

Some landmarks about Irish history:

In Northern Ireland until the 1990s, there was a conflict between two communities: the Irish Protestants who supported the British government and were proud to be part of Britain, and the Irish Catholics, who wanted independence from Britain and to be part of the Republic of Ireland. It was not just a question of identity and religion. The Irish Catholics are less numerous than the Protestants and until the 1980s, there was a high rate of unemployment and poverty among them, they had difficulties to find good jobs or state jobs like policeman or teacher. There was a wall in Belfast separating the living areas of the two communities which did not mix. The 1980s were a period of troubles with a situation of civil war and British troops were sent there. Both communities had a paramilitary group. The most famous one was the IRA (Irish republican Army) defending the Catholics cause. The group organized many terrorist acts in Northern Ireland and Great Britain. In 1998, Northern Ireland signed an agreement with the British government ending 30 years of troubles and violence.

Reading comprehension:

a) Which communities were involved in Northern Ireland's conflict? Why ?

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b) Did these two communities mix ? Why/Why not?

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c) There was something particular in Belfast. What was it ?

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d) What is the IRA ?

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e) What about the situation in Northern Ireland today ?

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Photographs taken by William Rukeyser. Find the right title for each picture:

Mass arrest of civilians / Blood on the street / Blanket



Last picture: who are the people painted on the house's wall ?