# Noel Doran warns that ignoring lessons from Northern Ireland risks deepening divisions in UK and US politics



Noel Doran reflects on the complexities arising from divided societies, drawing a poignant parallel between the historical struggles in Northern Ireland and the contemporary political climate in the United States under former President Donald Trump. His observations underscore a critical theme: societies plagued by division, whether through race, religion, or politics, find themselves increasingly vulnerable to decline.

In Northern Ireland, the harrowing legacy of the Troubles left an indelible mark, yet attempts at power-sharing such as the Sunningdale Agreement in 1973 and the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 initially promised hope. However, these milestones often failed due to fierce opposition, highlighting the fragility of inclusive governance in a divided society. Today, with a new Labour government taking charge, there are fears that the echoes of historical sectarian strife could resurface, particularly as the current administration appears more focused on consolidating power than fostering unity.

Doran's observations resonate even more starkly against the backdrop of recent political shifts in Northern Ireland. Once, the province was proudly touted as a "Protestant Parliament and a Protestant State," a stark contrast to today's call for inclusivity and diversity. However, this apparent evolution is now threatened as the Labour leadership leans towards policies that may marginalise the voices of those on the political right, further fragmenting the landscape.

Conversely, Doran highlights the alarming ramifications of divisive rhetoric in the United States, wherein Trump's rise marked a departure from civility and compromise. The polarization within American politics mirrors the growing detachment from the principles of democracy, exemplified by the Labour government's pursuit of policies that seem increasingly out of touch with the concerns of many citizens. As party lines harden, Doran warns that such an atmosphere breeds contempt, straying further from the dialogue necessary for a thriving democracy.

In a striking metaphor, the former president's actions are likened to authoritarian figures, showcasing a potential trajectory that the UK must heed as it navigates its current political climate. The recent election results serve as a stark reminder that voters in the UK are yearning for representation that reflects their concerns, casting a shadow on the new government's ability to unify the country. The lessons from Northern Ireland are cautionary, reminding contemporary figures that exclusionary practices lead only to turmoil and discontent.

Ultimately, Doran posits that dividing societies breed dire consequences. The fate of American democracy may hang in the balance under such polarization, but the lessons from Northern Ireland underscore the vital need for reconciliation and respect for all views. The newly elected leaders must take heed of historical precedents, as they chart a course that acknowledges the profound importance of inclusivity and compromise, lest they repeat the mistakes of the past.

Doran's reflections serve as a clarion call, urging all political leaders to listen to the sidelined voices in society. Dismissing these voices not only endangers the fabric of democracy but threatens to unravel the very progress that has been achieved, as history has shown.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

* <https://www.irishnews.com/opinion/noel-doran-divided-societies-do-not-prosper-as-trump-could-learn-from-us-RTCWYSB6DFDVRFFYDA23LT75SM/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
* <https://www.irishnews.com/opinion/noel-doran-divided-societies-do-not-prosper-as-trump-could-learn-from-us-RTCWYSB6DFDVRFFYDA23LT75SM/> - Noel Doran, a journalist with over 40 years of experience and former editor of The Irish News, discusses the challenges of divided societies, drawing parallels between Northern Ireland's history and the United States under President Donald Trump. He highlights the Sunningdale Agreement of 1973 and the Good Friday Agreement of 1998 as efforts to establish power-sharing and mutual respect in Northern Ireland, contrasting them with the current political climate in the U.S. Doran emphasizes that societies divided along lines of race, religion, or ethnicity are less likely to prosper.
* <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Good-Friday-Agreement> - The Good Friday Agreement, signed on April 10, 1998, is a pivotal accord that ended much of the violence during the Troubles in Northern Ireland. It established devolved government in Northern Ireland, emphasizing power-sharing between unionists and nationalists. The agreement addressed issues of sovereignty, governance, and civil rights, aiming to foster cooperation and peace between the United Kingdom and Ireland. It was ratified by popular vote in both regions, marking a significant step towards reconciliation and stability.
* <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Sunningdale-Agreement> - The Sunningdale Agreement, signed on December 9, 1973, was an attempt to establish a power-sharing government in Northern Ireland and a cross-border Council of Ireland. It aimed to address the political and sectarian divisions by involving both unionists and nationalists in governance. However, the agreement faced strong opposition from unionist factions and loyalist paramilitaries, leading to its collapse in May 1974. Despite its failure, it laid the groundwork for future peace efforts, including the Good Friday Agreement.
* <https://www.time.com/4571676/president-obama-donald-trump-economic-anxiety/> - In a 2016 press conference in Athens, President Obama reflected on Donald Trump's election victory, noting that Trump tapped into public economic anxieties such as inequality and concerns about the future. Obama emphasized the need for leaders to address these issues to prevent negative reactions and questioned whether Trump's proposed solutions would meet the needs of his supporters. He highlighted the importance of addressing economic dislocation and fears about future generations to prevent divisive politics.
* <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Good-Friday-Agreement> - The Good Friday Agreement, signed on April 10, 1998, is a pivotal accord that ended much of the violence during the Troubles in Northern Ireland. It established devolved government in Northern Ireland, emphasizing power-sharing between unionists and nationalists. The agreement addressed issues of sovereignty, governance, and civil rights, aiming to foster cooperation and peace between the United Kingdom and Ireland. It was ratified by popular vote in both regions, marking a significant step towards reconciliation and stability.
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