



Boston College High School Model UN Conference XXXI





Good Friday Agreement





Chair: Daniel Linnehan
Co-Chair: Atharva Niak
Table of Contents

1. Letters from the Chair 4

2. Letter from the Co-Chair.5

3. Why this Topic 6

4. Pre-Conflicted Background 7

5. Timeline 1967-1972. 8

6. Key Events 1973-1998. 16

7. Questions to Consider 18

8. Positions19



Letter from the Chair

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to BC High's 31th Model UN Conference! My name is Daniel Linnehan and this is my third year participating in Model UN. I am also involved in the soccer and track teams here at BC High.

From my time in Model UN, I have expanded my knowledge about international politics, enhanced my debate skills, and fostered relationships with students from all across New England. I hope your time at our conference will allow for you to do the same.

Lastly, please send your position papers to my email before the committee starts to be considered for an award. Thank you for participating in BCHMUN XXXI. I look forward to meeting you soon!

Sincerely,

Daniel Linnehan '24

Chair, Good Friday Agreement

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Letter from the Co-Chair

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to BC High! My name is Atharva Naik, I'm a junior, and this is my second year participating in Model UN. I am involved in track and soccer at BC High along with various other clubs. In my free time, I enjoy hanging out with my friends and watching movies across different genres. I also enjoy lively discussions about a range of topics from sports to movies.

Through my time in Model UN, I have encountered a number of people whom I have bonded with. Through committees like this, I have expanded my knowledge of world issues while fostering relationships with students across Massachusetts. I hope that through this committee you will be able to do the same.

This will be my first time co-chairing for a committee so I look forward to a lively experience with you. I wish you all the best.

Sincerely,

Atharva Naik '24

Co-Chair, Good Friday Agreement

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Why this Topic

The Good Friday Agreement of 1998 is perhaps the most significant victory for peace in the 20th Century; ending a viciously brutal 30 year conflict that had resulted in constant terrorist attacks, sectarian murders, political unrest, and 3,500 deaths. Despite the devastation of the “Troubles” and the miraculous settlement met, this triumph of diplomacy and compromise is often overlooked and forgotten.

With the headlines constantly splashed with the sectarian and racial violence in Israel and Iraq it is understandable to see peace as impossible. Regions resigned to the travesty of terrorism and the failure of all goals, for all sides. When this hopelessness overcomes me, it helps me to remember when we conceived the inconceivable, achieved the unachievable and attained the unattainable: Peace in Northern Ireland.

The Good Friday Agreement stands as a 25 year testament that peace is an improbable possibility not a probable impossibility. However, to make the improbable possible required the rare ability to compromise and the rarer ability to reconcile. Will you be able to achieve the same?

Pre-Conflict Background



Establishment of British Rule in Ireland

By the 17th century Ireland had come under complete control of the British Empire. Multiple wars and invasions had been waged by the English in the previous centuries to exert complete hegemony. During the 1600's massive immigration to the Northern part of the island (hereafter referred to as Ulster) helped to cement British rule in Ireland. For the next three centuries Britain ruled Ireland as a colony and installed a strict social, political and economic system that placed the minority migrant Protestant population above that of the native Catholic. One of these systems installed by the British was the confiscation of native Irish Catholic land. This system left the Irish in abject poverty.

Years of British Rule in Ireland

The potato famine of 1845-1852, caused by the economic system that left the poor Catholic population reliant on the potato crop and made worse by British mismanagement, resulted in the island's population decreasing by 50% through refugees fleeing Ireland and mass starvation. As the effects of Britain's imperialism were felt in Ireland many of the Irish Catholic majority in the Southern 26 counties began to call for independence from Britain or home rule while the majority Protestant Northern 6 counties wanted to remain in the U.K.

Easter Rising

The Easter Rising was an Irish rebellion staged on Easter Day April 24, 1916. The revolt failed and had very little public support. However, after the rebellion the British army officers in command ordered the execution of a leader of the rebellion each day. This turned the leaders into martyrs and drummed up anti-English sentiments across the island.

Irish War for Independence

From 1919-1921 the Catholic population of Ireland fought a bloody war of independence against the British which resulted in the Irish free state being created among the Southern 26 counties. This free state in the coming decades would become the Irish Republic, a completely independent state from Great Britain. The Northern 6 counties, under the peace treaty signed in 1921, would remain part of Britain as the majority Protestant population refused to part with their mother country. This partition of Ireland is the source of a conflict known to history as the Troubles.

The Troubles (Timeline of: 1967-1972)



February 1967

The Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) was founded as a non-sectarian organization to tackle the perceived bias of the unionist (Protestant) majority government against the nationalist (Catholic) minority. They list six areas of reform of local government. (This is the unofficial beginning of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Movement)

- 1) One man one vote in local elections (business owners held multiple votes and were almost all Protestant preventing fair representation for Sinn Féin¹)
- 2) The removal of gerrymandered boundaries
- 3) Laws against discrimination by local government, and the provision of machinery to deal with complaints
- 4) Allocation of public housing on a points system (discrimination made it nearly impossible for poor Catholics to receive Governments aid)
- 5) Repeal of the Special Powers Act (this act was used to repress political dissenters of the Ulster Unionist Party)
- 6) Disbanding of the B Specials (A quasi-military police force 100% composed of Protestants used frequently to quell nationalist dissenters)

October 5th, 1968:

NICRA and the Derry Housing Action Committee (DHAC) decide to hold a march to protest at housing in the city. The march is banned by the Stormont Government, but goes ahead anyway. The RUC baton charge protesters and the images of police violence are captured on television. Almost 100 protesters were injured.

January 4th, 1969

The People's Democracy movement organized a march from Belfast to Derry on New Year's Day 1969. On the fourth day of the march at Burntollet Bridge outside Derry, the protesters are attacked with sticks and stones by a unionist mob. The RUC² stood by and watched.

April 19th, 1969

A rally at Londonderry's/Derry's Guildhall by nationalists is attacked by stone-throwing unionists. The RUC intervened and followed the nationalist crowd back into the Bogside³. RUC officers enter the home

¹ Nationalist Political Party (Pro-Irish Unity)

² Royal Ulster Constabulary: the police force of Northern Ireland commanded and comprised of Unionist Protestants

³ Majority Catholic neighborhood in Londonderry/Derry



of Sammy Devaney in William Street and beat him and his family, including his five-year-old son. Mr. Delaney would die of his injuries on July 14th, 1969.

12-14 August, 1969

Violence broke out as the Protestant unionist Apprentice Boys marched past the Catholic Bogside in Londonderry/Derry. The RUC drove back the Catholic crowd and pushed into the Bogside, followed by unionist mobs who attacked Catholic homes. Thousands of Bogside residents beat back the RUC with a hail of stones and petrol bombs. The besieged residents built barricades, set up first aid posts and petrol bomb workshops, and a radio transmitter broadcast messages calling for resistance. The RUC fired CS gas into the Bogside (the first time it had been used by UK police). Residents feared the Ulster Special Constabulary (B Specials) would be sent in and would massacre Catholic residents. The Irish Army set up field hospitals near the border and the Irish government called for a United Nations peacekeeping force to be sent to Derry. On 14 August, the British Army was deployed and the RUC were withdrawn. The British Army made no attempt to enter the Bogside, which became a no-go area called Free Derry. This battle resulted in around 1,000 injuries but no deaths.

14-17 August, 1969

In response to events in Londonderry/Derry, Irish nationalists held protests throughout Northern Ireland. Some of these became violent. In Belfast, unionists responded by attacking nationalist districts. Rioting also erupted in Newry, Armagh, Crossmaglen, Dungannon, Coalisland and Dungiven. Six Catholics and two Protestants were shot dead and at least 133 were treated for gunshot wounds. Scores of houses and businesses were burnt out, most of them owned by Catholics. Thousands of families, mostly Catholics, were forced to flee their homes and refugee camps were set up in the Republic. During the rioting the RUC-led attacks on Catholic areas in Belfast the first British Soldier to be killed in the conflict was shot dead by the RUC. He was Trooper McCabe who was home on leave and joined his neighbors trying to defend their homes from the Police and Unionist mobs.

October-December, 1969

The UVF⁴ detonated bombs in the Republic of Ireland. In Dublin it detonated a car bomb near the Garda Síochána central detective bureau. It also bombed a power station at Ballyshannon, a Wolfe Tone memorial in Bodenstown, and the Daniel O'Connell monument in Dublin.

31, March 1970

⁴ Ulster Volunteer Force: Unionist Protestant paramilitary force



Following an Orange Order march, intense riots erupted on the Springfield Road in Belfast. Violence lasted for three days, and the British Army used CS gas for the first time in large quantities. About 38 soldiers and dozens of civilians were injured.

19 June, 1970

Edward Heath became Prime Minister of the United Kingdom after winning a majority in the general election.

27-28 June, 1970

Following the arrest of Bernadette Devlin, intense riots erupted in parts of Derry and Belfast. Further violence erupted in Belfast following Orange marches past Catholic neighborhoods. This led to gun battles between republicans and unionists. Seven people were killed.

27-28 June, 1970

A British Army raid in the Falls district of Belfast developed into a riot between soldiers and residents and then gun battles between soldiers and the OIRA. The British Army sealed off the area, imposed a 36-hour curfew and raided hundreds of homes under the cover of CS gas. Three Catholic civilians as well as a British journalist, were killed by the British Army, sixty others were injured, and 300 were arrested. Fifteen soldiers were shot by the OIRA who saw this situation as another possible Pogrom⁵. After the change of UK Government from Labour to Conservative the UK's policy changed and became more open to the local Unionist government's influence. At this time UK Home Secretary Reginald Maudling declared in the House of Commons "We are now at war with the IRA". Up to this time the OIRA and IRA⁶ policy was to remain as defensive organizations for the areas which had suffered the Pogrom of the previous August. Maudling's statement also offered the opportunity to British Army CO of Belfast Frank Kitson to put his policies, including the use of counter gangs, into action.

3-6 February 1971

Under pressure from the unionist government of Northern Ireland, the British Army began a series of raids in nationalist areas of Belfast, sparking three days of violence. On 6 February, British soldiers shot dead Catholic civilian Bernard Watt in Ardoyne and IRA member James Saunders in Oldpark, claiming both were armed. Shortly after, the IRA shot dead British soldier Robert Curtis during rioting in New Lodge. He was the first on-duty British soldier killed in the Troubles. The next day, James

⁵ An organized massacre of a particular ethnic group

⁶ OIRA (Official Irish Republican Army) IRA (Provisional Irish Republican Army) both Nationalist Catholic paramilitary forces



Chichester-Clark, Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, declared that "Northern Ireland is at war with the Irish Republican Army Provisionals".

9 February, 1971

Five men were killed by an IRA landmine as their vehicle passed Brougher Mountain, near Trillick, County Tyrone. A British Army mobile patrol was reportedly the intended target.

9 March, 1971

Three off-duty Scottish soldiers were shot dead by the IRA after being lured from a pub in Belfast. Two days later, 4,000 loyalist shipyard workers took to the streets to demand the mass internment of Irish republicans.

23 March, 1971

Brian Faulkner became the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland.

25 May, 1971

The IRA threw a time bomb into Springfield Road British Army/RUC base in Belfast, killing British Army Sergeant Michael Willetts and wounding seven RUC officers, two British soldiers and eighteen civilians.

8 July, 1971

During street disturbances, British soldiers shot dead two Catholic civilians in Free Derry. As a result, riots erupted in the city and the SDLP⁷ withdrew from Stormont⁸ in protest.

August, 1971

Operation Demetrius was launched by the British Army. Armed British soldiers launched dawn raids throughout Northern Ireland, capturing 342 people suspected of being involved with the IRA. Those captured were "interned". A process whereby the British government would imprison those they suspected of being linked with the IRA without a trial or any due process. Most of those interned in Operation Demetrius were Catholics who had no links with republican paramilitaries, and many reported that they and their families were beaten and threatened by soldiers. This sparked four days of violence in which 20 civilians, two IRA members and two British soldiers were killed. Fourteen of the civilians,

⁷ The Social Democratic and Labour Party: Irish National Party

⁸ Northern Ireland Parliament



including a Catholic priest, Father Hugh Mullan, were killed by British soldiers; 11 of them in the Ballymurphy massacre. An estimated 7,000 people, mostly Catholics, were forced to flee their homes.

September, 1971

Loyalists formed the Ulster Defence Association (UDA). The group would quickly become the largest loyalist group in Northern Ireland.

4 December, 1971

The UVF exploded a bomb at a Catholic-owned pub in Belfast, killing fifteen Catholic civilians (including two children) and wounding seventeen others. This was the highest death toll from a single incident in Belfast during the Troubles

11 December, 1971

A bomb exploded outside a furniture showroom on the mainly-Protestant and loyalist Shankill Road, Belfast. Four civilians, two adults (one Protestant and one Catholic), and two babies, Tracey Munn (2 years old) and Colin Nichol (17 months old) were killed. The babies both died instantly when part of the wall crashed down upon the pram they were sharing. The adult employees were killed and nineteen people were wounded. The IRA was blamed.

30 January, 1972

During a peaceful civil rights and anti-internment protest in the Bogside Neighborhood of Londonderry/Derry, British Army paratroopers opened fire on the unarmed protestors shooting 26 and killing 14. Six of those killed were under the age of 18 while another was only 19. Many were shot while fleeing from the soldiers while others were shot while trying to help the wounded. In the immediate aftermath the Widgery Tribunal was set up by the British Government to investigate the incident. The report accepted the claims of the soldiers that those who were shot were armed and posed a threat to their safety. This report was widely condemned as a coverup of a mass murder committed by the British Army. In 2010 after a 12 year long investigation it was concluded in the Saville Inquiry that the killings were "unjustified" and "unjustifiable". It found that all of those shot were unarmed, that none were posing a serious threat, that no bombs were thrown and that soldiers "knowingly put forward false accounts" to justify their firing. The soldiers denied shooting the named victims but also denied shooting anyone by mistake. On publication of the report, British Prime Minister David Cameron formally apologized. Following this, police began a murder investigation into the killings. One former soldier was charged with murder, but the case was dropped two years later when evidence was deemed inadmissible. Following an



appeal by the families of the victims, however, the Public Prosecution Service resumed the prosecution and is still ongoing as of 1/22/2023.

2 February, 1972

Funerals of eleven of those killed on Bloody Sunday. Prayer services held across Ireland. In Dublin, over 30,000 marched to the British Embassy, carrying thirteen replica coffins and black flags. They attacked the Embassy with stones and bottles, then petrol bombs. The building was eventually burnt to the ground and no one was hurt.

22 February, 1972

Aldershot bombing – seven people were killed by an Official IRA car bomb at Aldershot Barracks in England. It was thought to be in retaliation for Bloody Sunday. Six of those killed were ancillary workers (five female and one male), and the seventh was a Roman Catholic British Army chaplain (Father Gerry Weston, aka Captain Gerard Weston, MBE), who had recently returned from service in Northern Ireland

4 March, 1972

Abercorn Restaurant bombing – a bomb exploded in a crowded restaurant in Belfast, killing two Catholic civilians and wounding 130. Many were badly maimed. The IRA was blamed.

20 March, 1972

1972 Donegall Street bombing – the IRA detonated its first car bomb, on Donegall Street in Belfast. Allegedly due to inadequate warnings, four civilians, two RUC officers and a UDR soldier were killed while 148 people were wounded.

30 March, 1972

Northern Ireland's Government and Parliament were dissolved by the British Government. Direct rule from Westminster was introduced.

14 April, 1972

The IRA exploded 24 bombs in towns and cities across Northern Ireland. There were 14 shootouts between the PIRA and security forces.

22 April, 1972

An 11-year-old boy was killed by a rubber bullet fired by the British Army in Belfast.

13-14 May, 1972



Battle at Springmartin – following a loyalist car bombing of a Catholic-owned pub in the Ballymurphy area of Belfast, clashes erupted between the IRA, UVF and British Army. Seven people were killed: five civilians (four Catholics, one Protestant), a British soldier, and a member of the Fianna Éireann⁹.

29 May, 1972

The Official IRA announced a ceasefire. This marked the end of the Official IRA's military campaign.

9 July, 1972

Springhill Massacre – British snipers shot dead five Catholics (2 were youth members of republican paramilitary organizations, 3 were civilians, including a Roman Catholic priest, shot dead while trying to render aid to one of the injured, a 13 year old girl.) and wounded two others in the Springhill section of Belfast. All of the victims were unarmed.

13 July, 1972

There was a series of gun-battles and shootings across Belfast. The PIRA shot dead three British Army soldiers, and the British Army shot dead two civilians and an IRA volunteer .

14 July, 1972

There was a series of gun-battles and shootings across Belfast. The PIRA shot dead three British Army soldiers. The British Army shot dead an IRA volunteer and an OIRA volunteer, while a Protestant civilian was shot dead in crossfire.

21 July, 1972

Bloody Friday – within the space of 75 minutes, the PIRA exploded twenty-two bombs in Belfast, killing nine people: five civilians, two British Army soldiers and one UDA¹⁰ volunteer were killed, while 130 were injured.

31 July, 1972

Operation Motorman – the British Army used 12,000 soldiers supported by tanks and bulldozers to retake the "no-go areas" controlled by the IRA.

⁹ The Youth Wing of the IRA

¹⁰ Ulster Defense Assasination: Loyalist Protestant Paramilitary Force



31 July, 1972

Claudy bombing – nine civilians (five Catholics and four Protestants) were killed when three car bombs exploded in Claudy, County Londonderry. No group has since claimed responsibility.

22 August, 1972

Newry customs bombing – three IRA members walked into a customs office in Newry with a bomb. It exploded prematurely, killing all of them, two lorry drivers and four customs staff.

Note From the Chair:

This timeline has been meant to demonstrate the start of and nature of the “Troubles” by explaining every incident that occurred till the end of 1972. The rest of this historical background will only focus on the most headline events but it is important to remember that in between and in addition to these indicates further terrorist attacks, military/police operations and riots occurred as well.



The Troubles

(1973-1998)

December, 1973

The Sunningdale Agreement was an attempt to establish a power-sharing Northern Ireland Executive and a cross-border Council of Ireland. The agreement was signed at Sunningdale Park located in Sunningdale, Berkshire, on 9 December 1973. Unionist opposition, violence and general strike caused the collapse of the agreement in May 1974.

15-28 May, 1974

The strike was called by unionists who were against the Sunningdale Agreement, which had been signed in December 1973. Specifically, the strikers opposed the sharing of political power with Irish nationalists, and the proposed role for the Republic of Ireland's government in running Northern Ireland.

17 May, 1974

The UVF exploded four bombs in the Republic of Ireland. They killed thirty-three civilians and wounded a further 300. This was the highest number of casualties in a single incident during "The Troubles". It has been alleged that members of the British security forces were involved. The UVF did not claim responsibility until 15 July 1993.

9 February, 1975 - 23 January 1976

The IRA agreed to a truce and ceasefire with the British government and the Northern Ireland Office. Seven "incident centers" were established in nationalist areas to monitor the ceasefire and the response of the security forces.

8 May, 1975 - 5 March 1976

There was no agreement between the UUUC¹¹ and the rest of the assembly members. The UUUC drew up a report which was essentially a Unionist wish-list, seeking a return to majority rule and ruling out any new Council of Ireland. The report wanted a new Stormont with even greater powers, a doubling of Northern Ireland seats at Westminster, and the introduction of an oath of allegiance to the Queen for all major appointments. No compromise was met.

¹¹ United Ulster Unionist Council: Protestant Loyalist Faction



1981

The 1981 Irish hunger strike was the culmination of a five-year protest during the Troubles by Irish republican prisoners in Northern Ireland. The protest began as the blanket protest in 1976, when the British government withdrew Special Category Status (POW rather than Criminal status) for interned paramilitary prisoners. In 1978, the dispute escalated into the dirty protest, where prisoners refused to leave their cells to wash and covered the walls of their cells with excrement. In 1980, seven prisoners participated in the first hunger strike, which ended after 53 days. The second hunger strike took place in 1981 and was a showdown between the prisoners and the Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher. One hunger striker, Bobby Sands, was elected as a member of parliament during the strike, prompting media interest from around the world. The strike was called off after ten prisoners had starved themselves to death, including Sands, whose funeral was attended by 100,000 people. The strike radicalized Irish nationalist politics and was the driving force that enabled Sinn Féin to become a mainstream political party.

12 October, 1984

The IRA planted a long-delay time bomb in the Brighton hotel where the Conservative Party conference was to be held. The IRA was attempting to assassinate Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and other leaders of the Conservative Party for their treatment of interned IRA soldiers. The plot failed as Thatcher survived but 5 people were killed and 31 were injured.

15 November, 1985

The Anglo-Irish agreement was signed. The treaty gave the Irish government an advisory role in Northern Ireland's government while confirming that there would be no change in the constitutional position of Northern Ireland unless a majority of its citizens agreed to join the Republic. It also set out conditions for the establishment of a devolved consensus government in the region. All Unionist MPs resigned in protest of the treaty and it would not end the conflict.

19 July, 1997

The IRA announces a ceasefire after nearly a decade long terrorist campaign, including the Manchester bombing wounding 212, and retaliatory attacks by the UVF against Irish Catholics.

Note From the Chair: This will be the starting point for our committee.



Questions to Consider

1. Will paramilitary groups be decommissioned and disarmed?
2. What is the future of interned, suspected, terrorists/paramilitary fighters of both sides?
3. What will be the political future of the six northern counties (Unify with Ireland/Remained Partitioned/Another Solution)?
4. What/will there be reforms to ensure equality among Catholics and Protestants?

Positions



- 1. John Hume: Leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP)**
2. Seamus Mallon: Deputy leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP)
3. Bríd Rodgers: Member of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP)
4. Gerry Adams: Leader of Sinn Féin (politically aligned with the IRA)
5. Martin McGuinness: Deputy leader of Sinn Féin (politically aligned with the IRA)
6. Alex Maskey: Member of Sinn Féin (politically aligned with the IRA)
7. David Ervine: Leader of the Progressive Unionist Party (politically aligned with the UVF)
8. Billy Hutchinson: Member of the Progressive Unionist Party (politically aligned with the UVF)
9. John White: Leader of the Ulster Democratic Party (politically aligned with the UDA)
- 10. David Trimble: leader of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP)**
11. Martin Smyth: Chief Whip of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP)
12. Alan McFarland: Member of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP)
13. Bertie Ahern: Irish Prime Minister (Fianna Fáil)
14. Tony Blair: British Prime Minister (Labour)
15. John Bruton: Irish Leader of the Opposition (Fine Gael)
16. William Hague: British Leader of the opposition (Conservative)
17. Mo Mowlam: Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Labour)
- 18. George Mitchell: US special envoy for Northern Ireland**
19. John Alderdice: Leader of the Alliance Party

Note From the Chair: If you are having trouble finding specific information about the policies of your position go based off of the policy of the party.

