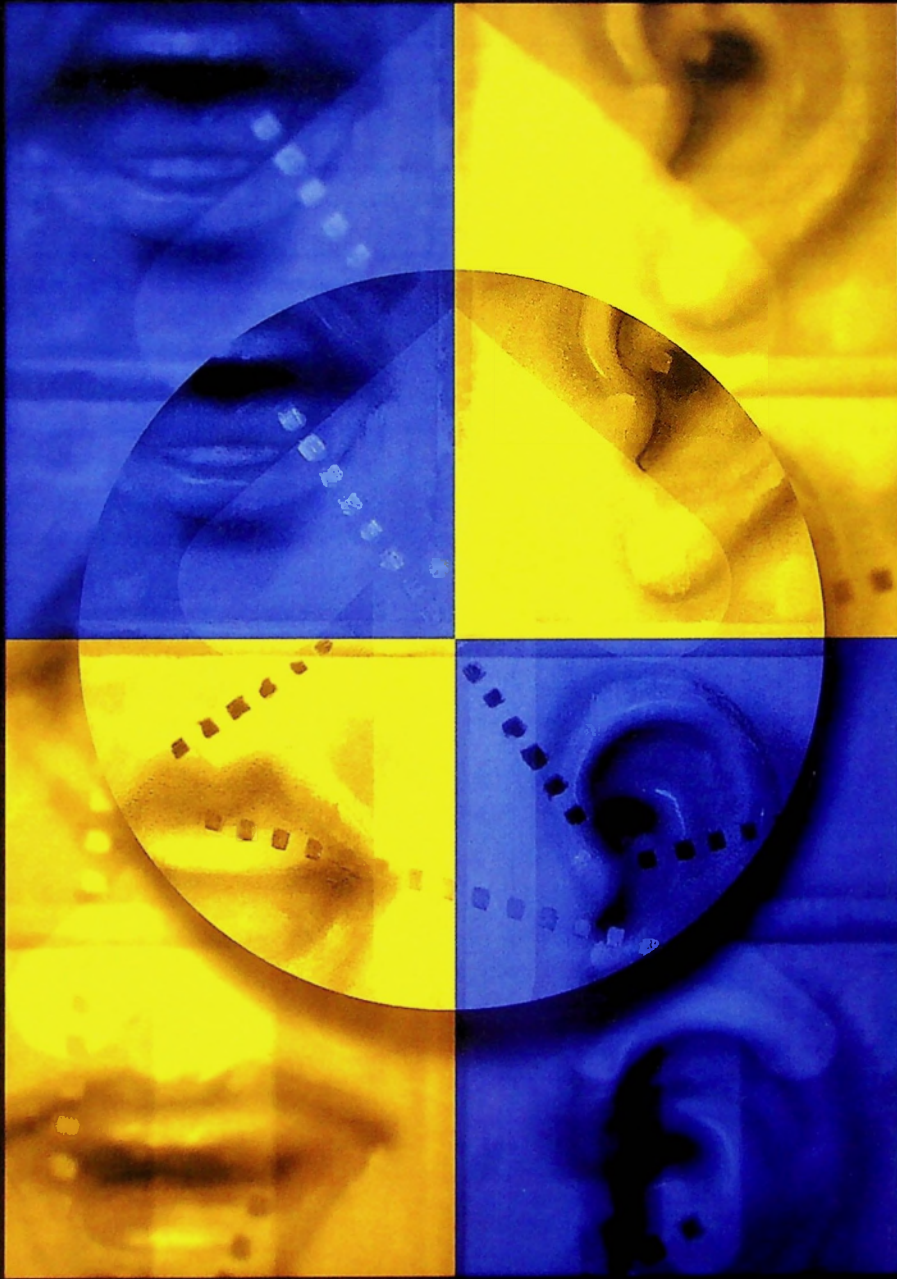


ALD2/216/12/2/6

# NORTHERN IRELAND FORUM FOR POLITICAL DIALOGUE



ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

JUNE 1996 TO APRIL 1998

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# **Northern Ireland Forum for Political Dialogue**

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**THE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS  
OF THE FORUM**

**A REPORT  
BY  
THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE**

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*Presented to the Northern Ireland Forum for Political Dialogue  
on 24 April 1998*

*Adopted 24 April 1998*

CR32

Northern Ireland Forum

1971

Political Dialogue

THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE

ON THE

REPORT

OF THE

Committee on the Report of the Commission of Enquiry into the Events of 1968-1970



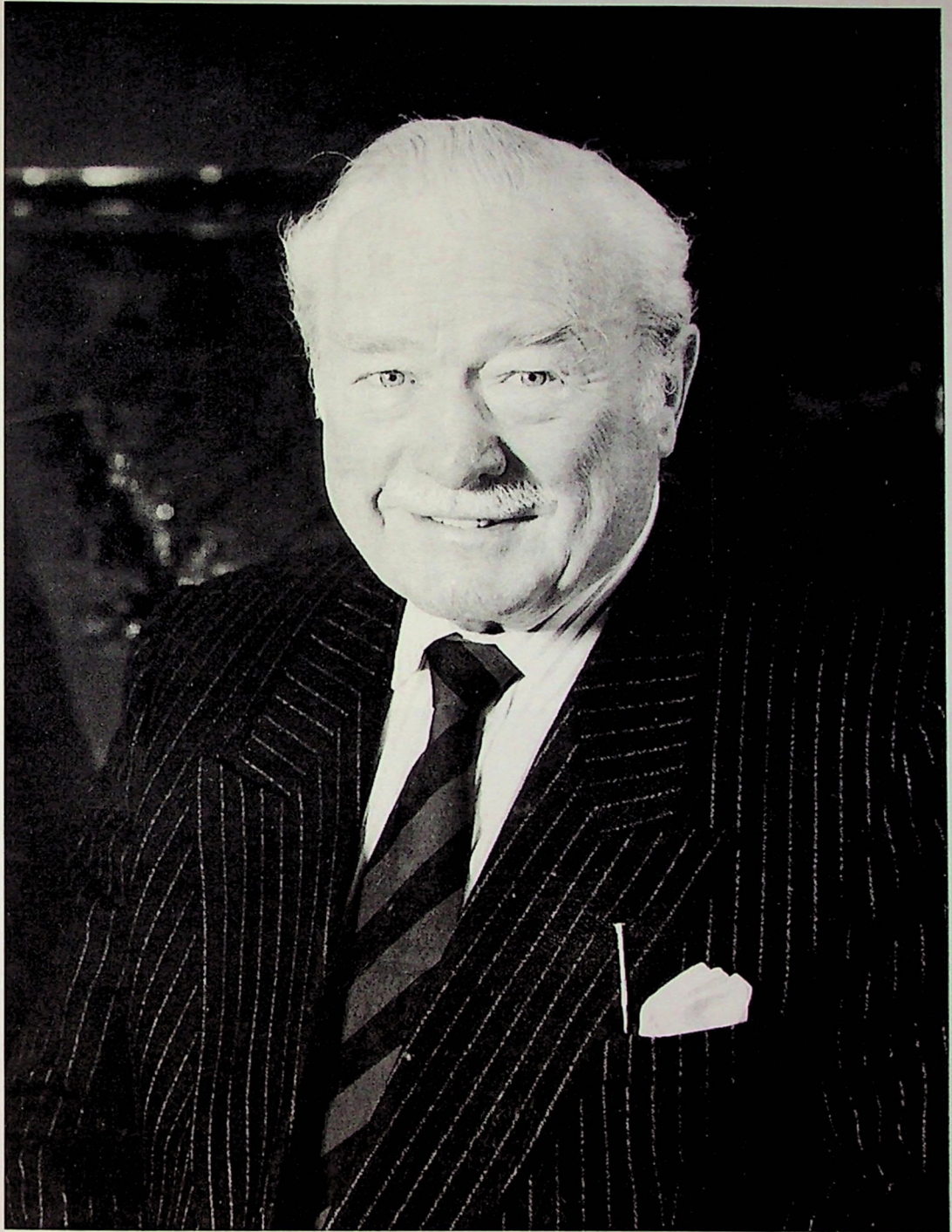
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100	Chapter LXXXXIX
101	Chapter LXXXXX





**MR JOHN GORMAN CVO CBE MC DL**  
**Chairman**







## MEMBERSHIP OF THE FORUM ON 24 APRIL 1998

- |     |   |     |   |
|-----|---|-----|---|
| 1.  | Mrs Iris Robinson                                     | 21. | Mr Steve McBride                                  |
| 2.  | Mr David Browne                                       | 22. | Mr Jeffrey Donaldson MP                           |
| 3.  | Ms Kathleen Coulter<br>(Alliance Party support staff) | 23. | Mrs May Steele                                    |
| 4.  | Mr Reg Empey  | 24. | Mr Peter Weir                                     |
| 5.  | Mrs Eileen Bell                                       | 25. | Rev Eric Smyth                                    |
| 6.  | Mr Robert John White                                  | 26. | Mr Wilson Clyde                                   |
| 7.  | Mr James Shannon                                      | 27. | Mr Hugh Smyth                                     |
| 8.  | Mr David Brewster                                     | 28. | Mr Oliver Gibson                                  |
| 9.  | Mr Peter King   | 29. | Mr James Speers                                   |
| 10. | Mr Derek Hussey                                       | 30. | Mr Kieran McCarthy                                |
| 11. | Mr John Junkin  | 31. | Mr Paddy O'Connor<br>(Labour Party support staff) |
| 12. | Mr Alan McFarland                                     | 32. | Mr Nigel Carson (Forum Secretary)                 |
| 13. | Mr Joseph Gaston                                      | 33. | Mr Des Stewart                                    |
| 14. | Mr Robert Stoker                                      | 34. | Mr Sam Gardiner                                   |
| 15. | Mr David Campbell                                     | 35. | Mr Murray Barnes<br>(Deputy Forum Secretary)      |
| 16. | Mr Gary McMichael                                     | 36. | Rev Robert Coulter                                |
| 17. | Mr Dermot Nesbitt                                     | 37. | Ms Pearl Sagar                                    |
| 18. | Mr Sam Foster   | 38. | Mr Tom Robinson                                   |
| 19. | Mr Ivan Davis   | 39. | Mr John Gorman (Chairman)                         |
| 20. | Mr Robert Bolton                                      |     |   |

### Absent when photograph taken:

- |                       |                           |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Prof Anthony Alcock   | Mr Jack McKee             |
| Lord Alderdice        | Ms Monica McWilliams      |
| Mrs May Beattie       | Mr Ken Maginnis MP        |
| Mrs Thomas Benson     | Mr Maurice Morrow         |
| Mr Cecil Calvert      | Sir Oliver Napier         |
| Mr Gregory Campbell   | Mr Sean Neeson            |
| Mr Mervyn Carrick     | Rev Dr Ian Paisley MP MEP |
| Mr Hugh Casey         | Mr Ian Paisley Jnr        |
| Mr James Clarke       | Mrs Joan Parkes           |
| Mr Seamus Close       | Mr Edwin Poots            |
| Mr Malachi Curran     | Mr Peter Robinson MP      |
| Mr Nigel Dodds        | Mr Jim Rodgers            |
| Mr David Ervine       | Mr William Snoddy         |
| Mr John Hunter        | Rt Hon John Taylor MP     |
| Rev Trevor Kirkland   | Rt Hon David Trimble MP   |
| Mr St Clair McAlister | Mr John White             |
| Rev William McCrea    | Mr Sammy Wilson           |



## BUSINESS COMMITTEE



L-R: Miss A M Moore (Assistant Secretary to the Business Committee), Mr S Gardiner, Mr J Gorman (Chairman) (seated), Mr N Carson (Secretary to the Business Committee), Mr H Smyth (seated), Mr G McMichael, Mr R Coulter (seated), Mrs P Sagar, Mr P Robinson MP (seated), Mr M Morrow



**STANDING COMMITTEE A (PUBLIC ORDER ISSUES)**



**L-R:**  
Mr J Donaldson (Vice-Chairman), Mr C Wilson (Chairman), Mr J McKee,  
Ms G McKibbin (Secretary), Mrs I Robinson (seated), Mr M Carrick,  
Mr J English (seated), Mr R J White, Mr N Dodds, Mr J Rodgers (seated)



**STANDING COMMITTEE A (POLITICAL AFFAIRS)**



**L-R:**

**Mr G McMichael (Vice-Chairman), Mr R Stoker (Chairman), Ms G McKibbin (Secretary),  
Mr H Smyth (seated), Mr R Coulter, Mr S Gardiner (seated), Mr J McKee,  
Mrs I Robinson (seated), Mr M Carrick**

**Inset:**

**Mr N Dodds (top), Mr G Lynch**

**Absent when photograph taken:**

**Mr S Farry, Ms R Whitaker**



**STANDING COMMITTEE B - (EDUCATION ISSUES)**



**Standing L-R:**

**Mr R Bolton, Mr D Browne, Mr G McMichael, Mr T Benson, Mr D Hussey, Rev T Kirkland,  
Mr H Smyth**

**Seated:**

**Mrs E Bell, Mr A McFarland (Vice-Chairman), Mr O Gibson (Chairman), Mrs M Clark-Glass**

**Absent when photograph taken:**

**Rev E Smyth, Mr M Curran, Ms C Moffat, Mrs E Roche**



**STANDING COMMITTEE C - (HEALTH ISSUES)**



Back Row L-R

Mr T Robinson, Mr F McCoubrey, Mr S Foster, Mr G Campbell, Mr P King, Mr C Calvert,  
Mr D Arnold (Secretary), Mr S Gardiner

Front Row L-R

Mrs M Steele, Mrs J Parkes, Mr H Smyth (Chairman), Mrs M Beattie

Absent when photograph taken:

Mrs M Marshall, Mrs G Rice, Dr H McKee, Dr J Wilde, Dr A Evans



## STANDING COMMITTEE D - (AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES ISSUES)

Presentation of Reports: 'Northern Ireland Agriculture - Preparing for the Future'  
and 'Willow Biomass and Renewable Energy' to Lord Dubs, Minister for Agriculture



**Standing L-R:**

Mr J Speers, Mr J Junkin, Mr K McCarthy, Mr J Shannon, Mr W Clyde, Mr P O'Connor, Mr E Poots,  
Mr M Barnes (Secretary)

**Seated:**

Mr P Small (Permanent Secretary, DANI), Lord Dubs (Minister for Agriculture),  
Mr D Campbell (Chairman), Mr D Stewart (Vice-Chairman)

**Absent when photograph taken:**

Mr J Gaston, Mr D Ford, Mr J White



**STANDING COMMITTEE E**  
**(THE NORTHERN IRELAND ECONOMY)**



**L-R:**

**Mrs M Steele (Vice-Chair), Mr St C McAlister (Chairman),  
Mr D Nesbitt, Mr R J White, Mr M Carrick, Mr W Clements (Secretary), Mr S McBride**

**Absent when photograph taken:**

**Mr S Wilson, Mr W Snoddy, Mr J Clarke, Mr S Neeson, Mrs N Heaton, Mr W White,  
Mr D Adams, Mr R Stewart**



COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL REFORM



**Inset L-R:**



**Mr S Gardiner (Vice-Chairman), Mr S Neeson (Chairman)**

**Mr I Paisley, Rev W McCrea, Mr R Stoker, Mr P Robinson (seated),  
Mr D Ford, Ms D Purvis, Mr R Coulter (seated), Mr H Casey, Mrs P Sagar (seated)**

**L-R:**

**Absent when photograph taken:**

**Mr N Dodds, Mr K Maginnis, Mr F McCoubrey**



## 1. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- 1.1 It is with some sadness but much pride that I present this Report to the Forum on behalf of the Business Committee and with it bring to a formal close the Northern Ireland Forum for Political Dialogue on 24 April 1998.
- 1.2 The Forum was established under the Northern Ireland (Entry to Negotiations, etc) Act 1996. Following elections on 30 May 1996 which returned 110 members (Annex 1) from 10 parties (Annex 2) the Forum met for the first time on 14 June 1996 on the 1st Floor of Interpoint in York Street. The floor was normally home to the administration for Short's training operations and it was kindly made available to the Forum while purpose designed accommodation was being prepared on the 3rd Floor of the same building.
- 1.3 After the Summer Recess, during which the SDLP decided in light of the events at Drumcree that year not to participate further, the Forum met in more appropriate surroundings on the 3rd Floor. While in session we met in Plenary every Friday and I presided over most of the 71 meetings. On those few occasions when I was unable to do so one of five deputies presided. I am grateful to Ivan Davis, Sam Gardiner, Joan Parkes, Gregory Campbell and Hugh Smyth for their willingness to step into the breach when required.
- 1.4 In March 1997 a number of forthcoming events, not least an impending General Election, forced the then Secretary of State, now Lord Mayhew, to suspend the Talks process. This led, as the terms of the Act required, to the closure of the Forum but since both Labour and the Conservatives had pledged to revive the Forum if elected, this turned out to be a period of enforced suspension from 21 March to 6 June.
- 1.5 It is perhaps important to emphasise that under the provisions of the Act the Forum's life was inextricably linked to the life of the Talks. While the Forum could not exist beyond the end of May 1998 it was always in danger of being brought to a premature end and we were often looking over our shoulders as the Talks came to the brink of collapse on several occasions. This uncertainty as to whether the life of the Forum would be 2 weeks, 2 months or 2 years was unhelpful, to say the least, in forward planning terms but we did not let it hinder our desire to get things done.
- 1.6 During its 22 month history the Forum was at times maligned and often ignored. It was not, as most people would acknowledge, the main game in town. The primary focus of attention of most of the political parties elected in May 1996 was on the talks about the future of Northern Ireland. This also proved to be true for the Government and the press.
- 1.7 Nevertheless, as the rest of this Report shows, the Forum achieved much during its brief life. It would have achieved more had it been attended by all those who were elected to it but to the credit of those parties who did



participate they were determined that work should continue which would benefit all the people of Northern Ireland.

- 1.8 For my own part I have experienced, and sometimes been subjected to, the full range of emotions. Initially shock at being invited by the Secretary of State to be the initial Chairman of the Forum, excitement at the role the Forum might play, frustration that we did not achieve more and pride to have been involved in this unique body.
- 1.9 In the following pages you will see the quantity and quality of what the Forum's Committees have accomplished. But this is only a partial view of what has been gained. When the Forum started I watched the performance of a group of members who clearly had widely varying experiences of speaking in public and in trying to achieve objectives through working in Committee. Nearly two years later I find it difficult not to be impressed by the new skills and confidence displayed by many members.
- 1.10 One key advantage, not often appreciated by those viewing the Forum from outside, has been the willingness of members to put aside party differences in order to work in Committees. As with similar bodies the real work often goes on behind the scenes where Committees put in the hard graft needed to pursue a particular remit. This work is largely done in private, after taking evidence from various experts, in order to pull together the disparate views of members and distil them into a usable Report. A full list of Reports produced is at Annex 3.
- 1.11 Despite the Forum's lack of any executive authority we tackled issues which we considered to be important to the people of Northern Ireland where we felt that local politicians could, and should, put forward a different perspective. Our only means of bringing about change was either to suggest recommendations which had the benefit of expert evidence or to use the power of publicity, or both. It is with considerable satisfaction that I can report that we did get Ministers to review their decisions and sometimes even to change them.
- 1.12 The Forum established six Committees to take forward the detail of work which the Forum delegated to them:

Standing Committee A	:	Parades/Public Order up to 26.9.97 Political Affairs from 29.9.97
Standing Committee B	:	Education
Standing Committee C	:	Health
Standing Committee D	:	Agriculture and Fisheries
Standing Committee E	:	The Northern Ireland Economy



- 1.13 I also chaired the Rules Committee which met frequently in the early stages of the Forum's existence and did an excellent job in producing a set of Rules which the Secretary of State was able to approve and were adopted by the Forum on 26 September 1996. That the Rules Committee did not have to meet again to change any of the Rules is an indicator of the robust job which the Committee did and I am grateful to the members who served on it for their efficiency and help. The membership of the Committee is at Annex 4.
- 1.14 I should also express my thanks to those who served on the Business Committee. The regular membership is at Annex 5 but often others attended the Committee as alternates or substitutes and to them I am also grateful. The members of the Business Committee are the unsung heroes of any elected body. Not only do they determine the future business that needs to be conducted but also help to decide how to deal with a wide variety of issues to ensure its smooth operation. The Forum as a body owes much to the contributions made every Thursday by their representatives on this important Committee.
- 1.15 In addition to Committee work the Forum devoted much of its time in plenary to full-scale debates on a wide range of issues from the bread and butter to the highly contentious. For the most part I am glad to say that these debates were conducted with good humour and respect for differing points of view. (A list of the matters discussed is at Annex 6.)
- 1.16 Unfortunately this is not the impression portrayed either by or through the press. What was more frequently, if not totally, reported were the few occasions when passions were running high or behaviour tended towards the rowdy. As we have come to expect these days news is not that which is new. It is that which is sensational or exceptional. Several months of hard work in Committee is rendered worthless in comparison to a hasty, ill-considered remark or action.
- 1.17 Often I have thought that the press in Northern Ireland to whom political issues are second nature and who are reporting arguably to the most sophisticated electorate in Western Europe could contribute more to the solution to our problems. It is easy to report the latest piece of information which is inflammatory, sensational, extraordinary or unique. But what view of the world does the reader gain? The impression is that the entirety of the subject being reported on conforms to the exceptional event whereas the norm is completely different. It would please me greatly, as we anticipate the possibility of a new Assembly, to see the standard of reporting improve in content and analysis so that we understand what is going on rather than be left to extrapolate the wrong conclusions from exceptional events.



- 1.18 One aspect of my responsibilities which I least enjoyed was having to make judgements under Rule 13(1). This Rule required me to judge whether a particular matter, having achieved the required vote in favour, would also "command support across the various traditions in Northern Ireland". Although I used the power on very few occasions (which in itself indicates that for the most part the Forum concentrated on non-controversial issues) I disliked the invidious nature of the Rule and it is one aspect of the Forum I shall not miss.
- 1.19 Finally I should like to thank all the staff of the Secretariat. Particularly the Forum Secretary, Nigel Carson, who played the major part in bringing the Forum into existence, and, together with his Deputy Murray Barnes, gave the leadership which inspired the Secretariat who looked after our papers, provided advice, organised our meetings, and turned what we said into readable prose! The service which they provided was not only highly efficient but delivered in the most helpful and friendly manner. The staff who served in the Secretariat during its life are listed in Annex 7. Members would also want me to thank those others who looked after our physical well being and provided other services, viz, the staff of Macmillan Media, the staff from Lisburn Security Services, the catering staff from Mount Charles and the cleaners from Grove Cleaning Services.

**J R GORMAN**



## 2. STANDING COMMITTEE A

### Remit

- 2.1 Standing Committee A (Public Order Issues) was established on 26 July 1996 initially *"to examine the problems which arise in relation to parades in Northern Ireland and to make recommendations which would contribute to better understanding and amelioration of those problems and report to the Forum"*.
- 2.2 At the plenary meeting on 4 October 1996 Standing Committee A was also tasked *"to examine the problems of boycotting in Northern Ireland and make recommendations which would help resolve them and report to the Forum"*.

### PUBLIC ORDER ISSUES

#### Review of Boycotting of Businesses

- 2.3 In undertaking research for this Report the Committee took evidence from various businesses, community organisations and from traders affected by the boycott campaign.
- 2.4 The Report which was adopted by the Forum on 13 December 1996 made several recommendations which included the issue of compensation for affected traders and was presented to the Government on 14 January 1997.

#### Review of the Parades Issue in Northern Ireland

- 2.5 In compiling its evidence for this Report the Committee:-
- (1) inserted advertisements in the 3 main daily newspapers in Northern Ireland setting out the subject of the study and inviting responses from interested parties;
  - (2) distributed leaflets throughout the local libraries and Training and Employment Agency branches throughout the Province seeking written submissions;
  - (3) wrote to key groups and organisations responsible for organising parades inviting them to make written submissions;
  - (4) invited selected witnesses to address the Committee, on the record, and to answer questions;
  - (5) attended specific controversial parades as observers on behalf of the organisers of the parade.



- 2.6 On the basis of the evidence and information gathered by the Committee a Report was presented to the Forum on 20 June 1997. The main recommendations suggested that consideration should be given for the implementation of a Code of Practice based on those currently operated by the Loyal Orders; that the Government address the flaws identified in the Public Order legislation and that the RUC ensure that the law is enforced equitably and fairly.
- 2.7 A copy of this Report was sent to the Government and was discussed at a meeting between the Secretary of State and the Chairman of the Forum on 28 July 1997.

### POLITICAL AFFAIRS

- 2.8 On 26 September 1997 Standing Committee A was deemed to have discharged its original remit of Public Order Issues and was then charged with a remit of Political Affairs and terms of reference which tasked the Committee *"to examine and report on issues which contribute to division, distrust and misunderstanding within Northern Ireland and between Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic"*.
- 2.9 Within its broad remit, Standing Committee A (Political Affairs), after deliberation, decided to examine the following two themes in parallel:-

Political development in the nationalist and unionist communities since 1972 which would examine the movement on both sides in terms of political thinking and the effect of Direct Rule and related issues on the administration of Northern Ireland.

Relationships within the British Isles and the implications of decentralisation throughout the regions of the UK.

- 2.10 Due to the constraint imposed by the early closure of the Forum the Committee was unable to complete its investigations on the theme of political development in the nationalist and unionist communities.
- 2.11 In compiling its evidence for a Report the Committee:-
- (1) sought advice from academics to identify specific issues which should be addressed;
  - (2) met with representatives of various key organisations who would play a part in or would be affected by any forthcoming devolution arrangements in Northern Ireland;



- (3) visited Scotland and Wales to speak to representatives from the Scottish and Welsh Offices and the main political parties within each respective region;
- (4) visited Brussels to speak to representatives from the regional offices of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland as well as with a representative from a German regional government;
- (5) invited political parties participating in the Committee to put forward written submissions on their proposed devolution arrangements for Northern Ireland.

2.12 The Committee presented a Report to the Forum at its final plenary session on 24 April 1998. The main recommendations were:-

- that devolution is clearly the way forward for the United Kingdom as a whole and therefore recommends that Northern Ireland should be treated the same as the rest of the United Kingdom in that regard;
- that Northern Ireland should have a devolved administration but recognises that each party has its own views as to the form such a devolved administration should take;
- that any new administration for Northern Ireland should take a comprehensive look at the whole administrative system in Northern Ireland including Quangos and Local Government to ascertain if the distribution of powers and responsibilities are suitably placed;
- that Quangos at present have too much control over a large amount of public expenditure;
- that the relationship between any future Northern Ireland Assembly and Local Government will be particularly vital to the good governance of the people of Northern Ireland and the effective provision of its services to the community;
- that there should be a meaningful role for a devolved administration at all appropriate levels within the European Union to ensure that Northern Ireland's position is strengthened;
- that any devolved administration for Northern Ireland should work closely with the NI MEPs;
- that devolution should not lead to a reduction in the allocation of public expenditure to Northern Ireland and that the allocation should be sufficient and, if necessary, increased to meet the needs of the region;



- that devolution should not lead to any reduction in the number and role of Northern Ireland's representatives at Westminster; and
- that there would be enormous advantages in liaison between regional devolved Governments within the British Isles.

2.13 In November 1997 the Committee played a major part in a study visit by top level representatives of the Governments in the divided former Soviet Republic of Moldova.

The Committee met with the delegation to discuss the ways in which conflict and its effects were being handled in their respective situations. This was a unique opportunity for the Forum to work with a high powered delegation, who like the elected representatives in the Forum, were dealing with the consequences of conflict and division in their society.



**MEMBERSHIP OF STANDING COMMITTEE A**  
**(PUBLIC ORDER ISSUES)**

- Ulster Unionist Party* - Mr J Donaldson MP - Vice-Chairman  
Mr R J White  
Mr J Rodgers  
Mr I Davis
- Democratic Unionist Party* - Mr N Dodds  
Mr J McKee  
Mrs I Robinson (substituted by  
Ian Paisley Jnr)  
Mr M Carrick
- Alliance Party* - #Mr S McBride  
#Sir O Napier
- Ulster Democratic Party* - \*Mr J English
- Progressive Unionist Party* - +Mr D Ervine
- UK Unionist Party* - Mr C Wilson - Chairman
- Labour* - <sup>o</sup>Mr H Casey
- NI Women's Coalition* - <sup>o</sup>\*Mrs B McCabe

\*attend the Committee on behalf of the party under Rule 14(4)(a) of the Forum Rules of Procedure.

+resigned from the Committee on 26 September 1996.

#resigned from the Committee on 24 February 1997.

<sup>o</sup>resigned from the Committee on 28 February 1997.



## MEMBERSHIP OF STANDING COMMITTEE A POLITICAL AFFAIRS

- Ulster Unionist Party* - Mr R Stoker (Chairman)  
Mr K Maginnis MP  
Mr R Coulter  
Mr S Gardiner
- Democratic Unionist Party* - Mr N Dodds  
Mrs I Robinson  
Mr J McKee  
Mr M Carrick
- Alliance Party* - \*Mr G Lynch  
\*Mr S Farry
- Ulster Democratic Party* - Mr G McMichael (Vice-Chairman)
- Progressive Unionist Party* - Mr H Smyth
- UK Unionist Party* -
- Labour* - Mr M Curran
- NI Women's Coalition* - \*Ms R Whitaker

\* attend the Committee on behalf of the party under Rule 14(4)(a) of the Forum Rules of Procedure.



### 3. STANDING COMMITTEE B (EDUCATION ISSUES)

#### Remit

- 3.1 Standing Committee B was established on 26 July 1996 to examine and report on Education Issues of public interest or concern. The Committee's formal remit from the Forum is *"to examine issues relating to education provision in Northern Ireland and report to the Forum"*.

#### Activities

- 3.2 Within its broad remit, Committee B chose to examine and report to the Forum on four specific education topics.

##### The Review of Education Administration in Northern Ireland

- 3.3 On 25 June 1996 the then Education Minister, Mr Michael Ancram, announced his controversial decision to reduce the number of Education and Library Boards from 5 to 3, ostensibly to save money and reduce duplication of effort. The decision was opposed by all the major political parties in Northern Ireland and the Minister agreed to delay its implementation until he received the views of the Forum. As its first task, Committee B was asked to report on the subject.

##### Pre-School Education Provision

- 3.4 Committee B chose its second topic of study because of widespread concern about the proposed introduction to Northern Ireland of the Nursery Voucher Scheme, which was already in operation in Great Britain. Shortly after the study began, Mr Ancram announced the deferral of the scheme due to lack of funds. The Committee decided to continue with its examination of pre-school education since Northern Ireland has the lowest level of early years' services in the European Union despite the fact that for almost 20 years the Department of Education has aimed to provide universal pre-school education.

##### The Implications of Public/Private Partnerships for Education Services

- 3.5 Successive governments have been unable to solve the crisis of school accommodation within available resources and have turned to the private sector in the hope of harnessing immediate additional funds without incurring extra expense in the long-term. The launch, by the Department of Education, of 6 "pathfinder" Public Finance Initiative (PFI) projects prompted the Committee to examine the case for and against introducing private investment into education provision.



### Special Educational Provision for School Age Children

- 3.6 The introduction of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996, the accompanying Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs and the new government's recent Green Paper Excellence for all Children - Meeting Special Educational Needs led the Committee to its final, topical investigation.

### Miscellaneous

- 3.7 The Committee also prepared draft responses to the following consultation papers issued by the Department of Education:

- (1) Draft Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998; and
- (2) "Pre-School Education".

Finally, in response to representations from grammar school preparatory departments, the Committee examined the case for continuing their grant-aid.

### Approach

- 3.8 In compiling evidence for its Reports the Committee adopted the following practices:-

- (1) inserting advertisements in the 3 main daily newspapers setting out the subject of study and inviting responses from interested parties;
- (2) writing to key organisations and individuals with an interest in and knowledge of the subject. In selecting target groups, the Committee relied on its own knowledge and on the circulation lists of the Department of Education;
- (3) inviting selected witnesses to address the Committee, on the record, and to answer questions;
- (4) visiting schools and organisations where relevant to the subject under consideration.

- 3.9 In responding to the two consultation papers, the Committee relied on its own interpretation of the implications of the draft Education Order and, in the case of the proposals for pre-school education, on its previous examination and report on this subject.

- 3.10 In considering the case for continuing grant-aid to preparatory departments, the Committee took evidence from concerned parents and from teachers' unions and drafted a letter to the Education Minister for Forum endorsement. The NI Women's Coalition Party opposed the response and, in the interest of



harmony and in the spirit of the remit of the Forum, the Committee Chairman forwarded their comments to the Minister as a minority report.

### Reports

- 3.11 As a result of its investigations Committee B produced 4 Reports for the Forum.

A Review of Education Administration in Northern Ireland  
(22 November 1996)

- 3.12 This Report systematically considered and rejected the reasons advanced by the Education Minister for reducing the number of Education and Library Boards. In particular, it pointed out the lack of evidence to substantiate the estimated savings and the failure to cost the implementation of the change. It was also the view of all the major political parties that decisions about such fundamental administrative changes should be left to a devolved government of locally elected representatives. The Report made only one recommendation "*that the Department of Education should not proceed with the restructuring of the Education and Library Boards at this time*".

An Examination of Pre-School Education Provision in Northern Ireland  
(27 June 1997)

- 3.13 This Report made a number of recommendations for the improvement of pre-school education provision, particularly concerning the need for the two responsible Departments to establish effective working partnerships for the development of policy and provision, in order to harmonise child care and education. The Report's main recommendation was that the Department should implement its own aim of universal pre-school education provision.

The Implications of Public/Private Partnerships for Education Services in Northern Ireland  
(5 December 1997)

- 3.14 The key recommendations of this Report were divided between proposals for the simplification of the PFI procurement process and assertions of the need to ensure that educational priorities do not become subordinate to commercial considerations.

Special Educational Provision for School Age Children in Northern Ireland  
(24 April 1998)

- 3.15 The main recommendations of this Report are intended to assist the successful implementation of the new proposals for the identification of, and provision for, special educational needs. They emphasise the need for early identification of special educational needs, adequate resourcing of special educational provision, proper training of the staff concerned and the



development of effective working partnerships, particularly between the Departments of Education (DENI) and of Health and Social Services (DHSS).

#### Miscellaneous

- 3.16 In its response to consultation on the Draft Education (NI) Order 1998 (13 February 1998) the Committee gave a guarded welcome to the proposals but warned that they will have considerable financial and training implications.
- 3.17 In response to the joint DENI/DHSS consultation paper Pre-School Education (30 January), the Committee welcomed the proposals to expand pre-school education but criticised the lack of detail, the failure to make universal pre-school provision and the failure to reinstate the "Northern Ireland share" of the Nursery Voucher Scheme money.
- 3.18 On the funding of preparatory departments, the Committee wrote to the Minister, on behalf of the Forum, setting out the case for continued grant-aid. This was not, however, sufficient to change Mr Worthington's mind about cutting support to preparatory schools.

#### Achievements

- 3.19 The Committee forwarded its Report on The Review of Education Administration in Northern Ireland to the Secretary of State and to the Prime Minister. The Committee believes that the Prime Minister's decision to overrule Mr Ancram's plans was largely due to its hard-hitting report.
- 3.20 Following publication of its Report on Pre-School Education, the Committee had a useful and cordial meeting with Mr Worthington. Within 5 months, DENI and DHSS published joint proposals for expanding pre-school provision. Although the proposals did not go as far as the Committee would have wished, the influence of its recommendations was apparent in the government's consultation paper.
- 3.21 The Report on The Implications of Public/Private Partnerships for Education Services in Northern Ireland also formed the basis of a useful discussion with the Minister who was most complimentary about it.
- 3.22 It is hoped that the latest Report on Special Educational Provision will also inform government policy in this area.
- 3.23 In responding to Government consultation papers on important education policy and legislation, the Committee played a worthwhile role in reflecting to the Departments concerned the views of elected Forum representatives.



**MEMBERSHIP OF STANDING COMMITTEE B**  
**(EDUCATION ISSUES)**

*Ulster Unionist Party* - Mr T Benson  
Mr D Browne  
Mr P Weir (Vice-Chairman)  
Mr J Rodgers

*Democratic Unionist Party* - Mr R Bolton  
Mr O Gibson (Chairman)  
Rev T Kirkland  
Rev E Smyth

*Alliance Party* - Mrs E Bell  
\*Mrs K Coulter

*Ulster Democratic Party* - \*Mr T English

*Labour* - \*Mr P MacLennan

*NI Women's Coalition* - \*Ms C Moffat

*Progressive Unionist Party* - \*Mr P Ferguson

\* Attend the Committee on behalf of the party under Rule 14(4)(a) of the Forum Rules of Procedure.



4. **COMMITTEE C**  
**(HEALTH ISSUES)**

**Remit**

- 4.1 Standing Committee C was established on 26 July 1996 *"to examine the health needs of the community in Northern Ireland with particular reference to health care administration, acute hospital services, community care services and access by the rural community and report to the Forum"*.
- 4.2 Although the remit was originally time-bounded, this limitation was subsequently removed.

**Activities**

- 4.3 Within its broad remit, which remained unchanged for the duration of the Forum, Committee C examined and reported on the following areas.

**Fluoridation of the Water Supply**

- 4.4 The first of these, on Fluoridation of the Public Water Supply, was produced against the background of a Ministerial deadline. The issue was a controversial one and generated considerable interest throughout the community. Press interest has continued and BBC Television Northern Ireland ran with the story including footage of the Committee activities shown on 28 February 1997.
- 4.5 The most important development was that the then Minister, Malcolm Moss, decided not to proceed with the planned fluoridation of the water supply. The then Opposition spokesperson on health in Northern Ireland also indicated that if the public could not be persuaded of its efficacy there should be no fluoridation of the public water supply.
- 4.6 On the basis of the above outcome, which is in line with the thrust of the Report's central recommendations, it can be clearly seen that this Report, endorsed by the Forum on 8 November 1996, proved a very effective vehicle for transmitting cross-community public opinion to Government and Opposition alike. It has been doubly effective in the sense that both appear to have taken the Report to heart.

**Cancer Care**

- 4.7 The Committee turned its attention on 14 November 1996 to Cancer Care within the Province. This is an issue of the first importance to many within Northern Ireland and the diversity of Committee membership helped to ensure that all interests were taken on board and that the West of the Province in particular was not forgotten.



- 4.8 The Central issue here was the Campbell Report which made a number of recommendations in relation to Cancer Care in the Province. The Committee Report has many detailed recommendations and has been circulated widely. The Minister responded to it in detail. While not accepting all of its findings he concluded by thanking the Forum for taking an interest in this important issue and "for producing such a constructive report".
- 4.9 Cancer care is an emotive and controversial subject which had to be dealt with sensitively and with a view to what we perceived as the "greater good". Important and difficult decisions have been taken by Government in the past weeks and the Committee has continued to monitor developments critically and dispassionately to the end.

#### Efficiency in the Health Service

- 4.10 The Committee's next Report was entitled "An Examination of the Operation of the Health Service in Northern Ireland (Efficiency)". It was an opportune and timely look at some of the fundamentals underlying the organisation and structure of the Health and Personal Social Services here and it has served to inform the new Labour administration in the Province.
- 4.11 The Report, which went out on 26 September 1997, was a hefty document running to 55 pages of text and a mass of supporting material. The Report built upon the Committee's now established reputation as a public representative body and this was acknowledged through the securing of a meeting with the relevant Minister, Tony Worthington, on 6 October 1997. The event received significant media coverage.

#### Men's Health

- 4.12 The Committee had a second meeting with the Minister on 7 April 1998. Its purpose was to discuss its Report on Men's Health and resulted in the Minister undertaking to refer the Report to the Health Promotion Agency and to discuss it with Ministerial colleagues.
- 4.13 Men's Health was an unusual subject choice but there were many good reasons for looking at it; these are detailed in the Report which was debated in the Forum on 13 February 1998.
- 4.14 This Report essentially was about raising awareness and making necessary adjustments to perceptions. It was also about sowing seeds and putting into place a strategy, at modest cost, that might lead to better directed effort in the health care and treatment of men. The comparative statistics for men and women indicates the apparent problem of imbalance, and at the very least the Committee wanted explanations of this from those who are managing the health service.



- 4.15 In tackling a subject of this size and type the Committee has shown its willingness to be innovative, independent and controversial. It succeeded in raising the profile of Men's Health through achieving considerable press coverage within the Province and from the attentions of at least one national newspaper.

#### Northern Ireland Ambulance Service

- 4.16 The penultimate work of the Committee was a Report on the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service. A number of members had expressed concern over the adequacy of ambulance services and the final trigger for the study arose from a serious incident at Glenowen, Londonderry on 16 November 1997 in which four people died. The examination was originally designed as a quick exercise to be run in parallel with other work but ended up as a major Report with 26 recommendations. The Report was warmly welcomed by UNISON and also the Ambulance Service itself and we are certain that if and when it is implemented the result will be an effective and responsive Ambulance Service that is organised and resourced appropriately.

#### Community Care and the Home Help Service

- 4.17 The Committee's final major piece of work moved away from Health and on to the community care side of its remit. It arose following concerns about the state of the Home Help Service in the Province and is in some respects an incomplete work owing to the demise of the Forum on 24 April 1998.

#### Recommendations

- 4.18 The recommendations made by the Health Committee were:

Fluoridation (5); Cancer Services (17); Efficiency (33); Men's Health (17); Ambulance Service (26); Home Help Service (11). Total: 109.

- 4.19 The Committee took and considered oral evidence from a number of other bodies, usually at their request. These included:

Age Concern  
Friends of Montgomery House  
Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action  
Disability Action  
Action on Medical Negligence  
An Anti-Abortion Grouping

#### Other Work

- 4.20 The Committee also demonstrated its capacity to deal expeditiously with urgent matters of public concern. An instance of this was the Forum debate on a Health Committee motion of 28 February 1997 on Cardiac Surgery at the



RVH. This motion commanded all-party support and this was communicated directly to the Minister for consideration.

- 4.21 Over time the Committee's influence has grown and on 24 March 1998 it met representatives of the Trust and Board Chief Executives (National Health Service (NHS) Confederation) at their request to discuss the future of the Health Service here.
- 4.22 Committee C has also taken the opportunity of contributing to Government discussion documents. An example of this was on the question of Food Standards which had become a major public health issue. The Committee's contributions on this issue are contained in a Report on Food Standards by Standing Committee D.



**MEMBERSHIP OF STANDING COMMITTEE C**  
**(HEALTH ISSUES)**

- Ulster Unionist Party* - Mr S Foster  
Mr S Gardiner  
Mr P King  
Mr T Robinson
- Democratic Unionist Party* - Mrs M Beattie  
Mr C Calvert  
Mr G Campbell  
Mrs J Parkes - (Vice-Chairperson)
- Alliance Party* - \*Mrs M Marshall  
\*Mrs G Rice
- Ulster Democratic Party* - \*Mr F McCoubrey
- Progressive Unionist Party* - Mr H Smyth - (Chairman)
- Labour* - \*Dr H McKee
- NI Women's Coalition* - \*Dr J Wilde

\* Attend the Committee on behalf of the party under Rule 14(4)(a) of the Forum Rules of Procedure



5. **STANDING COMMITTEE D**  
**(AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES ISSUES)**

**Remit and Terms of Reference**

- 5.1 Standing Committee D met for the first time on 12 September 1996 its terms of reference being *"to examine the problems being faced by farmers and fishermen in Northern Ireland and report to the Forum"*.

**Activity**

- 5.2 When the Committee was formed, the most pressing problem affecting the farming industry was the Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) crisis which not only severely affected the beef industry but had far reaching effects on the rural economy. The Committee therefore conducted an examination of the Beef Industry Crisis, taking evidence not only from the two Farming Unions, the Ulster Farmers' Union and the Northern Ireland Agriculture Producers' Association, but also from a wide spectrum of industry interests.
- 5.3 Having commenced the examination of the Beef Industry Crisis, the Committee became aware of a need to complete an urgent report dealing with Fisheries Issues in sufficient time to influence European Union consideration of fishing quotas which was to take place in early December 1996. The two exercises, Beef Crisis and Fisheries Issues, were taken forward in tandem with Reports being adopted in the Forum in November 1996.
- 5.4 The Committee then settled down to address the issues which farmers identified as being worthy of further examination. In January and February 1997, advertisements were placed in local newspapers across Northern Ireland indicating that the Committee proposed to hold evening meetings at various locations. Meetings were arranged in Enniskillen, Banbridge, Coleraine, Dungannon, Omagh, Newtownards and Ballymena at which Committee members heard at first hand from farmers. The benefits of this exercise were twofold - the Forum was going out into the country and Forum members were making contact with the people - and in addition people were given the opportunity to lobby public representatives. The information gained in the course of this exercise was used to prepare the programme of work of the Committee over the next year.

**Approach**

- 5.5 In pursuing information and compiling evidence for its Reports, the Committee wrote to the key organisations and individuals in the agriculture sector and, where applicable, the fishing sector, seeking written evidence and inviting selected witnesses to address the Committee on the record and to answer questions. The Committee, in most cases, sought the help and assistance of



the Department of Agriculture (DANI) - assistance which was willingly given and which was valued by the Committee.

- 5.6 The Committee also sought to make contact with farmers, growers and processors in all sectors of the agriculture and fishing industry. Visits were arranged to enable the Committee members to see the industry at work and to meet the people. The Committee also in the course of preparation of particular Reports visited agricultural establishments and Department of Agriculture operations across the country.
- 5.7 The Committee progressed its work mainly through its Reports, but it also sought to influence opinion by arranging meetings with the Northern Ireland Agriculture Minister, the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food in London, the Chief Minister of the Isle of Man and his Agriculture and Fisheries Minister, and with the Agriculture Commissioner and his staff in Brussels.

### Reports

- 5.8 Over the past two years, the following Reports were completed by the Committee and adopted by the Forum.

Review of the Beef Industry Crisis in Northern Ireland  
(1 November 1996)

- 5.9 The Committee sought Government agreement to the creation of a regional policy, the implementation of a certified herds scheme and the establishment of a Ministry of Food separate from the Agriculture Ministry.

Review of Fisheries Issues in Northern Ireland  
(November 1996)

- 5.10 This Report was produced to influence the EU Fisheries Council meeting to be held in early December 1996. The Committee called for the fundamental re-examination of the Hague Preference, for the end of the abuse of quotas by "flagships", for the Manx authorities to permit limited fishing on the Douglas Bank, investment in the Fisheries Harbour Board and for Government action to encourage young people into fishing.

Review of the Current State of the NI Potato Industry  
(7 March 1997)

- 5.11 This Report examined the decline in the potato industry and recommended inter alia that the introduction of a Quality Assurance Scheme should be expedited and that more aggressive marketing of potatoes should be encouraged.



The Sourcing in Northern Ireland of Agricultural Produce by National Supermarkets and Retailers

(23 January 1998)

- 5.12 This Report examined the sourcing policies of national supermarkets and retailers encouraging them to use Northern Ireland agriculture producers and processors and to make a commitment to Northern Ireland. The Committee called for a labelling policy which identified country of origin and animal welfare standards.

A Response to the Government White Paper "The Food Standards Agency - A Force for Change"

(13 March 1998)

- 5.13 This Report provided the Committee's response to the Government White Paper which proposed the setting up of a Food Standards Agency. As identified in earlier Reports, the Committee called for a clear labelling policy, increased Northern Ireland representation on the UK body, and additional resources for local authorities to meet the increased workload required. Further the Committee recommended that the Government should meet the largest proportion of the cost of the new Agency.

Organophosphate Insecticides - Their Use in The Farming Community

(3 April 1998)

- 5.14 The Committee's interest in this topic arose from representatives from the Northern Ireland Organophosphorous Sufferers Association. The Committee was impressed by the strength of argument presented by the farmers who suffered from Organophosphorous Poisoning - recommending that the Government should conduct a review of the use of Organophosphates, impose a moratorium on their use, develop safer alternatives, establish a Diagnostic Centre and Detoxification Unit in Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland Agriculture - Preparing for the Future

(24 April 1998)

- 5.15 This Report commented on the EC Agenda 2000 proposals and examined measures to assist farmers to diversify and adapt to changes arising from the proposals - eg, Early Retirement Scheme for Farmers, Diversification, Education and Training and Rural Planning.

Willow Biomass - Renewable Energy

(24 April 1998)

- 5.16 The Committee was impressed with DANI research and development in this area and this led to a wide ranging Report covering Renewable Energy. The Report recommends continuing research and development in this area and



the development and expansion of renewable energy sources, particularly willow biomass.

### Other Issues

5.17 In a number of cases the Committee discussed issues and took evidence on matters which did not merit the preparation of a Report. These issues covered all of the sectors of the agriculture and fisheries industry and were progressed by means of correspondence with the Agriculture Minister, with Departmental officials or with the relevant organisation. Issues which fell into this category included the following:

- the importation into Northern Ireland from Scotland of lamb for processing;
- cattle grading problems;
- double tagging of cattle;
- boarding of Northern Ireland fishing boats within United Kingdom waters by Republic of Ireland vessels;
- fixed quota allocations - consultation paper;
- European Union Intervention Aid and Green Pound compensation;
- Ballymena Meat Plant;
- welfare of pigs.

### Achievement

5.18 The Committee offered individual farmers, representative groups, sectoral interests, etc, within the agricultural and fisheries industries the opportunity to put opinions and views on the record, something that they had been unable to do for some time. Although the Committee had no power, it did have the ability to persuade and apply influence. With regard to the BSE crisis the Committee presented its Report to Government and then engaged in active lobbying for the lifting of the beef export ban - this lobby was conducted at local, national and European Union levels. At the time of writing, the formal lifting of the ban has yet to be made, however it is hoped that this will take place shortly. The Committee no doubt assisted in bringing the problem to this stage. The Committee also takes credit for assisting in obtaining assistance for hard pressed "flagged" farmers.

5.19 On the fisheries front, the Fish Producers Association, indicated their appreciation of the timing and content of the Fisheries Report which assisted in negotiations of quotas and other issues with the European Commission Fisheries Commissioner. The Committee regards its engagement of the national supermarkets and retailers as important and takes some credit for the resulting higher profile given to Northern Ireland agricultural produce and the increased reliance by the supermarkets on Northern Ireland producers.

5.20 The Committee, having identified the need for an Early Retirement Scheme for Farmers and having been met with a DANI refusal to find the necessary



resources to implement a regional scheme in Northern Ireland, welcomes the UK Agriculture Minister's willingness to consider a national scheme. The Committee has been proved right in its attitude to this key area of encouraging young people to engage in farming as a career.

- 5.21 The Committee believes that it was right to highlight the plight of those farmers suffering from Organophosphorous Poisoning. Not only does the Committee take credit for the first major report in the UK on this important topic, it has been rewarded by the praise of the Organophosphorous Sufferers Association for a report which addresses the problems and some possible solutions. The Committee is pleased that its call for the establishment of a Diagnostic Service for sufferers has been met and awaits with interest to see if the recommended Detoxification Unit is accepted.
- 5.22 On a general note, the Committee has been successful in heightening the awareness of farmers to many issues through the efforts as reported in the farming media.



**MEMBERSHIP OF STANDING COMMITTEE D**  
**(AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES ISSUES)**

- Ulster Unionist Party* - Mr R D S Campbell - Chairman  
Mr J Gaston  
Mr J Speers  
Mr J Junkin
- Democratic Unionist Party* - Mr D Stewart - Vice-Chairman  
Mr E Poots  
Mr J Shannon  
Mr W Clyde
- Alliance Party* - Mr K McCarthy  
\*Mr D Ford
- Ulster Democratic Party* - Mr J White
- Progressive Unionist Party* - Mr D Ervine
- Labour Party* - \*Mr J Masson (resigned on 22.10.97)  
\*Mr P O'Connor
- NI Women's Coalition* - \*Ms R Keenan

\*Attend the Committee on behalf of their Party under  
Rule 14(4)(a) of the Forum Rules of Procedure



6. **STANDING COMMITTEE E**  
**(THE NORTHERN IRELAND ECONOMY)**

**Remit**

- 6.1 On 8 November 1996 the Northern Ireland Forum for Political Dialogue agreed the membership of a Committee *"to examine issues relevant to the performance of the Northern Ireland economy and report to the Forum"*.
- 6.2 In determining how it should approach its work, the Committee considered that there was a need for it to take an overview of the economy and address its various aspects, ie, industrial, retail, manufacturing, imports, exports and the service sector. In addition, it was agreed that the Committee could best demonstrate its effectiveness by being able to react quickly to specific economic problems.

**Overview of the Northern Ireland Economy**

- 6.3 The Committee commenced its work by taking evidence from a number of organisations which have a key role in the economy, eg, the Department of Economic Development, the Confederation of British Industry, the Industrial Development Board, etc, and presented a progress report on work undertaken to the Forum on 21 February 1997 and a full report on evidence about the performance of the Northern Ireland economy on 25 July 1997.

**Long-Term Unemployment**

- 6.4 Having begun its work of examining issues affecting the performance of the Northern Ireland economy the Committee focused on long-term unemployment as an area worthy of consideration. Written evidence was received from a number of District Councils and other relevant organisations and oral evidence was taken from the Permanent Secretary of the Department of Economic Development and the Chief Executive of the Training and Employment Agency.
- 6.5 To provide a timely response to the Training and Employment Agency's consultation document the Committee presented an Interim Report (setting out a summary of the relevant issues and initial conclusions) to the Forum on 18 July 1997. A final report on Long-Term Unemployment was published on 31 October 1997.

**Integrated Transport Policy**

- 6.6 The Forum requested the Economy Committee to examine the issue of developing an integrated transport policy and to prepare a response to the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions. The Committee commissioned a discussion paper from Dr Irvine Lavery of the University of



Ulster at Jordanstown and took oral and written evidence from Translink and a number of relevant transport associations. The response prepared by the Committee was presented to the Forum on 14 November 1997.

### **Rural Transport.**

- 6.7 When the response was being debated in the Forum a number of members, while welcoming the response, felt that it was mainly relevant to the Belfast conurbation and was remiss in not highlighting the needs of rural areas, particularly those in the western part of the Province. The Committee agreed to consider this issue further and presented a report on Transport in Rural Areas on 3 April 1998.

### **Peace and Reconciliation**

- 6.8 The Committee evaluated the European Union Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation and put forward a number of recommendations for the future operation of the fund in a report which was adopted by the Forum on 6 February 1998.

### **Support for Industry**

- 6.9 In addition to taking an overview of the Northern Ireland economy and reporting to the Forum on a variety of key issues, the Committee reacted to specific economic problems, eg, the proposed closure of the Coats Viyella factory in Lurgan and a perceived threat to the operation of Short Brothers. A deputation met the Economy Minister, Adam Ingram, and corresponded with him on a number of occasions.

### **Submission to the Chancellor of the Exchequer**

- 6.10 At the request of the Forum the Committee prepared a submission to the Chancellor setting out a number of areas (including agri-business, petrol retailing, research and development and rural transport) where Government might provide special financial assistance to Northern Ireland.

### **Industrial Visits**

- 6.11 Towards the end of the life of the Committee industrial visits were arranged to Newtownards Abattoir and to the Belfast Shipyard of Harland and Wolff.



**MEMBERSHIP OF STANDING COMMITTEE E**  
**(THE NORTHERN IRELAND ECONOMY)**

- Ulster Unionist Party* - Mrs M Steele (Vice-Chair)  
Mr D Nesbitt  
Mr J Clarke  
Mr R J White
- Democratic Unionist Party* - Mr St C McAlister (Chairman)  
Mr W Snoddy  
Mr S Wilson  
Mr M Carrick
- Alliance Party* - Mr S McBride  
Mr S Neeson
- Ulster Democratic Party* - \*Mr D Adams
- Progressive Unionist Party* - \*Mr R Stewart
- Labour* - \*Mr W White
- NI Women's Coalition* - \*Ms N Heaton

\* Attend the Committee on behalf of the party under Rule 14(4)(a) of the Forum Rules of Procedure.



## 7. COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL REFORM

### Remit

7.1 The Committee on Electoral Reform was established on 13 June 1997 initially to recommend methods of countering electoral irregularities which had occurred during the General Election on 1 May 1997 and the Local Government Election on 21 May 1997 with a view to submitting such evidence to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland for consideration within the Government's review procedure.

This remit was extended on 23 January 1998 to allow the Committee to make a contribution to the Government's review of the electoral system to be used for parliamentary elections as well as to consider and recommend an appropriate system for any future election for a Northern Ireland Assembly.

### Approach

7.2 In compiling evidence for its first Report on Electoral Irregularities the Committee:-

- (1) inserted advertisements in the Northern Ireland morning and evening papers setting out the details of the Committee's investigations and inviting responses from interested groups and individuals;
- (2) wrote to key organisations and individuals with an interest and a knowledge of the subject including Chief Electoral Officer, key politicians, government departments and organisations with responsibility for electoral matters, British Embassies as well as organisations representing people with disabilities;
- (3) invited selected witnesses to address the Committee, on the record, and to answer questions;
- (4) considered legislation which currently covered electoral procedures;
- (5) utilised personal knowledge and experiences of the members of the Committee.

7.3 In compiling its two Reports dealing with electoral systems the Committee firstly sought advice from a leading academic on the type of voting systems which could be adopted. The Committee also wrote to the political parties seeking written submissions/oral presentations. The Reports are based solely on this advice and oral presentations/submissions from the political parties.



## Reports

- 7.4 As a result of its investigations the Committee on Electoral Reform presented three Reports to the Forum.

### Electoral Irregularities

(31 October 1997)

- 7.5 This Report contains some 49 conclusions and recommendations addressing a vast range of issues such as removing multiple entries from the electoral register; ensuring that those who are entitled to vote are registered; providing suitable and convenient polling stations; overcoming postal and proxy vote abuse; preventing voting personation by introducing proper and effective identity checks and other relevant issues which include difficulties experienced by those with learning or sensory difficulties and by security forces; non-delivery of polling cards and the registration of homeless people.

### Electoral System for a Northern Ireland Assembly

(13 March 1998)

- 7.6 The main recommendation in this Report details the values around which any future electoral system for a Northern Ireland Assembly should be constructed. As a result of time constraints the Committee was unable to engage in an examination of any one system and the Report therefore presents the arguments put forward by each party.

### Electoral System for Westminster Elections

(3 April 1998)

- 7.7 The main recommendation in this Report identifies the values around which future parliamentary elections should be constructed and advocates the use of Single Transferable Vote as an alternative to the present system for parliamentary elections.

## Achievements

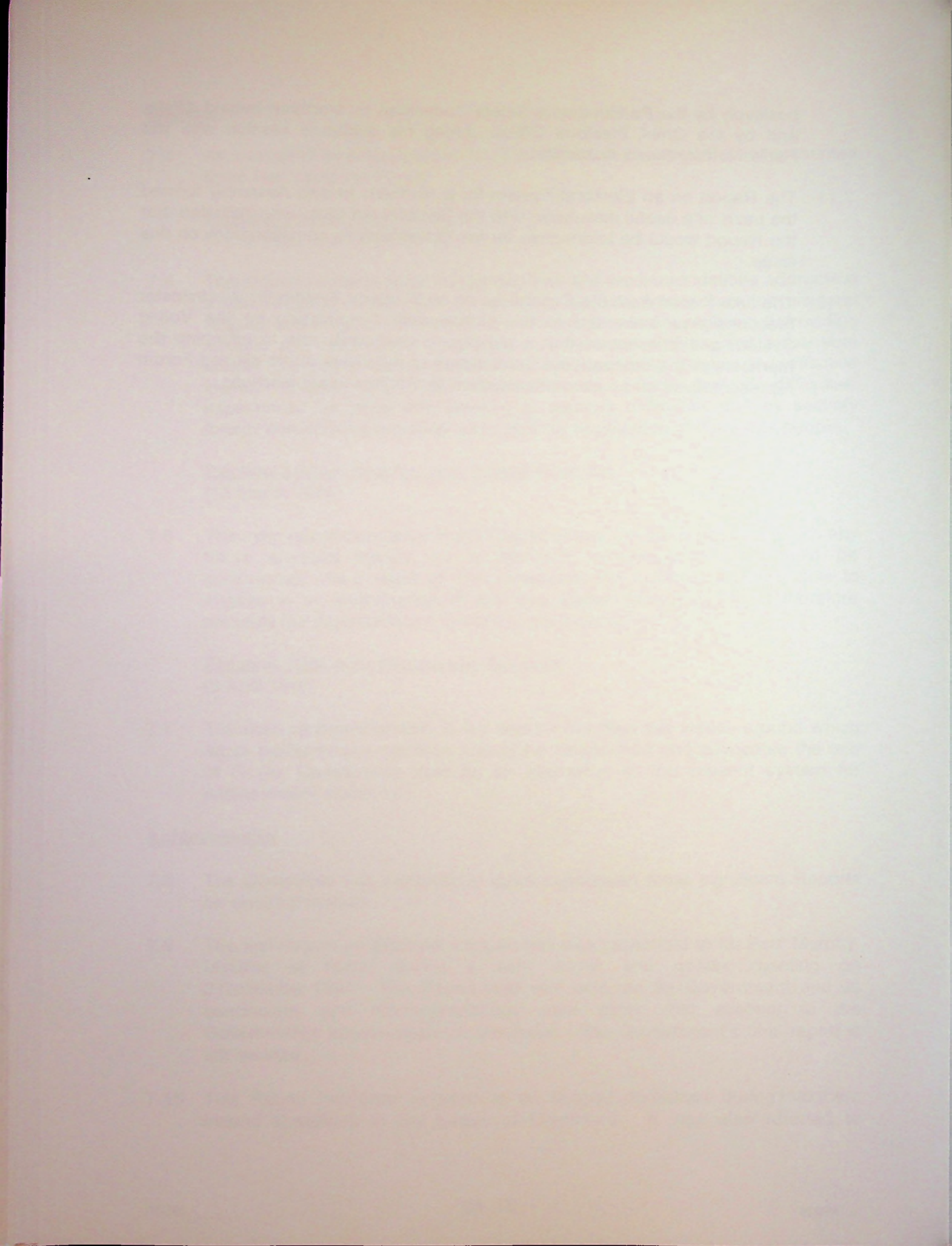
- 7.8 The Committee has produced in quick succession three significant Reports on electoral matters.
- 7.9 The first Report on Electoral Irregularities was presented to Mr Paul Murphy, Minister of State, during a very useful and cordial meeting on 3 December 1997. The Report was well received by Government and its conclusions and recommendations were taken into account in the Government's interim report on this issue. The Government's final report is still awaited.
- 7.10 This Report has been referred to on several occasions during Northern Ireland Questions in the House of Commons. It was also referred to



positively by the Parliamentary Select Committee on Northern Ireland Affairs and by the Chief Electoral Officer during his evidence session with the Parliamentary Select Committee.

- 7.11 The Report on an Electoral System for a Northern Ireland Assembly formed the basis of a useful discussion with the Secretary of State who indicated that the Report would be informative for the Government's considerations on this issue.
- 7.12 The final Report from the Committee on an Electoral System for Westminster Elections was forwarded to the Independent Commission on the Voting System and it is hoped that it will play a worthwhile role in informing the members of the Independent Commission of the views of the elected Forum representatives on an alternative system for Parliamentary elections.







**MEMBERSHIP OF**  
**COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL REFORM**

- Ulster Unionist Party* - Mr K Maginnis MP  
Mr R Coulter  
Mr S Gardiner (Vice-Chairman)  
Mr R Stoker
- Democratic Unionist Party* - Mr P Robinson MP  
Mr N Dodds  
Rev W McCrea  
Mr I Paisley
- Alliance Party* - Mr S Neeson (Chairman)  
\*Mr D Ford
- Ulster Democratic Party* - \*Mr F McCoubrey
- UK Unionist Party* - \*#Mr J Dudgeon
- Labour* - Mr H Casey
- NI Women's Coalition* - Ms P Sagar
- Progressive Unionist Party* - \*Ms D Purvis

\* attend the Committee on behalf of the party under Rule 14(4)(a) of the Forum Rules of Procedure.

# party resigned from Forum on 16 September 1997.



MEMBERS RETURNED BY ELECTION 30 MAY 1996

**ADAMS, Gerard (SF)**  
**ALCOCK, Antony (UUP)**  
**ALDERDICE, John (All)**  
**ARMSTRONG, Annie (SF)**  
**BEATTIE, May (DUP)**  
**BELL, Eileen (All)**  
**BENSON, Thomas (UUP)**  
**BHREATNACH, Luciletta (SF)**  
**BOLTON, Robert (DUP)**  
**BREWSTER, David (UUP)**  
**BROWNE, David (UUP)**  
**BYRNE, Joe (SDLP)**  
**CALVERT, Cecil (DUP)**  
**CAMPBELL, David (UUP)**  
**CAMPBELL, Gregory (DUP)**  
**CARAHER, Maria (SF)**  
**CARR, Hugh (SDLP)**  
**CARRICK, Mervyn (DUP)**  
**CASEY, Hugh (Lab)**  
**CLARKE, James (UUP)**  
**CLOSE, Seamus (All)**  
**CLYDE, Wilson (DUP)**  
**COULTER, Robert (UUP)**  
**CURRAN, Malachi (Lab)**  
**DAVIS, Ivan (UUP)**  
**DODDS, Nigel (DUP)**  
**DOHERTY, Arthur (SDLP)**  
**DOHERTY, Patrick (SF)**  
**DONALDSON, Jeffrey (UUP)**  
**DURKAN, Mark (SDLP)**  
**EMPEY, Reg (UUP)**  
**ERVINE, David (PUP)**  
**FARREN, Sean (SDLP)**  
**FEELY, Frank (SDLP)**  
**FIELD, Dorita (SDLP)**  
**FOSTER, Sam (UUP)**  
**GALLAGHER, Tommy (SDLP)**  
**GARDINER, Sam (UUP)**  
**GASTON, Joseph (UUP)**  
**GIBSON, Oliver (DUP)**  
**GORMAN, John (UUP)**  
**GROOGAN, Patrick E (SF)**  
**HENDRON, Dr Joe MP (SDLP)**  
**HUME, John MP MEP (SDLP)**  
**HUNTER, John (UUP)**  
**HUSSEY, Derek (UUP)**  
**JUNKIN, John (UUP)**  
**KELLY, Gerry (SF)**  
**KING, Peter (UUP)**  
**KIRKLAND, Rev Trevor (DUP)**  
**McALISTER, St Clair (DUP)**  
**McBRIDE, Steve (All)**  
**McCARTHY, Kieran (All)**  
**McCARTNEY, Robert MP (UKU)**  
**McCLELLAND, Donovan (SDLP)**  
**McCREA, Rev William MP (DUP)**  
**McDONNELL, Alasdair (SDLP)**  
**McELDUFF, Barry (SF)**  
**McFARLAND, Alan (UUP)**  
**McGLONE, Patsy (SDLP)**  
**McGOWAN, Paddy (SDLP)**  
**McGRADY, Eddie MP (SDLP)**  
**McGUINNESS, Dodie (SF)**  
**McGUINNESS, Martin (SF)**  
**McHUGH, Gerry (SF)**  
**McKEE, Jack (DUP)**  
**McLAUGHLIN, Mitchell (SF)**  
**McMICHAEL, Gary (UDP)**  
**McNAMEE, Patrick (SF)**  
**McWILLIAMS, Monica (NIWC)**  
**MAGINNESS, Alban (SDLP)**  
**MAGINNIS, Ken MP (UUP)**  
**MALLON, Seamus MP (SDLP)**  
**MASKEY, Alex (SF)**  
**MOLLOY, Francie (SF)**  
**MORROW, Maurice (DUP)**  
**MURPHY, Michael (SF)**  
**NAPIER, Sir Oliver (All)**  
**NEESON, Sean (All)**  
**NESBITT, Dermot (UUP)**  
**O'BRIEN, Dr Conor Cruise (UKU)**  
**O'CONNOR, Michelle (SF)**  
**PAISLEY, Dr Ian MP MEP (DUP)**  
**PAISLEY, Ian Jnr (DUP)**  
**PARKES, Joan (DUP)**  
**POOTS, Edwin Cecil (DUP)**  
**RITCHIE, Margaret (SDLP)**  
**ROBINSON, Iris (DUP)**  
**ROBINSON, Peter MP (DUP)**  
**ROBINSON, Thomas (UUP)**  
**RODGERS, Brid (SDLP)**  
**RODGERS, Jim (UUP)**  
**SAGAR, Pearl (NIWC)**  
**SHANNON, James (DUP)**  
**SMYTH, Eric (DUP)**  
**SMYTH, Hugh (PUP)**  
**SNODDY, William (DUP)**  
**SPEERS, James (UUP)**  
**STEELE, May (UUP)**  
**STEPHENSON, Jonathan (SDLP)**  
**STEWART, Des (DUP)**  
**STOKER, Robert (UUP)**  
**TAYLOR, Rt Hon John MP (UUP)**  
**TIERNEY, John (SDLP)**  
**TRIMBLE, David MP (UUP)**  
**WEIR, Peter (UUP)**  
**WHITE, John (UDP)**  
**WHITE, Robert John (UUP)**  
**WILSON, Cedric (UKU)**  
**WILSON, Sammy (DUP)**



**PARTY COMPOSITION**

Ulster Unionist Party	30
Democratic Unionist Party	24
Social Democratic & Labour Party	21
Sinn Fein	17
Alliance	7
UK Unionist Party	3
Labour	2
NI Women's Coalition	2
Progressive Unionist Party	2
Ulster Democratic Party	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>110</u></b>

Sinn Fein did not take up their seats. On 7 July 1996 the SDLP decided to withdraw from the Forum, and on 16 September 1997 the UKUP also withdrew.



NORTHERN IRELAND FORUM FOR POLITICAL DIALOGUEINDEXSTANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Report No	Title	Committee	Date
1	Review of Education Administration in NI (Education & Library Boards)	B	22.11.96
2	Review of the Beef Industry Crisis in NI (Interim Report)	D	01.11.96
3	Investigation into the Proposed Fluoridation of Water Supplies in NI (Interim Report)	C	08.11.96
4	Review of Fisheries Issues in NI	D	22.11.96
5	Review of Boycotting of Businesses	A	13.12.96
6	Investigation into Cancer Care in NI	C	07.02.97
7	Review of the Current State of the NI Potato Industry	D	07.03.97
8	Progress Report on Work undertaken by Committee E	E	21.02.97
9 Vol I Vol II	Review of the Parades Issue in NI	A	20.06.97



Report No	Title	Committee	Date
10	An Examination of Pre-School Education in Northern Ireland	B	27.06.97
11	Interim Report on Long-Term Unemployment (Summary of Relevant Issues and Initial Conclusions)	E	18.07.97
12	Report on Evidence about the Performance of the NI Economy given to Standing Committee E	E	25.07.97
13	An Examination of the Operation of the Health Service in NI	C	26.09.97
14	Final Report on Long-Term Unemployment by Standing Committee E (The NI Economy)	E	31.10.97
15	Report by Committee on Electoral Reform	Committee on Electoral Reform	31.10.97
16	Developing an Integrated Transport Policy	E	14.11.97
17	The Implications of Public/Private Partnerships for Education Services in Northern Ireland	B	05.12.97
18	Report on the European Union Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation	E	06.02.98
19	The Sourcing in NI of Agricultural Produce by National Supermarkets & Retailers	D	23.01.98



Report No	Title	Committee	Date
20	Men's Health in NI - An Examination by Standing Committee C (Health Issues)	C	13.02.98
21	Electoral System for a NI Assembly by Committee on Electoral Reform	Committee on Electoral Reform	13.03.98
22	A Response to The Government White Paper "The Food Standards Agency - A Force for Change"	D	13.03.98
23	Transport in Rural Areas - A Report by Standing Committee 'E' (The NI Economy)	E	03.04.98
24	The NI Ambulance Service - A Review by Standing Committee C (Health Issues)	C	27.03.98
25	Organophosphate Insecticides - Their Use by the Farming Community - A Report prepared by Standing Committee D (Agriculture and Fisheries Issues)	D	03.04.98
26	Electoral System for Westminster Elections - A Report by Committee on Electoral Reform	Committee on Electoral Reform	03.04.98
27	Northern Ireland Agriculture - Preparing for the Future - A Report Prepared by Standing Committee D (Agriculture & Fisheries Issues)	D	24.04.98
28	Community Care & The Home Help Service - An Examination by Standing Committee C (Health Issues)	C	24.04.98







**RULES COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Mr J Gorman (Chairman)

*Ulster Unionist Party* - Mr P King  
Mr K Maginnis MP

*Democratic Unionist Party* - Mr G Campbell  
Mr I Paisley

*Social Democratic & Labour Party* - <sup>o</sup>Mr A Maginness  
<sup>o</sup>Ms B Rodgers

*Alliance Party* - Ms E Bell

*Ulster Democratic Party* - Mr J White

*UK Unionist Party* - #Mr C Wilson

*Labour* - Mr H Casey

*NI Women's Coalition* - Ms P Sagar

*Progressive Unionist Party* - Mr H Smyth

<sup>o</sup> Party resigned from Forum on 7 July 1996.

# Party resigned from Forum on 16 September 1997.



**BUSINESS COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Mr J Gorman (Chairman)

- Ulster Unionist Party* - Mr R Coulter  
Mr K Maginnis MP
- Democratic Unionist Party* - Mr M Morrow  
Mr P Robinson MP
- Alliance Party* - Mr S Neeson
- Ulster Democratic Party* - Mr G McMichael
- UK Unionist Party* - #Mr C Wilson
- Labour* - \*Mr D Bleakley
- NI Women's Coalition* - Ms P Sagar
- Progressive Unionist Party* - Mr D Ervine

\* Attend the Committee on behalf of the party under Rule 14(4)(a) of the Forum Rules of Procedure.

# Party resigned from Forum on 16 September 1997.



## RECORD OF DEBATES

- No. 1 Friday 14 June 1996**  
Forum Business : Forum(Purpose and Arrangements),Chairman,Roll of Members  
Establishment of Rules Committee,Appointment of a Business Committee
- No. 2 Friday 21 June 1996**  
IRA Bomb (Manchester)  
Forum Business : Seating Arrangements,Chairmanship,Somme Commemorations
- No. 3 Friday 28 June 1996**  
Forum Business : Rules of Procedure,Draft Rules  
Forum Business : Education Administration
- No. 4 Friday 05 July 1996**  
Motion : Education Administration  
Forum Business : Chairmanship,Rules of Procedure
- No. 5 Monday 08 July 1996**  
Security Situation (Drumcree)
- No. 6 Friday 19 July 1996**  
Motion : Education Administration (continued from 05 July)  
Security / Political Situation  
Forum Business : Draft Advertisement  
Motion : Forum Rules
- No. 7 Friday 26 July 1996**  
Motion : Health Care  
Motion : Committees: Appointment of 4 Standing Committees (A - Public Order / B - Education / C - Health / D - Agriculture and Fisheries)  
Forum Business : Summer Recess Debate
- No. 8 Friday 06 September 1996**  
Forum Business : Rules of Procedure  
Forum Business : Education Administration  
Forum Business : Committees  
Motion : Union Flag flown when Forum is sitting  
Motion : Business Boycotts  
Forum Business : Broadcasting Facilities
- No. 9 Friday 13 September 1996**  
Motion : Beef Industry Crisis (BSE)  
Forum Business : Notice of Motion paper,Rules of Procedure  
Forum Business : Committees



**No.10 Friday 20 September 1996**

Motion : Housing Policy Review  
Broughshane International Award  
Forum Business : Business Committee  
Forum Business : BSE

**No.11 Friday 27 September 1996**

Motion : Housing Policy Review (continued from 20 September)  
Motion : Disability  
Forum Business : Rules of Procedure agreed (subject to review of Rule 13(1)),  
Christmas Recess

**No.12 Friday 04 October 1996**

Motion : Education Administration (Interim report)  
Motion : Multi-party Talks (Stormont)  
Motion : Committees : Current remit and terms of reference agreed for  
Standing Committees A(Public Order),B(Education),C (Health) and  
D(Agriculture and Fisheries)

**No.13 Friday 11 October 1996**

Motion : Bombing of Thiepval Army Barracks  
Motion : Northern Ireland Economy

**No.14 Friday 18 October 1996**

Motion : Job seekers Allowance  
Motion : Water Service Privatisation  
Forum Business : Order Paper

**No.15 Friday 25 October 1996**

Motion : Queen's Speech (State opening of Parliament)  
Motion : Waste Products  
Motion : Committees:  
- Standing Committee to be formed to examine Economy issues  
- Standing Committee B (Education) terms of reference extended  
- Standing Committee C (Health) terms of reference extended  
- Rotation of Committee meetings each Thursday  
Forum Business : President of R.O.I.-(visits to N.I.) Protocol

**No.16 Friday 01 November 1996**

Motion : Beef Industry Crisis (BSE)(Interim report)  
Motion : Neil Latimer  
Motion : European Union (Political Integration)  
Motion : Committees:  
-Appointment of Standing Committee E (Economy)  
- Standing Committee B (Education) terms of reference extended  
- Remove wording "by 31 December 1996" from terms of reference for  
Standing Committees B,C and D



**No.17 Friday 08 November 1996**

Motion : European Union (Political Integration)(continued from 01 Nov.)  
Motion : Water Supply (Fluoridation)(Interim report)  
Special Debate - 5 minute debate

**No.18 Friday 15 November 1996**

Motion : Anglo-Irish Agreement

**No.19 Friday 22 November 1996**

Motion : Education Administration (final report)  
Motion : Fisheries Issues  
Motion : Elderly People  
Motion : Paedophile Activities

**No.20 Friday 29 November 1996**

Motion : All-Ireland Harmonisation  
Forum Business : Christmas celebrations  
Special Debate (continued from 08 November)

**No.21 Friday 06 December 1996**

Motion : Human Rights  
Motion : Roads and Transport  
Forum Business : Boycotts  
Forum Business : Neil Latimer

**No.22 Friday 13 December 1996**

Motion : Business Boycotts (Interim Report)  
Motion : Public Expenditure Cuts

**No.23 Friday 10 January 1997**

Motion : Senior Citizens - Cold Weather Payments  
Motion : Forum (Plenary Meetings) : Address Invitations  
Motion : Ulster-Scots Identity

**No.24 Friday 17 January 1997**

Motion : Terrorist Crime Legislation  
Motion : Housing  
Special Debate (Rule 10 (8))

**No.25 Friday 24 January 1997**

Police Complaints System : Hayes Report  
Motion : Drug Abuse  
Forum Business : Education Administration, Neil Latimer  
Forum Chamber (schools event)

**No.26 Friday 31 January 1997**

Motion : ACE/Jobskills  
Motion: Parades and Marches : Independent Review



**No.27 Friday 07 February 1997**  
Motion : Cancer Care (Report)  
Motion : Parades and Marches : Independent Review (continued from 31 Jan)

**No.28 Friday 14 February 1997**  
Murder of L/Bdr Restorick  
Motion : Committees : Political Affairs  
Motion: Assoc. of Local Authorities of N.I.  
Motion : Pollution (Rivers,Streams and Beaches)

**No.29 Friday 21 February 1997**  
Standing Committee A (Oral evidence)  
Motion : The work undertaken by Standing Committee E  
Motion : Public Holidays (N.I.)  
Motion : Newcastle Disease  
Motion : Education : Finance  
Forum Proceedings : Publicity

**No.30 Friday 28 February 1997**  
Forum Business : Standing Committee A  
Motion : Education :Finance (continued from 21 Feb.)  
Motion : Child Support Agency  
Forum Business : press coverage  
Motion : Cardiac Surgery

**No. 31 Friday 07 March 1997**  
Motion : Committee D: Potato Industry Report  
Motion :Special Needs : Summer Schemes  
Motion : Negotiations / Violence  
Forum : Business

**No.32 Friday 14 March 1997**  
Forum : Business  
Motion : Political Negotiations :Violence (continued from 07 March)  
Forum Business : Education Finance  
Forum Business : Standing Committee D  
Forum Business : Special Debate (Rule 10 (5))

N.I.F.F.P.D. was in recess for the general election from 14/3 - 06/6/97

**No.33 Friday 06 June 1997**  
Womens coalition : Forum Review  
Motion: Prime Ministers speech (Royal Ulster Agricultural Society)  
Forum : Chairmanship  
Womens coalition : Forum Review (continued)



**No.34 Friday 13 June 1997**

Forum : Business  
Beef Industry Crisis (BSE)  
Motion : Elections (irregularities)  
Special Debate (Rule 10(5))

**No.35 Friday 20 June 1997**

Murder of Policemen (Lurgan)  
Forum : Committee on Electoral Reform  
Forum : Business  
Motion : Parades : Review  
Motion : Sexual Harassment

**No.36 Friday 27 June 1997**

Forum : Committee on Electoral Reform  
Forum : Summer Recess  
Forum : Business  
Motion : Pre-School Education (Report)  
Forum : Business  
Motion : Talks on Political Development: statement by Prime Minister  
Whiteabbey Hospital  
Motion : Local Government

**No.37 Friday 04 July 1997**

Forum : Business  
Forum : Standing Committee C (SDLP)  
Parades (Review) : Forum Report  
Forum : Standing Committee B  
Motion : Local Government (continued)  
Motion : Employment  
Summer School Holiday : Whereabouts and Behaviour of Young People



**No.38 Friday 11 July 1997**

Employment (decision from 04/07)  
Forum Standing Committee D: Delegation to Isle of Man  
Motion : Parades  
Forum : Motions and amendments (notice)  
Forum Resolutions : Chairmans determination ( Rule 13 (1))

**No.39 Friday 18 July 1997**

Forum : Motions and amendments (notice)  
Forum : Business  
Murder of Bernadette Martin  
Motion : European Union - Peace and Reconciliation Programme  
Motion : Long Term Unemployment ( Committee Report)  
Motion : Local Government : Environment functions

**No.40 Friday 25 July 1997**

Forum : Explosive device (Post)  
Pre-School Education  
Motion : Northern Ireland Economy (Committee evidence)  
Forum : Business  
Special Debate (Rule 10 (5))

**The N.I.F.F.P.D. was in recess 25/7 - 05/09**

**No.41 Friday 05 September 1997**

Motion : Death of Diana,Princess of Wales

**No.42 Friday 12 September 1997**

Motion : Governance of Northern Ireland  
Forum : Standing Committee B (report of Ministerial meeting)  
Welfare to work : Task Force

**No.43 Friday 19 September 1997**

Markethill bombing incident  
Forum : business  
Beef Industry Crisis (BSE)  
Motion : Bill of Rights

**No.44 Friday 26 September 1997**

Forum : Standing Committee A (Political-Affairs remit)  
World land speed record  
Parades / Standing Committee A  
Forum : Interruptions from Strangers Gallery  
Motion : Operation of the Health Service in Northern Ireland  
Motion : Integrated Transport Policy



**No.45 Friday 03 October 1997**

Forum : Standing Committee A (Political Affairs Remit)  
Forum : Interruption from Strangers' Gallery  
Standing Committee E (Integrated Transport Policy)  
Forum Committees : Meetings (Stormont Talks Days)  
Motion : Republic of Ireland Constitution : Territorial claim to Northern  
Ireland  
Standing Committee C : South Tyrone and Ulster Hospitals

**No.46 Friday 10 October 1997**

Forum Business : E.U. Peace and Reconciliation Fund, Christmas Recess  
Motion : Standing Committee A (Political Affairs)  
Forum Business : Hospitals : Forum Committee Visits  
Motion : Local Government : Working Groups  
Motion : Employment : ACE Schemes

**No.47 Friday 17 October 1997**

Forum Business : Standing Committee A (Political Affairs Remit)  
Motion : Parliamentary Devolution (N.I.)

**No.48 Friday 24 October 1997**

Forum Business : Committees (Meetings)  
Gallipoli  
Motion : Economic Development and Social Programmes (Local Participation)  
Forum Business : Whiteabbey Hospital  
Special Debate (Rule (10(5)))

**No.49 Friday 31 October 1997**

Motion : Report on long term unemployment  
Motion : Report on Electoral Reform  
Forum Business : Beef Industry Crisis (BSE)  
Motion : Public Processions : Draft Legislation

**No.50 Friday 07 November 1997**

Act of Remembrance  
Statement by the Secretary of State  
Motion : Firearms  
Motion : Coats Viyella

**No.51 Friday 14 November 1997**

Saracen Ltd  
Motion : Integrated Transport Policy  
Motion : Anglo-Irish Agreement

**No.52 Friday 21 November 1997**

Fiftieth Wedding Anniversary of The Queen and Prince Philip  
Saracen Ltd.  
Delegation from Moldova and Transdnierstria



Delegation from Moldova and Transdniestria  
**Friday 21 November (continued)**  
Motion : Quangos: Consultation Paper  
Delegation from Moldova and Transdniestria  
Motion : "Community Action" Groups  
Delegation from Moldova and Transdniestria

**No.53 Friday 28 November 1997**

War Memorials  
"Community Action" Groups : Forum Resolution (21/11/97)  
War Memorials  
Electoral Reform  
Preparatory Schools  
Motion : Provisional IRA / Republic of Ireland Ministers and Officials  
Motion : Library Services

**No.54 Friday 05 December 1997**

Extension to Electoral Reform Committee until 27 June 1997  
Motion : Education : Public/Private Partnerships  
Motion : Beef Industry Crisis (BSE)  
Motion : Hospital Services

**No.55 Friday 12 December 1997**

Forum Chairman (health)  
Motion : Change of Committee Bs terms of reference  
Forum : "Belfast Telegraph Article"  
Forum : Agriculture Industry (PM meeting update)  
Forum : Special Debate (Rule 10(5))

**No.56 Friday 09 January 1998**

Forum Chairman  
Motion : Forum Committees : Voting  
Motion : Political/Security Situation  
Motion : Extradition (Republic of Ireland)

**No.57 Friday 16 January 1998**

Forum : Business  
Motion : Third-level Education : Funding  
Motion : Ambulance Service  
Forum : Special Debate (Rule 10(5))

**No.58 Friday 23 January 1998**

Forum : Quorum  
Motion : Change of Terms of Reference for Electoral Reform Committee  
Forum : Internet Web site  
Forum : Beef Industry Crisis (BSE) - European Parliament update  
Motion : NI Agricultural Produce (National Retailers)  
Motion : Police (NI) Bill



Forum : Special Debate (Rule 10 (5))

**No.59 Friday 30 January 1998**

Forum : Trade Union Rally  
Motion : Pre-School Education  
Motion : Northern Ireland Community  
Forum : Trade Union Rally  
Forum : Special Debate ( Rule 10 (5))

**No.60 Friday 06 February 1998**

Forum : N.I. Economy  
Motion : E.U. Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation  
Motion : "Shaping our Future" (Consultation Document)  
Forum : Special Debate (Rule 10 (5))

**No.61 Friday 13 February 1998**

Forum : Ambulance Service  
Motion : Men's Health  
Forum : Education : Private/Private Partnerships  
Motion : Draft Education Order  
Motion : Sport in N.I. : Government Funding  
Motion : Funding of Grammar School Preparatory Departments  
Forum : Special Debate (Rule 10(5))

**No.62 Friday 20 February 1998**

Forum business : Committee Procedures  
Motion : Fishing Quotas (Domestic Waters) : Consultative Paper  
Motion : Forum (Parliament Buildings)  
Motion : Social Services  
Forum : Special Debate (Rule 10(5))  
Forum : Quorum

**No.63 Friday 27 February 1998**

Forum : Community Relations - Presentation  
Motion : FAIT Anti-Violence Charter  
Motion : Security Situation

**No.64 Friday 06 March 1998**

Motion : Security Situation (continued from 27 Feb)  
Department Presentations (Health and Social Services, Education and Training and Employment)  
Motion : Special Debate (Rule 10(5))



**No.65 Friday 13 March 1998**

Motion : Food Standards Agency  
Motion : Assembly Electoral System  
Forum : Minutes of Proceedings (20 Feb. 1998)  
Motion : Disability Benefits  
Motion : Special Debate (Rule 10 (5))

**No.66 Friday 20 March 1998**

Forum : BSE : E.U. Export Ban  
Motion : Budget Statement  
Motion : "Partnership for Equality" (White Paper)  
Motion : Special Debate (Rule 10 (5))

**No.67 Friday 27 March 1998**

Motion : Ambulance Service  
Motion : British Citizenship (Irish Republic)  
Motion : E.U. Common Agricultural Policy  
Motion : Special Debate (Rule 10 (5))

**No.68 Friday 03 April 1998**

Motion : Transport in Rural Areas  
Motion : Parliamentary Elections : Voting System  
Motion : Organophosphate Insecticides  
Forum : Submission to Chancellor Exchequer  
Motion : Special Debate (Rule 10 (5))

**No.69 Friday 10 April 1998**

Forum : Forum Precincts : Firearms and Members' access  
Motion : Fair Employment Commission Report  
Forum : Business  
Motion : Special Debate (Rule 10 (5))

**No.70 Friday 17 April 1998**

Forum : Business  
Motion : Multi - Party Agreement

**No.71 Friday 24 April 1998**

Forum : Business  
Motion : ) Future of N.I. Agriculture  
                  ) Renewable Energy (Willow Biomass)  
Motion : Special Education Provision for School-Age Children  
Ministerial Presentation (Environment and Agriculture)  
Motion : British Isles Relationships and UK Decentralization  
Motion : Community Care and the Home Help Service  
Forum : Statement of behalf of the Economy Committee  
Motion : Forum : Activities and Achievements  
Forum : Closure  
Forum : Presentation to Forum Chairman



STAFF WHO SERVED IN THE FORUM SECRETARIAT  
BETWEEN 14.6.96 AND 24.4.98

ARNOLD, Denis  
BARCLAY, Rosemary  
BARNES, Murray  
BENSON, Liz  
BEST, Annemarie  
BLAIR, Sean  
BURNS, Jonathan  
CANTLEY, Raymond  
CARSON, Nigel  
CASEY, Kevin  
CHALMERS, Muriel  
CLEMENTS, Bill  
COEY, Margaret  
CORR, Brenda  
COWAN, Kathleen  
DUGAN, Carson  
ELDER, Alex  
GRAY, David  
HARKIN, Dermot  
JOHNSTONE, Rosemary  
LUNN, Christine  
McCONNELL, Elizabeth  
McDOUGALL, Stuart  
McKIBBIN, Gail  
McMASTER, June  
McMILLAN, Sandra  
MEREDITH, Wilma  
MOLLOY, Geraldine  
MOORE, Audrey  
MULLAN, Margaret  
NULTY, Jim  
RAFFERTY, Anne  
STEELE, David  
THOMPSON, Doreen  
WILKINSON, David  
YOUNG, Sharon







