THE REFERENDUM

A Digitisation and Outreach Project from the Linen Hall Library

Resource 5

A GCSE Toolkit

DIVIDED SOCIETY
Northern Ireland 1990 - 1998

Photo courtesy of Pacemaker Press
Introduction

This education resource was created as part of the Linen Hall Library’s ‘Divided Society’ project. It is a learning tool aimed at GCSE students studying the 1990s period, however those studying politics and history subjects will also find its material relevant. The resource can be used to stimulate debate and will help towards the development of empathy and understanding of the topic. Included in the resource are samples of political cartoons, newspaper front pages and political posters. Materials are held at the Linen Hall Library.

Key areas of interest include:

- Ceasefires
- Bill Clinton’s Visit
- The Good Friday Agreement
- The Referendum
- First Day of Power-Sharing

Students will develop skills in:

- Research
- Thinking critically/analysing
- Reading/using primary sources
- Developing an understanding of history’s value and significance for today’s society
- Developing an awareness of how the past has been represented, interpreted and given significance for different reasons and purposes
- Acquiring an understanding of different identities within society and an appreciation of social, cultural, and religious diversity
- Recognising that their historical knowledge and skills help them understand the present and also provides them with a basis for their role as responsible citizens, as well as for the possible further study of history.
U2 can change tomorrow

Article by Liz Trainor from The Irish News 20th May 1992

Voters were last night urged to “give peace a chance” as SDLP leader John Hume and UUP boss David Trimble joined together in a show of unity at the Waterfront Hall in support of the Mitchell deal.

Around 2,000 Protestant and Catholic sixth formers - crammed into the hall to see Downpatrick band Ash and Dublin supergroup U2 - cheered when the SDLP and Ulster Unionist leaders walked on stage and grasped each other’s hands.

U2 vocalist Bono, who said it was, “great to be in Belfast in a week where history was being made,” described both leaders as men who have, “taken a leap of faith out of the past and into the future.”

Both political leaders smiled and waved to the crowd but left it to Bono to call on the packed concert hall to observe a minute’s silence for all those who had lost their lives during the last 30 years of troubles.

U2 joined Downpatrick band Ash on stage after an hour and sang their own hit ‘One’ and Ben E King’s ‘Stand By Me.’

The 2,000 strong crowd - many too young to vote - joined in with U2 lead singer Bono when he chorused: “All we are saying is give peace a chance.”

Before the concert, Bono, met outside the Waterfront by John Hume and David Trimble, called for a resounding yes vote on Friday and appealed to those to vote in support of the agreement.
DON'T LET THEM DOWN

"My daughter was at the concert on Tuesday night. For me it was a concert that symbolised the Future. A future where all our children live normal, carefree lives, going wherever they want, whenever they want, with whoever they want."

David Trimble

VOTE YES
VOTE FOR THE FUTURE

Published by the Ulster Unionist Party, 3 Glengall Street, Belfast

By permission of the Ulster Unionist party.
The poster on Page 4 was released the day before the referendum vote took place. It is a personal advert taken out by Ulster Unionist leader David Trimble.

**Questions**

1. Why do you think this was placed in a local newspaper and given a full page?

2. Why is there a photograph of young people?

3. How do we know that David Trimble endorses the advert? Why is this important?

**Task**

4. Look on YouTube for the peace concert with the bands U2 and Ash. Describe the concert and why politicians wanted to attract a young audience.
1. Why do you think some Unionist politicians were against a ‘Yes’ vote during the referendum?

2. In the article voters are unsure about how they are going to vote. Imagine you are voting in the referendum and think about how you would have voted.

3. Some voters changed their minds about how they were going to vote. Why do you think this happened? What were their main reasons?
4. A ‘Yes’ vote won the majority of votes and led to The Good Friday Agreement being signed. Describe the mood in Northern Ireland at the time.

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5. Why do you think there was such a high turnout for the vote?

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Since 1968 the Linen Hall Library has been collecting material relating to the conflict in Northern Ireland. Over the years the Library has become the repository for a vast amount of material relating to the subject and the subsequent Peace Process.

The Northern Ireland Political Collection now consists of over 350,000 items including books, pamphlets, leaflets, posters, manifestos, press releases, newspapers, objects and many thousands of periodicals. It is a completely unique collection that is unrivalled throughout the world.

The Divided Society project sees a significant section of the Northern Ireland Political Collection digitised. The project is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Ulster Garden Villages, and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Hundreds of Periodical titles relating to the conflict have been digitised and made available from the new Divided Society website. These are publications that were published between 1990-1998 in the UK, Ireland and further afield, and documented the issues that affected Northern Ireland during that period.

This was a significant time in Northern Ireland's history and included events such as the Downing Street Declaration, several ceasefires, and the ongoing peace negotiations which culminated in the signing of the Good Friday Agreement.

Note of thanks
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