

QUESTIONS FOR STRATEGY CONFERENCE, GLENARIFF, 19.1.91

1. Should we be looking at the question of devolution again in the light of the 'talks' and the campaign of violence.?
2. Should we be looking outside Northern Ireland. What has Europe to offer to NI, and also to our own image?. What about regionality?
3. What about relationships with the PD's? in light of the Articles 2&3 vote?
5. ...and the Lib Dems, should it be closer, with an emphasis on us having Westminster ambitions.
6. In what ways do we try to ensure confidence in the security force and the administration of justice within the Catholic population? Role of the army. Is there the possibility of talks with SF?
7. What image do we wish to project. The need for our own Identity. Emphasis of our own distinct policies. (eg civil liberties, support for security forces, integrated schooling etc.)
8. Promoting our own policies in Local Govt. How do we take on the other parties without being seen to be involved in confrontational politics which turns off the voters?
9. How do we promote power-sharing devolution as a better option than direct rule? Governing with Consent Document. The need for NI people to solve our own problems.
10. Are there further initiatives on North-South economic cooperation.
11. Are we getting enough out of the NIO? How do we change our image as lackeys of the NIO?
12. Identifying the weaknesses of the other parties, and then exaggerating the distinctions between ourselves and them.
13. People listen less and less to local government.
14. Getting away from single issue of AIA, and on to broader political matters.
15. Confidence building measures for the party?
16. SWOT Analysis of party. Setting out of strategic objectives, and tactical approaches.

17. Proposals:

- (a) Market Research to establish image of party, and interests of popn., and sub-ctte to evaluate this, and make recommendations.
- (b) Entertain key editorial writers/journalists
- (c) Target activities, eg leaflets/mailings
- (d) Specific Staff Member for Press/PR
- (e) Training Programme for activists.
- (f) New Equipment.
- (g) Fund-raising Ctte (for outside the party).

ANALYSIS OF PRESENT SITUATION

WHERE DOES POLITICS GO FROM THERE?

HOW CAN ALLIANCE MAKE ITSELF SUCCESSFUL?

AGENDA FOR NEGOTIATIONS

1. A NEW NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

One Chamber or two, method of election, legislative/administrative, subjects to be transferred and how quickly (see security below)

Devolution provides the right framework for all citizens of Northern Ireland to work together. Only devolution has substantial support right across our divided community. In order to give this body significance and impact, and to attract responsible people into participation it should have both legislative and executive functions.

2. EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

The method of selection and modus operandi of those who take executive responsibility.

Majority and minority representatives must work and build together at the highest level of Government.

3. COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

There must be effective participation by elected representatives in the scrutinising of the operation of the Executive.

4. TEST OF ACCEPTABILITY

Any new administration must be widely accepted if it is to work. There may need to be an institutional definition of acceptability.

5. CONSTITUTIONAL SAFEGUARDS

All citizens must be confident that their essential civil and political rights will be protected.

6. CROSS-BORDER CO-OPERATION

Cross-border co-operation over issues of joint interest, and especially economic development, is ever more crucial to the well-being of citizens throughout the island. A clear institutional definition is now required.

7. ANGLO-IRISH CONTEXT

Good working arrangements with both London and Dublin are essential for a lasting political settlement in Northern Ireland. Relationships with London and Dublin may need clearer redefinition.

8. SECURITY CONTROL

Any political accommodation will come under threat from terrorists, and paramilitaries. The question of security control will be a difficult one, but it is hard to see how a local administration could retain credibility without an input to the control of security. Full control however raises enormous and possibly initially terminal questions.

9. RELATIONS IN EUROPE

As part of an increasingly integrated Europe the people of Northern Ireland should have their interests represented, in so far as is possible, by their own elected politicians.

10. THE PERMANENCE OF ANY NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT

If it is not publicly accepted by all parties to the agreement as having foreseeable permanence, then it has reduced stability.

ALLIANCE PROPOSES the transfer of power over Economy, Education, Finance, Health and Social Services, Agriculture and Environment to a new Northern Ireland Assembly. There would be a consultative role on security.

ALLIANCE PROPOSES A PARTNERSHIP EXECUTIVE based on the strength of the Assembly Parties, but excluding those who support violence.

ALLIANCE PROPOSES back-bench COMMITTEES with membership based on the proportionate strength of Parties in the Assembly.

ALLIANCE PROPOSES a TEST OF ACCEPTABILITY with a WEIGHTED MAJORITY requirement in the Assembly for the new Executive.

ALLIANCE PROPOSES a BILL OF RIGHTS and also a RIGHT OF APPEAL to Westminster for aggrieved minorities, which would require 30% support within the Assembly.

ALLIANCE PROPOSES that for devolved matters, the new Executive negotiate whatever arrangements are necessary for CROSS-BORDER CO-OPERATION.

ALLIANCE PROPOSES a new three-way ANGLO-IRISH INTER-GOVERNMENTAL BODY providing rights of consultation between Belfast, London and Dublin over matters of mutual concern.

AGENDA FOR DISCUSSIONS

From a speech by the Secretary of State, Rt Hon Peter Brooke MP, in Bangor, on Tuesday, 9 January 1990:

"There need to be devised workable and acceptable arrangements for the exercise of devolved powers over a range of matters. There needs to be agreement on democratic institutions which would give appropriate weight to majority and minority aspirations and views. There is the question which is addressed by the Anglo-Irish Agreement: how the legitimate interest of the Irish Government in matters within Northern Ireland, particularly as regards the minority community, are to be acknowledged, without dilution of UK sovereignty or the status of Northern Ireland as part of the United Kingdom. And there is the question of a local political contribution to security matters."