

ALLIANCE PARTY OF NORTHERN IRELAND

MINUTES OF POLITICAL STRATEGY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 5
JANUARY 1994 AT 1.00PM IN PARTY HEADQUARTERS

Present: John Alderdice, Steve McBride, Addie Morrow, John Campbell, Eileen Bell, Nick Whyte, Mary Clark-Glass, Philip McGarry, Sean Neeson, David Bleakley, Stewart Dickson, David Ford

Apologies: Seamus Close

1. John Alderdice said we were living in an unprecedented time, with Northern Ireland at the top of the agenda for both Prime Ministers and for the national media. For the first time in 20 years we have an initiative we can fully support. An Assembly is now a serious possibility and there is a growing interest in political discussions across all parties.

John Alderdice emphasised the importance of Strategy/Talks team keeping in close touch and becoming involved in such developments as there might be. Boundary changes will imply organisational changes for Alliance. Association organisation and candidates may become an urgent priority.

2. Reaction to Joint Declaration

Both Sinn Fein/IRA and Loyalist paramilitaries have still to give definite reaction to Downing Street declaration. Much will depend on their reaction in coming weeks, but it is important that constitutional politicians continue the process regardless of paramilitaries.

There is an Alliance role in maintaining contacts with other parties, 2 governments and North America and putting forward our proposals wherever possible. It is important that 2 governments are kept together and do not amend their document.

There was general discussion on attitudes to Sinn Fein if Republicans do not accept the declaration.