

Partitions III — Northern Ireland

Nobody asked but ...

OK, I have somewhat mixed feelings on this one. The niggling part of the mix is that the present population of Northern Ireland probably want the status quo, but the overwhelming part of the mix is that the character of the current population was created by British usurpation, historically. The United Kingdom has no claim to the land that belongs to the Irish people. This is fundamental, despite any and all convolutions of the past.

I am not an expert on either Irish or British history. There is too much of it. But I do know that I have yet to find anything in it which justifies the present problem, the UK feel as though they have a foothold on the Emerald Isle. The Irish had the misfortune of living too close, first to the Vikings, then to the Brits. In any event, when the UK finally acquiesced to independence for the Republic of Ireland in 1922, they saw fit to spite the new nation by withholding part of it. I don't know what pros and cons the Brits were wrestling with at the time, but they frequently solve their problems with some wholesale fiasco that relegates the problem to someone else. In the case of Northern Ireland, it was more than half a century of intramural violence between the hapless Catholics and Protestants who lived within its confines.

There is now a restless peace in Ulster. How long will it last? A force of Nature is being artificially capped there. Like stilling the San Andreas fault or calming the magma in the Yellowstone Caldera, human nature is being repressed in this innocent province. As with all estopped forces, the containment will fail, either in a large way or in a painfully slow gradualism.

— Kilgore Forelle