**Anglo Irish Agreement 1985**

**Background**

- **Intergovernmental Conference**
  - Set up in 1983
  - Discussed issues of concern between North and South
  - Involved two governments

- **Permanent Secretariat**
  - Set up in Maryfield, Belfast
  - Supported intergovernmental conference

- **Irish Government**
  - Accepted the principle of consent

- **Power-sharing**
  - Not part of the agreement

**What was agreed?**

- The agreement gave the Republic of Ireland a say in the affairs of Northern Ireland for the first time.

**Reactions?**

- SDLP and Sinn Fein/IRA rejected the agreement as they felt it was nationalist.

**Who signed it and why?**

- **British Government**
  - Wanted Sinn Fein and IRA weakened
  - Saw SDLP as part of the solution

- **Irish Government**
  - Wanted to reduce Sinn Fein's power and boost moderate SDLP
  - Wanted more cooperation with the Irish government over IRA

**Key IRA**

- The agreement was seen as progress.
- Sinn Fein grew in popularity.
- Nationalists began to support a more hardline thinking.

**Key Events**

- HUNGER STRIKES of 1981
  - Major effect on NI Politics
  - Sinn Fein grew in popularity
  - Nationalists began to support a more hardline thinking

- **Sinn Fein Thinking**
  - Sinn Fein began to support a policy of the armalite (gun) and ballot box (elections)
  - Combining an armed violent struggle and winning elections

- **British Government**
  - Concerned about nationalism heading to more extreme SF viewpoint

- **Sinn Fein**
  - Began to support a policy of the armalite and ballot box

- **SDLP**
  - Worried about the IRA threat

**When was agreement signed?**

- November 1985

**Anglo Irish Agreement was signed by**

- Margaret Thatcher, on behalf of British Government
- Garret FitzGerald, on behalf of Irish Government

**Was New Ireland Forum successful?**

- British government wouldn't support its ideas
- Unionists refused to attend as they felt it was nationalist viewpoints
- Republicans/SF were not invited as they supported violence
  - Therefore it seemed pointless...

**Anglo Irish Agreement 1985**

- The SDLP were worried about nationalism heading to a more extreme SF viewpoint
- Sinn Fein Thinking: Sinn Fein began to follow a policy of the armalite and ballot box (elections)
  - Meaning they were trying to get a United Ireland by a combination of an armed violent struggle and winning elections

**BEFORE THE AGREEMENT**

- SDLP: Happy - NI would have ROI involved in its affairs for first time.
- Also SDLP were behind much of the agreements background

- Sinn Fein/IRA rejected the agreement seeing it as putting a United Ireland further away as the agreement was 'recognised' Northern Ireland

- SDLP and Irish Government started this forum to look into solutions for a peaceful Ireland
- They had recommendations including:
  - Joint London Dublin rule of NI
  - Federal Ireland
- British government would do more cooperation with the Irish government over dealing with the IRA

**After the Agreement**

- SDLP: Most MP's supported it
- They wanted Sinn Fein and IRA weakened and also saw SDLP as part of the solution

- Sinn Fein/IRA: Felt bitterly betrayed by Thatcher and the British government
  - They hated that the deal had been kept from them and they feared the British government also saw Sinn Fein/IRA as part of the solution

- British government: Agreed and wanted to work to reduce Sinn Fein support and increase SDLP

- Irish government: Wanted to reduce Sinn Fein's power and boost moderate SDLP
  - They didn't support the IRA campaign and felt the SDLP were moderate and key to any solution

- SDLP: Agreed and wanted to work to reduce Sinn Fein support and increase SDLP