

Issues arising from Protestant rule 1921-1968

Gerrymandering

Electoral boundaries were fixed so that Protestants could control all the local councils.

Large numbers of Catholics elected only a small number of councillors.

Small numbers of Protestants elected a large number of councillors.

This reaffirmed the Unionist held belief that the Protestants should rule Northern Ireland for Protestants and not always Protestants and Catholics

While the Protestants controlled the councils, the best jobs and houses would be given to Protestants. Needy Catholics would be pushed behind less needy Protestants.

Council Housing

Protestant/Unionists tried to give the best housing to their own people. This led to many Catholics living in sub standard housing. When baths and toilets were put into council houses, it would be Protestant areas first, Catholic areas second, if there was money left.

Jobs

Council jobs were more likely to go to Protestants than Catholics, often ignoring the experience and qualifications of the applicants. In the outside world of work, skilled jobs (usually higher paid) went to Protestants.

Conclusion

These 3 factors led to much resentment amongst the Catholic communities. Even if a United Ireland was not their goal, many Catholics felt mistreated and under represented.

With a lack of say in local government, people were more likely to protest on the streets.

In addition, many felt they could follow the example set by Black Civil Rights activists in the U.S.A.