interviews with people who had first-hand accounts of the Troubles and current news articles and polls that examine Northern Ireland today. From analyzing these sources, this paper concludes that the Troubles are not over because 1) violence still exists today, 2) the Good Friday Agreement did not solve the problem of identity and nationalism and, 3) the memories, legacies, and wounds created by the Troubles are too fresh and strong to be forgotten, 4) just because there is no longer as much violence as there used to be does not mean that the war is over, it means that the war is different. The fight for a united Ireland is still being fought; however, it is changing.

### **Introduction**

A war usually begins and ends on a certain date. Wars have resulted in the death of a few soldiers or they have seen the most horrific acts of genocide. Some have been fought over the phone via words and threats; others have been fought via bombs, tanks, and guns. Some have been a success while some have failed. Some were supported by many while others were condemned by most. Almost all wars end, at some point. What does not end, however, are the memories.

The Troubles created many horrific memories that will never be forgotten. The Troubles was a period of time in Northern Ireland that lasted from the late 1960s to the late 1990s. During that time, bombs were planted under cars, men, women and children were killed, husbands went out to kill a target only to return home to eat dinner with their family. The Republicans of Northern Ireland, who were predominantly Catholic, wanted a united Ireland free from a union with Great Britain and the United Kingdom. For the Republicans, Northern Ireland was Irish. Unionists and Loyalists, on the other hand, were predominantly Protestant. They supported a union with Great Britain and the United Kingdom. For the Unionists, Northern Ireland was British. Britain was interested in keeping Northern Ireland as a part of the United Kingdom. They made some efforts to try and prevent conflicts from erupting. This paper will highlight how they failed at doing so. By pleasing one side, Britain would end up angering the other. There was a constant battle between the three. This battle, however, technically ended with the Good Friday Agreement. Did the Troubles actually end, though? Are they over? If so, who won

and who lost? Because of this constant battle and inability to please all three sides, the Troubles did not end. The war is still being fought. The Troubles are not over because 1) violence still exists today, 2) the Good Friday Agreement did not solve the problem of identity and nationalism and, 3) just because there is no longer as much violence as there used to be does not mean that the war is over, it means that the war is different.

This paper will answer the questions listed above and argue the answers to the questions in four ways. First, this paper will discuss the history of Northern Ireland's fight for independence, beginning with the Penal Laws and ending with the Good Friday Agreement. Second, recent news articles and polls will be analyzed that report on the current status of Northern Ireland, specifically regarding religion, political and national identity, and violence. Third, the interviews of three separate individuals will be discussed in order to shed an opposite light on the argument. The interviews will argue that the Troubles are over. The interviews will also help define the term "over" in light of the violence.

### **Historiography / Literature Review**

The study of the conflict between Northern Ireland and Ireland has been documented numerous times in books, movies, documentaries, and songs. These sources express facts and opinions regarding the Troubles. Some support the efforts of the Loyalists, others the Republicans, and some argue in favor of the British. There are also numerous current day news reports that document recent violent events in Northern Ireland, such as attempted bombings and arrests.

An integral part of this thesis asks if the Troubles are indeed over and who won. Peter Taylor, a veteran journalist for the BBC who has perilous experience reporting on the Troubles, has written extensively on the Troubles.<sup>1</sup> He has recently released a documentary called, "Who Won the War?" This documentary marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the IRA and Loyalist ceasefires. The film discusses the ceasefires; however, it also covers the events that caused the conflicts, the peace process, and the eventual settlement.<sup>2</sup> At the conclusion of the film, Taylor states how horrific the memories are and that because of this, almost all hope that the events of the Troubles never happen again. He also states that, via an interview with an ex-IRA paramilitary member,

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<sup>1</sup> Crutchley, Peter. "A Life in Conflict." *BBC News*. BBC, 25 Sept. 2014. Web. 10 Dec. 2014. <<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-29224218>>.

<sup>2</sup> Taylor, Peter. "Who Won The War?" *BBC News*. BBC, 25 Sept. 2014. Web. 10 Dec. 2014. <<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-29369805>>.

the fight for a united Ireland is not over, it is simply changing. Their goal of a united Ireland will be achieved one day.<sup>3</sup>

The book, *Lost Lives: The Stories of the Men, Women and Children who Died as a Result of the Northern Ireland Troubles*, by David McKittrick is an important book that gives the accounts of every life lost as a result of the Troubles. It is incredibly moving, desperate, emotional, and illuminating. The point of the book is not to argue or discuss who was right and who was wrong, but to explain how horrifying the Troubles for those who were affected by it.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> *Who Won the War?* Dir. Peter Taylor. BBC, 2014. Online.

<sup>4</sup> McKittrick, David. *Lost Lives: The Stories of the Men, Women, and Children Who Died as a Result of the Northern Ireland Troubles*. Edinburgh: Mainstream, 1999. Print.

### **Statement of Methodology**

This thesis answered the questions it asked via the use of various primary and secondary sources. For example, the use of books regarding the Irish Republican Army, the Good Friday Agreement, the Maze Prisons, the Hunger Strikes, and the Easter Rising were used to write the history section of the paper.

The analytical section of the paper focused on the use of three personal interviews conducted with people who had a personal experience with the Troubles. These interviews were conducted via the use of Skype.

Also, news articles and polls were used to give a description of modern day Northern Ireland.

### **History**

Putting an exact date on the origin of the conflicts between Northern Ireland and Great Britain is difficult. Yes, the Troubles began in 1968; however, tensions existed and lives were lost many years before Bloody Sunday.<sup>5</sup> The history section of this paper will begin with the Act of the Union in 1800 and end with the Good Friday Agreement in 1998.<sup>6</sup> It will discuss and analyze the most significant events that happened within this period of time.

#### **Act of Union 1801**

The Act of Union was passed on January 1, 1801. It was an act of legislation that united Great Britain, which consisted of England and Scotland, with Ireland. This act created the name Great Britain.<sup>7</sup> The British felt that this act would help resolve the problems between the

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<sup>5</sup> "The Troubles." *BBC News*. BBC, n.d. Web. 13 Nov. 2014. <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/troubles>>.

<sup>6</sup> IBIB

<sup>7</sup> Chauhan, Yamini, and Surabhi Sinha, comps. "Act of Union." *Encyclopedia Britannica*. N.d. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Web. 27 Sept. 2014. <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/614673/Act-of-Union>>.

Catholics and Protestants that existed at the time. Catholics fell to the wrath of the government under the Penal Laws. These laws prescribed fines and imprisonment for participation in Catholic worship. Catholic priests who practiced in Britain or Ireland could be put to death.<sup>8</sup> The Penal Laws penalized the practice of the Roman Catholic religion and imposed civil disabilities of Catholics in Britain and Ireland.<sup>9</sup> This effort to seclude Catholics from society helped strengthen their unrest and unhappiness towards the Protestants and the British.

Following the creation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, there was a high level of unrest. The Irish were not happy because they were not treated fairly. Why? The majority of the Irish at that time were not Anglican. There was a range of religions in Ireland. Catholics, however, made up 80.3% of the population.<sup>10</sup> British religious volunteers made their way over to Ireland to try and change these statistics and convert the people of the land to the Church of England.<sup>11</sup> Irish Catholics did not like this.

### **Home Rule Bills**

The years following the Penal Laws and the Act of Union were filled with unrest and discontent. British Parliament felt the only way to solve the problems in Ireland would be to establish Home Rule. Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, two Home Rule Bills were passed and

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<sup>8</sup> "Penal Laws". *Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica Online*. Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2014. Web. 09 Dec. 2014. <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/449591/Penal-Laws>>.

<sup>9</sup> "Penal Laws." *Encyclopaedia Britannica. Encyclopaedia Britannica Online Academic Edition*. Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2014. Web. 27 Sep. 2014. <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/449591/Penal-Laws>>.

<sup>10</sup> Hill, Mrytle. "Emancipation, Famine & Religion: Ireland under the Union, 1815–1870." *Multitext*. University College Cork, Ireland, n.d. Web. 14 Nov. 2014. <[http://multitext.ucc.ie/d/Ireland\\_culture\\_amp\\_religion\\_1815ndash1870](http://multitext.ucc.ie/d/Ireland_culture_amp_religion_1815ndash1870)>.

<sup>11</sup> IBIB

both failed. The first was in 1886 and the second in 1893.<sup>12</sup> These Home Rule Bills were aimed to grant Ireland limited self-rule within the United Kingdom. This would eliminate the Irish seat in Parliament.<sup>13</sup> The bills failed because the Conservative Party in London felt that removing Ireland from Parliament would weaken the United Kingdom. In Ireland, Catholics were in favor of the Bill while Protestants were not. As a result, violence broke out the following summer.<sup>14</sup> The Third Home Rule Bill was passed in 1912 and addressed three things: 1) Purely Irish questions would be dealt with by an Irish Parliament, 2) Parliament in Westminster would deal with all issues relating to the crown, army and navy, foreign policy and custom duties, 3) Irish members would still be in Westminster. This bill was finally passed, however, it was not introduced because World War I started. The British passed it because they felt it would please many people in Ireland, giving them more time to focus on other issues, like the War.<sup>15</sup>

### **Sinn Féin**

One of the most crucial events in the history of the relationship between Northern Ireland and Great Britain was the creation of Sinn Fein in 1905. Originally called the *United Irishmen*, Sinn Fein is one of the leading Republican political parties in both Ireland and Northern Ireland

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<sup>12</sup> Lynn, Brendan, and Martin Melaugh. "CAIN: Background: Chronology of Key Events 1800 to 1967." *CAIN: Background: Chronology of Key Events 1800 to 1967*. CAIN, n.d. Web. 15 Nov. 2014. <<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/chron/ch1800-1967.htm>>.

<sup>13</sup> "Two Home Rule Bills." *UK Parliament*. UK Parliament, n.d. Web. 15 Nov. 2014. <<http://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/evolutionofparliament/legislativescrutiny/parliamentandireland/overview/two-home-rule-bills/>>.

<sup>14</sup> Lynn, Brendan, and Martin Melaugh. "CAIN: Background: Chronology of Key Events 1800 to 1967." *CAIN: Background: Chronology of Key Events 1800 to 1967*. CAIN, n.d. Web. 15 Nov. 2014. <<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/chron/ch1800-1967.htm>>.

<sup>15</sup> "Home Rule and Ireland." *Home Rule and Ireland*. History Learning Site, n.d. Web. 12 Nov. 2014. <[http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/home\\_rule\\_and\\_ireland.htm](http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/home_rule_and_ireland.htm)>.

today. They played a very significant role in the fight for Irish freedom. The term, when translated, means, “We Ourselves.” Sinn Feiners, as members of the group referred to themselves, proclaimed that *Irish Freedom* was the motto of a nation, not an empire. The following words of Patrick Pearse, a member of Sinn Fein, could be considered the foundation of the group:

The nation is a natural division, as natural as the family and as inevitable. This one reason is why a nation is holy and why an empire is not holy. A nation is knit together by natural ties, ties mystic and spiritual, and ties human and kindly; an empire is at best held together by ties of mutual interest and at worst by brute force. The nation is the family in large; an empire is a commercial corporation in large. The nation is of God; the empire is of man – if not be of the devil.

(Hennessey, 33)

These words carried the actions of Sinn Fein throughout their fight for Irish independence. They believed, and continue to believe, in a referendum on Irish unity to be held by the North and South.<sup>16</sup>

### **The Easter Rising**

Looking back at the Third Home Rule Bill, it angered many people because it was never actually introduced.<sup>17</sup> The Irish Republican Brotherhood, a small, secret, revolutionary body that aimed to establish Irish unity and independence from Great Britain, was displeased by this. As a

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<sup>16</sup> "What Sinn Féin Stands for." *Sinn Féin*. Sinn Fein, n.d. Web. 15 Nov. 2014. <<http://www.sinnfein.ie/what-sinn-fein-stands-for>>.

<sup>17</sup> Lynn, Brendan, and Martin Melaugh. "CAIN: Background: Chronology of Key Events 1800 to 1967." *CAIN: Background: Chronology of Key Events 1800 to 1967*. CAIN, n.d. Web. 15 Nov. 2014. <<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/chron/ch1800-1967.htm>>.

result, they took advantage of Britain at this time.<sup>18</sup> The IRB was one of the groups held accountable for starting one of the first and largest acts of Irish Nationalism, the Easter Rising. The rebellion took place in small factions throughout Ireland; however, it was mainly focused in Dublin. The group of rebels met at the General Post Office in Sackville Street on Easter Monday. From the steps of the Post Office, Patrick Pearse, one of the leaders of the rebellion, read a 500-word document that proclaimed the provisional government of the Irish republic.<sup>19</sup> From that point on, a week-long rebellion took place mainly throughout the streets of Dublin. Both soldiers and citizens were killed. The violence finally came to an end on April 29, when Pearse agreed to an unconditional surrender at 3:30 p.m. to Brigadier-General W.H.M. Lowe.<sup>20</sup>

It is important to look at the Act of Union, the Penal Laws, the Home Rule Bills and the Easter Rising because the reasons for the unrest and discontent that they caused would be seen throughout the course of the Troubles. For example, these legislative acts either pleased or angered people. The Act of Union pleased the British and those in Ireland who wanted to be a part of Great Britain and the United Kingdom; however, it angered those who felt strictly Irish. The Home Rule Bills were beneficial to the British and the Unionists throughout Ireland. On the other hand, these bills diluted Irish identity. Because none of these acts could please everyone in Britain and Ireland, unrest was a result. Problems like this arose as the conflicts between the Republicans, Unionists and British progressed.

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<sup>18</sup> "Irish Republican Brotherhood." *BBC News*. BBC, n.d. Web. 15 Nov. 2014. <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/easterrising/profiles/po17.shtml>>.

<sup>19</sup> Lawlor, Sheila. *Britain and Ireland 1914-23*. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1983. 7-8. Print.

<sup>20</sup> McMahon, Seán. *Rebel Ireland Easter Rising to Civil War*. Douglas Village, Cork: Mercier, 2001. 8. Print.

Soon after the Easter Rising, a Civil War broke out in Ireland as a result of the Irish Free State Treaty. This treaty separated Northern Ireland from Southern Ireland. There were 26 counties in the South and six counties in the North.<sup>21</sup> Again, the goal of this treaty was to please everyone; the Republicans who wanted independence and the Unionists who wanted to be a part of the United Kingdom. The actual outcome, however, was far from successful. The problem was this: the treaty was not good enough. The Catholics and Republicans / Nationalists in the North wanted absolutely nothing to do with Great Britain. They wanted a Republic of Ireland that was united as one, completely free from the influence of the Crown and British parliament.<sup>22</sup>

As mentioned earlier, it is hard to list a full and detailed history of the conflicts between Ireland, Northern Ireland, and Great Britain. There are numerous details regarding each event that took place from the beginning of the conflicts up until Good Friday Agreement. The events mentioned above, however, are among the more famous and influential. These events are influential because they created a pattern that the Troubles followed. The two groups at war, the Republicans and the Unionists/Loyalists, wanted all or nothing. In other words, the only two competing options were 1) Northern Ireland would be a part of Great Britain or 2) there would be no such thing as Northern Ireland, only Ireland. Many of the acts and legislative measures that Britain passed promoted neither of these options. The Home Rule Bills made Ireland “kind of” Irish and “kind of” British. This was not an option for either side; Ireland was either 100% Irish or 100% British.

### **Paramilitary Groups**

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<sup>21</sup> McMahan, 115

<sup>22</sup> IBIB

Before giving an account of the events that make up the Troubles, it is important to know the role of paramilitary groups in the Troubles. The Irish Republican Army (IRA) was the main paramilitary group on the Republican side during the war. The roots of the IRA go back to the Easter Rising. The IRA, during the course of the conflict, broke into several different factions. The different factions represented the minor but specific differences in views represented by Republicans during the time. Some factions were more violent than others; however, all factions believed in a united Ireland.<sup>23</sup>

On the Loyalist side, there was the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF). The UVF was not viewed as a terrorist group until after 1969. Their members were viewed as terrorists after responding to the IRA's campaign with indiscriminant sectarian violence against Catholics.<sup>24</sup>

The Ulster Defense Association was formed in 1972. This group consisted of thousands of Protestants whose goal was to stand up to the IRA while the British government possessed a lack of determination. They started off representing what their name suggested, a defense association. Once the Troubles kicked off, however, they became more violent. Some members of the UDA remained a part of the group while creating the Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF). The tactics of the UFF were to kill Catholics in order to end the IRA's campaign.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Taylor, Peter. "Paramilitaries in the Troubles." *BBC News*. BBC, n.d. Web. 15 Nov. 2014. <[http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/topics/troubles\\_paramilitaries#p016kt9g](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/topics/troubles_paramilitaries#p016kt9g)>.

<sup>24</sup> IBIB

<sup>25</sup> IBIB

## The Troubles

### Bloody Sunday

January 30, 1972, Bloody Sunday. The Troubles began. Bloody Sunday has gone down as one of the most horrific and brutal events in the history of Northern Ireland. On this day, thirteen people were killed by British soldiers and fourteen others were injured.<sup>26</sup>

This demonstration was an illegal protest against the British policy of internment. British soldiers were stationed throughout the town to supervise the events. After skirmishes between groups of local youths and the army, the soldiers barricaded certain streets, preventing the march from reaching its destination. Soldiers then began making arrests and opened fire on the crowd.<sup>27</sup> For years, it was unclear whether the violence erupted because of British soldiers who opened fire first or violent protesters who opened fire on the soldiers.<sup>28</sup>

The protests started peacefully, however, a small group of young men broke away from the march and began throwing rocks at soldiers. These protesters were repelled with rubber bullets and water canons. A few minutes later, soldiers began arresting various protesters. Finally, a few minutes after that, shots were fired. Within an hour, thirteen people had been killed and fourteen were injured.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Mullan, Don, and John Scally. *Bloody Sunday: Massacre in Northern Ireland, the Eyewitness Accounts*. Niwot, CO: Roberts Rinehart, 1997. Print. 11

<sup>27</sup> "BBC - History - Bloody Sunday." *BBC News*. BBC, n.d. Web. 16 Nov. 2014. <[http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/bloody\\_sunday](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/bloody_sunday)>.

<sup>28</sup> Mullan and Scally

<sup>29</sup> IBIB, 18

The British Ministry of Defense issued a lengthy official response regarding the events on Bloody Sunday on February 1, 1972 in New York City. The response gave the army's version of events, not the protesters' version. The statement explained that the protest was held despite the British government's ban on all processions and parades. They explained that four of the men who were killed were on the security force's wanted list. According to the British army, the shooting began with two shots aimed at the troops manning the barriers. The protesters continuously fired shots while the army refrained from firing. The army began shooting once they saw a man begin to light a nail bomb. Throughout the course of the gunfights, the army only fired on identified targets.<sup>30</sup>

The issue regarding who fired first was not made clear until the 2010 Bloody Sunday Inquiry. In this statement headed by Lord Saville, the British Parliament stated the innocence of the victims and laid the blame of the events on the British army.<sup>31</sup>

### **Hunger Strikes and the Maze Prisons 1970s/80s**

As mentioned before, the protests on Bloody Sunday were in response to the British policy of internment. Internment without trial was one of the last British government acts before the Troubles really erupted. This policy gave the British government the ability to imprison anyone whom they felt necessary without a trial. On August 1, 1971, when internment was introduced and the days following, 342 people were arrested and taken to camps. The only targets of this policy were republicans. Violence followed thereafter. Seventeen people were killed in the next 48 hours, ten of them were Catholic and were shot dead by the British army.

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<sup>30</sup> IBIB, 25-26

<sup>31</sup> BBC, Bloody Sunday

As the violence raged across Northern Ireland, another 7,000 people, mainly Catholics, fled their homes.<sup>32</sup>

The H- blocks, or Maze prison, were introduced in 1971 by the British government. They were the prisons where the subjects of internment were kept. Those who were interned and kept in these prisons were suspected to be members of illegal paramilitary groups. During this period of internment, 1,981 people were detained: 1,874 were Catholic/Republican while 107 were Protestant/Loyalist.<sup>33</sup>

The H-blocks were the site of protests and violent activities. In the Maze prison, prisoners were put under the 'special' category. This meant that they were political prisoners. Prisoners of special category were entitled to certain privileges that criminals were not, such as association between prisoners, the allowance to wear their own clothes rather than prison uniforms, extra visits and food packages.<sup>34</sup>

This all changed on March 1, 1976. Merlyn Rees, the then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, announced that political prisoners would no longer be put under the 'Special' category. They would be treated as ordinary criminals. This process became known as 'criminalization.' The British government was no longer trying to reach a settlement with the Irish Republican Army, they were trying to end the conflicts.<sup>35</sup> By declaring the paramilitary

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<sup>32</sup> Mulholland, Marc. *The Longest War: Northern Ireland's Troubled History*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002. Print.

<sup>33</sup> Melaugh, Martin. "CAIN: Events: Internment: Summary of Events." *CAIN: Events: Internment: Summary of Events*. CAIN Web Service, n.d. Web. 09 Dec. 2014. <<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/intern/sum.htm>>.

<sup>34</sup> Crawford, Colin. 1979. *Long Kesh: An Alternative Perspective*. Unpublished M.Sc. thesis, Cranfield Institute of Technology

<sup>35</sup> Melaugh

prisoners “political” prisoners, there was a sense of leniency and sympathy. In other words, being a political prisoner was better than being a criminal in terms of how one experienced prison. By removing this political status, however, the British government changed its views. They wanted to show the Republicans that they would not stand for their acts of terror.

The first of many acts of protest against the H-block campaigns was performed by Kieran Nugent. He was the first IRA prisoner to experience the withdrawal of the special category status. The withdrawal of this status meant that Nugent had to wear a prison uniform. He refused to do so. Wearing a prison uniform meant that there would be no difference between him, a political prisoner, and an ordinary criminal. As a result, Nugent chose to wear a blanket instead of a prison uniform. This began the series of protests known as the ‘blanket protests.’ The blanket protests eventually transformed into hunger strikes. When a prisoner went on a hunger strike, he refused to eat the food that was given to him by the prison.<sup>36</sup>

The hunger strikes and blanket protests carried out by the IRA prisoners in the Maze prison were, perhaps, one of the most effective moves made by the Republican and IRA movement. This was the first non-violent protest by the IRA in the history of their fight. After years of violent protests that included bombings and assassinations, the IRA took a different approach. Instead of inflicting pain on others to make a point, they inflicted pain on themselves. By doing so, they inflicted pain on their main enemy, the British government. The hunger strikes did not kill the British; they did no physical harm to them in any way. The hunger strikes embarrassed the British, which was worse than any assassination or bombing. The Irish Republican Army attacked the British through their blanket protests and hunger strikes. These

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<sup>36</sup> Ross, 26

non-violent protests were one of the first events that signified a change in the fight for a united Ireland. The IRA told the British that their fight was real. They were going to achieve Irish independence, even if it meant not eating and taking their own lives.

### **Anglo-Irish Agreement 1985**

The Hunger Strikes invigorated the Republican fight. The British government was running out of ideas to while the Republicans and Unionists showed no signs of giving up. The British made an effort to please both sides with the Anglo-Irish Agreement. For this agreement, the British government invited the Republic of Ireland into their efforts to solve the problems in Northern Ireland.<sup>37</sup> This agreement was the most important agreement between Britain and Ireland since the 1920s when Ireland became free and independent.<sup>38</sup> The two governments agreed that there would be no change in the status of Northern Ireland without the consent of the majority of the citizens in Northern Ireland. The agreement also gave Ireland a consultative role in Northern Ireland affairs.<sup>39</sup> Ireland was to deal with, “1) Political matters, 2) security and related matters, 3) legal matters including the administration of justice, 4) the administration of cross-border cooperation.”<sup>40</sup>

Regarding its goal to resolve the Troubles, the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985 failed because it did not give the Unionists what they wanted. For years up to this point, the Unionists

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<sup>37</sup> Shannon, William V. "The Anglo-Irish Agreement." *Global*. Council on Foreign Relations, n.d. Web. 26 Oct. 2014.

<sup>38</sup> "CAIN: Events: Anglo-Irish Agreement - Summary." *CAIN: Events: Anglo-Irish Agreement - Summary*. Ed. Alan Morton. University of Ulster, n.d. Web. 26 Oct. 2014.

<sup>39</sup> IBIB, 2014

<sup>40</sup> Shannon, William V. "The Anglo-Irish Agreement." *Global*. Council on Foreign Relations, n.d. Web. 26 Oct. 2014.

adhered to Great Britain's every move. They fought for and supported their relationship with Great Britain. They adhered to the British sense of culture and overall way of life. After years of supporting the British in the fight against the republican movement, the British went and cheated on them with the Irish Republic. The Unionists movement was about a British Northern Ireland that was a part of the United Kingdom. The Unionists did not identify themselves as Irish in anyway. They felt, however, that the Anglo-Irish agreement did recognize the Unionists desire to be 100% British. The Unionists were also upset because, after years of supporting the British, they did not include the Unionists in official talks for the agreement. As a result, the Anglo-Irish agreement came as a surprise and a stab in the back.

### **Downing Street Declaration 1993**

Years of terror, tears, bloodshed, fear, uncertainty, push, pull, and failed efforts to end the violence and spread peace had taken a huge toll on all those who were involved. The efforts on both sides, the Republicans and the Unionists, were becoming hopeless. For all those involved, it was hard to imagine an end to the terror.

The tides began to turn in 1993, however, when the British and Irish governments said something that many people hoped for yet very few imagined. On December 15, 1993, the British government released the Downing Street Declaration. It was issued by John Major, the Prime Minister of Britain at the time, and Albert Reynolds, the Irish Prime Minister. The official statement had eleven parts to it. Some of the most important or notable parts include the following:

1) The Taoiseach, Mr. Albert Reynolds, TD and the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. John Major MP, acknowledge that the most urgent and important issue facing the people of Ireland, North and South, and the British and Irish Governments together, is to remove the conflict, to overcome the legacy of history and to heal the divisions which have resulted, recognizing the absence of a lasting and satisfactory settlement of relationships between the peoples of both islands has contributed to continuing tragedy and suffering, 2) the Prime Minister, on behalf of the British Government, reaffirms that they will uphold the democratic wish of the greater number of the people of Northern Ireland on the issue of whether they prefer to support the Union or a sovereign united Ireland. 3) the British and Irish Governments reiterate that the achievement of peace must involve a permanent end to the use of, or support for, paramilitary violence. (Mullan, 25)

The Downing Street Declaration gave the people of Northern Ireland two choices, the choice to be free from the United Kingdom and united with the Republic of Ireland, or, they could be united with Great Britain and the United Kingdom. The main focus, however, was to instill peace across all of Northern Ireland. An end to the conflict was an absolute must.

The language of this specific government document is very interesting. The British government says that they plan to overcome the “Legacy of history.”<sup>41</sup> A legacy is something that is eternal, something that is intended to be handed down from generation to generation. It is not easy to let go of a legacy. That is why the Troubles are not over, nor will they ever be over. For many of the people involved in the Troubles, whether they were republicans or Unionists,

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<sup>41</sup> Mullan 2014

they inherited certain legacies and/or created their own. These legacies involved either fighting for a united Ireland or a union with Great Britain. People felt and still feel so strongly for what they believe in; however, the British government said that these legacies must be overcome. One of the reasons why the Troubles are not over is because these legacies that have been created and handed down cannot be overcome. Having republicans believe in a union with Great Britain can be close to impossible because of how strongly they believe in their fight. The same goes for unionists. Encouraging them to believe in a sovereign and united Ireland is not fair, nor is it right. Doing either of these things is like asking the Catholic Church to adopt an atheistic view, and vice versa.

### **Good Friday Agreement**

The Troubles 'ended' on April 10, 1998. This agreement had plans to create a Northern Ireland assembly. It also had the Republic of Ireland drop its constitutional claims that addressed the six counties of Northern Ireland.

The first section of the agreement states that both the Irish and British governments will recognize the desire of the majority of the people of Northern Ireland. The new British-Irish agreement would, "Recognize the legitimacy of whatever choice is freely exercised by a majority of the people of Northern Ireland with regard to its status, whether they prefer to continue to support the Union with Great Britain or a sovereign united Ireland."<sup>42</sup>

The agreements, as mentioned before, setup various chairs and committees that helped promote a healthy relationship between Ireland, Northern Ireland, and Great Britain. A

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<sup>42</sup> "CAIN: Events: Peace: The Agreement - Agreement Reached in the Multi-party Negotiations (10 April 1998)." *CAIN: Events: Peace: The Agreement - Agreement Reached in the Multi-party Negotiations (10 April 1998)*. Ed. Fionnuala McKenna. University of Ulster, n.d. Web. 26 Oct. 2014.

democratically elected power-sharing assembly was created in Northern Ireland, along with a 'North/South Ministerial Council' that would deal with affairs that both the North and the South were interested in.<sup>43</sup>

The agreement also created a Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission that was committed to the respect of the civil rights and religious liberties of everyone in Northern Ireland. The European Convention on Human Rights was then incorporated into Northern Ireland law.<sup>44</sup>

The Good Friday Agreement also called for the early release of all paramilitary prisoners. This would be only be allowed as long as all paramilitary groups adhered to their ceasefires.<sup>45</sup>

The agreement is commonly seen as the end of the period of time known as "The Troubles." By saying that the Troubles ended with the Good Friday assumes that people are no longer fighting for what they believe in. It almost assumes that everything is done; the legacies of Unionists and Republicans just simply ended, they no longer existed after the Good Friday Agreement. To assume this is entirely wrong.

The following section will examine life in Northern Ireland following the Good Friday Agreement and explain why the Good Friday Agreement did not end the Troubles. The Agreement did not end the Troubles because 1) it did not force either side to give up the fight, it changed the fight, 2) it simply decreased the level of violence, 3) it did not create a united

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<sup>43</sup> "The Good Friday Agreement in Full." *BBC News*. BBC, 12 Sept. 2004. Web. 26 Oct. 2014

<sup>44</sup> IBIB

<sup>45</sup> IBIB

Ireland, it left Northern Ireland the way it was, just without as much violence and 4) it did not terminate the IRA and Loyalist attitudes and paramilitary groups.

### **Analysis of Interviews and Modern Day Northern Ireland**

#### **Modern Day Northern Ireland**

Almost 20 years have passed since the Good Friday Agreement. Since then, the level of violence in Northern Ireland has gone down significantly. Perfect peace, however, has not replaced the conflict. Recent articles and polls will suggest the Troubles has not ended.

For example, there was rioting back in 2013 over the decision to fly the Union Jack over Belfast's city center on certain days of the year rather than everyday. This decision upset some Unionists. This signifies that some members of the Unionist community feel that they have lost the war and have been betrayed<sup>46</sup>

A different article from July of this year describes Protestant discontent towards police requests to cut short their protests on the biggest day of their Marching Season. Roman Catholics in the area felt that these marches are intimidating and sectarian. In the past, protests like these had caused riots and fighting. Under the Good Friday Agreement, however, Catholics are required to respect the Marching season. Billy Hutchinson, leader of the Progressive Unionist Party, which is linked to the UVF, explained that they are not unhappy with the decision

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<sup>46</sup> Walsh, Jason. "15 Years after Good Friday Agreement, an Imperfect Peace in Northern Ireland." *The Christian Science Monitor*. The Christian Science Monitor, 10 Apr. 2013. Web. 19 Nov. 2014. <<http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Global-News/2013/0410/15-years-after-Good-Friday-Agreement-an-imperfect-peace-in-Northern-Ireland>>.

to cut short one single parade; they are upset because it violates their human rights and religious liberties.<sup>47</sup>

As mentioned earlier, the peace process in Northern Ireland was not and is still not accepted by everyone. The leader of the Democratic Unionist Party, Jim Allister, declared back in 2009 that the tenth anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement was a celebration of 30 years of terrorism in Northern Ireland because it undermined both justice and democracy.<sup>48</sup> Also, the construction of peace walls, walls that separate Catholic towns from Protestant towns, has continued since the agreement. These walls exist in communities where sectarian animosities between Catholics and Protestants have not died down.<sup>49</sup>

Guns, detonators, explosives and parts for rocket launchers were found in Coalisland in Northern Ireland back in 2011. They were linked to the murder of the young Catholic policeman Ronan Kerr a few days prior.<sup>50</sup> This suggests that peace is far from achieved in Northern Ireland. Even scarier than these findings was the response by some in the community to the killing. One man said, "He joined the police, so what does he expect?"<sup>51</sup> Some still believe that the fight

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<sup>47</sup> Smith, Andrew C. "Catholic-Protestant Feud Flares Anew in Northern Ireland." *USA Today*. Gannett, 11 July 2014. Web. 19 Nov. 2014. <<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2014/07/11/northern-ireland-catholics-protestants-parade/12496615/>>.

<sup>48</sup> Hammer, Joshua. "In Northern Ireland, Getting Past the Troubles." *Smithsonian*. Smithsonian Magazine, Mar. 2009. Web. 16 Nov. 2014. <<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/people-places/in-northern-ireland-getting-past-the-troubles-52862004/?no-ist>>.

<sup>49</sup> IBIB

<sup>50</sup> Wylie, Catherine. "After 13 Years, Catholic Faith in the Good Friday Agreement Wears Thin." *The Independent*. Independent Digital News and Media, 22 Apr. 2011. Web. 19 Nov. 2014. <<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/after-13-years-catholic-faith-in-the-good-friday-agreement-wears-thin-2271990.html>>.

<sup>51</sup> IBIB

against the British is still going on and that someone has to fight it because Sinn Féin is no longer doing a good job.

The setting in Northern Ireland almost turned sour recently with the arrest of Gerry Adams, the leader of Sinn Féin. Adams was arrested back in May of this year. During the height of the Troubles, 11-year old Michael McConville lost his mother to the hands of the IRA. A week after she was killed, he was abducted and told to keep quiet. Forty-two years later, Mr. McConville spoke up and listed names associated with that horrible event. Gerry Adams was one of the names. Adams' arrest almost led to the break down of the extremely vulnerable and fragile peace settlement in Northern Ireland.<sup>52</sup> Adams was eventually released after a few days. Many believe, however, that had Adams been imprisoned, violence would have kicked off again.<sup>53</sup>

Alfie Butler, 58, lost his niece and her daughter in a 1993 bombing. He explains that paramilitary groups still exist and the fear of these groups bringing instability back is real. His thoughts coincide with the physical description of neighborhoods today. In some towns, one side waves the Union Jack while the other side waves the Irish tricolors. Some schools, pubs, and soccer teams are still divided along sectarian lines.<sup>54</sup>

If this article does not suggest that the Troubles are not over, then nothing does. Gerry Adams, the leader of a political party, was arrested because he was apparently involved in the

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<sup>52</sup> Witte, Griff. "Uproar over Gerry Adams's Arrest in Northern Ireland Reveals Fragility of Peace." *Washington Post*. The Washington Post, 7 May 2014. Web. 19 Nov. 2014. <[http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/uproar-over-gerry-adams-arrest-in-northern-ireland-reveals-fragility-of-peace/2014/05/07/1fea595a-d5fa-11e3-aae8-c2d44bd79778\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/uproar-over-gerry-adams-arrest-in-northern-ireland-reveals-fragility-of-peace/2014/05/07/1fea595a-d5fa-11e3-aae8-c2d44bd79778_story.html)>.

<sup>53</sup> IBIB

<sup>54</sup> IBIB

death of a mother during the Troubles. Also, Alfie Butler explicitly said that paramilitary groups still exist. It is blatantly obvious that the Troubles are not over. People are not happy with the current state of Northern Ireland.

The religious statistics regarding Northern Ireland are important to look at because they shed light on the state of Northern Ireland since the Agreement. A poll from 2012 shows that 45% of the resident population is either Catholic or brought up Catholic. 48% of the resident population is either Protestant or have been brought up Protestant. This number has gone down 5% since 2001.<sup>55</sup> One of the reasons for this is that the Protestant community is older and has a higher rate of mortality.<sup>56</sup>

The polls also asked questions regarding national identity. 40% had a British only national identity, 25% felt only Irish, and 21% had a Northern Irish only national identity.<sup>57</sup>

The difference in numbers shows that Northern Ireland is still very much divided in religion and identity. For some, this is a problem. Some people are still not comfortable with people of different political, national, and religious views. Others, however, do not care about identity; they just care about living peacefully.

These numbers suggest that it is unlikely that there is going to be any significant violent events in Northern Ireland in the years to come. In comparison to these numbers, Stormont First

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<sup>55</sup> Devenport, Mark. "Census Reveals NI Religious Figures." *BBC News*. N.p., 11 Dec. 2012. Web. 19 Nov. 2014. <<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-20673534>>.

<sup>56</sup> IBIB

<sup>57</sup> IBIB

Minister believes that the majority of Catholics in Northern Ireland support Northern Ireland staying within the United Kingdom.<sup>58</sup>

The article suggests that a referendum on Northern Ireland's place in the United Kingdom is not in the foreseeable future. Sinn Féin, however, sees no reason to give up. The Democratic Unionist Party simply "believes" that most Catholics in Northern Ireland support the union with the United Kingdom. There are no numbers or statistics supporting this.

Contributing to the argument that Northern Ireland is still divided is another poll from the Belfast Telegraph in 2013. The 2012 Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey noted a rise in the percentage of people describing their national identity as Irish. In 2010, 26% of the population considered themselves Irish. That number increased to 32% in 2012.<sup>59</sup>

The change in Catholic identity is also very significant. In 2010, 58% of Catholics described themselves as Irish. In 2012, that number rose to 68%. The number of Catholics calling themselves Northern Irish fell from 26% to 17% during the same time period.<sup>60</sup>

This number only supports the claim the Northern Ireland is still divided. Northern Ireland has people who feel both Irish and British. Thirty years ago, this was a problem. Today, however, it is less of an issue as most people are mainly concerned with living peacefully. A small portion of these numbers could account for the small factions of paramilitary groups that

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<sup>58</sup> Simpson, Mark. "NI Catholics 'want to Stay in UK'" *BBC News*. N.p., 24 Nov. 2012. Web. 19 Nov. 2014. <<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-20475919>>.

<sup>59</sup> Morrow, Duncan. "Northern Ireland Remains Sharply Divided over National Identity but with No Strong Desire for Irish Unity - BelfastTelegraph.co.uk." *BelfastTelegraph.co.uk*. N.p., 11 June 2013. Web. 19 Nov. 2014. <<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/debateni/blogs/northern-ireland-remains-sharply-divided-over-national-identity-but-with-no-strong-desire-for-irish-unity-29332675.html>>.

<sup>60</sup> IBIB

still exist. The numbers suggest that the Troubles are not over. This is the case because a foundation of the Troubles had to do with national identity. There is no more violence, however, there is still a split in national identity.

As stated earlier, the Good Friday agreement did not end the Troubles, it simply changed how the war was being fought. It did not end the conflict, it put an end to the level of violence. The key word here is “level.” These articles highlight how violence still exists today; officers are still being shot and bombings are still attempted. The only difference between today and 30 years ago is that back then, bombings, killings, and violence occurred more often.

The Good Friday Agreement did not end the Troubles because there are still people who associated with either the Loyalists or Republicans. For example, in response to the officer who was shot, another man said that he should have expected it. This tone of voice supports the argument that the feelings of discontent towards the British and people of other religions still exist. These are two key values that helped fuel the Troubles.

These articles and reports on current day Northern Ireland, while looked at generally and as a whole, prove that life in Northern Ireland is different compared to how it was 30 or 40 years ago. People still do not like the IRA and Sinn Féin, both of which still exist. People still do not like the Loyalists and their marching season, both of which still exist. While these groups exist, discontent and hatred towards them will exist. The Good Friday Agreement did not dispose of these groups. If the Troubles are to end, then these groups, attitudes, and motives must end as well.

### Interviews

Interviews of individuals who had some kind of experience with the Troubles played an integral role in the research of this paper. Over the course of two months, three people were interviewed via Skype. Two of these people were from Northern Ireland and one was from just west of Northern Ireland in the Republic. Each interview determined where the subject was from. They were asked questions such as: What was it like growing up during the Troubles? Was there a strong divide between people of different religions? Did you ever feel threatened by people of a different religion/political view? Do you feel that the Troubles are over? If so, who won and who lost? These interviews will provide a counterargument to the claim that the Troubles are not over. The accounts of these three individuals will explain that the Troubles are, in fact, over.

Interview #1

The first individual who was interviewed was Margaret Dornan. Mrs. Dornan was from Finaghy. Finaghy is a town not far from Belfast. It is not far from where the Troubles took place. It also the site of where loyalist flags were erected two years ago.<sup>61</sup>

Even though her town was not in the center of the Troubles, she had her own unique experience of the events. Mrs. Dornan reported hearing gunshots and bombs go off on a regular basis not far from her home. She was Protestant and volunteered at an adventure playground helping to keep young Catholic children off of the streets. The playground was located on Falls Road, which was a notorious IRA stronghold. In 1970, this road was the site of an attack performed by the Provisional IRA.<sup>62</sup>

Mrs. Dornan never had any trouble being Protestant in a predominantly Catholic/Republican town. She just states the Troubles became a way of life. She and the people of the town were used to being searched when going into town. The main goal of the people at the time was to live together peacefully. She had no interest in politics; she simply wanted to live peacefully. In her eyes, the IRA and the UVF were the same, they were both violent<sup>63</sup>

She did not associate with Republicans or Unionists/Loyalists. She had no problem interacting with Catholics. She was respected and treated well by all.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Ainsworth, Paul. "Finaghy Loyalist Flags Are Flying Again." *Belfast Media Group*. N.p., 22 June 2012. Web. 18 Nov. 2014. <<http://belfastmediagroup.com/finaghy-loyalist-flags-are-flying-again/>>.

<sup>62</sup> Moloney, Ed. *A Secret History of the IRA*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2002. 91. Print.

<sup>63</sup> Margaret Dornan, Skype Interview, October 26, 2014

<sup>64</sup> IBIB

Some interesting aspects of Mrs. Dornan's experience with the Troubles have to do with her religion. For example, when she applied to volunteer with Catholic children, she was asked her religion. She was also "warned" that the people she would be working with had never met a Protestant before.<sup>65</sup>

She said that many of her Catholic friends felt Irish. She, however, did not necessarily feel Irish, she said that, "You felt more British than anything."<sup>66</sup> In terms of the Troubles being over, Ms. Dornan feels that they will never be over; however, they are much better than they used to be.

It is important to note the differences between many of the historical accounts of the Troubles and Mrs. Dornan's experience with the Troubles. For example, much of the history regarding the Troubles suggests that there was a strong hatred between Protestants and Catholics. Mrs. Dornan, on the other hand, explains that the hatred between Protestants and Catholic was not as prevalent in society as it seemed to be. Yes, there were bitter feelings between Catholics and Protestants. These bitter feelings existed between the sever Catholic Republicans and Protestant Unionists. It existed between those on complete opposite sides of the political spectrum. Mrs. Dornan's account advises the reader that there were plenty of people who had no interest in politics and religion. All they wanted to do was live together peacefully.

### Interview #2

Mr. Patrick McKeown was the second individual interviewed for this thesis. He was from West Belfast, a predominantly Republican town; however, there was and still is division in

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<sup>65</sup> IBIB

<sup>66</sup> IBIB

the town. He recalled the sound of helicopters at night, bombs going off, often getting stopped by police, and a strong army presence in the town.<sup>67</sup>

Mr. McKeown explains that the Troubles were not necessarily as black and white as winning and losing. It was not about Catholics versus Protestants or Republicans versus Unionists/Loyalists. The Troubles were concerned with cultural identity and territory.<sup>68</sup> Republicans and Unionists believed very strongly in who they were and what they were fighting for. When the two groups fought one another, they were fighting for their cultural identity. For Republicans, they identified themselves as Irish. Unionists, however, identified themselves as being a part of Great Britain. These differences in identity were important and helped fuel the conflict.

Coinciding with what Mrs. Dornan said, Mr. McKeown made it clear that Republicans and Unionists were not the only two groups of people who existed. There were plenty of people who did not care about what side of the political spectrum you were on nor did they care about your religion. They just cared about living peacefully with one another.

### Interview #3

The Third interview was with Ms. Lorraine McCafferty. Ms. McCafferty was from South Donegal in the Republic of Ireland. It is only a few miles west of the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Patrick McKeown, Skype interview, November 2, 2014

<sup>68</sup> IBIB

<sup>69</sup> Lorraine McCafferty, Skype Interview, November 16, 2014

Ms. McCafferty explains that the Troubles were a way of life while growing up. The IRA was known in her town. In other words, everyone knew everyone that was in the IRA. There was always an army presence, especially when she would travel across the border to Northern Ireland to go shopping. For her family, the Troubles, at most, were a disruption of daily life. The British army stopped her family's car numerous times to search it for bombs, weapons, etc.<sup>70</sup>

She did, however, know of an Irish girl who dated a British soldier. The British soldier was shot one day while entering the girlfriend's house.<sup>71</sup>

Again, as mentioned by Mrs. Dornan and Mr. McKeown, the Troubles were not strictly Protestants versus Catholics. There were plenty of people who had no interest in the politics and religion of the conflict. There were numerous people who simply wanted to live together peacefully.<sup>72</sup>

Ms. McCafferty also made an interesting point with regards to the question, "Are the Troubles over?" What is the definition of "over?" If you consider the violent and severe period of intense warfare between the late 60s and late 90s, then yes, the Troubles are over.

### Life During the Troubles

The accounts of Ms. Dornan, Mr. McKeown, and Ms. McCafferty explain what life was like during the Troubles. What these three accounts have in common is that none of them were

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<sup>70</sup> IBIB

<sup>71</sup> IBIB

<sup>72</sup> IBIB

avid or radical supporters of either side. They saw the efforts of the Republicans and Loyalists as a disruption to daily life. The bombings, killings, and protests were inconvenient and annoying. A driving force of the Troubles was a strong sense of either British or Irish pride. This force, however, did not drive everyone. There were plenty of people, like the individuals from these three accounts, who were not driven by any of these forces. There were those who just cared about living life without having their cars searched for bombs or without the presence of British soldiers in their town. Nationalism and pride did not matter to them. Also, they saw the actions of the both the Republican and Loyalist paramilitary groups as acts of terror. Their actions did not accomplish anything; they did not move the conflict in any correct direction.

Through these accounts and their descriptions of life during the Troubles, there is the argument that the Troubles are over. There is no more violence like there used to be; cars are no longer being searched and the British army is no longer present. The disruption to daily life is over.

### **Conclusion**

What exactly does the word 'over' refer to? With regards to the thirty years of bloodshed, violent and tumultuous warfare, endless bombings, killings, ineffective legislative acts installed by the government, the Troubles are over. The level of violence that existed for those thirty years does not exist anymore. Violence does still exist; however, it is nowhere near as bad as it used to be. The groups that were known for creating much of the violence, the terrorists groups such as the Provisional IRA, the UVF, and other paramilitary groups, have almost completely subsided. If any small factions of these groups do in fact still exist, they do not possess the manpower or weaponry like they used to during the Troubles. With regards to the level of violence the Troubles created, yes, the Troubles are over.

It is crucial to recognize all types of people who were subject to the terror and fear of the Troubles. The history section of this paper tended to focus on the battle between the Republicans and the Unionists / Loyalists. The conflict made it seem as if the only two types of people that existed in Northern Ireland during the Troubles were these two groups. After speaking to Ms. Dornan, Mr. McKeown, and Ms. McCafferty, a new light is shed on the 'other' people who experienced the Troubles. The Troubles consisted of Republicans, Unionists, Loyalists, and those who did not associate with any of those groups. They did not care about politics, religion, who won, and who lost. They cared about living life. All they wanted was to live peacefully with one another.

The third aspect of the Troubles that must be considered are the legacies that have been handed down from one generation to the next. A legacy is something that has been transmitted

by or received from an ancestor.<sup>73</sup> The legacies that were created during the Troubles have been handed down from generation to generation. These legacies were in the form of memories and causes that fueled either the Republican or Unionist fighting. These memories and reasons for fighting have been handed down by some generations to the next. They have created these deep-seated grudges that are hard to overcome due to how horrific the Troubles were. For as long as these memories exist, the legacies associated with them will carry on from generation to generation.

The winners and losers of the Troubles depend on how you look at it. If you view the Troubles as a war between Republicans and Unionists / Loyalists, then the Unionists won because Northern Ireland is still a part of the United Kingdom. If you look at it in light of the Good Friday Agreement, then there is no winner yet. The Agreement left the ending for the conflict to be decided by the people of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Sinn Féin will argue that they are still fighting for a united Ireland.

For the people who were neither Republican nor Unionist and did not care what religion you were, it does not matter who won the Troubles. All that matters is that the violence is over. People of all political backgrounds and religions are living peacefully with one another. Life is better and that is the most important thing for these people.

A very minor but specific detail of the Troubles is that the Good Friday Agreement was never signed, it was only ever agreed upon. No one signed anything. Nothing was made official. Perhaps this suggests that the agreement was not an end to anything; rather, it was just a further

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<sup>73</sup> "Legacy." *Merriam-Webster*. Merriam-Webster, n.d. Web. 19 Nov. 2014. <<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/legacy>>.

step on the road to end the Troubles. Yes, it ended the violence, however, it did not stop Republicans and Unionists from fighting for their beliefs. It simply changed their fight. The Good Friday Agreement did not end the Troubles, it changed the conflict.

Why and how the conflict is changing can be seen in through Sean, an ex-IRA member. Sean is 52 years old today. During the Troubles, he was a strong and fervent supporter and member of the IRA. The strength of his hatred of the British and their army matched the strength of his passion and love for the IRA and their cause. Sean was sentenced to life in prison for the murder of a British soldier. He explained in an interview as a child that he would fight and die for his country. Forty years later, Sean has changed. He explains that no one should die or fight like they used to for their country. Sean states that the IRA did achieve some of its goals. For example, they obtained a seat in Parliament. What they did not achieve was a united Ireland. He also states that he is sure that one day, they will achieve a united Ireland. He believes in Sinn Féin and Gerry Adams and that through them, Ireland will one day be united.<sup>74</sup>

Yes, the violence of the Troubles is over; however, there will always be people or groups of people who will be unhappy with how Northern Ireland turned out. For example, the arrest of Gerry Adams and the claim that paramilitary groups still exist and the waving of both the Union Jack and Irish flags suggest that the Troubles are not over. There will always be Republicans who dislike Unionists and vice versa. There will always be the memories of Bloody Sunday, the Hunger Strikes, the dirty protests, the various bombings and executions, and the tremendous and devastating loss of life that took place.

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<sup>74</sup> *Who Won the War?*, Taylor

This paper argued that the Troubles are not over because 1) violence still exists today, 2) the Good Friday Agreement did not solve the problem of identity and nationalism and, 3) just because there is no longer as much violence as there used to be does not mean that the war is over, it means that the war is different and is changing. The first point was seen through the recent news articles from Northern Ireland that reported on the killing of a Catholic police officer and the arrest of Gerry Adams. The second can be seen through the construction of peace walls that separate the Catholics from Protestants and those who wave the Union Jack from those who waive the Irish tricolors. The third is seen through the words of Sean, an ex-IRA member. Sean still believes in some of the ideas that fueled the Troubles, such as a united Ireland. A united Ireland is not impossible. For people like him, it is not a question of if Ireland will become united, it is a question of when.

Perhaps one of the saddest aspects of the Troubles is that generations of children were shaped by this conflict to become killers in the name of causes and efforts that fueled the war. The actions that took place during the Troubles created memories. These memories created legacies. These legacies created such strong feelings of hatred and bitterness towards people who you did not like and such strong feelings of love and camaraderie towards people you did like. These feelings and legacies have been passed down from generation to generation. For as long as these memories exist, the Troubles will not be over. The Troubles are not over. Nobody has won. The war is still being fought.

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