

Oliver Napier indicts the Government for backing away from the problem of setting-up a devolved Assembly.
 He was speaking to the Party Council's December meeting.

The Atkins Conference has come to an end. Not expectedly agreement was not achieved because of continued intransigence on the part of our tribal politicians. What was unexpected, however, was the response of the Government. When confronted with the uncompromising stands from those on both sides of the sectarian

divide the Government has decided to do nothing. This negative attitude is in marked contrast to the strong statements which were made by both the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State. Mrs. Thatcher on several occasions emphasised that she would not let the medieval stances of Northern

...the opportunity of ... a devolved Assembly because of the failure of the Government to keep their word?

I am convinced that an overwhelming majority of the people of the province from both sides of our divided community are in favour of devolution. I am convinced that they would accept a devolved government based upon partnership and which does not contain an institutionalised Irish Dimension.

How to set up a body should be preoccupying the minds of Government, and not just a decision to sit back and do nothing.



Enough is Enough — Party Chairman

This was the theme of the Chairman of the Alliance Party, Councillor Seamus Carrickfergus, when he addressed the Council of the Party, at its December meeting in Carrickfergus.

"Since we last met as a Council, almost three months ago, the situation in Northern Ireland has become decidedly worse on all fronts.

"Politically we have had the Queens Speech, which in forty words and seventeen seconds promised nothing except a further vacuum situation.

Nothing appears to have been learnt over the past decade. It has not yet been recognised that a political vacuum plays into the hands of terrorists which in turn further polarises the community.

"Northern Ireland's politicians will not drift towards reconciliation — they have got to be taken by the scruff of the

neck and driven to a position of working together. This can be achieved in one of two ways. Either by a Government at Westminster which has the political will to bring it about by legislation, and in this score the present government appears to have chickened out, or alternatively by the people of Northern Ireland.

RE-INJECT RECONCILIATION

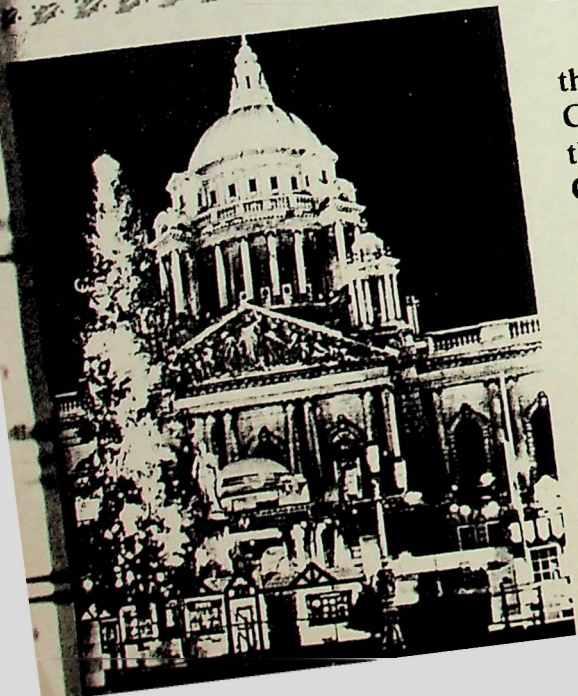
"This latter option is where I believe the Alliance Party should now concentrate its efforts over the next few

months leading up to the Local Government Elections in May. We should re-inject reconciliation into the forefront of everyone's mind. The idea of Catholics and Protestants working together at the highest level was what launched this party. We were established to smash sectarianism, to smash hatred, to smash bigotry, to smash fear and to smash mistrust.

We have not yet succeeded.

TRIBAL INTRANSIGENCE

"Intransigence still prevails and this intransigence is reflected in the tribal political parties and their tribal leaders. This intransigence was reflected at the recent Atkins Conference, where one side insisted



Seasonal Greetings