

FOR 1. SECRETARY OF STATE

2. MR F COOPER

1. The election results, which are analysed in the attached statement, are in some respects surprising and even disturbing. There are, however, a number of positive gains, which should not be underestimated.

(i) There now exists an authentic elected forum in Northern Ireland. Its composition may be such that wide-ranging agreement within it may be difficult to achieve; but a true agreement reached there has a real chance of "sticking".

(ii) For the first time in Northern Ireland's history, no single party commands a majority. Thus, if there is to be any Executive based upon the Assembly it must be some form of coalition.

(iii) The SDLP have clearly emerged as the indisputable elected voice of the Catholic community (in the process completely brushing aside such traditional parties as the Nationalists and Republican Labour). With the self-confidence likely to be engendered by this mandate, the SDLP will be in a stronger position to assert itself against less constructive elements in the Catholic community if it so wishes; although there is, of course, also a danger that its new strength could make it truculent and stubborn in insisting upon conditions which the other parties could not conceivably meet.

(iv) The candidates and campaigns associated with violence or the use of industrial power for political purposes have been rejected in no uncertain terms. The Provisionals' call to spoil votes had only a modest effect in West Belfast and practically none elsewhere (allowing for the ordinary proportion of unintentionally spoiled votes probably not more than 4 to 5 thousand people throughout Northern Ireland indicated sympathy for the Provisionals in this way). The Republican Clubs as standard bearers for the Officials got nowhere and on the Protestant side, Tommy Herron of the UDA fell far short of election, while Billy Hull of LAW received a derisory number of votes and lost his deposit.

2. On the other hand, the results reveal an almost total sectarian polarisation. With only 8 seats, the Alliance Party has fallen ~~were~~ ^{rather} short of its expectations, even in so far as these were based upon its comparatively modest showing at the local government elections. This may be because voters saw the Assembly as a "conference table" for which one had to choose representatives to sit on one side or the other rather than on the "cross benches"; or because many of the Catholics who had supported it at the local government elections felt that their movement towards the centre was not being reciprocated on the Protestant side and therefore moved back to the SDLP at the Assembly elections. This would account both for the fall in the Alliance vote and the strengthening of the SDLP vote. The NIIP fared badly as at the local elections.

3. It was always to be anticipated that the Protestant vote would be fragmented, but the outcome has left the potential accepters of the White Paper principles weaker, and the "wreckers" stronger than expected. Those Unionists "pledged" to Mr Faulkner's manifesto (including Mrs Ann Dickson, who was involved in a nomination dispute but is in the "acceptance" camp) polled 26 % of the first preference vote and will have 23 Assembly seats, while the Loyalist Coalition of Messrs Craig and Paisley received 21 % of the votes and will have 15 seats. But this does not represent the true strength of the factions. "Loyalists" or Unionists not pledged to Mr Faulkner gained another 13.7 % of the votes and 12 Assembly seats, and these must for the present be included in the anti-Faulkner camp (although these categories are not absolute). Moreover, the strength of the Loyalist Coalition and their supporters could exercise a powerful pull on various Official Unionists who, while "pledged" to the manifesto will not necessarily regard themselves as committed thereby to (say) power sharing with the SDLP. Recognising this, Mr Faulkner could decide, or could be pressed, to move somewhat to the right, so as to hold on to his existing support and possibly even make inroads into the "unpledged" Unionists.

4. The election demonstrated the powerful pull under Proportional Representation of known personalities, often leading to a marked disparity between the support for various candidates on the same ticket. Thus Mr Faulkner ran far ahead of his running mates in South Down as did Mr Bradford in East Belfast. Others who had exceptional personal success included Mr Kilfedder in North Down (who, on an anti-White Paper ticket, received more first preference votes than all the other Unionists pledged to Mr Faulkner put together); Dr Paisley in North Antrim; Mr Hume in Londonderry; and Mr Laird in West Belfast. By these standards, Mr Craig in North Antrim did not prove an exceptional vote puller. Although he was always certain of election, he did not get in on the first count and an Official Unionist, as well as Dr Paisley, ran ahead of him.

5. The fine balance of the parties is particularly significant when measured against the terms of the White Paper and the Constitution Bill. The Loyalist Coalition have so far said that they will not play any part in any power sharing Executive. It is of course always possible that in an open bargaining situation these or other groups may not necessarily be indefinitely or rigidly bound by their campaign positions. If however they were to maintain their line on the White Paper there would have to be a Coalition between Faulkner Unionists and the SDLP to command a majority in the Assembly, let alone to meet the statutory requirements about broadly based government. In this situation the Alliance may not represent more than a make-weight.

6. Mr Faulkner's position is undoubtedly difficult. He will have less than half of the Protestant vote behind him, as Dr Paisley and others will no doubt vociferously remind him if and when he makes an effort to work the new system. Not a few of his own pledged supporters may hanker after the traditional solidarity of the Loyalist/Unionist Forces. Moreover, the SDLP may well be tempted to consider by-passing the Faulkner Unionists so as to bargain with the Loyalist Coalition as "the voice of the Protestant Working Class". Mr Faulkner himself has already robustly declared again on the radio that there is no question of a coalition between himself and the "Loyalist Coalition, and that he is ready to share power with those who will accept that the constitutional position was determined by the Border Poll and cannot be reconsidered under the "Constitutional Bill" any earlier than 1983.

7. This note ends with the details of the fate of a number of the better known political personalities in Northern Ireland.

VANGUARD UNIONISTS

Elected: Bill Craig Party Leader
Kennedy Lindsay Professor and party "economist".

Rejected: Billy Hull LAW leader
Tommy Herron UDA leader

DEMOCRATIC UNIONISTS

Elected: John McQuade Former Stormont MP
Mrs Eileen Paisley
Dr Ian Paisley
Rev W Beattie Former Stormont MP

"UNPLEDGED" UNIONISTS

Elected: John Laird Former Stormont MP
John Taylor Former Minister
Harry West Former Minister
Austin Ardill One time Stormont MP and former Vice-Chairman of Vanguard.
Jim Kilfedder Westminster MP
W A B Douglas A leading belligerent Orangeman in Co Londonderry

OFFICIAL UNIONISTS

Elected: W J Morgan One time Minister
H V Kirk Former Minister
W B McIvor Former Minister
R H Bradford Former Minister
Peter McLachlan ex Conservative Research Dept
N O Minford Former Minister
J W Brooke Former Minister
Brian Faulkner do.

Rejected: Walter Scott Former Deputy Speaker
R J Mitchell Former Stormont MP

ALLIANCE

Elected: Basil Glass
Bob Cooper
Oliver Napier

Rejected: Phelim O'Neill Former Minister
Tom Gormley Former Stormont MP

NI LP

Elected: David Bleakley One time Minister

Rejected: F V Simpson Former Stormont MP
Erskine Holmes
W R Boyd One time Stormont MP
Sandy Scott Prominent Trade Unionist

LIBERALS

Rejected: Sheelagh Murnaghan One time Stormont MP
and member of NI Commission

SDLP

Elected: Gerry Fitt
Paddy Devlin
Austin Currie
John Hume
Ivan Cooper
Paddy O'Hanlon

NATIONALISTS

Rejected: James O'Reilly Former Stormont MP
Eddie McAteer One time Leader of the Opposition
Paddy McGill Former Senator

30 JUNE 1973

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ANALYSIS OF RESULTS OF NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

28 JUNE 1973

First Preference Votes Cast 722,241 (A 70.63% Poll)
78 Members elected

PERFORMANCE OF PARTIES AND GROUPS

	First Pref. Votes	% of Total Poll	Members elected
(A) "Protestant" Parties			
(i) Vanguard Unionists (Craig)	74,494	10.31	7
(ii) Democratic Unionists (Paisley)	78,950	10.93	8
(iii) Anti White Paper Unionists other than (i) and (ii)	98,881	13.70	12
(iv) "Pledged" Unionists (Faulkner)	191,007	26.45	23
<hr/> Total of above 'Protestant' Parties <hr/>	443,332	61.38	50
(B) "Centre" Parties			
(v) Alliance (O'Neill)	66,491	9.20	8
(vi) N I Labour (Simpson)	19,940	2.76	1
(vii) Liberal (Murnaghan)	811	0.11	-
<hr/> Total of above 'Centre' parties <hr/>	87,242	12.08	9
(C) "Catholic" Parties			
(viii) S D L P (Fitt)	159,773	22.10	19
(ix) Nationalists (McAteer)	8,270	1.14	-
(x) Republican (Rep Clubs and Rep Labour)	14,814	2.05	-
<hr/> Total of above 'Catholic' Parties <hr/>	182,857	25.32	19

ASSESSMENT OF ATTITUDE TO POWER SHARING

	% of Poll	No of Seats
(a) Definitely willing		
Alliance	9.20	8
N I L P	2.76	1
<hr/> Total of those willing <hr/>	11.96	9
(b) May be willing		
"Pledged" Unionists	26.45	23
S D L P	22.10	19
<hr/> Total of those who may be willing <hr/>	48.55	42
(c) Very doubtful		
Unionists and Loyalists not pledged to Faulkner	13.70	12
(d) Opposed		
Vanguard	10.31	7
DUP	10.93	8
<hr/> Total of those opposed <hr/>	21.24	15

	% of Poll	Number of seats
(e) Abstentionist		
Nationalists	1.14	-
Republicans	2.05	-
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Total of Abstentionists	3.19	
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(f) Spoiled Votes		
Total	16,852	
Estimated as Provisional support	4,287	