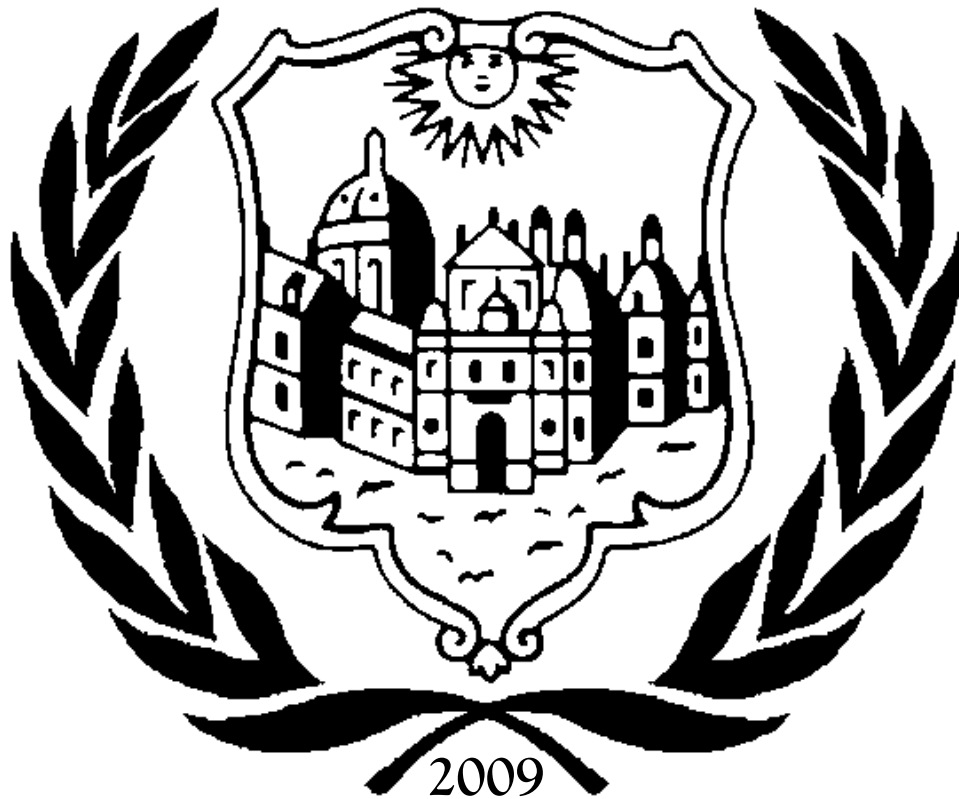


The William & Mary
High School Model United Nations Conference

XXIII



*NORTHERN IRELAND PEACE
TALKS*

BACKGROUND GUIDE

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the twenty-third session of the William and Mary High School Model United Nations! I guarantee you all will have a wonderful time and come ever closer to establishing solutions to real world problems. This conference is my third WMHSMUN and my sixth year doing MUN. This year, I hope the conference will be even more fun and can't wait to listen to everyone's fantastic ideas!

Before immersing yourself in our exciting topics, allow me to introduce myself. I'm a junior here majoring in International Relations and I'm half American and half Brazilian. I'm fluent in Spanish and Portuguese, I'm currently learning French, and I've lived in China, Brazil, Bolivia, India, and England. Besides the IR club, I'm also involved in a Medical Relief Team that goes to Ghana every spring break, I'm in Alpha Phi Omega, a community service fraternity, and I teach Portuguese to W&M students through Hello WM.

However, my favorite extracurricular has always been MUN. In high school, I attended The Hague MUN twice, Beijing MUN three times, THIMUN Singapore once, and I chaired Youth Assembly (a type of MUN where one represents their own views) twice. In college, I directed GA 2050 for WMHSMUN XXI, was a Rapporteur for WMIDMUN VI, directed Organization of American States for last year's WMHSMUN, was Chargee D'Affairs on the secretariat for WMIDMUN VII, and have been to MUN conferences at Harvard, Yale, UVA, Georgetown, and McGill as a delegate.

I'm incredibly excited to be your director for the Northern Ireland Peace Talks in 1998 because we will simulate what those talks could have resulted in and perhaps come up with new solutions of our own. Each delegate will represent a different member of the Northern Ireland Forum. I trust that each delegate will effectively represent the views of the member he or she is assigned. Together, we will come up with our suggestions to improve the Belfast agreement, which although is an excellent agreement that mitigated Northern Ireland violence, can definitely be improved upon. We will also be discussing how to stop IRA violence and how to make the British-Irish Council more effective. This committee will also have occasional crises that must be dealt with swiftly and effectively by members of the Peace Talks. Please research the individual you were assigned to represent thoroughly, especially their positions on the topics discussed in the Northern Ireland Peace Forum.

If you have any questions at all about anything related to MUN, the background guide, the conference, college, or anything else you can think of, please e-mail me at sllloyd@wm.edu and I will answer as best as I can, as quickly as possible. Please don't hesitate to voice your concerns because I'll do my best to make this weekend full of fun, intelligent debate, and awareness. Everyone involved in organizing WMHSMUN wants more than anything for everyone to enjoy the conference! I only hope that this experience will help you love MUN as much as I do. I look forward to meeting you all and hearing your awesome ideas in November!

Sincerely,
Stephanie Lloyd
Director, Northern Ireland Peace Talks- 1998
WMHSMUN XXIII
sllloyd@wm.edu

Members of the Northern Ireland Forum

Bertie Ahern – Leader of the Republic of Ireland
David Trimble – Ulster Unionist Party
Father Alec Reid
Gerry Adams – Sinn Fein
Hugh Smyth – Leader of the Progressive Unionist Party
Ian Richard Kyle Paisley – Democratic Unionist Party
Jeffrey Donaldson – Ulster Unionist Party
John Hume – Social Democratic and Labour Party
Marjorie Mowlam – Secretary of State for Northern Ireland
Martin Mansergh
Martin McGuinness – Sinn Fein
Prime Minister Tony Blair
Senator George J Mitchell Jr. (D-ME)

History

Before the Troubles (1880-1925)

Tensions in Northern Ireland stretch far back into history. In 1690, the Battle of the Boyne was violently fought between two rival claimers of English, Scottish, and Irish rule: King James (Catholic) and King William (Protestant). When King William won the battle, Protestant supremacy continued in Ireland. Parades today still commemorate the victory of the Battle of the Boyne.ⁱ However, tensions continued to cause violence but became even more prominent in the 1880s, when Home Rule bills were introduced, with the idea that Northern Ireland should be given its independence. Northern Ireland did not become an official region until 1920.ⁱⁱ

Following the Government of Ireland Act of 1920, Northern Ireland was formed as a new region of the United Kingdom and given limited autonomous rights. In 1922,

Ireland gained its independence as an independent dominion called the Irish Free State, with Northern Ireland deciding to not be part of this region. Northern Ireland resisted Home Rule, or rule by Britain, and had resisted since the 1880s, especially since Parliament and the House of Lords had passed legislation to ensure that Northern Ireland maintained autonomy. The Liberal minority government and the Unionists introduced a third Home Rule Bill in 1912. This Home Rule Bill stated that a bicameral Irish Parliament be established in Dublin to deal with most national affairs, that several Irish Ministers of Parliament (MPs) could remain in the Imperial Parliament in Westminster, and abolished Dublin Castle.ⁱⁱⁱ

In 1914, the Commons allowed four counties of Ulster to vote to opt out of

provisions, but only following the House of Lords heavily amended the Home Rule Bill. During 1913 and 1914, paramilitary “volunteer armies” were formed. The Ulster Volunteer Force was one of the first of these dangerous armies. The Irish Volunteers arose in response, as a counter form to the Ulster Volunteer Force’s views that Home Rule should be blocked. The First World War, however, interrupted the process of Home Rule as Great Britain found herself preoccupied with the war instead of Ireland’s Home Rule Concerns.^{iv} In 1916, the Easter Rising was led by Thomas Clarke and James Connolly. Irish separatists, known as Irish Irelanders and then eventually Republicans, wanted complete independence. There were also rebellions in Dublin at the same time. In fact, one of the hard-line Irish Separatist Groups, Sinn Fein, campaigned against conscription in 1918 when the British government tried to demand that the Irish would be forced to serve in the Army. Sinn Fein was so successful in rallying Northern Irish citizens that they won most of the Parliament seats in the general election of 1918. Guerilla warfare was rampant following the election since some citizens wanted complete independence and others did not. Guerilla warfare was especially more intense in the south and involved the Irish Republican Army (IRA), the British Army, and the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF). Finally, the fourth Home Rule Bill, called the Government of Ireland Act of 1920, divided the island into Northern Ireland (six northeastern counties) and Southern Ireland. The Anglo-Irish Treaty in 1922 made Northern Ireland become part of the

new Irish Free State for three days. Violence continued, especially tensions between the Catholics and Protestants, creating a very tense climate where no one felt safe.^v

Causes of the Troubles (1925-1965)

The Catholic minority was highly discriminated against when increasingly anti-Catholic Prime Ministers came to power. In many cases, especially the Corporation of Londonderry, Omagh Urban District, and Fermanagh County Council, Catholics were placed in wards with widespread opposition towards them. Bloc voting eased this process, since those who wanted support all voted together to gain what they wanted. At the center of the 1960s civil rights movement were arguments over the form of voting of local government.^{vi}

There was also a lot of employment discrimination, especially at senior levels of the public sector and in certain economy sectors, such as shipbuilding and heavy engineering. Thus, Catholics left as mainly Protestants obtained these jobs. In 1929, the proportional representation was abolished, meaning that the Ulster Unionist Party was given a significant majority in the Northern Ireland Parliament, which led to fifty years of one-party rule. While Nationalist parties continued to retain the same number of seats that they had under proportional representation, the Northern Ireland Labour Party and various smaller leftist Unionist groups were smothered, meaning that it proved impossible for any group to

sustain a challenge to the Ulster Unionist Party from within the Unionist section of the population.^{vii}

In 1935, the most horrible violence since partition engulfed Belfast. The Protestant Orange Order held a rally in the city, which by the end of the day would leave nine people dead and thousands homeless. After the rally the Order returned into the city, marching throughout Catholic neighborhoods inciting violence as they marched. The Order came to blows with local Catholics and nine people were killed. The result of the riot was the eviction of 2,000 Catholic families from the area.^{viii}

However, Northern Ireland was relatively peaceful from 1924 until the late 1960s, except for some brief explosions of IRA activity and the Luftwaffe Belfast blitz during the Second World War and the so-called "Border Campaign" from 1956 to 1962, with little support among the wider Catholic community partly because of the economic prosperity of Northern Ireland. This time period saw an almost complete integration between the Ulster Unionist Party and the loyalist Orange Order.^{ix}

Nationalist political institutions declined, with the Nationalist party boycotting the Stormont Parliament for much of this period and its constituency organizations reducing to little more than shells. Sinn Fein was banned, though it operated through the Republican Clubs or similar vehicles. However, no one knew that this relatively peaceful period was the eye before the storm: The Troubles.

Essentially, The Troubles were caused by the Civil Rights movement, which demanded more equal rights for Catholics, the integration of the Ulster Party and the Orange Order, and the overwhelming tensions between the Catholics and the Protestants.

The Troubles (1965-1998)

The Troubles were the thirty years of civil strife that plagued Northern Ireland from the 1960s until 1998. In the 1960s, moderate Unionist prime minister Terence O'Neill (later Lord O'Neill of the Maine) attempted to reform the system, but encountered strong opposition from both fundamentalist Protestant leaders like Ian Paisley and within his own party. The increasing pressures from Nationalists for reform and from extreme Loyalists for "No Surrender" led to the appearance of the civil rights movement, under figures such as Austin Currie and joint-winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, John Hume. The movement had more support from Protestants and Protestant parliamentarians than previous movements, and saw the growing involvement of students, who increasingly saw the situation in Northern Ireland as a humanitarian crisis. Clashes between marchers and the Royal Ulster Constabulary led to increased tensions.

However, tensions continued to rise. On January 4th 1969 a Unionist mob in Burntollet carried out violent attacks outside of Derry as police forces watched and allowed the violence to proceed.

Then, 1,091 canisters (containing 12.5g of CS teargas) and 14 canisters containing 50g of CS gas) were released into the densely populated residential area by the RUC. Even more severe rioting broke out in Belfast and elsewhere in response to the events in Derry. There were many riots in 1969 protesting discrimination and also riots for the civil rights movement.^x

The Unionist Government asked that the British army be deployed by the UK Home Secretary James Callaghan on August 14th, 1969. Soon, control of security in Northern Ireland was handed from the Stormont government to Lieutenant-General Ian Freeland (GOC). At first, a positive welcome was received, but then tensions continued to rise.^{xi}

Internment without trial for men suspected of being IRA members was introduced in August 1971, causing even more outrage from Unionists. Even moderate Nationalists were so upset that they stopped cooperating with the state. A huge campaign of civil disobedience started as everyone disagreed with this unfair internment. On January 30th, 1972, which later became known as Bloody Sunday, fourteen unarmed civilians were killed in Derry by the Parachute Regiment. This continued to cause outrage over the general disorganization and violence in Ireland, causing more and more tension.^{xii}

Following Bloody Sunday, 1972 became a very violent year. Founded in 1970, the Provisional IRA was formed as a breakaway group from the more and more

Marxist Official IRA, and a violent campaign by loyalist paramilitary groups like the Ulster Defence Association and others made it seem as though Northern Ireland was on the verge of civil war. In 1973, the British Government discontinued the Parliament of Northern Ireland and its government with the Northern Ireland Constitution Act of 1973.^{xiii}

Steps to End the Troubles (1972-1998)

The British government worked with several parties, especially the Provisional IRA, during 1972 and 1973. The Official IRA announced a ceasefire in 1972, and eventually ended violence for good, but a breakaway group, the Irish National Liberation Army, continued a violent campaign. However, the Provisional IRA was still the largest, most successful nationalist paramilitary group.^{xiv}

In December 1973, following talks in Sunningdale, Berkshire, the Ulster Unionist Party, the Social Democratic and Labour Party and Alliance Party of Northern Ireland came to the Sunningdale Agreement on a cross-community government for Northern Ireland. This community government took office in January 1974. The Provisional IRA was not impressed, and thus intensified its violence, while many unionists were enraged about nationalists participating in Northern Ireland government and at the Council of Ireland, which subsequently did not accomplish the goals it intended.

The Sunningdale parties clearly had a majority in the new Northern Ireland Assembly, but the failure of the Agreement parties to coordinate their efforts for February's general election and a boycott by the IRA gave the anti-Sunningdale Unionists the 51.1% of the vote and 11 of Northern Ireland's 12 seats in the UK House of Commons.^{xv}

This event gave other parties more strength and thus a coalition of anti-Agreement Unionist politicians and paramilitaries incited a general strike on May 15th, 1973. The strikers paralyzed Northern Ireland by closing down power stations. British Prime Minister Harold Wilson did not send in troops to take over from the strikers so the power-sharing executive collapsed on May 28, 1974.^{xvi}

A few British politicians, such as former British Labour minister Tony Benn, wanted a withdrawal of British involvement from Ireland, but others were against this policy, and predicted a Domsday Scenario, with widespread communal strife. Their worst fear was a civil war that would engulf Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, and Scotland. Afterward, another feared possible impact of British withdrawal was chaos over the breaking up the region.^{xvii}

The level of violence, while it would continue to wreck havoc in Ireland, decreased substantially as the decade came to a close. The Provisional IRA utilized weapons and explosives obtained from the United States and Libya to bomb England

and several British army bases in Europe, and continued violent attacks within Northern Ireland. These attacks were on military targets and also on businesses that catered to a lot of Protestants, civilian commercial properties, and many city centers. A common attack would involve cars with high explosives driven straight into important areas for maximum effect. Meanwhile, Loyalist paramilitaries mostly focused their violence in Northern Ireland, ignoring the uninvolved military of the Republic of Ireland, and instead claimed a few Republican paramilitary casualties. They also targeted Catholics who worked in Protestant areas, and frequently attacked Catholic-frequented pubs with automatic fire weapons. These attacks were known as "spray jobs". Both groups would also administer punishment attacks against members of their own communities for many people suspected crime despite the reality of the situation.^{xviii}

Political Talks

Many political talks took place until the early 1990s, supported by schemes such as rolling devolution, and 1975 saw a short Provisional IRA ceasefire. The two main events of the political talks were the hunger strikes (1981) and the Anglo-Irish Agreement (1985). The Anglo-Irish Agreement did not bring an end to political violence in Northern Ireland, but it did improve cooperation between the governments of Britain and Ireland, essential to the creation of the Belfast Agreement.^{xix}

The agreement showed that the British legitimately recognized the Republic's desire to directly be interested in Northern Ireland affairs. In contrast with the Sunningdale Agreement, the Anglo-Irish Agreement incited a more intense campaign of violence and intimidation and political hostility towards the loyalists. Republicans were forced to reject the only important all-encompassing Ireland structures established since partition.^{xx}

In the 1990s, the failure of the IRA campaign to obtain mass public support or accomplish its goal of British withdrawal, and especially the public relations disaster of Enniskillen (11 deaths among families occurred while they attended a Remembrance Day ceremony) saw a shift away from armed conflict to political engagement, because clearly armed conflict was not getting the problem solved. This shift from paramilitary to political methods was part of the broader Northern Ireland peace process, which proceeded the appearance of novel leaders in London (John Major) and Dublin (Albert Reynolds).^{xxi}

In 1993, as the government became increasingly concerned with the problems in North Ireland, the two prime ministers signed the Downing Street Declaration. Meanwhile, Gerry Adams (Sinn Féin) and John Hume (Social Democratic and Labour Party) engaged in talks. David Trimble (Ulster Union Party) was at first seen as extreme, but he brought his party into all-party negotiations (which arose from the creation of the Northern Ireland Forum) that in 1998 produced the Belfast Agreement, also known as the Good Friday agreement and it was signed by eight parties on April 10th 1998, though it excluded Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party and the UK Unionist Party. Most of both communities in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland approved this Agreement by referendum on May 22, 1998. The Republic of Ireland amended its constitution, *Bunreacht na hÉireann*, to substitute its claim to the Northern Ireland territory with a declaration that all people of Ireland had a right to be part of the Irish nation and an expression of a desire for a united Ireland.^{xxii}

Irish Republican Army

Established on November 25, 1913, the Irish Republican Army was a republican revolutionary military organization, descending from the Irish Volunteers. They staged the 1916 Easter Rising. In 1919, the Irish Volunteers were to be the legitimate army of the "Irish Republic" that the Irish state declared at the Easter

Rising and reiterated in the Dáil, the parliament of the Republic of Ireland, in 1919. Subsequently, the IRA waged a campaign of guerilla warfare against British rule in Ireland when it participated in the Irish War of Independence (1919-1921).

In 1922, the original IRA came apart. In 1921, following the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty, IRA members supported the Treaty formed the center of the National Army founded by Michael Collins, the leader of the IRA. Nonetheless, many in the IRA were against the treaty. The IRA members who opposed the treaty fought a civil war with their past colleagues from

1922 to 1923, in order to create an independent Irish Republic. When they lost the civil war, the group opposing the Treaty continued to exist, intending to abolish the Irish Free State and Northern Ireland in order to go back to the 1919 Irish Republic.^{xxiii}

Provisional IRA

The IRA's objective is to end "British rule in Ireland," and it desires "to establish an Irish Socialist Republic, based on the Proclamation of 1916." Before the Belfast Agreement of 1998, the Provisional IRA wanted to end Northern Ireland's status within the United Kingdom and bring about a united Ireland by force of arms and political persuasion. The organization is catalogued as a terrorist group in the United Kingdom and

identified as an illegal organization in Ireland.^{xxiv}

In July 2005, the IRA Army Council declared an end to its armed campaign, saying that it worked to accomplish its goals utilizing "purely political and democratic programs through exclusively peaceful means" and that IRA "Volunteers must not engage in any other activities whatsoever."^{xxv}

British Irish Council

"The Council was created under the agreement reached in the Multi-Party Negotiations in Belfast in 1998 to promote positive, practical relationships among its

Members, which are the British and Irish Governments, the devolved administrations of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, and Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man."^{xxvi}

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Footnotes

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