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**INTO
THE
FUTURE**

**In True
Tradition**

**ULSTER
UNIONIST
MANIFESTO**

ULSTER UNIONIST PARTY

OUR POLICY

I. TO MAINTAIN THE UNION WITH GREAT BRITAIN

This is what the overwhelming majority of the Ulster people want regardless of creed or party. They are proud of their British heritage and nationality and of their loyalty to the British Crown. Northern Ireland has a quite different identity and ethos from that of the Irish Republic. Throughout the centuries Ulster has always preserved its historic differences. This fact was given constitutional acknowledgement in 1920; since then for three generations the position has been consolidated.

The Republican fervour which carried the twenty-six counties of Ireland out of the United Kingdom has been very much to the detriment of the population living in the parochial Irish Republic. Its economic ills are now blatant and are having a disastrous effect; its standards in social services, education and housing and other government services are far below those in Northern Ireland and the rest of the United Kingdom. Indeed the separation has resulted in that country becoming the most socially deprived in the European Community. Throughout its sixty year existence the Irish Republic has suffered huge emigration; the quality of life continues to deteriorate and its present rate of inflation is intolerable.

Ulster Unionists for a hundred years have accurately foreseen the catastrophic consequences of withdrawing from the United Kingdom. If anything, the dangers and disadvantages are more evident to-day than they were sixty years ago when under the 1921 settlement the Stormont Parliament had to vote the Province into the United Kingdom. As then, so now, we are opposed to the Irish dimension designed to break the Union.

2. TO CREATE DEMOCRATIC DEVOLVED GOVERNMENT

The Ulster Unionist Party has consistently advocated that the internal affairs of Northern Ireland should be administered by an elected legislature and government. Devolved government in the past has successfully maintained and strengthened the Union of Northern Ireland and Great Britain. The Ulster Unionist Party believes that the restoration of such Government based on normal British and Irish democratic practice will enable the people of Ulster to preserve their British Heritage and their Ulster identity.

Devolved Government is necessary in order:-

- a. To restore democratic and accountable government to Northern Ireland.
- b. To demonstrate to the Provisional IRA and its sympathisers the determination of the Ulster people to establish structures which will not yield to terrorist violence.
- c. To end the present constitutional uncertainty caused by the opportunism of the major political parties at Westminster who persist in dealing with Ulster affairs in an all Ireland context.
- d. To restore commercial confidence to the province; stem the outflow of locally generated capital and attract outside capital for industry. These matters are vital in solving the chronic unemployment situation.
- e. To recognise Ulster's special interests and requirements.
- f. To establish a proper system of local government including a review of the rating system to change the inequitable burden imposed currently by central bureaucracy.

3. TO TRANSFORM THE ASSEMBLY INTO A BODY ACCEPTABLE TO UNIONISTS

We are all conscious of the way in which elements in the Northern Ireland Office and the Foreign Office may wish to entrap those elected to the Assembly into power-sharing with republicans and an Irish Dimension. Just as our forefathers moulded the Stormont Parliament into the firmest bastion of the Union, the Ulster Unionist Party reaffirms its consistent and proven commitment to the restoration of a devolved legislature in the province, and pledges itself through its elected representatives to use the mandate from these elections to work constructively for the better government of Northern Ireland. It is only in the context of a fully efficient democratic system of government that we can tackle the urgent current problems of security, employment, industry and commerce, agriculture, housing, education, health and social services.

While we have been totally consistent in striving for the return of devolved government to Ulster, we have been equally consistent in refusing to enter into power-sharing with republicans and any Irish Dimension designed to facilitate Irish unification or the annexation of this part of the United Kingdom by the Irish Republic. And once again we will oppose any attempt by the Secretary of State to foist such options on the Ulster people.

In the various stages of the evolution of the Assembly we will use every opportunity afforded to us to scrutinize the government carried on by the Secretary of State, but while the Assembly is denied actual power we will not be responsible for the failures of the Secretary of State. We will endeavour to secure the transfer of that power as quickly as possible upon terms acceptable to the unionist people of Ulster. Consequently, we regard the Assembly elections as no more than the first step on the long, hard road towards the establishment of genuine parliamentary institutions which will embody the legitimate requirements of Ulster. To that end we are determined to mobilise the electoral support of all traditional Unionists and thus ensure the strongest representation of the Ulster Unionist Party in the new Assembly, and to demand the means to put our policies into action.

4. TO REBUILD OUR SECURITY SYSTEM

The month of November 1981 saw a series of carefully planned murders of local members of the security forces by Republican terrorists in each frontier county and in Belfast as well as the assassination of the Member of Parliament for South Belfast.

In each instance it was evident that these attacks were the result of meticulous planning involving prolonged observation of the movements of the intended victim and the assistance of local supporters whether or not the actual perpetrators entered and returned across the frontier. In many instances the murder weapons are known to have been used in earlier outrages.

The Northern Ireland Office overestimates the effectiveness of the co-operation by the authorities in the Republic. Three leading Republican activists for example were arrested in the Republic and charged with belonging to a proscribed organisation. Although each had been alleged to have been directly or indirectly connected with the murder of British subjects all three were released on bail.

It is encouraging to be told that very substantial sums have been expended on the improvement of RUC stations along the frontier, but it is important that such expenditure, much of which is needed for the reinstatement of stations damaged by terrorists, should be used to the best advantage in order to procure tolerable protection and provision for the police. The improvement of facilities at permanent check points manned by Regular troops is most welcome, but further improvements could have been achieved at relatively small cost.

The progressive decline in part-time membership of the RUC Reserve and UDR is due to deliberate policy decisions and not primarily to financial considerations. In a situation in which the RUC is overstretched, in which the number of short stay units is being reduced (the flying in of two spearhead battalions was a welcome public relations exercise but had little or no operational significance), and in which the law abiding community feels increasingly threatened, such a policy is manifestly wrong and should be reversed. As a first step UDR centres should be re-opened just as R.U.C. stations have been replaced.

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There is a widespread anxiety within the RUC at the premature withdrawal of regular army units from threatened areas especially along the frontier; at the insufficient manpower resources available to the RUC; at the lack of success against hard core terrorism; at the failure to make full use of part time reinforcements; at the inadequacy of interim custody orders; and at the level of cross border co-operation. It is important that the RUC should be answerable only to the law and should not be subjected to political pressure or become an instrument of government policy.

What continues to cause the gravest concern is the large number of assassins who are still at large. It is understood that less than 10 per cent of the principal perpetrators of each of the 60 and 205 murders attributable to Republican terrorists in Counties Fermanagh and Armagh respectively during the past eleven years have yet been prosecuted to conviction. It is essential to enact proper extradition arrangements between the United Kingdom, the Irish Republic and other countries to deny the cloak of political respectability to acts of criminal terrorism.

Since the prosperity of Ulster has been gravely impaired by terrorist violence and since previous administrations fell because they had no control over internal security, the Ulster Unionist Party will not support those who would assume responsibility for Government without the power to do so. Every opportunity will be taken in the Assembly to highlight the deficiencies in the security policies adopted under the direction of the Secretary of State, and every effort will be made to show the need to devolve authority for internal security to a Northern Ireland Government.

We shall continue to press for total victory over every form of terrorism, intimidation, victimisation and racketeering and for the implacable denial of any political objective that such activities are intended to serve. No compromise, appeasement or political expediency must be allowed to hinder the enforcement of the rule of law. We believe that many lives, jobs and homes have been destroyed by a vacillating strategy and the prostitution of security considerations to ulterior political motives of an irresolute and unrealistic nature.