

COUNCIL OF IRELAND - UNIONIST PROPOSALS

Purpose:

We believe that all the people of Ireland have a common interest in the achievement and maintenance of peace, the provision of arrangements whereby no part of the British Isles can provide a haven for terrorists, the co-ordination of Government activities on many social and economic matters, and the promotion of mutual understanding and tolerance between the different Irish traditions. We, therefore, propose that a Council of Ireland shall be set up to assist in achieving these objectives.

Procedure:

We propose that a tripartite conference of representatives of the Westminster, Dublin, and Belfast governments should take place in Northern Ireland to discuss the structures and powers of a Council of Ireland and to determine whether an adequate foundation for progress can be agreed upon. This meeting would take place after a Northern Ireland Executive had been agreed upon, appointed, and had held its first meeting to agree on a common approach at the conference. ?

To secure an adequate foundation for further progress the conference must achieve agreement on -

1. the ending of the constitutional claim to the territory of Northern Ireland by the Republic:
2. recognition of the present constitutional status of Northern Ireland by a treaty between the Westminster and Dublin Governments:
3. a recognition that only by the democratically expressed will of the Northern Ireland people voting in a Border Poll will that constitutional status be altered:
4. measures to bring to justice terrorists operating in any part of the British Isles:
5. the general structure of the Council of Ireland, and
6. general agreement on the scope of activity of the Council of Ireland.

Setting up a Council:

Following a successful conference there should be a meeting of the governments of the Republic and of Northern Ireland attended by a representative of the British Government to determine the dates, place, and precise structure for the first meeting of a Council of Ireland.

/Structure:

Structure:

We envisage the following for the Council -

- (a) It will consist of an equal number of representatives of the Governments of Northern Ireland and the Republic, (and be attended by a representative of the Westminster Government.)
- ✓ (b) Decisions must be unanimous.
- ✓ (c) The chairmanship will alternate.
- X (d) Meetings will be open to the Press.

Powers:

- X (a) The Council will require a 75% vote of support in the Dail and the Northern Ireland Assembly on all matters of policy.
- ✓ (b) The Council will discuss matters in the social and economic sphere which require co-ordinated action by the Governments of the Republic and of Northern Ireland.
- ✓ (c) The Council will discuss social and economic affairs with a view to reaching a joint approach of regional policy within the European Economic Community.
- ✓ (d) The Council ^{will} ~~may~~ discuss progress in the elimination of terrorism and provide for an exchange of views on possible further measures.
- ✓ (e) The Council may discuss means of fostering better understanding between the differing political aspirations held by the peoples of the British Isles.

Finance:

✓ The costs of the tripartite conference shall be shared equally between the Westminster and Dublin Governments. The costs of operating a Council of Ireland shall be jointly borne by the Dublin and Stormont Governments.

1. Council of Jell - Ministerial
bi-partite equal numbers.
2. Ministers.
3. Unanimous - collective responsibility.

Further.

Party association
at all Jell Parties.

4. Method of liaison between ^{assembly} Parties
& Dist.

