

Ulster Unionist Party (UUP)

STRAND 1 AGENDA ITEM 3

i. Nature of new arrangements

The current democratic deficit endured by Northern Ireland is unacceptable. Replacing that deficit with good government within the United Kingdom entails locally elected politicians having control over functions now in the hands of "quangos" and the six government departments in Northern Ireland. We believe that the nexus between those who govern and those who are governed must be restored.

New arrangements will have to be equitable, durable and workable with the maximum amounts of open administration and accountability in order to have the confidence of the people of Northern Ireland. To safeguard that confidence the UUP does not see any role for those not committed to exclusively peaceful means in the future administration of Northern Ireland.

ii. Form of new arrangements

A body elected by proportional representation and operating on the basis of proportionality is envisaged. Members elected to the body would control the administration of Northern Ireland. Currently heads of government departments in Northern Ireland are civil servants; members of the elected body would assume those roles.

Full liaison with other UK and EU regions would be a crucial area of responsibility for the elected body. Co-operation with other bodies is envisaged where and when this is necessary for the benefit of Northern Ireland.

The rights of the people of Northern Ireland, whether defined by the ECHR with appropriate protocols or otherwise, would be an integral part of the internal governance of the province.

iii. Extent of new arrangements

The new body would be a tier of administration between the sovereign Parliament at Westminster and Local Government in Northern Ireland. (This is without prejudice to Northern Ireland's full participation at Westminster and possible changes in Local Government). Initially it would not have a legislative role, but this could evolve as new constitutional arrangements for the United Kingdom as a whole develop.

27.10.97.