

The Northern Ireland 'troubles': some glossaries

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Conflict in Northern Ireland by R.G. Grant, Hodder Wayland, 0-75023-429-6, p. 62

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1. Glossary

Conflict in Northern Ireland by R.G. Grant, Hodder Wayland, 0-75023-429-6, p. 62

B-Specials	a force of armed part-time Protestant policemen in Northern Ireland, disbanded in 1970; it was hated by Catholics for its alleged brutality.
Dáil Éireann	the Irish parliament.
Decommissioning	handing over stocks of weapons and ammunition or putting them out of use.
Dissenter	a member of one of the Protestant groups that reject the authority of the Church of England (also known as Non-Conformists).
dominion	a state forming part of the British Empire but having its own independent government.
Fenian	The Fenians were a secret organization set up in the 1850s to fight for Irish independence; the word is often used by Northern Ireland Protestants for any Catholic nationalist.
Gaelic	the language of the Celtic people of Ireland and Scotland.
Good Friday agreement	agreement reached on 10 April 1998 between the Northern Ireland political parties, intended to end the Northern Ireland conflict.
Home Rule	proposal under which Ireland would have had its own government, but would have remained a part of the United Kingdom.
internment	detention without charge or trial, usually in a camp rather than a prison.
loyalist	essentially the same as a 'Unionist', but usually employed for members or supporters of the more extreme Protestant organizations.
nationalist	in Northern Ireland, someone who believes that all of Ireland should be united under the Dublin government; often used simply to mean 'Catholic'.
Orange Order	Protestant organization in Northern Ireland dedicated to resisting Catholicism and upholding Ulster Protestant traditions.
paramilitary	belonging to an armed organization that is not part of a regular army or police force.
power-sharing	Governing body for Northern executive Ireland in which opposing political parties take part.
province	'The province' is a term often used to refer to Northern Ireland.
Republican	In Northern Ireland, a member or supporter of Sinn Fein, the IRA, or other similar organizations; confusingly, Republicans are generally hostile to the government of the Irish Republic.
sectarian	motivated by hostility towards a group of people holding different religious beliefs.
the 'Troubles'	a term once used for the fighting in Ireland from 1919 to 1923, but now used to refer to the events in Northern Ireland since 1969.
Ulster	one of the four provinces of Ireland; six of the nine counties of Ulster became Northern Ireland.
Unionist	a person or political group that believes in keeping Northern Ireland as part of the UK.
vigilantes	people who take it upon themselves to suppress criminal activity of which they disapprove.

2. Glossaries

The Troubles in Northern Ireland by Ivan Minnis, Heineman, 0-43111-868-X, pp 62-3

Anglican	a member of the Church of Ireland, which is part of the worldwide Anglican church. Also called Episcopalian in the US.
Apprentice Boys	A Protestant association set up in 1814 to commemorate the part played by the Apprentice Boys in the Siege of Derry
B-Specials	a reserve police force, almost entirely Protestant, called into service in times of civil conflict
catalyst	an event which sparks change
Catholic	a member of the Roman Catholic Church
census	an official survey of the population
civil rights	the rights of individual citizens supported by law; relating to jobs, housing, voting rights and the legal system
colony	a territory ruled by another state; usually the people of the colony have no political power and are ruled for the economic benefit of the other state
consultative body	group of politicians from both sides of the border who meet to make suggestions for policy in Northern Ireland
decommissioning	the destruction of illegal, paramilitary weapons
democracy, democratic	a form of government where people exercise power through voting; the majority vote is accepted as the decision
devolve	transfer power to a lower level; e.g. to transfer power from central government to local government
executive	a branch of government that introduces and enforces laws
gerrymander	drawing up electoral boundaries so that they suit one political group; it ensures that political opponents are concentrated in one area, so have less representatives
H-blocks	a name given to the Maze Prison, where many Loyalist and Republican paramilitaries were jailed; the buildings at the Maze had a distinctive 'H' shape
hunger strike	a protest against prison conditions organized by Republican prisoners; the protesters refused to accept any food
legislation	discussing and making laws
Loyalist	a member of the Unionist community who is prepared to use or support violence to support the union with Britain
militant	favouring violent or confrontational action in support of a cause
Nationalist	someone who hopes to achieve a united Ireland through peaceful, political methods
Orange Order	a Protestant organization which commemorates the victory of King William of Orange at the battle of the Boyne in July 1690; formed in 1795 to defend Protestant and Unionist interests in Ireland
paramilitary	a member of an illegal organization that is prepared to use violence, such as the IRA or UVF
partition	the division of Ireland into two separate states in 1921: the Irish Free State and Northern Ireland
planters	Protestant immigrants from Scotland and England who were brought to Ulster in the 17th century by

King James I

Presbyterian	a member of the Protestant Presbyterian Church
propaganda	information that is biased or designed to mislead
proportional representation	an electoral system allowing voters to choose candidates in a descending order of preference; minority parties are more able to gain representation under this system
Protestant	member of a church which is separated from the Roman Catholic Church, and follows the principles of the reformation
province	an old administrative area in Ireland; there are four provinces - Ulster, Munster, Leinster and Connaught; the province of Ulster has 9 counties, 3 of which – Donegal, Cavan and Monaghan – are not part of Northern Ireland
punishment beatings	vicious attacks carried out by members of paramilitary groups upon their own communities for what are termed ‘anti-social’ crimes, such as car theft, burglary and drug dealing
referendum	a general vote by the people to show opinion on a subject
repeal	to revoke or declare something invalid
republic	a state in which power is held by the general people who elect a leader
Republican	a member of the Nationalist community who is prepared to use or support the use of violence to gain a united Ireland
Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC)	the police force of Northern Ireland until 2004
sectarian	concerning actions or attitudes based on membership of a group or community
socialist	someone who believes in a society run by and benefiting the people
Taoiseach	the prime minister of the Republic of Ireland
Ulster	an ancient province of Ireland
Unionist	someone in favour of keeping Northern Ireland’s links with Britain and believes in using peaceful methods to achieve this

3. Glossary

The Struggle for Peace in Northern Ireland by Ben Walsh, John Murray, 0-71957-472-2, pp 138-9

ANGLICAN	one of the Protestant churches in Ireland, the church of Ireland
BLACK AND TANS	special force created by British Prime Minister David Lloyd George in 1920 to help fight the IRA
B-SPECIALS	part time armed Special Police Constables who served in Northern Ireland from 1922 until 1970
BY ELECTION	one-off election held between major elections, usually because of the death or resignation of an MP or councillor
CELT /CELTIC	ancient peoples who migrated to Ireland and settled it in the Iron Age
CIVIL RIGHTS	equal treatment for all citizens, whatever their religion, nationality or political beliefs
COMMISSION	an investigation into particular events, usually set up by the government and headed by a senior judge
CONSTITUTION	the basic rules which set out how a country is run and how it makes its laws
CURFEW	a restriction placed on people in a certain place, usually preventing them from going out of their homes after dark
DAIL EIREANN	the parliament of the Republic of Ireland, set up in 1918 when Ireland was still ruled by Britain
DECOMMISSIONING	process in which paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland give up their weapons
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party, hard line Loyalist party led by Ian Paisley
EASTER RISING	rebellion against British rule organised by the Irish Republican Brotherhood which took place on Easter Monday 1916
ECUMENICAL	a movement which involved different Churches communicating and co-operating with each other
FENIANS	name often given to the Irish Republican Brotherhood. Fenians were originally an invincible army from ancient Irish mythology
GAELIC	term to describe ancient Irish language, culture and people
GERRYMANDERING	arranging the boundaries of electoral districts in such a way as to distort the vote
GUERRILLA	type of warfare involving hit and run attacks rather than open battles
HOME RULE	measure to give Ireland its own parliament to rule itself, but leaving Ireland within the British empire
HUMANITARIAN	concern for human dignity and compassion
INLA	Irish National Liberation Army, a Republican paramilitary group formed in 1974
INTEGRATED	schools which educate students from all communities in Northern Ireland rather than Protestant or Catholic
INTERNMENT	policy of arresting and holding suspects without trial
IRA	Irish Republican Army - republican paramilitary organisation formed in 1919 and active at various stages of the conflict in Northern Ireland
IRB	Irish Republican Brotherhood - republican organisation, also known as Fenians, formed in 1858
JACOBITE	supporters of Catholic King James II in the late 1600s
LOYALISM /LOYALIST	hardline Unionism - loyalists are loyal to the monarch of the United Kingdom

LOYAL ORANGE ORDER

a Protestant organisation formed in 1795 - opposed to the Catholic Church, connected to unionist political parties and best known for marches and parades

NATIONALISM/NATIONALIST

political view which wants a united Ireland free of connections to the United Kingdom

OMBUDSMAN

a government official whose role is to investigate complaints into the actions of local councils or similar organisations

PARAMILITARIES

violent republican and loyalist organisations

POLITICAL PRISONER

person in prison because of political beliefs rather than having committed any crimes

PRESBYTERIAN

one of the main Protestant churches in Northern Ireland

PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

system of voting which ensures minority groups gain fair representation in parliament

REFERENDUM

vote on a key issue to see whether the population approves or disapproves of a particular action by the government

REPRISALS

revenge attacks

REPUBLICAN

extreme nationalist political view, usually prepared to support force to achieve a united Ireland with no connection to Britain

RUC

Royal Ulster Constabulary - police force of Northern Ireland

SDLP

Social and Democratic Labour Party - main democratic nationalist party in Northern Ireland

SECTARIAN

term used to describe religious and/or political conflict in Northern Ireland

SEGREGATED

separate schooling for Catholics and Protestants

SINN FEIN

republican political party with close links to the IRA

SOCIALISM

political belief which focuses on working people and poorer members of society to improve their lives by spreading wealth more evenly through society

STATUS QUO

the existing situation

TAOISEACH

leader of the Irish Republic (term first used by Eamon de Valera in 1937)

TROUBLES

conflict in Northern Ireland, can describe conflict of 1919-21 or from 1969 onwards

UDA

Ulster Defence Association - main loyalist paramilitary organisation

UFF

Ulster Freedom Fighters - loyalist paramilitary organisation

ULSTER

one of the four provinces which make up Ireland, consisting of nine counties

ULSTER UNIONIST PARTY

main Unionist party in Northern Ireland

UNIONIST

political view supporting the parliamentary union of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

UNITED IRISHMEN

radical political movement which tried to break the links between Britain and Ireland in the 1790s

UVF

Ulster Volunteer Force - loyalist paramilitary organisation

4. Glossary

Northern Ireland: Roots of Conflict, Routes to Peace, a learning resource from the National Peace Council, pp 704

Anglo-Irish Agreement (AIA) 1985

- Republic's 'clear interest' in N.I. accepted
- principle of majority consent for change in status of N.I. guaranteed
- respect for minority traditions guaranteed
- also fair treatment under the law.

apprentice

a young person learning a trade e.g. bakery, by working for a baker. There are fewer apprenticeships today, but there is an organisation called the Apprentice Boys whose membership is similar to that of the Orange Order.

Articles II & III

of the Republic of Ireland constitution stated that the territory of the Republic was the whole island of Ireland. The status of N.I. was seen as a temporary arrangement.

assimilate

to become alike, to adapt or conform.

attitude

a way of thinking or point of view that has become a habit.

besiege

to surround a settlement of people and try to starve or otherwise force them into surrender.

blanket/dirty protests

some prisoners refused to dress, wash or use toilet facilities in prison, a non-violent technique to reclaim their special category status.

Bloody Sunday

great controversy still surrounds this event, which was a turning point in Catholic/nationalist attitudes towards the British army's role in Northern Ireland.

'B Specials'

set up in 1920 when an extra police force was thought to be necessary in the north at the time of Partition. Recruited part-time, unpaid, but uniformed and armed constables. Whole units of the Protestant paramilitary UVF joined. By the 1960s many were paid and some full-time.

Catholic

a person who identifies themselves in some way with the Roman Catholic Church - in Northern Ireland this is often more related to family background or where people live than to their religious belief.

The Roman Catholic Church traces its roots back to the beginning of Christianity in the centuries after the birth of Christ. The Orthodox and Eastern Rite Catholic Churches are not part of the Roman Catholic Church.

cease-fire

generally understood to be a temporary halt to violent conflict, often while negotiations for a political settlement to the conflict are taking place.

civil rights

rights given to people by the government of a country. Can vary from country to country, and are therefore distinct from human rights.

colonise

send people to form a settlement in an unfriendly or defeated country, to control and develop it. Empires have been built up this way from ancient times, e.g. the Roman Empire.

commemorate

to remind people of something, using a happy or solemn ceremony.

Commonwealth

The British Commonwealth is made up of countries formerly ruled by Britain. They now rule themselves, a few keeping the Queen as their Head of State, but all accepting her as Head of the Commonwealth.

confiscate

take away a person's possessions as a punishment

conscription

the compulsory 'calling up' of people to serve as soldiers. During World War I, all fit men in Britain between the ages of 18 and 51 were liable to be 'called up' to fight. Those who refused to fight on moral grounds were known as 'conscientious objectors' and were sent to prison.

Corrymeela Community

a reconciliation community founded in 1965 which brings together people from both sides of the conflict.

cross-community

efforts involving the bringing together of people from both sides of the conflict who may not otherwise have much contact with each other. These are opportunities to meet, socialise and get to know ordinary people from the 'other side'.

decommissioning

this word does not appear in many dictionaries. It has been coined to describe the giving up and disabling of weapons while avoiding the implication of surrender.

deprive

keep out of or take away.

Derry

Northern Ireland's second city is generally called Derry by nationalists. Unionists generally call it Londonderry, as it was renamed in 1610. There is no neutral term acceptable to both sides, although an attempt has been made by some to call it 'stroke city' i.e. London/Derry.

discrimination

the ability to see the difference between one thing and another. Has come to mean treating one person differently (usually unfairly) to another because of a perceived difference e.g. race, religion, gender.

Downing Street Declaration 1993

made jointly by British and Irish PMs, combined Westminster's intentions:

- to uphold majority decision in N.I. on Union or unification
- to disclaim selfish strategic or economic interests in N.I.
- to encourage agreement, dialogue & co-operation between both traditions with Dublin's intention:
- that a united Ireland without freely given consent of N.I. would not be valid
- that the Republic's constitution would be amended to reflect this.

emancipation

setting someone free - in this context the freedom to become an MP.

European Convention on Human Rights, 1950

a statement of rights and fundamental freedoms together with ways to put them into practice by means of:

- a commission to advise on new law
- a court to make judgements.

It was based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and was the first international treaty to allow an individual to take a country to court.

extreme

opposing, far apart, difficult to bring together.

Frameworks document 1995

issued jointly from Westminster and Dub

- included proposals for a new elected Assembly for N.I.
- proposals for a North/South body comprised of representatives from the Assembly and the Irish parliament.

gerrymandering

making alterations to electoral boundaries, or to the electorate, with the intention of affecting the outcome of elections unfairly.

Good Friday Agreement, 1998

set out

- a United Ireland should only be brought about through peaceful means, and with democratic consent of both NI and Republic
- 108 member NI Assembly
- elections by single transferable vote
- power sharing executive of 12 members

- a North/South Council to foster co-operation between NI and Republic
- a British/Irish Council, including representatives of the 2 governments with others from N.I., Scotland, Wales, Isle of Man & Channel Islands
- creation of Human Rights Commissions in N.I. and Republic.

guerrilla war

fighting carried on by small groups of people acting more or less independently.

Home Rule

Ireland would mostly govern itself, under the overall control of the British crown and Parliament.

human rights

the United Nations General Assembly set out what is still one of the most comprehensive statements of these in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948. It starts by stating the right of every individual to life, liberty and security of person.

hunger strike, 1981

under orders from the IRA one prisoner after another started to refuse food, and continued doing so until they died. This strategy was eventually ended by prisoners' families, who persuaded their loved ones not to obey.

inequity

lack of justice or fairness.

internment

imprison without making a formal accusation or holding a trial.

integrated education

in Northern Ireland, most children go either to Protestant or to Catholic schools, but a few go to schools especially set up to provide a mixed education for Protestant and Catholic children. The movement for integrated education campaigns for more and more of these schools. They currently account for only 4% of schools in Northern Ireland.

IRA

Irish Republican Army formed 1916, a paramilitary organisation, that uses armed force to achieve its political aims.

Local Councils

in UK generally these run specific services e.g. education, housing etc under the general direction of central government.

loyalty

generally it means standing by your word, your friend, your community or what you believe in. In this context an enthusiastic love said to be owed to the king or queen of a country by people living in that country.

marching season

main events commemorated are Relief of Derry and the Battle of the Boyne. Over 3000 marches a year are undertaken in full regalia with beating drums, by Apprentice Boys and the Orange Order. About 20 that take place in Catholic areas have become flashpoints. For instance, Drumcree has been the site of ineffective police mediation since 1995.

massacre

large numbers of people are killed, possibly whole communities of people, including men, women and children.

militia

men who are not full-time soldiers take up arms and fight, usually for the government against what they understand to be disorder or rebellion.

Mitchell Commission, 1996

put forward 6 proposals for:

- only democratic and peaceful means to be used in resolving problems
- total disarmament of paramilitaries
- verification of disarmament
- opposition to all armed force
- commitment to stick to agreements
- effective steps to prevent punishment beatings.

nationalists

generally describes those who support a strong and independent country for their national group. In this context, nationalists support a united Ireland independent of Britain. The term is usually used to describe those who work towards that aim peacefully, whereas the term 'republican' generally refers to those who are prepared to use armed force.

nonviolent action

seeks to bring about change by influencing opinions rather than taking up arms. Types of action can range from large-scale demonstrations to individual actions. In this case, farmers voted against their landlords to bring in a change of MPs, though they risked losing their farms.

Northern Ireland Forum

parties which accepted the Mitchell Principles were invited to nominate delegates for the Forum. These delegates were to initiate the All-Party Negotiations.

Orange Order

this Protestant organisation derived its name from the name of the Dutch royal family, to which William of Orange, later King William III of England, belonged. It was formed in 1795 'to maintain laws of peace of the country and the Protestant Constitution'. In Northern Ireland today it is the largest Protestant organisation and organises regular marches to celebrate the traditions of the Protestant community.

Parades Commission

established 1997/8. It allowed some marches, but not others.

paramilitary

a paramilitary organisation is an army which operates outside the law to fight for its cause.

partition

to divide or separate into parts. In geographical terms, this means dividing a country.

Peace People

Founded in 1976, two main leaders, Mairead Corrigan (Maguire) and Betty Williams, were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize that year for their peace initiatives, which saw the largest peace demonstrations in Northern Ireland's history. Whilst these failed to change policies and gradually lost public support, they established a number of peace projects throughout Northern Ireland, which continue to this day.

plantation

usual meaning is a place where one crop is planted, e.g. trees or tobacco. In this context people are planted so that they will become established.

power sharing

is a form of government in which decisions are not taken by majority rule but must take into account the views of minority groups. In the case of Northern Ireland, this would have brought unionists and nationalists into a working relationship within government.

Protestant

a person who identifies themselves in some way with one of the non-Catholic churches – in Northern Ireland, this is often more related to family background or where people live than to their religious belief.

The Protestant churches trace their roots back to the Protestant Reformation in 16th century Europe, and include many different traditions. The main Protestant Church in Northern Ireland is Presbyterian. Others include the Church of Ireland (Anglican) and the Methodist Church.

'the Provos'

Provisional Army Council, formed 1969, wanted to continue the traditional IRA policy of uniting Ireland through armed force.

radical

thorough and complete, proceeding from the root or fundamentals of something. Often used to refer to an extreme or unusual position.

rebellion

organised and armed resistance to government rule.

reconciliation

when individuals or communities that have been divided win back respect and friendship for each other they have achieved reconciliation.

referendum (s) referenda (p)

the electorate votes yes or no on a question put to them directly.

reform

remove a fault. Usually a less than complete change - parts of the system are changed, but the system as a whole survives.

renounce

to promise to give up or do without something.

repress

keep under or put down.

reprisal

pay back an injury by doing an equal or worse one, sometimes called 'tit for tat'.

republicanism

group of ideas favouring an elected representative as head of state, not a king or queen.

revival

to restore something that has fallen out of use: for instance the Gaelic League was formed in 1893 to bring the Irish language back into use.

RUC

Royal Ulster Constabulary, the police force of Northern Ireland. Unlike police in Britain, RUC officers are usually armed. The RUC has always been largely Protestant and distrusted by much of the Catholic community.

sectarian

treating others in a particular way (often hostile) because they are not seen as part of your own group. In Northern Ireland this means treating someone as a 'Protestant' or 'Catholic' rather than as an individual.

SDLP

Social Democratic and Labour Party, part of the nationalist movement in Northern Ireland, dedicated to a peaceful resolution of the problems.

Sinn Fein

means 'ourselves' in Irish. The Party was formed in 1905 and had little support at the start. At first it planned to make Ireland a separate from Britain by peaceful means. Later it supported the 'armed struggle' of the IRA, although it denies this in public.

Six Principles, 1992

announced by the Republic of Ireland, agreeing consent of the majority community to be necessary before any change in status of NI; the right of the majority to withhold consent; various qualifications regarding the unification of Ireland; and exclusion of those engaged in violence.

slogan

a gaelic word for war-cry or battle-cry. A distinctive saying or catchy phrase.

socialist

one who advocates the ownership of major property by the community as a whole & fairer distribution of wealth.

'special category' status

paramilitary prisoners 1972-1975 were not treated like 'common criminals' in prison: for instance they could wear their own clothes and their officers had special privileges etc.

strategy

overall plan devised by the military e.g. the army, navy etc, more generally a plan for achieving one's goals.

subordinate

lower in importance.

the troubles

in the English language the word trouble is usually used to describe worry or anxiety of a relatively mild kind. However in Irish/British history it has been used to refer to episodes of violence that have been at times horrific, widespread and prolonged, most commonly the period in Northern Ireland since 1969.

Because the term 'the troubles' has been used in this way for a long time, it has come to have the effect of summoning up memories of previous 'troubles'. By stirring up deep emotions, the term itself may make more 'troubles' in the future.

toleration

allows what may not be approved of.

treason

breaking the tie of loyalty.

UDA, 1970

Ulster Defence Association, Protestant paramilitary organisation, separate from the UVF.

UDR

the Ulster Defence Regiment, to be used as back up by the police as the 'B Specials' had been. A part-time volunteer organisation, modelled on the army rather than the police, but in 1999 incorporated in the Royal Irish Regiment.

Ulster

historically Ireland comprised 4 provinces: Connaught, Leinster, Munster & Ulster. The latter included 9 counties in the north of Ireland. When Ireland was partitioned 6 of these counties formed the new Northern Ireland, even though the most northerly county, Donegal, was left in 'Southern Ireland'. Unionists often use the term 'Ulster' to refer to Northern Ireland.

Union

since the 13th century Ireland had its own Parliament, and although closely controlled from Britain had retained some independence. Union meant Irish MPs would join the British Parliament in Westminster. The British government would send a government representative to rule in Dublin. (In 1707 the Scottish and English Parliaments had been similarly joined).

unionists

those who support the constitutional link between Britain and Northern Ireland. The term is usually used to describe those committed to maintaining this link peacefully, while the term 'loyalist' generally refers to those who are prepared to use armed force.

UUP

Ulster Unionist Party is the largest of the Unionist parties.

UVF

the Ulster Volunteer Force. 200,000 Protestants joined in 1912. Their slogan was 'Ulster will fight and Ulster will be right'.

vote

in 60s Britain generally all adults could take part on the basis of 'one person one vote' in General and Local Elections. Entitlement to extra votes on the basis of property (as in Northern Ireland at that time) had been abolished in 1948.

5. Glossary

Northern Ireland & Its Neighbours since 1920 by S. Gillespie & G. Jones, Hodder & Stoughton, 0-34062-034-X, pp 146-52

Act of Union	An Act passed in 1800 uniting the British and Irish parliaments.
American civil rights movement	A non-violent movement in the early 1960s dedicated to achieving equal treatment for blacks.
amnesty	A general pardon.
Anglo-Irish Treaty, 1921	The treaty which ended the Anglo-Irish War (see below).
Anglo-Irish War/War of Independence	The period 1919-1920 during which the IRA was at war with the British.
annuity payments (land)	Payments to Britain for loans made to tenant farmers in the late 19th century which allowed them to buy the land they worked.
Apprentice Boys	A Protestant organisation which commemorates the apprentice boys of Derry who closed the gates as the siege began.
ascendancy class	Wealthy educated people who were born and lived in Ireland, but considered themselves British.
Auxiliaries	Ex-Army officers who, together with the Black and Tans, joined to reinforce the Royal Irish Constabulary against the IRA in 1920.
B Specials	Part-time members of the Ulster Special Constabulary set up in 1920 to support the regular police force and not disbanded until 1969.
back-to-back streets	Streets in which the backs of houses faced each other, crowding many people into a small area.
Battle of the Somme	Major battle during World War 1 in which the mainly Protestant 36th Ulster Division suffered extensive casualties.
Black and Tans	Unemployed ex-soldiers recruited to reinforce the Royal Irish Constabulary in their fight against the IRA in 1920.
blackouts	Covering all windows with black curtains and turning off all street lights during World War 11 creating total darkness to hinder the Germans in their bombing campaign.
blanket protest	A protest by IRA prisoners to gain political status (see below) in which they refused to wear prison clothes and draped themselves with blankets.
Blitz, The	Refers to the German bombing of cities in the United Kingdom, including Belfast and Londonderry in 1941.
Bogside	A Catholic housing area just outside the walls of Derry.
boycotts	Shunning people to isolate them. Used against RIC men to discourage them from co-operating with the British.
British Conservative Party	The British mainland party most closely linked to the unionist cause (also called the Conservative and Unionist Party).
Bunreacht na hÉireann	The name of the 1937 Irish Constitution (in the Irish language).
ceasefire	An ending of violence by all those engaged in paramilitary activity.
civil war/Civil War	A war between civilians from the same country. In this context, between those who supported the Anglo-Irish Treaty and those who rejected it.
coalition	An arrangement by which two political parties join together to govern.

Commonwealth	A organisation of former colonies of the United Kingdom with a continuing allegiance to the British Crown.
Communists	Believers in the theory that society should be classless, that private property should be abolished and that industry should be owned by the state for the benefit of the workers.
compounds	The name given to the areas in the Maze in which Republican and Loyalist prisoners with political status were held.
Council of Ireland	After the passing of the Government of Ireland Act 1920, this Council was to be set up with representatives from both north and south to work towards establishing a single parliament for the whole of Ireland.
Cumann na nGaedheal	Political party formed in the early 1920s after Sinn Fein split as a result of the Anglo-Irish Treaty. (The modern Fine Gael is descended from it.)
curfew	A time set by which all persons must be indoors. Usually imposed by governments to prevent civil disturbances.
Dáil Éireann	The lower house in the Irish Parliament The Dail Eireann would be similar to the House of Commons.
depression/Great Depression	A period of time during which output of goods and services and employment decline sharply resulting in falling wages, for example, during the 1920s and 1930s.
dirty protest	A continuation of the blanket protest where IRA prisoners refused to wash or slop out their toilet buckets in protest over the refusal of Britain to grant political status.
discriminate/discrimination	A situation where one group of people is given less access to, for example, education, housing, employment and government because of their beliefs, religion, race or sex.
Dominion status	A self-governing country with connections to the 'mother country' Great Britain and with a Governor General appointed by them.
Dublin diktat	The term unionists gave to the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985 which set up intergovernmental conferences and which was signed without their agreement.
Easter Rising, 1916	A rebellion against British rule, in which a small number of Irish Volunteers proclaimed an Irish Republic. The rising was put down and many of its leaders were executed.
economic war	Restrictions on trade between Britain and Ireland between 1932 and 1938 which began in retaliation for deValera's withholding of annuity payments for land.
External Relations Act, 1936	An act passed by the Irish Parliament which removed the authority of the British Crown in Irish affairs.
'first past the post'	A system of electing candidates using a single non-transferable vote
flying columns	Small groups of IRA volunteers which launched raids and attacks against Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) personnel and then escaped by hiding in the community.
franchise	The right to vote.
Free Presbyterian Church	Founded by the Rev Ian Paisley and relying on a literal, fundamentalist interpretation of the Bible.
Free State	The Irish state which was formed after the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty
garrisons	Military establishments containing military personnel on active service.
gerrymandering	The act of fixing unnatural electoral boundaries so that groups of voters are either spread out or bunched together to pre-determine the outcome of any election.
ghetto	An area in which only one group lives, such as Protestants or Catholics, usually associated with poor areas.

Government of Ireland Act, 1920

The act which partitioned Ireland into two states.

H Block

Name given to the prison buildings at the Maze because they were shaped like an 'H'.

hinterland

The part of the country removed from the centre of power or main centre of industry.

Hitler

Leader of the Nazi Party and main Axis power, Germany, in World War II.

Home Rule Party/movement

A party set up to achieve local government of Ireland within the framework of United Kingdom.

inter-communal

Between two recognised groups. In this context it refers to problems between the two communities, Protestant and Catholic.

intern/internment

The ability of the government to arrest and hold indefinitely without trial people suspected of acts likely to undermine the government.

Irish Republican Army (IRA)

An organisation that grew out of the Irish Volunteers which took part in the 1916 Easter Uprising and which was ready to use force to create an Irish Republic. Later split into the Official and Provisional IRA.

joint authority

A situation where Northern Ireland would be governed by both the Republic and Britain.

jurisdiction

The area over which any authority extends, for example, Northern Ireland is presently in the jurisdiction of the United Kingdom

livestock farming

Animal farming, whether cattle, sheep or pigs.

loyalist(s)

Those who totally reject any move away from the union and who have a tendency to accept or use violence to maintain it.

Lundy

Used as a term of abuse to those considered traitors. (Lundy was a Protestant who was a traitor during the Siege of Derry when he attempted to open the gates to the enemy.)

malnutrition

Situation when a person is not eating a proper diet, usually because of not having enough money to purchase healthy food.

Martin Luther King

Black civil rights leader in America who used non-violent, passive resistance and boycotts of white businesses to campaign for equal treatment of blacks.

means tested

A system by which peoples' circumstances were assessed before they were entitled to receive relief.

mortality

Referring to death as a proportion of the population.

multiple voting

The right of ratepayers to have one vote for every ten pounds paid in commercial rates, as well as one vote for rates paid for domestic property.

nationalised (industries)

Those industries which were taken into state ownership and control after World War II by the British government.

nationalist/Nationalist

Those who wished to see Ireland separated from Britain by non-violent means. Also the name of a political party dedicated to achieving these ends.

Ne Temere Decree, 1908

The Decree issued by the Catholic Church in 1908 which denied recognition to marriages between Catholics and Protestants unless they had been solemnised in the Catholic Church and which required children of mixed marriages to be brought up as Catholics.

neutral/neutrality

Neither on one side nor the other, impartial, for example, the position chosen by Eire during World War II.

Oath of Allegiance

An oath that the head of the Irish government had to make to the British Crown (part of the Anglo-Irish Treaty and the 1922 Irish Free State Constitution).

Official IRA	Heirs to the 1920s IRA. After a low-key campaign in 1956-1962 they turned to socialism and political action.
Oireachtas	The name given to the Irish Parliament in the Irish language. This name was agreed in the Irish Free State Constitution of 1922.
Ombudsman	A person appointed by the government to look into complaints. These complaints could be about, for example, housing or employment discrimination.
Orange Order	A Protestant organisation named in honour of William of Orange and dedicated to the continuation of British and Protestant rule in Ireland.
outdoor relief	Hard physical work, such as road mending to achieve a small amount of unemployment benefit, sometimes paid in 'chits' which could only be exchanged for food.
paramilitary/paramilitaries	A group organised along military lines which is prepared to use violence in support of political ideals.
Parliamentary Reform Act, 1918	An Act which increased the categories of those entitled to the vote and which doubled the electorate in Ireland.
partition	The division of one country into two separate countries, in this instance Ireland into the Free State and Northern Ireland
'points' system	A system for allocating housing fairly, in this context, without reference to an applicant's religion..
political status	An admission by the government that certain prisoners are motivated by political ideals and so are allowed privileges not granted to ordinary criminals.
Poor Law	A system by which each parish supported the poor through the rates.
power-sharing	A system by which all political parties govern together.
Proclamation of the Irish Republic	A proclamation made during the 1916 Easter Rising which declared a republic with no monarchy and no relationship with the United Kingdom.
proportional representation	A system by which voters elect candidates in decreasing order of preference. This system favours smaller parties
Provisional IRA	Split from the Official IRA in 1970 to form a more militant organisation.
ratepayers	Those who paid rates for homes or business premises. Only ratepayers were entitled to vote in local elections.
rationing	A system of distributing scarce resources fairly, usually involving ration books coupons.
rent and rates strike	Where tenants and homeowners refuse to pay as a protest against a perceive injustice.
republican(s)	Those who want Northern Ireland to be part of a united Ireland and who have a tendency to accept or use violence to achieve this goal.
republican bonds	Bonds sold by Dáil Éireann to help finance an alternative state after the 1918 election was won by Sinn Fein. (The bond was a promise by the new government to pay back the money lent at a future date plus a small amount interest.)
rioting	The situation when three or more people disturb the peace by taking to the streets and using violence.
Saorstát na hÉireann	The Free State in the Irish language.
Seanad Éireann	The upper house of the Irish Parliament (Oireachtas), similar to the House of Lords but with both appointed and elected members.

sectarian/sectarianism	When one group injures those of another group for no reason other than that they are perceived as belonging to the other 'side'.
self-determination	The right of small countries to rule themselves, recognised by the Versailles Peace Conference after the end of World War I.
Sinn Féin	The political party set up by Arthur Griffith, meaning Ourselves Alone whose goal was a Republic of Ireland, free from Britain.
soup kitchens	A place for supplying food to the poor. Often set up by charitable organisations or churches.
Taoiseach	The name for the Irish Prime Minister in the Irish language (adopted after the 1937 Irish Constitution came into force).
tariffs	Taxes levied on goods coming into a country to restrict their entry.
tuberculosis (TB)	A lung disease prevalent in the 19th and early to mid 20th centuries associated with poor housing and diet.
Ulster Special Constabulary	See B Specials.
Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF)	A Protestant paramilitary group which takes its name from the organisation set up before World War I, willing to use force to maintain the union.
unionist/Unionist	The position of those upholding the union of Ireland with Britain. Also refers to a political party with the same views usually aligned with the British Conservative Party. After partition refers to the union of Northern Ireland with Britain.
United Irishmen	A group of Irishmen, both Protestant and Catholic, led by Theobald Wolfe Tone and inspired by the French Revolution, which unsuccessfully rebelled against British rule over Ireland in 1798.
Versailles Peace Conference	A conference held after the end of World War I by the victorious allies to determine the borders of countries.
welfare state	The name given to the government plan to set up and pay for a system of care and benefits.
workhouse	A harsh institution set up by the Poor Law where poor people were housed and given food in exchange for work.