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### Public Opinion and the Northern Ireland "Talks"

Dear Tony Canavan,

Further to my letter of January 13th I am pleased to inform you that I have now spoken with representatives of all ten parties elected to the Forum in regard to the development of a questionnaire that can be used to measure public opinion on some of the key issues at the "Talks".

As brief conversations turned into lengthy discussions my "blank sheet of paper" has grown into a rather long collection of issues and questions that now need to be edited and redrafted into a workable questionnaire. Additionally, and most importantly, each parties preferred options will have to be presented with equal fairness and clarity.

With these points in mind I would be grateful if you and your colleagues would look over the draft questions and bring any alterations you would like to see made to my attention. You may write to me or I would be pleased to meet with you at the Forum, Stormont or at your offices.

As you look through the questions could you also please make a note of which ones you consider to be most important. We can then decide what questions could be run in a quick survey with a view to publication in the next month or two and which questions could be run in a more extensive survey with a view to publication before or after the general election.

Perhaps there are additional questions you would like to add in, on, for example, reaction to the "Hayes" and "North" reports or what the first priorities of a new government should be, after the general elections, with regard to the "Talks", the "Marching Season" or some other pressing matter. Any suggestions would be welcome.

Finally, let me add that I have enjoyed my discussions with the various parties very much and I look forward to completing this research in a timely manner so as to maximise its worth to you and hopefully make a constructive contribution to the "Talks" and perhaps even a less eventful summer.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Colin Irwin.

c. Prof. F. Boal - Queen's Geography Department  
Prof. T. Hadden - Queen's Law School



THE QUEEN'S  
ANNIVERSARY PRIZES

Sent to:

The ten political parties elected to the 'Forum'  
Joint chairs of the multi-party 'Talks'

Mr. Stephen Farry  
Alliance Party

Mr. David Adams  
Ulster Democratic Party

Ms. M. McWilliams  
Northern Ireland Women's Coalition Party

Mr. H. Smyth  
Progressive Unionist Party

Mr. Ian Paisley Jnr.  
Democratic Unionist Party

Mr. H. Casey  
Labour

Mr. Jeffrey Dudgeon  
U.K. Unionist Party

Mr. Peter Weir  
Ulster Unionist Party

Mr. Mark Durkan  
Social Democratic and Labour Party

Mr. Jim Gibney  
Sinn Fein

Mr. Rory Montgomery  
First Secretary, Anglo-Irish Division  
Department of Foreign Affairs  
Iveagh House  
80 St. Stephen's Green  
Dublin

Mr. Tony Canavan  
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## Public Opinion and the Northern Ireland "Talks"

### The "Talks" and Entry Requirements

1. Do you support the continuation of the "Talks" aimed at reaching political agreement for the future of Northern Ireland. Yes/No

2. Do you think the present Stormont "Talks" should be reformed to:

Allow all the parties elected to the Forum to be in the "Talks" including those parties who represent Republican or Loyalist paramilitary organisations Yes/No

Conduct the business of the "Talks" in accordance with an agreed time table Yes/No

If you would like to see the "Talks" complete their negotiations in a set period of time how long do you think the "Talks" should take:

Not more than six months [ ]

Not more than one year [ ]

Not more than two years [ ]

Not more than three years [ ]

or

As long as it takes, no time limits should be placed on the "Talks" [ ]

3. Here are some options for the different conditions under which political parties associated with paramilitary organisations could be allowed into the "Talks". Please indicate which of the following options are your first and second choice and which options, if any, you consider to be unacceptable:

**Immediately** - All parties should be allowed into the "Talks" now without any preconditions.

**After a ceasefire** - As soon as they call a ceasefire, without decommissioning and without any other preconditions.

**After a ceasefire and other preconditions** - When they call a ceasefire and satisfy a number of additional preconditions.

**Never** - political parties associated with paramilitary organisations should not be allowed to be part of the "Talks".

4. Here are a list of preconditions under which political parties associated with paramilitary organisations could be allowed into the "Talks". Please indicate which, if any, should be applied:

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| I am not in favour of any preconditions          | [ ] |
| or   |     |
| After agreeing to the Mitchell Principles        | [ ] |
| After a period of "Quarantine"                   | [ ] |
| After making a start on decommissioning          | [ ] |
| After complete decommissioning                   | [ ] |
| After their 'Military Machine' is 'Stood Down'   | [ ] |
| When paramilitary beatings are brought to an end | [ ] |

5. If you are in favour of a period of "Quarantine" how long should it last

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| I am not in favour of a period of "Quarantine" | [ ] |
| or   |     |
| After one month                                | [ ] |
| Between two and three months                   | [ ] |
| Between four and six months                    | [ ] |
| Between seven months and one year              | [ ] |

6. When do you think the decommissioning of weapons belonging to paramilitary organisations should take place:

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| After the "Talks" reach a successful conclusion                 | [ ] |
| During the "Talks" in accordance with the "Mitchell Principles" | [ ] |
| Before they are allowed into the "Talks"                        | [ ] |

7. If political parties associated with paramilitary organisations are allowed into "All Party Talks" what progress would you allow to take place before paramilitary weapons must be decommissioned. Please indicate which of the following options are your first and second choice and which options, if any, you consider to be unacceptable:

**Everything** - All aspects of a settlement for the future of Northern Ireland can be negotiated at "All Party Talks", including parties associated with paramilitary organisations, without the need for any decommissioning of weapons until a settlement is reached.

**Flexible time table** - Decommissioning should take place as political progress is made in the "Talks". But no rigid time table should be set.

**Fixed time table** - Decommissioning should take place on a fixed timetable that is unrelated to political progress in the "Talks".

**None** - All weapons should be decommissioned before political parties associated with paramilitary organisations are permitted into the "Talks".

8. What issues do you think could be negotiated at "All Party Talks" before decommissioning is completed:

Nothing	[ ]
Fair employment	[ ]
Education and Housing	[ ]
Language rights	[ ]
Parades	[ ]
Police reform	[ ]
Political future of Northern Ireland	[ ]
Amnesty	[ ]
Everything	[ ]

9. Should decommissioning be limited to paramilitary organisations or do you think it should be extended to include British Forces in Northern Ireland Yes/No

## Social and Cultural Issues at the "Talks"

1. Long term stability in Northern Ireland may require more than just political reform. Would you like the "Talks" to deal with social and cultural issues as well as the political future of Northern Ireland. Yes/No

2. Please indicate which social and cultural issues you think should be addressed:

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| Policing (e.g. Structure, uniform, name, emblems, recruitment)               | [ ] |
| Parades (e.g. Who can march where and when)                                  | [ ] |
| Employment (e.g. Fair employment law and mixed work places)                  | [ ] |
| Housing (e.g. Fair public housing and mixed public housing)                  | [ ] |
| Education (e.g. Catholic, Protestant, integrated and Irish language schools) | [ ] |
| Language and cultural (e.g. Separate and mixed community programs)           | [ ] |

Other \_\_\_\_\_

or

I do not think the "Talks" should deal with any social and cultural issues [ ]

3. Some negotiated settlements, for example South Africa, have included a "Bill of Rights" to deal with these kinds of social and cultural issues. Do you think a Northern Ireland settlement should include the introduction of a "Bill of Rights", commission and court. Yes/No

4. If you are in favour of a "Bill of Rights" when would you like it introduced into law:

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| As soon as possible                                     | [ ] |
| As the first 'item of business' at the "Talks"          | [ ] |
| As part of the final "Talks" settlement in a referendum | [ ] |
- or
- I am not in favour of a "Bill of Rights" [ ]

5. A "Bill of Rights", like the *European Convention on Human Rights*, will normally deal with a wide range of issues concerned with, for example, civil and political liberties and questions of discrimination. However, many states find they require special rights to give special protection to the different communities that make up their society. Please indicate which social and cultural issues, if any, you think need to be addressed to give special protection to the two main communities in Northern Ireland:

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| Policing (e.g. Structure, uniform, name, emblems, recruitment)               | [ ] |
| Parades (e.g. Who can march where and when)                                  | [ ] |
| Employment (e.g. Fair employment law and mixed work places)                  | [ ] |
| Housing (e.g. Fair public housing and mixed public housing)                  | [ ] |
| Education (e.g. Catholic, Protestant, integrated and Irish language schools) | [ ] |
| Language and cultural (e.g. Separate and mixed community programs)           | [ ] |

Other \_\_\_\_\_

or

I am not in favour of any special rights for the two main communities [ ]

6. A number of different options are available for the introduction of a "Bill of Rights" into Northern Ireland. Please indicate which of the following options are your first and second choice and which options, if any, you consider to be unacceptable:

**A Northern Ireland Bill of Rights** - A Northern Ireland Bill of Rights which would include special protection for both Communities.

**The European Convention on Human Rights** - The incorporation of the *European Convention on Human Rights* into Northern Ireland Law.

**A Bill of Rights for Ireland and the United Kingdom** - A single Bill of Rights for Ireland and the United Kingdom with special provisions for Northern Ireland.

**A Bill of Rights for the Island of Ireland** - A single Bill of Rights for the Island of Ireland with special protection for both the Unionist and Nationalist communities.

or

I am not in favour of a "Bill of Rights" [ ]

## The Status of a Negotiated Settlement

1. The negotiated settlement for the future of Northern Ireland will have to be approved by:

- A majority of the political parties in Northern Ireland elected to government [ ]
- A majority from each of the two main communities in Northern Ireland [ ]
- A simple majority of the people of Northern Ireland [ ]
- The British Parliament [ ]
- The Irish Dail. [ ]
- A referendum in Northern Ireland [ ]
- A referendum in the Republic of Ireland [ ]
- Separate referenda in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland [ ]
- A referendum in the Island of Ireland as a whole [ ]
- A referendum in the United Kingdom as a whole [ ]

2. Any future changes to the negotiated settlement will have to be approved by:

- A majority of the political parties in Northern Ireland elected to government [ ]
- A majority from each of the two main communities in Northern Ireland [ ]
- A simple majority of the people of Northern Ireland [ ]
- The British Parliament [ ]
- The Irish Dail. [ ]
- A referendum in Northern Ireland [ ]
- A referendum in the Republic of Ireland [ ]
- Separate referenda in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland [ ]
- A referendum in the Island of Ireland as a whole [ ]
- A referendum in the United Kingdom as a whole [ ]

3. Any changes to a Northern Ireland "Bill of Rights" will have to be approved by:

- A majority of the political parties in Northern Ireland elected to government [ ]
- A majority from each of the two main communities in Northern Ireland [ ]
- A simple majority of the people of Northern Ireland [ ]
- The British Parliament [ ]
- The Irish Dail. [ ]
- A referendum in Northern Ireland [ ]
- A referendum in the Republic of Ireland [ ]
- Separate referenda in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland [ ]
- A referendum in the Island of Ireland as a whole [ ]
- A referendum in the United Kingdom as a whole [ ]

4. Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish constitution should be amended to remove the Irish states claim on Northern Ireland. **Yes/No**

These changes should be made as part of an overall settlement [ ]

or

These changes should be made without delay [ ]

or

I do not think Articles 2 and 3 should be amended [ ]

## Constitutional Issues

1. Should the "Talks" be directed towards:

- A permanent political settlement of the status of Northern Ireland [ ]  
A political settlement of the status of Northern Ireland that is subject to periodic review [ ]  
A political settlement that progressively moves from the current status to a new status [ ]

2. A political settlement for Northern Ireland will require coming to terms with a number of political issues that relate to:

Firstly - the status of Northern Ireland

Secondly - regional government within Northern Ireland

Thirdly - the relationships between Northern Ireland, the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.

Several different options are available for each of these relationships. In an effort to help the negotiators at the multiparty talks to reach a settlement that could gain the support of a majority of the people in both communities please indicate which of the following options are your first and second choice and which options, if any, you consider to be unacceptable:

**Firstly - The status of Northern Ireland:**

**Separate Northern Irish State** - The complete separation of Northern Ireland from both the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland and the establishment of a separate state within the European Union.

**Integration into the United Kingdom** - Rule from Westminster with local government similar to the rest of the United Kingdom within the European Union.

**Integration into the Republic of Ireland** - Incorporation of Northern Ireland into the Republic of Ireland to create a single state within the European Union.

**A new political arrangement** - A new political arrangement for Northern Ireland negotiated by all the parties in the "Talks" and agreed to in a referendum.

**Secondly - Regional Government within Northern Ireland:**

**Rule from Westminster** - No Northern Ireland Legislature.

**Northern Ireland Assembly** - government by a Northern Ireland Assembly.

**Separate institutions for the two main communities** - Creation of separate structures for the government of each of the two main communities in Northern Ireland.

**Rule from Dublin** - No Northern Ireland Legislature.

If you are in favour of a Northern Ireland Assembly would you like it to:

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| Govern by simple majority                          | [ ] |
| or   |     |
| Govern with "Proportionality" in committees        | [ ] |
| Govern with "Responsibility Sharing" in committees | [ ] |
| Govern with a "Power Sharing" executive            | [ ] |
| and  |     |
| Have executive powers                              | [ ] |
| Have powers to make laws                           | [ ] |
| Have powers to raise taxes                         | [ ] |
| or   |     |
| I am not in favour of a Northern Ireland Assembly  | [ ] |

**Thirdly - The relationships between Northern Ireland, the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland:**

**None** - No special arrangements to be established for the government of Northern Ireland beyond those presently agreed to in international law as part of the international community and as partners in the European Union.

**Anglo-Irish Agreement** - Government in consultation with the Irish government under the terms of the Anglo-Irish Agreement.

**North-South institutions** - The establishment of a number of joint institutions with the Republic of Ireland to deal with matters of mutual interest.

**Joint authority** - Government by joint authority between the British and Irish governments.

If North-South institutions were established between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland to deal with matters of mutual interest would you want these institutions:

- To be established by Westminster and Dublin
- or
- To be established by a Northern Ireland Assembly and the Irish Dail
- and
- To have consultative functions
- To have co-operative functions
- To have executive functions
- To have legislative functions
- or
- I am not in favour of North-South institutions

What aspects of government would you like such institutions to be concerned with?

- The environment
- Agriculture
- Fisheries
- Tourism
- Medical care
- Transport
- Communications
- Economic development
- Training
- Joint representation in Europe
- Trade
- Taxation
- Broadcasting and film
- Culture and sport
- Social services
- Education
- Policing and security
- Defence
- Foreign policy
  
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
  
- All aspects of Government
  
- No aspects of Government

**Demographics**

6. Plus: Religion, Politics, Identity, Gender, Age, Occupation