

BACKGROUND:

Bloody Sunday was one of the most infamous events of the troubles in Northern Ireland

It took place in January 1972 in the wake of the violence and fall out over the introduction of internment in August 1971.

NICRA decided to hold a march in DERRY to protest about remaining civil rights issues and the continued hated policy of internment

The March was BANNED by the authorities but went ahead anyway with thousands taking part



1) BACKGROUND




BLOODY SUNDAY


1972




3) WHAT WERE THE REACTIONS TO BLOODY SUNDAY?

1) UNIONISTS : 


- Regretted the deaths of the protesters but regarded the March as being provocative
- Fearing the further rise of the IRA following Bloody Sunday hard line unionists started ULSTER VANGUARD. This was led by William CRAIG and was a LOYALIST PROTEST ORGANISATION with huge support. Up to 70,000 attended one meeting.

2) NATIONALISTS 

- They were deeply angry particularly at the British army and government. In Dublin the British embassy was burnt down by angry protesters
- They were further angered by the British government inquiry.

3) BRITISH GOVERNMENT (WIDGERY INQUIRY) 

- The British government were criticised around the world for the actions in Bloody Sunday
- An INQUIRY was ordered to establish the causes of the violence and establish if the soldiers were guilty. This was called the WIDGERY TRIBUNAL. It only added insult to injury as its findings seemed to place no blame on the soldiers. Nationalists were deeply angry. They called it the WIDGERY WHITEWASH
- It is also felt that Bloody Sunday encouraged the British government to close Stormont and introduce DIRECT RULE from Westminster in a bid to control the situation

4) IRA 

Membership of the IRA rocketed after Bloody Sunday and the violence saw 1972 as the worst year of the troubles with nearly 500 dead

The NICRA March started peacefully but soon rioting took place in isolated pockets of the route.

The very tough and highly trained members of the British PARACHUTE REGIMENT opened fire on the protesters (some believe they thought they wear under fire, others that it was an unprovoked attack)

FOURTEEN PEOPLE DIED. All were unarmed



RESULTS OF BLOODY SUNDAY

Far from ending the Troubles the introduction of internment enflamed an already dangerous environment.

- 1) Violence increased massively. Nearly 500 people died in 1972 making it easily the bloodiest year of the Troubles
- 2) the IRA grew in support and weaponry and was well financed after Bloody Sunday
- 3) The British army had its reputation and relationship with nationalists ruined by Bloody Sunday
- 4) FAULKNER was under deep pressure as things began to get out of control. The British government began to look for a longer term solution and that was to shut down Stormont and introduce DIRECT RULE from Westminster.



4) RESULTS

.. On Bloody Sunday:

" Money, guns and recruits flooded into the IRA"

