Ulster's Uncertain Defenders: Protestant Political, Paramilitary and Community Groups and The Northern Ireland Conflict

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Ulster loyalism is a political ideology found primarily among Ulster Protestants in Northern Ireland (and to a lesser extent Scotland) who maintain a strong desire to remain part of the United Kingdom. Many Ulster Protestants are descendants of settlers from Great Britain in the 17th and 18th centuries. Like most unionists, loyalists are attached to the British monarchy, support the continued existence of Northern Ireland, and oppose a united Ireland. Ulster loyalism has been described as a kind of COPYRIGHT: © American Political Science Association 1985. Recommend this journal. Email your librarian or administrator to recommend adding this journal to your organization's collection. Protestant leaders in Northern Ireland were less enthusiastic and rejected the proposal as falling too short of action. On Aug. 11, Britain's secretary of state for Northern Ireland, John Reid, suspended the power-sharing government for one day, a move that allowed Protestant and Catholic politicians six more weeks to negotiate before British authorities would be required to call for new elections to the assembly. The Council on Foreign relations has estimated that Protestant paramilitary groups have been responsible for 30% of the civilian deaths in the Northern Irish conflict. The two main Protestant vigilante groups are the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and the Ulster Defence Association (UDA). Strongest during the 1970s, their ranks have diminished since then.