

E.R.

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① Sir E. Bell 3/10
② Pol 4/10
cc: PS/Ministers (I&B)(M)
PS/PUS (I&B)(M)
PS/Sir E Bell ✓
Mr Bourn
Mr Brennan (M)
Mr Angel (M)
Mr Merifield o/a
Mr Gilliland
Miss Davies
Mr Palmer, Mr Boys Smith (M)
Mr Buxton, Mr Abbott (M)
Mr Coulson, Miss MacGlashan

PAB/5363/RE

PS/Secretary of State (I&B) (M)

DUP ELECTION MANIFESTO

1. The DUP Election Manifesto was launched on 29 September. I attach a copy: it contains few surprises.

Bridling Direct Rule

2. The Manifesto concentrates on the need to put curbs on direct rule, using familiar arguments: "we have been governed in a manner beyond democratic acceptability by those we did not, and would not, elect ... We need our own Devolved Parliament and Government, wholly within the Union, and operating on the principles of British democracy (ie majority rule) not for us a mere tinkering with the District Councils." An Assembly will not - alas - be a replacement for the old Stormont, but it will provide a forum for the "authentic voice of Ulster", it will through Committees bring direct rule to account, and it will frustrate London and Dublin's efforts to achieve Irish unification. But "the undemocratic 70% mechanism must be changed. The Assembly must be remoulded and built upon"

Powersharing and Dublin

3. The manifesto points out that the DUP is the only major unionist party not to have^{shared} power with "Republicans" in the past and offers the surest guarantee against the admission of Republicans to Government. It has also been the spearhead of opposition to the Dublin/London negotiations. "There will be no powersharing nor Irish Dimension if the Assembly is controlled by those resolved to oppose these twin evils". "The DUP will actively resist any attempt to involve Northern Ireland through the Assembly in the mooted Parliamentary tier of the Anglo-Irish Council."

Security

4. This section is on familiar lines, advocating a "Falklands style offensive", the return of security powers to Ulster politicians, searches

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to root out terrorists, capital punishment etc.

Other Matters

5. The manifesto also sets out known DUP views on the economy (additional "but sensible" public expenditure to increase jobs, equality of energy prices with GB and an Ulster/GB gas pipeline, full additionality); agriculture (a "realistic return", lower interest rates); housing (more houses and an end to anti-loyalist discrimination); education (democratic control, no state funding for Catholic schools, a separate NUU, no cash for the GAA); hospitals, the handicapped and the old. Ritual opposition is expressed to legalising homosexuality, sex shops, and Sunday opening.

Summary

6. The DUP's carefully worded election slogan, ("Let's get back to the Stormont way", not "Let's get back to Stormont") seems to reflect their essential dilemma. The DUP want to use the Assembly as a platform for their views and would probably be content (barring upsets over security or the Anglo-Irish relationship) to see the pre-devolution phase continue for some considerable time. Their arguments for a positive approach to the Assembly are however undermined by the fact that the 1982 Act makes virtually impossible the return of the sort of Stormont they and other unionists would ideally like. Mr Molyneaux and his friends, who want the Assembly to collapse, are constantly playing on this theme, and the DUP have to guard their backs. The manifesto meets these difficulties reasonably well, by repeating the ritual phrases about Stormont but emphasising the need for local influence over direct rule. It mentions briefly the need to change the devolution rules, but without suggesting how. During the election campaign the DUP will be under constant pressure to explain how they can stoop to work an Assembly set up under legislation which specifically prevents what every good unionist wants.

7. The manifesto stresses the party's well-known stands against power-sharing with Republicans (not Catholics) and the Irish Dimension. Here, the DUP mean what they say.

8. The manifesto is full of digs at the UUP - many of them noted above. The DUP's platform against the UUP is summed up in the slogan at the

bottom of the manifesto - "You know where you stand with the DUP". The UUP, by inference, has a bad track record on powersharing and the Irish Dimension, and is racked with differences over policy and personalities.

9. At his press conference to launch the Manifesto yesterday, Dr Paisley attacked the UUP on these lines, and recalled their refusal to join with other unionist organisations in the Unionist Forum earlier this year. He saw no reason why the absence of the SDLP would make the Assembly less effective and looked forward to getting his claws into civil servants in the Committees.

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