



Ulster Unionist Party PRESS RELEASE

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**SPEECH BY THE RH HON J H MOLYNEAUX MP TO THE
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ULSTER UNIONIST
COUNCIL HELD ON SATURDAY 20TH MARCH 1993 IN
THE DRUMKEEN HOTEL, BELFAST.**

John

*The leader issued instructions
for this to be posted to you overnight, but
the office didn't get it out.*

Kind regards

Reeg

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At this Annual General meeting we have paid tribute to those members who have passed on and we have remembered those who have been murdered or injured during another year of the current rebellion. Hoping that it will end achieves nothing. Debating the alleged causes has proved futile. Efforts to placate murderers have only given encouragement and hope to evil men.

Those conclusions need not cause despair for properly understood and accepted reality will get through to those in authority who have it in their power to extirpate terrorists - not my words but those of the present Foreign Secretary Mr. Hurd.

The vital first step is the removal of hope that terrorism will win. That hope will be kept alive by Government Spokesmen assuring murderers that Britain has no vested interest in staying in Ulster; proclaiming that Her Majesty's Government is neutral between those who wish to preserve the Union; and yielding to Sinn Fein demands for Irish street names which the natives can neither spell nor pronounce. It is the ministerial obsession with balance between butchers and their victims which perpetuates the blood sacrifice.

Terrorism will begin to diminish when the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland echoes the recent words of the Secretary of State for Scotland who declared that the Government in which both serve will resist any who strive to weaken the Union. That clearly means that a Scotsman may advocate separatism but he will be resisted by the Government as a unit. In other words the Scottish Office is not neutral between unionists and separatists.

Once that message is transmitted from Stormont the alarm bells will ring in every terrorist den. Surely that small step would be a modest price to pay for the preservation of lives which will otherwise be lost in 1993 and beyond.

Master Joe Kennedy boasts that wherever there is trouble American troops are in the midst of it. It would be quite unfair to retort that wherever American troops are found there is trouble. But even Ambassador Joseph Kennedy was unable to prevent De Valera from making international trouble when American troops landed in Northern Ireland in 1942.

I can not believe that Joe Kennedy speaks for Americans when he advocates wholesale American imperialism. His fellow citizens have no desire to begin a programme of colonisation.

The Irish Government, if it really cares about Irish men and women, can send its signal to murderers. It can confess to the United Nations, "we regret that for 56 years we have been breaking international law by laying claim to the territory of another member state. We are heartily sorry for these our misdoings. We shall sin no more."

By that act of contrition they will have freed the Irish Republic from the burden of guilt it bears, of sharing an objective with the Provisional IRA. It would cost the Republic nothing to heed Senator Gordon Wilson and abandon a territorial claim which is a nonsense but a highly dangerous nonsense.

The Republic and ourselves would gain much from economic co-operation; commerce; tourism; and above all from the establishment of a civilised good neighbour relationship which for a century has been the aim and objective of the Ulster Unionist Council. I would hope that our exchanges

during the last year's talks would have convinced our southern neighbours of the sincerity of our professions.

On October 24 last year I explained to our Party Conference the main thrust of the policies we had set before the two Governments and the other three parties in the talks which lasted some six months.

I indicated the course we would follow in the weeks remaining before the termination date agreed by the two Governments.

We owe much to our negotiating team and to our Headquarter's staff for their response to my call for an all out effort to achieve success in the closing weeks. But we were deprived of the success we deserved.

Because I was haunted by the fear that our efforts would be obstructed I thought it prudent to assure the Party Conference in these words, "Ulster is not going to slide back to square one if we are deprived of success: we shall not stall or falter just because another initiative has been only partially successful."

When the facts are fully known it will be seen that we have made good use of the four months since the talks were terminated for good. As a result we are now poised for a further advance. I shall outline our plans before I finish.

But I first want to offer some guidance to the SDLP - a party which attracts vague support from a section - and only a section of the Roman Catholic population of Northern Ireland. That support does not extend to endorsing the pipe dream of an all Ireland Republic. Father Denis Faul continually asserts that only 20% of Roman Catholics would vote for such a drastic step. He may be a few points on the low side. Personal experience inclines me to around 23% but who am I to question the wisdom of Father Faul.

Clearly there is a lack of credibility in the SDLP leading on to a lack of self-confidence when it shies away from championing the interests of the people it claims to represent and leaves it to a foreign government to plead their cause at all levels.

So in charity I have to say to the SDLP, "look forward and stop driving by the rear view mirror. Find an anthem more inspiring than the dirge, "we've no abiding city here."

Have a care when you hold up as an example the European dream which is fast becoming a nightmare. In 1990 the idea might have attracted the innocent but what are they now to make of the re-emergence of Nazism. French rejection of those who invented Maastricht; the disintegration of the Italian nation; and for Mr. Hume's philosophy the most damning decision to partition Belgium into two states with Brussels, at the heart of Europe, becoming a miniature city state with two parks and an airport to provide the only greenery.

All these examples demonstrate the sheer folly of forcing unification where there is no cultural, historical nor political basis of unity.

Having tendered that advice I have a duty to caution the SDLP. They have scored successes in the shape of the New Ireland Forum; the Anglo-Irish Agreement; lancing the Unionist boil; and facing down Unionists.

But they are now rejecting accountable democracy and substituting Commissions under the oversight of the European Assembly. They are in danger of overstretching themselves.

I have seen how disastrous that can be in military terms and the knock on in political terms. In September 1944 my unit was deployed east of Brussels. Suddenly we were ordered to advance into Holland. Ahead of us we saw the sky filled with gliders and paratroopers. Within hours we had linked up with the Airborne Division which had seized the huge bridges at Grave and Nijmegen but the third at Arnheim was just beyond our grasp. We failed because the 21st Army Group, with a list of victories behind it had gambled for a Bridge too far.

The same mistake can be made by statesmen and the same failure will result.

So my word of caution to the SDLP is

- Don't be too greedy
- Don't push your luck
- Don't gamble on a Bridge too far.

Again in what I hope will be seen as a civilised manner I am required to educate Irish Ministers and to spell out the facts of life in Northern Ireland as they really are. Despite the straight talking in last year's talks the Southern politicians appear to be somewhat short of analysed reality.

For example the recent speech by Mr. Spring reveals the real extent of Dublin misunderstanding of the position of the greater number of the citizens of Northern Ireland. He almost accidentally reveals the reason why the talks were terminated without result. Nothing appears to have been learnt from the months of talking and drafting. It would appear that even if new talks were launched all participants would start from the implicit inevitability of Irish unity, and negotiation would be confined to the phasing and speed of implementation of that objective.

If the representatives of Ulster's greater number behaved and co-operated the speed could be raised but no interim decision would be permitted if it ran counter to the goal of an all Ireland Republic. For the avoidance of doubt and the prevention of blood spillage I have to say that the greater number reject any such objective and that rejection applies with equal firmness to any system of instalments.

And in case there should be any misunderstanding we do not accept the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985 as a start line for any future discussions. It is unacceptable for all the reasons which we have previously stated but eight years of its existence have introduced naked sectarianism into every corner in Ulster. I often wonder if the draughtsmen are proud of their handiwork. Do they comprehend when British Ministers complain that at every Anglo-Irish Conference they are embarrassed into playing a neutral role on the Union and always on the defensive. Her Majesty's Ministers should not be placed in such an inferior position. But there is a remedy - they can stay away.

I turn now to Her Majesty's Ministers who are appointed by the Queen to tender advice to the Sovereign who represents the Crown in Parliament which is the constitutional structure by which the United Kingdom is governed.

Under the constitution the Queen has a reciprocal right to warn and encourage her Ministers.

I hope Her Majesty will not object to my assisting her in that latter role of offering encouragement to the Ministers whom she has appointed.

I want to encourage the Prime Minister in his efforts to improve co-ordination within his cabinet. Within the present Parliament he has more friends than enemies but if they are to assist him they need to know the course being steered.

The present Prime Minister has shown a willingness to listen and will not resent a reminder that on crucial issues like the folly of a fixed exchange rate and a mushrooming Public Sector Borrowing Requirement, we the fourth party in Parliament have been proven correct over two decades while the first three parties got it disastrously wrong. As recently as the General Election all three parties were pledging undying loyalty to the Exchange Rate Mechanism and all three bear responsibility for the damage done to the economy - not by leaving the ERM but for entering it in the first place.

Secondly, I want to encourage Ministers to sing from the same Hymn Sheet, particularly when they pronounce on the integrity of the Kingdom which the Prime Minister lists by its component parts, England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. We have to encourage the Northern Ireland Department of State to line up with the others and not take the lead in asserting that Northern Ireland is different.

The Prime Minister said last year that if one part were to leave all would be the poorer for being apart. Therefore no one Department can be negative as regards the Union, still less be neutral as between Unionists and Separatists anywhere in the Kingdom.

There are those at the Whitehall end of the Northern Ireland Office who boast that theirs was the only Department upon which Margaret Thatcher could not impose her will. Where she failed John Major must succeed.

I am in the business of encouraging Sir Patrick and his colleagues to shake off the rusty shackles of the talks framework described in the formula, "nothing is agreed until everything is agreed." We all signed up to that for the duration of the talks only. It ceased to apply on the day the two Governments terminated the talks on the 10th day of November 1992.

The formula has no validity now, and any attempt to retain it would paralyse the government of Northern Ireland.

For example if it were used to prevent alteration of the structure of restoring road service powers to Councils it must also halt another change in DoE structure to transfer water services to bodies not even born.

In short the NIO would deprive itself of the power to govern and become an administrative outstation of Government.

So, on behalf of all those who seek accountable democracy and responsive government throughout the Westminster Parliament we consider ourselves bound to encourage the Secretary of State to free himself to make progress where progress is desirable and possible.

You will remember that at our Party Conference in October I outlined a contingency plan in the event of our being deprived of success in the talks. I have explained how we were so deprived, and

four months on there has been no positive response to the constructive and generous proposals tabled by us at the talks.

It is now apparent that the Irish Government and the SDLP have hardened their attitudes in recent months. They have wrongly assumed that all who favour the Union will settle for government by commission as a holding operation until we can be manoeuvred into a republican Ireland.

If our civilised behaviour has led our opponents to miscalculate then I have a duty to tell them, for the avoidance of error, that they have never been more mistaken in their lives.

If common decency is regarded as weakness then we have to manifest iron resolve.

If our good neighbourly advances have been misinterpreted then we have to proclaim the truth - that our destiny lies in another direction.

I shall point to that direction once I have illustrated how during the past year both Governments have burdened themselves with the responsibility of ending the breach of international law which is committed by maintaining the Irish territorial claim to a part of the United Kingdom. Successive British Governments chose to ignore it when signing the Treaty of Rome; the Helsinki Act; the Anglo-Irish Agreement; and the Maastricht Treaty of European Union

The Irish Supreme Court tore away the web of deceit and humbug. We will not be party to the conspiracy and deceit.

Her Majesty's Government, which went to war in the Gulf to reject Iraq's claim to Kuwait, but indulged in shadow boxing through six months of talks when they had our backing, must now without delay dispel the ambiguity which compels Northern Ireland Ministers to co-operate with Irish Ministers bound by a constitutional imperative to unify Ireland.

It is the duty of our sovereign Government to force the removal of that reproach.

Both Governments say they want to talk so what better subject than this. They can come back to us when they have removed the obstacle.

The Northern Ireland Parties are pointed in a different direction. Confidence building is a high priority. A pre-requisite is the creation of trust between the various elements of the Northern Ireland Community for there would be no future for an Ulster consisting of two irreconcilable communities protected from each other by razor wire; the division perpetuated for eternity.

My view, which you have endorsed on other occasions; is that we have a responsibility to draw together the many strands in our community. It is time for a start to be made on designing a Blueprint for Stability.

Ulster Unionists freely acknowledge that we cannot achieve this aim on our own. We shall need the full co-operation of other constitutional parties participating on equal terms. Nor can we exclude those who bear responsibility in farming, commerce, industry, and all who possess special skills and talents.

We shall need the backing of the people of Northern Ireland who are weary of phoney sterile arguments and who yearn for the restoration of stability and the peace which will surely follow.

I know that traditional Party supporters will reach out to those who for some reason - and perhaps for no reason, have not yet involved themselves in helping to stabilise their province.

We begin with an advantage over other places where the great institutions are under assault and many of them are crumbling. It says much for the Ulster Community that its fabric remains intact and its institutions remain undamaged by the ravages of two decades. The world is realising that Ulster is not a failed entity.

We may find that the Blueprint for Stability could include the concept of responsibility sharing which surfaced in the Strand One discussions.

If that should prove too ambitious we might move down the scale until we discover the common denominator on which we can start to build a structure capable of delivering accountable democracy.

I do not know how much time remains to me but I can never forget that I have a bounden duty to leave this province a better place than I found it.

I do know that I will have your wholehearted backing.

I have no reason to believe that others will withhold their contributions.

If together we all try we shall succeed.

Succeed because we dare not contemplate failure.