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To see please, and for
draft reply

9/5/79



New Ulster Political Research Group



All communications c/o 76 Holywood Road, Belfast.

Telephone: Belfast 650756

3 April 1979

Mr. Jack Lynch
Prime Minister
Leinster House
Dublin

Dear Prime Minister:

Please find enclosed a copy of the New Ulster Political Research Group's "Documents for Discussion" which were released at a press conference in Belfast on Thursday 29 March 1979.

We hope that you take the time to read them through and would welcome any comments you have to make about them.

Yours sincerely,

Glen Barr
Chairman

GB/rs

encl.

Received 9/10 79

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appropriate file — S19284 (?)

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9/4/79

New Ulster Political

Research Group

Beyond The Religious Divide

Papers for Discussion - March 1979

TO THE PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND - we commend the
words of Bacon:

"He who cannot compromise is a fool,
He who will not compromise is a bigot,
He who dare not compromise is a slave ... "

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The New Ulster Political Research Group was formed in January 1978 after discussions between Mr. Andy Tyrrie, Chairman of the Ulster Defence Association, and Mr. Glen Barr, former member of the Northern Ireland Assembly (1973-1974) and Northern Ireland Convention (1975). Mr. Barr is also a former Deputy Leader of the Vanguard Unionist Party and former Senior Political Spokesman for the Ulster Defence Association.

The terms of reference given to the N.U.P.R.G. were to develop a Constitutional and Political Policy on behalf of the Ulster Defence Association for presentation to the people of Northern Ireland, bearing in mind, that any proposal before it can be enacted, must be submitted to, and receive, the overwhelming support of the people.

The members of the N.U.P.R.G. who are responsible for the development of the proposed Constitution, Political Structures, and amending the original Bill of Rights submitted by the Ulster Citizens Civil Liberties Centre, are:

Glen Barr
(Chairman)

John McMichael
(Secretary)

Harry Chicken
(Co-ordinator)

Ray McDowell
(Financial Director)

Tommy Lyttle
(Public Relations)

Committee

Andy Tyrrie
James Magee
Ian Stewart

Alan Snoddy
Derek Smyth
Alex Baird

The N.U.P.R.G. wish to thank Mr. Jim Creighton and Mr. Samuel Duddy for their secretarial assistance during the development. And to pay a special tribute to Dr. Ian Adamson, author of the "Cruthin" and historical advisor to the group, for his devotion to the cause of uniting the people of Northern Ireland.

I N T R O D U C T I O N

Political unity in Northern Ireland between Protestants and Roman Catholics with the same political ideology is not a new concept. At certain stages in our turbulent history, it has been achieved to varying degrees of success, but for one reason or another, has never been sustained long enough to be of any real consequence.

The evolution of proper politics would no doubt remove many of Northern Ireland's problems and would certainly allow the people of Northern Ireland to decide their elected Representatives on a political basis rather than religious bigotry and sectarian hatred.

Without the evolution of proper politics the people of Northern Ireland will continually be manipulated by sectarian politicians who make no contribution to the social and economic well-being of the people or the country, but only continue to fan the flames of religious bigotry for self gain and preservation.

If people are of the belief that political, rather than religious divisions are more desirable, why has the concept never taken effective root and developed into a force to be reckoned with in Northern Ireland?

The New Ulster Political Research Group disagree with those who believe that the evolution of proper politics alone is the answer to our Constitutional problem.. The vast majority of the Northern Irish people will never seriously accept the concept of voting for someone from the opposite religion, even if they agree with them on most political or social and economic issues, as long as there is a question of Constitutional allegiances.

This is the reason why it has failed in the past and will continue to fail in the future. Whilst there is Constitutional disagreement between the two sections of our community there can never be political unity with any real meaning or purpose. Furthermore, as soon as there is any movement towards political unity the manipulating sectarian politicians in Northern Ireland will always exploit the fundamental Constitutional differences which exists between the two sections. So it logically follows, that before there is an evolution of proper politics in Northern Ireland, there must be a Constitutional settlement which is acceptable to both sections.

The New Ulster Political Research Group has made an in-depth study of the Constitutional question and all the serious proposals which have been propounded, i.e.

1. Total integration with the rest of the U.K.
2. Federation of the U.K.
3. Return of Stormont - Pre-1972 [majority rule].
4. Return of Stormont - Sunningdale [power sharing].
5. Continuation of Direct Rule.
6. United Ireland.
7. Federal Ireland.
8. Condominium.

It is sufficient to say that principally we found that any proposal which involved London would be rejected by the minority community and any proposal which involved Dublin would be rejected by the majority community.

This being the case the New Ulster Political Research Group had to search for an answer which removes both Britain and Southern Ireland from the situation and gives Northern Irish people prime negotiating rights about their own future. Bearing in mind that the continuing patronage of London and Dublin perpetuates the Constitutional divisions between our people.

We believe there is one proposal which does offer peace, stability and reconciliation. It is the only proposal which does not have a victor and a loser. It will encourage the development of a common identity between the two communities, regardless of religion. It offers first class Ulster-citizenship to all of our people, because, like it or not, the Protestant of Northern Ireland is looked upon as a second class British citizen in Britain and the Roman Catholic of Northern Ireland as a second class Irish citizen in Southern Ireland. M

Negotiated independence for Northern Ireland is the only hope of achieving a united Northern Ireland.

Having come to this Constitutional conclusion, the New Ulster Political Research Group do not believe that it is sufficient to just put forward this emotional idea. It is essential that the proposal be supported by certain commitments and conditions: a new Constitution and a Bill of Rights which will apply equally to every citizen of the State; a new political structure which will allow every representative of the State to participate in decisions and responsibilities; guarantees from the two Sovereign powers involved, i.e., Britain and Southern Ireland to withdraw all their claims of sovereignty over Northern Ireland; and international recognition and support for the sovereignty of the new State, especially in the transitional period.

All of these ingredients are important if negotiated independence is to be a success. It is not the creation of a Protestant dominated State, nor is it the stepping stone to a United Ireland. It is an opportunity for peace and stability. It is an opportunity for the Ulster people to get back their dignity. This is the reason why we put forward for serious discussion our proposed Constitution, Bill of Rights, and political structure. M

It is a Constitution and Bill of Rights which will protect the Ulster citizen. It is a political structure which brings about consensus politics and sows the seed for the evolution of proper politics.

The British and Southern Irish Governments must withdraw from the situation and allow a friendly International Government to supervise the transitional period in a presence which is not military.

As part of the package, we are submitting economic papers which have been prepared by two leading economists which does not support the fashionably held view that Ulster could not survive economically as an Independent Sovereign State. The British Government would have to make a financial commitment to Ulster - with no strings attached - for a period of not less than 25 years and we believe they would be prepared to pay such a price to be relieved of their Northern Irish responsibilities.

The New Ulster Political Research Group do not believe that if Northern Ireland were to become an Independent Sovereign State that it should adopt an isolationist policy. It is vital to its future to be on friendly terms with its neighbours and to have membership of the EEC.

This being the case we would hope for encouragement and support from our neighbours to assist us in the task of bringing to fruition what we see as the only realistic proposal for Northern Ireland.

We do not pretend to have all the answers, as we believe the Legislature must be left to take many of the decisions, and undoubtedly changes will be proposed by constitutional lawyers and professional people who should bear in mind that our group is composed of lay people with no academic or professional qualifications. But we believe if people are prepared to discuss our proposals with the sincerity in which they have been presented, then the future of our country is not as black as many have painted it.