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# Ulster Unionist Party PRESS RELEASE

18

DATE:

RELEASE TIME:

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION NOR REFERENCE TO CONTENT  
BEFORE 12.00 NOON SATURDAY 21ST MARCH 1992**

**EXTRACT FROM SPEECH BY THE RT HON JAMES H  
MOLYNEAUX TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF  
THE ULSTER UNIONIST COUNCIL HELD ON SATURDAY  
21ST MARCH 1992 IN THE DRUMKEEN HOTEL,  
BELFAST.**

*Note: According to media sources, the rest of the speech  
was extempore.*

*Sp. 23.03.92*

*M. Kennedy  
23/3*

*Amazing stuff!  
huh  
23 3 92*

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It is understandable that the horrors of the past two decades have required concentrated attention - and rightly so. To have ignored the security and political dangers of that period could have allowed the denial of our history, resulted in our political destruction and denied us any future whatsoever.

It is to the eternal credit of the Ulster Unionist Council that the Ulster front has not cracked. The line has been held. The assaults have been beaten off. The advance can now begin.

There is a certain parallel with the early years of the Second World War. At that time our British Nation and Empire stood alone on the solid rock of its history and traditional freedoms. Refusal to contemplate defeat sometimes defied logic - at least the logic of Hitler and Ambassador Joe Kennedy. Perhaps our feelings can be best summarized in the Churchill phrase of that time "Very well then - alone".

It was difficult to produce convincing proof that ultimate survival was certain. But then great events seldom have their origins in cold facts. The will of a people to survive can not be computerised.

In 1941 the whole scene changed. Germany dragged Russia into the war and Japan forced America to fight. By Christmas of that year our endurance was rewarded and we entered 1942 not in isolation - but alone no more. At that turning point survival was no longer in doubt.

There is an uncanny resemblance as we meet to deliberate today. Ulster too has known the pain and the dangers of isolation, known the morale sapping ambiguity of so-called friends and the pressure of those who made little effort to conceal their hostility.

Now the experimental stage is over because the cost of ambiguity has become too high. A major rethink is inevitable. Blustering threats of the Brits leaving is not now an option. An Ulster deserted and left independent within sight of the Scottish mainland would ignite the charge which could shatter the fabric of the Kingdom.

The Government elected on 9 April will not be able to ignore the craving for decentralised powers to all the component parts of the Kingdom. Nor dare it run the risk of giving to one and withholding from another. For example, a Labour Government could not advocate a Kingdom without Ulster but in the next breath tell the Scots they must not leave.

A Conservative Government could not proclaim that certain forms of Scottish devolution would spell the end of the Union without revealing that its own insistence on a contrived Stormont was in reality a conspiracy to get rid of Ulster.

In the new Parliament the great debate will be about the constitutional framework of the United Kingdom. It can not be suppressed nor excluded from the agenda.

The English regions will have their say. Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales all have separatist minorities with numerical strengths in that order. All three separatist minorities are entitled to recognition and the common structure of decentralisation must respect the separation wish to opt out. But they can not claim the right to take the greater number with them.

My term "greater number" is more accurate than the word majority.

In Scotland the "greater number" consists of people of all faiths and most political groupings who are realistic enough to recognise that the Union has served them well.

The same is true of Northern Ireland where a high percentage of all religions are not of a mind to turn their backs on the Union, and in an uncertain world, take a reckless leap into the unknown.

The Ulster Unionist Council and the Party it leads will continue to extend its broad church appeal. You are currently studying outline proposals for structural changes to take us into the next century.

If we are true to the Union we must accord to all who support the Union the right to have their voices heard and heeded.

In the aftermath of the General Election our Parliamentary Party, with its numbers increased and its mandate renewed, will be up front in the national debate and will be well equipped to place Unionist experience at the disposal of the other Parliamentary Parties which have little or no practical knowledge of devolution.

The work already done in the Brooke Talks and the detailed blueprints drafted by our Party will be of great benefit to all, and the continuing Ulster talks will slot neatly into the main debate within the Kingdom.

In the new Parliament Ulster Unionism will enter into its inheritance.

This ~~could be~~ the last General Election in which Unionist candidates will be standing only in Northern Ireland. Indeed that may be a necessity given the conspiracy of silence over the Maastricht Treaty issue which Conservative, Labour and Liberal Parties lack the courage to put to the electorate.

It is true that persons and parties have greatness thrust upon them. Such has been the fate of the Ulster Unionist Party for the second time in this century.

We can not - and will not shirk our responsibility to the Union and the sovereignty of Parliament.

We shall give of our best for the common good of the Kingdom and all its constituent parts.

We shall meet the challenges of the present and the future with a confidence of knowing that after two decades of neglect and betrayal we are now alone no more.