

Killings in Northern Ireland

*Belfast Independent Research Group
Belfast 7, Northern Ireland*

This article provides a statistical breakdown of the deaths in Northern Ireland as a result of the conflict in the period August, 1969 to December, 1990. The analysis attempts to avoid the media treatment which reports each new death as a single event. The media rarely offers any analysis and generally fails to place them in any context.

Table 1 provides a breakdown of *admitted* British forces killed. Table 2 shows which military organisations killed British forces. From this it can be seen that the main, and virtually only, danger to British forces is from the Irish Republican Army (IRA). (Apart from the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA) in the early 1980's.) The British claim that they are in the middle of the conflict in Ireland, separating the two warring sides, and at risk from both sides, is shown to be incorrect, because they are not at any appreciable risk of being attacked by loyalist military activists. In fact, it could be said that there is an alliance between British forces and loyalist military activists. Republican military activists have killed 1012 British forces members since 1969, and loyalist activists have killed only 11 during the same period.

Table 3 gives a yearly breakdown of admitted British forces killed. This clearly shows, and 1990 was no exception, the continuing nature of this guerilla war. There are no new IRA offensives, unexpected attacks, etc. The British have also admitted to have suffered over 10000 of their forces wounded in this conflict. The overwhelming majority of them have been inflicted by republican military activists.

Table 4 is a breakdown of *admitted* British forces killings. Worthy of note is the fact that the British have admitted killing more civilians than military activists. The large difference between the number of republican military activists killed (131) and loyalist military activists killed (12) by British forces reflects the position of British forces in relation to these two groups as mentioned above. There has been scarcely any conflict between British forces and loyalist military activists. Only two loyalist activists have been killed by British forces since 1975.

Of the 184 (including 1 Sinn Fein member) admitted killings of civilians by British forces, only 32 were involved in some sort of criminal activity: 15 in robbery, 16 travelling in stolen cars, and 1 damaging commercial property. Apart from one would-be robber armed with a sawn-off shotgun, all were unarmed, as were all the other civilians.

Of the 131 republican military activists killed by British forces, 111 were members of the IRA, 11 were members of the INLA (including 1 member of the IPLO), and 9 were members of the official IRA. There is no assumption that all these republican forces were armed when they were killed, or posed an immediate threat to British forces.

Of the loyalist military activists killed by British forces, 7 were members of the Ulster Defence

Association (UDA) and 5 were members of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF).

Of the overall total of 336 admitted killings by British forces, 283 were committed by the British Army, 6 were committed by the Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR), 1 was committed by the Royal Air Force, and 1 was committed by the Ulster Special Constabulary ("B" Specials).

Table 5 gives a breakdown of killings carried out by loyalist military activists. The loyalists, particularly during the 1970's, did not claim responsibility for many of the killings. Further research by this author was required to establish that loyalists were responsible for a particular killing. When it was certain that a killing was carried out by loyalist military activists, even though they do not claim responsibility for the killing, then it is included in the list. If there is no certainty that the killing was carried out by loyalists then the killing is excluded from the list and is placed in the "killers unknown" category.

The major loyalist military activists responsible for the killings in the list are as follows:

(1) **Ulster Defence Association (UDA)**

They have *never* claimed responsibility for any killings, probably to preserve their "legal status", and preferring to use their "nom de guerre", Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF).

(2) **Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF)**

Also their off-shoot, Protestant Action Force (PAF).

(3) **Red hand Commando (RHC)**

(4) **Young Militants (YM)**

1. Republican military activists (Total killed 19)

Irish Republican Army (IRA).....	13
Official Irish Republican Army (OIRA).....	4
Irish National Liberation Army (INLA).....	2

2. "Catholic/nationalist/republican politicians" (Total killed 18)

Sinn Fein (SF)	7
Irish Republican Socialist Party (IRSP) members	3
Workers Party (WP) members (including 1 Republican Clubs member)	2
Social & Democratic Labour Party (SDLP) members	2
Irish Independence Party (IIP) member	1
Independent "nationalist" councillors	2
Human rights lawyer	1

3. Sectarian (Total killed 622)

Attacks on "catholic" civilian targets, including "protestants" killed because they associated with "catholics", were mistaken for "catholics", or were killed during attacks on "catholic" civilians. This also includes civilians killed during attacks on republican/nationalist military and political targets, or were mistaken for republican/nationalist military and political targets. These figures also include 40 civilians killed by loyalists in the Irish Republic (33 on one day, 17th. May, 1974).

Approximately 80% of loyalist killings fall into the "Sectarian" category. Given the clandestine nature of republican military organisations the identity of many of the members is not known to the loyalists. Therefore they have launched indiscriminate attacks on many occasions against the "catholic" civilian population, probably in an attempt to intimidate and terrorise this community into abandoning its rebellion against Unionist/British rule.

4. British forces (Total killed 11 + 1 civilian)

Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC)	6
Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR)	3
British Army (BA)	1
Prison guard	1

Of the 11 British forces killed by loyalist military activists, 3 were killed during attacks on "catholic" civilians or "catholic" owned property. One was a sectarian killing of a "catholic" member of the UDR, and one was during a bomb attack on a garage that had remained open during a loyalist strike. Only six of the killings of British forces have been deliberate (4 RUC, 1 BA, and 1 prison guard). There was also one civilian killed by loyalists during an attack on British forces.

5. Loyalist feuds (Total killed 51)

Ulster Defence Association (UDA), including former UDA members	24
Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF)	7
Loyalists (precise organisation unknown)	18
Civilians	2

6. Premature bomb explosions (Total killed 25)

Ulster Defence Association (UDA)	6
Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF)	14
Loyalists (precise organisation unknown)	2
Civilians	3

7. Others (Total killed 28)

Alleged informers	7
Alleged criminals	2
Punishment shooting (with intention to wound)	1
Civilians killed during armed robberies	7
Civilians killed during loyalist strikes, for continuing to work (1 fireman, 1 bus driver)	2
Civilian killed during an attack on an alleged informer	1
Persons killed by loyalists, with reason for the killing unknown	8

8. Table 1: Breakdown of admitted British forces killed, 1969 to 31st. December, 1990.

(a) British Army (BA) in Ireland.....	438	Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC).....	277
(b) BA outside Ireland	50	Former members of RUC	14
(c) Former members of BA	5	(d) British police	5
Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR)	189		296
Former members of UDR	36		
	718	Prison guards	24
		Former prison guards	2
			26
Overall total			1040

Notes:

- (a) Includes 1 Royal Navy.
- (b) Includes 4 Royal Air Force.
- (c) Killed by Irish republican military activists in Ireland.
- (d) Killed by Irish republican military activists in Britain

The above figures exclude "prestige" non-military British dead. For example, Airey Neave, Lord Mountbatten, Richard Sykes, Christopher Ewart-Biggs, Ian Gow, etc.

The figures also exclude all British forces killed in the following type of incident:

- (1) Accidental shootings of British forces by other British forces members.
- (2) Killings during rows/fights between individual British forces members.
- (3) Suicides.
- (4) Road accidents, whether on or off duty,
- (5) British forces helicopter crashes and accidents.
- (6) British forces patrol boat crashes and accidents.

9. **Table 2: Breakdown of who killed British forces, 1969 to 31st. December, 1990.**

Irish Republican Army (IRA)	966
(a) Irish National Liberation Army (INLA)	39
(b) Official Irish Republican Army (OIRA)	7
(c) Loyalist military activists	11
(d) Out of uniform, killed by other British forces	4
(e) Undercover British forces, killed by other British forces	5
(f) Street disturbances	5
Unknown	3
	1040

Notes:

- (a) Includes Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) and Irish Peoples Liberation Organisation (IPLO).
 (b) The Official IRA has had a ceasefire since May, 1972.
 (c) Of the 11 British forces killed by loyalist military activists, 3 were killed during attacks on "catholic" civilians or "catholic" owned property. One was a sectarian killing of a "catholic" member of the Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR), and one was during a bomb attack on a garage that had remained open during a loyalist strike. Only six of the killings of British forces have been deliberate.
 (d) Out-of-uniform British forces were assumed to have been civilians when they were deliberately killed by other British forces members.
 (e) Undercover British forces, deliberately killed by other British forces when an undercover operation went wrong.
 (f) Killed, but not shot, during street disturbances and riots; hit on the head by a brick, etc. It is not possible to link these killings to any other military organisation.

10. **Table 3: Yearly breakdown of admitted British forces killed, 1969 to 31st. December, 1990.**

Year	IRA	OIRA to 31/12/74 INLA from 1/1/75	Loyalists	Others	Total
1969	0	0	1	0	1
1970	2	0	0	0	2
1971	59	0	0	1	60
1972	133	6	2	6	147
1973	79	0	2	1	82
1974	68	OIRA 1 INLA 1	1	2	72
1975	32	1	1	0	34
1976	57	2	0	2	61
1977	48	0	1	1	50
1978	34	0	0	0	34
1979	72	5	0	0	77
1980	32	2	1	2	37
1981	44	6	0	0	50
1982	40	17	0	1	58
1983	37	2	0	0	39
1984	29	2	1	0	32
1985	30	1	0	0	31
1986	24	1	0	0	25
1987	29	0	0	0	29
1988	45	0	1	0	46
1989	38	0	0	1	39
1990	34	0	0	0	34
Total	966	46	11	17	1040

Britain: Includes "Prestige" British civilians, and civilians deliberately killed in Britain.

11. **Table 4: Admitted British forces killings, 1969 to 31st. December, 1990.**

Year	Killed by				
	Civilians	Republican military activists	Loyalist military activists	Other British forces	Total
1969	10	0	1	0	10
1970	5	0	0	0	5
1971	36	9	0	0	45
1972	45	31	5	2	83
1973	14	15	2	0	31
1974	7	7	2	2	18
1975	3	3	1	0	7
1976	9	4	0	2	15
1977	3	5	0	0	8
1978	4	6	0	0	10
1979	1	1	0	0	2
1980	6	1	0	2	9
1981	12	4	0	0	16
1982	6	6	0	0	12
1983	5	5	1	0	11
1984	4	8	0	0	12
1985	2	3	0	0	5
1986	2	3	0	0	5
1987	1	8	0	0	9
1988	2	8	0	0	10
1989	1	0	1	1	3
1990	6	4	0	0	10
Total	184	131	12	9	336

Excludes:

- (1) Accidental killings of British forces by other British forces members.
- (2) Killings during rows/fights between individual British forces members.
- (3) Killings by off-duty British forces members.

12. **Table 5: Killings by loyalist military activists, 1969 to 31st. December, 1990.**

Year	Republican military activists	Nationalist "politicos"	Sectarian	British forces	Loyalist feuds	Premature explosions	Others	Total
1969	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	3
1970	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
1971	0	0	17	0	1	2	0	20
1972	1	0	99	2	6	0	0	106
1973	3	2	63	2	6	3	4	84
1974	2	1	109	1	5	4	3	125
1975	0	1	97	1	9	9	4	121
1976	1	2	101	0	5	0	2	111
1977	0	0	15	1	1	4	4	25
1978	1	0	7	0	2	0	0	10
1979	2	0	14	0	1	0	0	17
1980	0	4	5	1	0	2	0	12
1981	1	1	9	0	0	0	1	12
1982	0	1	7	0	4	0	2	14
1983	1	1	4	0	2	0	2	10
1984	0	1	5	1	0	0	0	7
1985	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	4
1986	0	0	13	0	2	0	0	15
1987	1	0	11	0	1	0	2	15
1988	2	0	17	1	3	0	0	23
1989	2	2	13	0	0	0	1	18
1990	0	2	14	0	0	0	3	19
Total	19	18	622	11 (+1 civilian 1973)	51	25	28	775

Excludes:

- (1) Accidental killings of loyalist military activists civilians by other loyalist military activists.
- (2) Killings during rows/fights between individual loyalist military activists and civilians. (personal matters.)