In geopolitics, much of what nations value is the availability of resources based solely on the proximity of those nations. Geographically speaking, if a nation desires a resource, and has the choice of acquiring that resource from a neighboring country and another thousands of miles away across a sea, that country will always choose the closest one. It is the same as going to the closest store to obtain whatever shopping item that you need. You certainly don’t want to go across town to get it when you can go down the street.

Many times, this “acquisition” is not made freely. There can be an agreement between countries to trade for resources. However, if no agreement can be reached, such a resource can be had by other means, some of them violent.

Ireland and the United Kingdom share such a geographical proximity. In the 16th century, British royalty had acquired lands in Northern Ireland for such resources. While this was the case, Ireland was under British control and instituted a Protestant religious ***temperament*** . This remained the case until the early 20th century when many of those earls left Ireland and returned to the UK, leaving an opportunity for Ireland to unite its country.

After petitioning the UK for its independence, there were disagreements between the unionists in the south who did not want to support ***Home Rule Bill of 1920***and those *loyalists* in the north who did. One possible solution was the ***Partition of Ireland***, a separation of the country into two, Northern and Southern Ireland. While this was not a favorable outcome for Ireland, the Brits were able to maintain control of N. Ireland because of the Protestant provinces (towns) that the earls left. These were called the “Ulster Provinces.” These towns were mostly Protestant, and the people were called “Unionists.” They were called this because they were in favor of maintaining ties to the UK.

The remainder of N. Ireland was Catholic and were called “Loyalists.” These were Irish citizens who felt they were loyal to the free state of Ireland and wanted nothing to do with the UK. In fact, they were in favor of a unified Irish state.

As with the acquisition of resources, if neither the *Loyalists* nor the *Unionists* can reach an agreement, the resource (in this case the independence of a country) can be acquired in various ways. Violence was certainly a key component, a tool used by both sides to persuade the other. This activities in this section will attempt to help bring understanding to the Irish 30-year conflict known as “*The Troubles.”*

***Temperament****- A person’s or animal’s nature, especially as it permanently affects their behavior.*

***Partition-*** *The official separation of Ireland by the British into two countries, Northern Ireland and Southern Ireland. Came as a result of the South’s opposition to the Home Rule Bill of 1920*

***Home Rule Bill of 1920****- Relinquishes control of Ireland to Ireland. Protestants were not in favor of this, as many of them were unionists and in favor of remaining under British rule.*