

R E S T R I C T E D

FROM: C G MACCABE
POLITICAL AFFAIRS DIVISION
14 APRIL 1992

PS/Secretary of State (B&L) - B

cc Ps/PUS (B&L) - B
PS/Mr Fell - B
Mr Thomas - B
Mr Ledlie - B
Mr Alston - B
Mr Bell - B
Mr Deverell - B
Mr Shannon - B
Mr Steele - B
Mr Watkins - B
Mr D J R Hill - B
Mr D A Hill - B
Mr Cooke - B
Mr Dodds - B
Mr Archer, RID - B
Mr Thorp, Dublin - B
Mr Hallet, FCO Research - B
Mr Rodell - B
Mr McCormick, DOE(NI)



1992 GENERAL ELECTION: RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The attached paper outlines the Election results in Northern Ireland and provides a broad-brush analysis of their impact as requested by No 10. At Annex A, the overall levels of party support at the Election are detailed, together with comparisons with the past two General Elections. Annex B comprises a schedule of the 17 constituency results.

[Signed CM]

C G MACCABE
Ext 2238 SH

RN/8439

R E S T R I C T E D

R E S T R I C T E D

1992 GENERAL ELECTION: RESULTS AND ANALYSIS FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

1. The only change in Westminster representation among the 17 constituencies was the much-reported victory of Dr Joe Hendron (Social Democratic and Labour Party) over Gerry Adams (Sinn Fein) in West Belfast. Thus, representation at Westminster is now:

Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) 9 seats
Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) 4 seats
Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) 3 seats
Popular Unionist Party (UPUP) 1 seat

Background

2. The Election campaign in Northern Ireland was generally fairly low-key compared to that in Great Britain. The only issue raised during the campaign which may have an impact on the forthcoming Talks was a difference of opinion between Dr Paisley and Mr Hume over whether the Union was "on the table" in those Talks. That apart, the likely resumption of Talks was used by the four main constitutional parties concerned to demonstrate their commitment to progress and peace. Sinn Fein, who also claimed to be the party of peace, argued that they need to be involved in any Talks which were going to bring a resolution to the conflict.

Social Democratic and Labour Party

3. The main victors in the Election were the SDLP who, in addition to winning West Belfast, gained an extra 30,332 votes over 1987. Their share of the vote rose by 2.4% to 23.5%. They increased their support across Northern Ireland, and had their largest gains (at the expense of Sinn Fein) in the rural western constituencies of Mid-Ulster, where they confirmed their second place convincingly, and Fermanagh and South Tyrone, where they went ahead of Sinn Fein for the first time.

4. They also polled more heavily than expected in the marginal South Down constituency which they were defending with a 731 vote majority, but won with a majority of over 6,000. In addition to

R E S T R I C T E D

R E S T R I C T E D

winning over some Sinn Fein voters, the increased turnout undoubtedly worked to their advantage and demonstrated the greater credibility the party now has with the electorate.

West Belfast

5. The defeat of Gerry Adams by Joe Hendron was something of a surprise. A comparison of the figures with the 1987 General Election demonstrates that Adams received only some 30 fewer votes this time than last, and that the turnout was only 3% higher on this occasion. Hendron won, in part at least, because of tactical voting by Unionists. The Unionist candidate's vote was much lower than that received last time, and there were reports from the count that the ballot boxes from the Shankill Road area contained votes for Hendron. It is not, at present, possible to say with any authority how many such votes there were, but estimates suggest they exceeded Hendron's majority. Hendron explicitly acknowledged the support he had received from both sides of the community in his victory speech.

Ulster Unionist Party

6. The UUP remain the largest party by a comfortable margin. Their share of the poll dropped both because the DUP challenged their sitting MPs in three of the Greater Belfast constituencies (reflecting the end of the pact agreed upon as a consequence of the Anglo-Irish Agreement which was in force in 1987 - although the two Unionist parties agreed again not to stand against each other in seats where a split vote might result in a Nationalist being elected), and the arrival of the Conservatives on to the electoral scene. They will have been disappointed not to take back South Down, Enoch Powell's old seat, from the SDLP but otherwise are fairly satisfied with their results.

Democratic Unionist Party

7. The DUP held on to their three seats comfortably and, through fighting three more seats than 1987, saw their share of the vote rise. However, their failure to put down serious challenges to the UUP in the three contests mentioned above will have been particularly disappointing for them. The DUP seem to have lost out as a result of the aforementioned pact with their Unionist partners.

R E S T R I C T E D

R E S T R I C T E D

Sinn Fein

8. The loss of West Belfast and the further decline in their overall vote will have been a big blow to Sinn Fein. Although their vote held up in the largely Nationalist urban seats of West Belfast and Foyle (Londonderry) they lost support nearly everywhere else. The slide in their support should not, however, be overstated. The solid core of Sinn Fein support remains and is unlikely to be eroded at an accelerated rate in future. In his speech following the West Belfast declaration, Adams said that party policy will not change but there may now be pressure within the Provisional movement for the 'armed struggle' to take a more prominent position. Those questioning the continued campaign of violence may, on the other hand, see the fall in Sinn Fein support as linked to the party's association with PIRA.

Alliance Party

9. The Alliance Party, who have been fighting elections for 21 years now, will be disappointed with the results and in particular at the failure of their leader, John Alderdice, to make a bigger impression in the East Belfast constituency. They undoubtedly lost some support to the Conservative Party, and may find it difficult to beat that rival in the next set of elections (the local government elections of May 1993).

Conservative Party

10. Like the Alliance Party, the Conservatives draw most of their support from the Greater Belfast area, and despite having been beaten by Alliance Party candidates in all constituencies except North Down, will feel they performed creditably in their first province-wide general election. Their leader, Laurence Kennedy, had hoped to win North Down from Jim Kilfedder, but despite a good showing, the large personal vote for the latter meant the result was never in serious doubt. Both the Conservatives and the UUP (who this time supported Kilfedder) would be eyeing up the seat were the incumbent to decide to stand down next time.

R E S T R I C T E D

R E S T R I C T E D

Workers Party/New Agenda

ANNEX A

11. Internal difficulties within the Workers' Party, which led to the formation of a splinter group - New Agenda - sabotaged any chance of making an impact they had. Their showing places them very much at the margin of Northern Ireland politics now.

Conclusion

12. The 1992 General Election has confirmed the position of the UUP and SDLP as the main parties in Northern Ireland representing the two traditions. The results show the rise of moderate opinion across Northern Ireland at the expense of extremism, although the DUP's decline will remain slow for as long as Dr Paisley continues to lead the Party. The Alliance Party and the Conservatives are struggling to make a significant impact, a situation perhaps more worrying for the former because they have been fighting elections in Northern Ireland for 20 years longer than the Conservatives. Pressure will now be on the SDLP (particularly in West Belfast) to press the Government on unemployment and other socio-economic issues and they will need to develop an effective constituency service.

RN/8439	102,701 (13.4%)	83,389 (11.4%)	78,291 (10.0%)
ALLIANCE PARTY	61,275 (8.0%)	72,671 (10.0%)	68,695 (8.7%)
CONSERVATIVE PARTY	-	-	44,608 (5.7%)
Total Valid Votes	769,278 (73.3%)	730,192 (67.4%)	785,123 (69.8%)

WUL/RN/8434

R E S T R I C T E D

R E S T R I C T E D

ANNEX A

PAB/7975/WKL/RN

	1983 General Election	1987 General Election	1992 General Election
	Votes	Votes	Votes
ULSTER UNIONIST PARTY	259,952 (34.0%)	276,230 (37.8%)	271,049 (34.5%)
SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC AND LABOUR PARTY	137,012 (17.9%)	154,087 (21.1%)	184,445 (23.5%)
DEMOCRATIC UNIONIST PARTY	152,749 (20.0%)	85,642 (11.7%)	103,039 (13.1%)
SINN FEIN	102,701 (13.4%)	83,389 (11.4%)	78,291 (10.0%)
ALLIANCE PARTY	61,275 (8.0%)	72,671 (10.0%)	68,695 (8.7%)
CONSERVATIVE PARTY	-	-	44,608 (5.7%)
Total Valid Votes	769,278	730,152	785,123
Turnout	(73.3%)	(67.4%)	(69.8%)

WKL/RN/8434

R E S T R I C T E D

R E S T R I C T E D

ANNEX B

1992 WESTMINSTER GENERAL ELECTION

East Belfast

Elec. 52,869	Votes Cast	% Poll	Turnout 67.7%
--------------	------------	--------	---------------

*Robinson, P (DUP)	18,437	51.5	
Alderdice, Dr J (All)	10,650	29.8	
Greene, D (Cons)	3,314	9.3	
Dunlop D (Ind U)	2,256	6.3	
O'Donnell, J (SF)	679	1.9	
Bell, J (WP)	327	0.9	
Redden Guy (NLP)	128	0.4	

Majority 7,787

North Belfast

Elec. 55,068	Votes Cast	% Poll	Turnout 65.2%
--------------	------------	--------	---------------

*Walker, A C (UUP)	17,240	48.0	
Maginness A (SDLP)	7,615	21.2	
McManus, P (SF)	4,693	13.0	
Campbell, T (All)	2,246	6.3	
Redpath, M (Cons)	2,107	5.9	
Lynch, S (NA)	1,386	3.9	
Smith, M (WP)	419	1.2	
O'Leary, D (NLP)	208	0.6	

Majority 9,625

South Belfast

Elec. 52,050	Votes Cast	% Poll	Turnout 64.5%
--------------	------------	--------	---------------

*Smyth, M (UUP)	16,336	48.6	
McDonnell, A (SDLP)	6,266	18.7	
Montgomery, J (All)	5,054	15.0	
Fee, L (Cons)	3,356	10.0	
Hayes, S (SF)	1,123	3.3	
Hadden, P (L&TU)	875	2.6	
Lynn, P (WP)	362	1.1	
Mullan, T (NLP)	212	0.7	

Majority 10,070

R E S T R I C T E D

R E S T R I C T E D

West Belfast

Elec.	55,280	Votes Cast	% Poll	Turnout 72.3%
<hr/>				
Hendron, J (SDLP)		17,415	43.6	
*Adams, G (SF)		16,826	42.1	
Cobain, F (UUP)		4,766	11.9	
Lowry, J (WP)		750	1.9	
Kennedy, M (NLP)		213	0.5	
<hr/>				
Majority		589		

East Antrim

Elec.	63,739	Votes Cast	% Poll	Turnout 62.3%
<hr/>				
*Beggs, R (UUP)		16,966	43.2	
Dodds, N (DUP)		9,544	24.2	
Neeson, S (All)		9,132	23.3	
Boal, M (Cons)		3,359	8.6	
Palmer, A (NLP)		250	0.6	
<hr/>				
Majority		7,422		

East Londonderry

Elec.	76,912	Votes Cast	% Poll	Turnout 68.6%
<hr/>				
*Ross, W (UUP)		30,370	57.6	
Doherty, A (SDLP)		11,843	22.5	
Davey-Kennedy, P (SF)		5,320	10.1	
McGowan, P (All)		3,613	6.9	
Elder, A (Cons)		1,584	3.0	
<hr/>				
Majority				

R E S T R I C T E D

R E S T R I C T E D

Fermanagh & South Tyrone

Elec.	71,472	Votes Cast	% Poll	Turnout 78.0%
*Maginnis, K (UUP)		26,923	48.8	
Gallagher, T (SDLP)		12,810	23.2	
Molloy, F (SF)		12,604	22.9	
Kettyles, D (Prog Soc)		1,094	2.0	
Bullick, E (All)		950	1.7	
Cullen, G (NA)		747	1.4	
Majority		14,113		

Foyle

Elec.	75,970	Votes Cast	% Poll	Turnout 68.3%
*Hume, J (SDLP)		26,710	51.5	
Campbell, G (DUP)		13,705	26.4	
McGuinness, M (SF)		9,149	17.6	
McIlroy, L (All)		1,390	2.7	
Mackenzie, G (WP)		514	1.0	
Burns, J (NLP)		422	0.8	
Majority		13,005		

Lagan Valley

Elec.	73,688	Votes Cast	% Poll	Turnout 67.9%
*Molyneaux, J (UUP)		29,777	60.8	
Close, S (All)		6,207	12.7	
Lewsley, H (SDLP)		4,626	9.4	
Coleridge, T (Cons)		4,423	9.0	
Rice, P (SF)		3,346	6.8	
Lowry, A (WP)		582	1.2	
Majority		23,565		

R E S T R I C T E D

R E S T R I C T E D

Mid Ulster

Elec.	Votes Cast	% Poll	Turnout
70,410			78.4%
*McCrea, W (DUP)	23,181	42.3	
Haughey, D (SDLP)	16,994	31.0	
McElduff, B (SF)	10,248	18.7	
McLoughlin, J (Ind)	1,996	3.6	
Gormley A (All)	1,506	2.8	
Hutchinson H (Ind)	389	0.7	
Owens, T (WP)	285	0.5	
Anderson J (NLP)	164	0.3	

Majority 6,187

Newry and Armagh

Elec.	Votes Cast	% Poll	Turnout
68,716			77.0%
*Mallon, S (SDLP)	26,073	49.6	
Speers, J (UUP)	18,982	36.1	
Curran, B (SF)	6,547	12.5	
Bell, E (All)	972	1.8	

Majority 7,091

North Antrim

Elec.	Votes Cast	% Poll	Turnout
70,217			64.9%
*Paisley, I (DUP)	23,152	50.9	
Gaston, J (UUP)	8,216	18.1	
Farren, S (SDLP)	6,512	14.3	
Williams, G (All)	3,442	7.6	
Sowler, R (Cons)	2,265	5.0	
McGarry, J (SF)	1,916	4.2	

Majority

R E S T R I C T E D

R E S T R I C T E D

North Down

Elec.	68,662	Votes Cast	% Poll	Turnout 65.5%
*Kilfedder, J (UPUP)		19,305	42.9	
Kennedy, L (Cons)		14,371	31.9	
Morrow, A (All)		6,611	14.7	
Vitty, D (DUP)		4,414	9.8	
Wilmot, A (NLP)		255	0.6	
Majority		4,934		

South Antrim

Elec.	68,292	Votes Cast	% Poll	Turnout 62.7%
*Forsythe, C (UUP)		29,956	70.9%	
McClelland, D (SDLP)		5,397	12.8%	
Blair, J (All)		5,254	12.6	
Cushinan, H (SF)		1,220	2.9	
Dino-Martin, Denis (Raving Looney)		442	1.0	
Majority		24,559		

South Down

Elec.	76,186	Votes Cast	% Poll	Turnout 81.3%
*McGrady, E (SDLP)		31,523	51.2	
Nelson, D (UUP)		25,181	40.9	
Healy, M (All)		1,542	2.5	
Fitzpatrick, S (SF)		1,843	3.0	
Mackenzie-Hill, S (Cons)		1,488	2.4	
Majority		6,342	10.3	

R E S T R I C T E D

Strangford

Elec.	Votes Cast	% Poll	Turnout
68,901			65.0%
*Taylor, J (UUP)	19,517	43.9	
Wilson, S (DUP)	10,606	23.6	
McCarthy, K (All)	7,585	16.9	
Eyre, S (Cons)	6,782	15.1	
Shaw, D (NLP)	295	0.7	
Majority	8,911		

Upper Bann

Elec.	Votes Cast	% Poll	Turnout
68,422			67.2%
*Trimble, D (UUP)	26,824	59.0	
Rodgers, B (SDLP)	10,661	23.4	
Curran, B (SF)	2,777	6.1	
Ramsay, W (All)	2,541	5.6	
Jones, Collette (Cons)	1,556	3.4	
French, T (WP)	1,120	2.5	
Majority	16,163		

RN/8431

* Sitting MP

Note:

UUP	Ulster Unionist Party
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
SDLP	Social Democratic and Labour Party
SF	Sinn Fein
All	Alliance
Cons	Conservative
WP	Workers Party
NA	New Agenda
NLP	Natural Law Party
Prog Soc	Independent Progressive Socialist

R E S T R I C T E D