

## Making Sense of the Troubles: The Story of the Conflict in Northern Ireland

By David McKittrick, David McVea



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Compellingly written and even-handed in its judgments, this is by far the clearest account of what has happened through the years in the Northern Ireland conflict, and why. After a chapter of background on the period from 1921 to 1963, it covers the ensuing period?the descent into violence, the hunger strikes, the Anglo-Irish accord, the bombers in England?to the present shaky peace process. Behind the deluge of information and opinion about the conflict, there is a straightforward and gripping story. Mr. McKittrick and Mr. McVea tell that story clearly, concisely, and, above all, fairly, avoiding intricate detail in favor of narrative pace and accessible prose. They describe and explain a lethal but fascinating time in Northern Ireland's history, which brought not only death, injury, and destruction but enormous political and social change. They close on an optimistic note, convinced that while peace?if it comes?will always be imperfect, a corner has now been decisively turned. The book includes a detailed chronology, statistical tables, and a glossary of terms.

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#### Review

Buried in the text of most histories you can detect the views of the author. *Making Sense of the Troubles*, the first attempt to tell the whole story of the past 30 years in Northern Ireland, is an exception. (Anne McHardy *Observer*)

One of the great merits of David McKittrick and David McVea's book lies in the authors' ability to pinpoint the causes of trouble while avoiding oversimplification.... A valuable resume of causes and effects. (Patricia Craig *Independent*)

If you want a frank, accurate and authoritative account you cannot do much better.... There could be no better guide through the intricacies of the Peace Process. This book...is likely to be the definitive account.... An important book.... It should be on every bookshelf. (*Irish Independent*)

Comprehensive, considered and compassionate. (Paul Arthur The Irish Times)

A masterly account. (Barry White Belfast Telegraph)

Extraordinarily well-balanced, sane, comprehensive, and rich in sober understatement. (Cal McCrystal *Glasgow Herald*)

This book tells a sorry tale, and it tells it with a powerful clarity.... It took steady nerves to undertake such a book. (Susan McKay *Sunday Tribune*)

About the Author

David McKittrick writes for the *Independent* and is a winner of the Orwell Prize for Journalism. In 1999 he was named correspondent of the year by the BBC's *What the Papers Say*. He has reported on Northern Ireland since 1973.

David McVea was, for many years, head of the politics department at a leading Belfast grammar school. He now works for Northern Ireland's examinations board. With David McKittrick he helped to produce the book *Lost Lives*, which tells the stories of all those who died as a result of the Troubles.

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