



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

6 December 1995

John Alderdice
Leader, Alliance Party
88 University St
Belfast BT7

Dear

John

It is some time since we had a formal meeting and I think it would be helpful if we could have a meeting between delegations of our respective parties as soon as reasonably possible. There is much to discuss in view of likely developments in the new year, and I would hope we could arrive at a reasonably common position on the structure and role of any elected body with regard to the further development of the political process.

I also include for your information a copy of a recent statement of our party's aims and a forward I have contributed to a commentary on that statement, which contains some observations relevant to the structure of any future talks process.

Sincerely

David Trimble

David Trimble MP

**THE FOLLOWING WAS APPROVED BY THE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE ULSTER UNIONIST COUNCIL
ON 10 NOVEMBER 1995**

STATEMENT OF AIMS

Government within Northern Ireland

- 90 member Northern Ireland Assembly elected by proportional representation for a fixed 4 or 5 year term.
- The Assembly to exercise wide ranging administrative (non-legislative) responsibility by the maximum transfer of power.
- The structure of governance to be based on the Committee system, reflecting the departments of government in Northern Ireland.
- The constitutional parties to have a role at each level of responsibility in proportion to party strengths.
- When the Assembly - and other aspects of government - are seen to be clearly defined, working and stable, consideration in the UK context could be given to some devolved legislative powers to the Assembly.

Parliament of the United Kingdom's Function

- To have legislative responsibility for matters not transferred to a NI Assembly.
- A Special Standing Committee for NI to consider legislation on a basis which is equitable with the legislative procedures which operate in the rest of the UK.
- Statutory responsibility of the Secretary of State for NI to consult with the Assembly at the beginning of each parliamentary session on the legislative programme for NI for that year.
- The Select Committee for NI to monitor both the workings of government in NI and also to monitor the NI Assembly.

United Kingdom/Republic of Ireland Dimension

- To have friendly co-operative relationships within the islands on the basis of consent, mutual recognition, respect and interest.
- These relationships must preserve the political independence and territorial integrity of States which are fundamental principles of International Law.
- A Council of the British Isles to be established, comprising elected representatives aimed at facilitating/enabling joint/complementary action on issues of common interest.
- Participants may include, at various levels: government ministers, national/regional elected representatives and/or local representatives.
- The Council should have a flexible structure in order to allow for the involvement of those relevant to a particular issue.

European Dimension

- The NI Assembly to seek maximum representation within Europe through the establishment of a European Office.
- Establish similar status as other regions within the EU such as observer status at Council of Ministers and representation on UK delegation where NI powers or interests are concerned.
- Establish a European Committee within the NI Assembly.