The Rest of the World

Ireland

Just as in real life, the Troubles occurred, and Ireland split into Northern Ireland (part of Britain) and the Republic of Ireland (which is its own country). The Republic of Ireland is extremely Catholic; if you imagine ‘basically Mexico, but smaller and Irish’, you won’t be too far off. Northern Ireland has a bit more of a complicated situation.

Paramilitaries

Since the end of the Troubles, instead of paramilitaries being on the decline in Northern Ireland, they have continued to grow due to the social unrest caused by the fertility crisis. While Northern Ireland is *in theory* run by the British government, in practice all areas are controlled and run by local paramilitaries. While each paramilitary does try to present a unified front ideologically, it is not uncommon for the people running a branch of a paramilitary in a particular town to primarily set the rules to be most convenient to them, with the views of the ‘cause’ being an afterthought.

The three major paramilitaries are the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), the Ulster Defence Association (UDA), and the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA). The UVF and UDA are both violently Protestant, but the UVF primarily supports Ulster loyalism while the UDA primarily supports Ulster nationalism. PIRA is violently Catholic and supports a united Republic of Ireland. In almost all parts of Northern Ireland (particularly touristy spots, or spots where police frequently patrol, will avoid this), posters making vague threats about what will happen if you disobey the local paramilitary in any way are common.

People from Northern Ireland will never use ‘Northern Ireland’ when talking about where they’re from, except in school assignments; they will instead use either ‘Ulster’ (if they are Protestant) or ‘Ireland’ (if they are Catholic), and when being more specific about regions, they will refer to ‘UDA/UVF/PIRA territory’ as opposed to geographical markers.

Ulster loyalism

The Ulster British are attached to ‘Ulster’ (Northern Ireland) being a part of the UK. They support the British Government and monarchy, and support Ulster being a part of it. They tend to enforce British laws, so as long as you’re Protestant, living in a UVF-controlled area is not super different from living in Britain (other than the method of enforcement, since it is ‘secret paramilitary vigilante justice’ instead of ‘cops’). If you’re Catholic, you or your loved ones are a likely target of violence.

Ulster nationalism

In real life, the UDA considered Ulster nationalism for a time before rejecting it; in this history, due to people’s mixed opinions of the British government’s handling of the fertility crisis, the UDA embraced it. The Ulster nationalists tend to believe that the British government it completely incompetent and that they should be running Ulster as an independent country; defenses range from ‘the paramilitaries are *already* doing all of the policing and law-making, just informally and secretly’ to ‘the british government isn’t bombing the catholics, clearly it’s not doing enough to protect us’ to ‘i think the UDA’s policies on the handling of the fertility crisis would be better for me than British ones’.

UDA territory tends to be more dangerous to live in. The laws that they make and enforce are sometimes wildly different from the British laws, so that people are often forced to choose between potentially getting in trouble with the police or the UDA. They are also typically more harsh on Catholics, ‘potential Catholics’, and ‘Catholic supporters’ than the UVF is.

Catholicism

While Catholicism is a minority in Northern Ireland, PIRA is the largest of the three paramilitaries (though it is not larger than the other two *combined*). However, they are shrinking quickly and steadily, as Catholics convert or emigrate to the much safer Republic of Ireland. Most land near the border is PIRA-controlled, and PIRA helps people in these border areas with emigration to the Republic of Ireland. People in PIRA territory also face the same dilemma as those in UDA territory, when dealing with a situation where they can either obey British law or PIRA law. PIRA tends to see themselves and their fellow Catholics as being heavily persecuted underdogs; however, Protestants in PIRA territory are in significant danger, just as Catholics in UVF/UDA territory are.

Social Issues

While Northern Ireland is religious, much of UVF and UDA territory is in fact less religious than most areas in Mexico or Gilead. It is not dangerous to be a ‘Christmas-Easter Christian’, so long as you’re passionate about being a Protestant and not a Catholic; similarly, while abortion and same-gender partnerships are illegal, it is not uncommon or dangerous to take a day trip to another part of the UK and “miscarry”, and homosexuality itself is not illegal, nor will people have to fear for their lives from the paramilitaries if they are open about being LGBT+, though they may face serious harassment and hate crimes from less official channels. PIRA territory can be modeled essentially as Mexico or the Republic of Ireland, with increased risk of terrorism, persecution, and issues with the law, but also with increased freedom of movement and reduced censorship and totalitarianism.

Censorship is not really a thing in Northern Ireland about most topics, mostly due to the lack of a competent central authority and strong freedom of movement; however, everyone self-censors when talking about the paramilitaries unless they are highly anonymized, for fear that a paramilitary member might hear them and mark them as a target

Other Religions

Muslims are a small but extant minority; they are mostly overlooked on the basis of ‘nobody can figure out if they should count as Protestant or Catholic’. Atheists are typically seen as either Protestant or Catholic socially on the basis of their political beliefs (whether they think Northern Ireland should continue as it is, join the Republic of Ireland, or become its own country), but also on the basis of who their family is. Neither atheism nor Islam are particularly dangerous to believe, but both will definitely attract weird looks and potential social repercussions; however, if you are particularly militant about it, then you may make a good target for the local paramilitary groups, though no more so than with most other traits that make you stand out as strange.

Everywhere Else

China

China has a Eugenics Policy instead of a One-Child Policy; it basically runs on a permissions system (for men). Women who are capable of live birth are co-opted by the government to bear IVF children by sperm donors selected for scoring well on various measures of their fitness. The women who raise their own children are called ‘princesses’ and get a government-provided house, budget, and live-in handler. The women who don't want to raise their own children (or aren't allowed to, e.g. prisoners) are called ‘flowers’ and get a stipend but not the other things. Heavy sex selection means that upwards of 90% of the population is female.

Revision #3
Created 2021-01-15 03:00:55 UTC by westwind
Updated 2021-01-15 16:37:30 UTC by marikiathoi