

Dermot Nally Papers

UCDA P254/98

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UUP peace plan 'ignored'

THE position taken up by the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) at the failed negotiations organised last year by Sir Patrick Mayhew, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, appears, on the face of it, to have been honest and conciliatory.

They produced a welter of position papers on new constitutional arrangements and guarantees for the minority, but these were not taken seriously, or discussed by the SDLP, or the Government, according to the party.

The *Sunday Independent* has now secured a full set of the UUP documents, which run to well over two hundred pages and draw heavily on the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982; the American Constitution and Bill of Rights, 1789; The European Convention of Human Rights; the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights, 1966; and the American Convention of Human Rights, 1969.

The UUP used these documents — with full back-up from independent constitutional lawyers and other outside experts — to draft a three-point plan, which its leader, James Molyneux, put up for discussion at various stages of the talks.

- A comprehensive Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland.
- An Inter-Irish Relations Committee representing North and South.
- A new Northern Ireland Assembly with a strong committee system. The Bill of Rights put forward by the UUP drew heavily on Canadian experience. There is also a divided community in Canada — a majority English-speaking community and a minority French-speaking one.

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982 has built in equality of status and equal rights and privileges for the two communities and a framework to ensure there are no infringements.

The Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland, as proposed by the UUP, would introduce measures to prevent discrimination in jobs, housing and community services and freedom of thought, conscience and religion, freedom of expression, assembly and association, equality before the law and freedom from torture, cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment.

The Inter-Irish Relations Com-



Kevin Moore talks to Ulster Unionist MP Ken Maginnis about the party's document for an agreed Northern Ireland — a plan aimed at satisfying the SDLP's three demands

mittee would represent a formal link between the new Assembly and the Oireachtas and a practical basis on which the two political entities in Ireland could implement an agreed joint, or complementary action on issues of common interest.

These would include fisheries, roads, energy, rail transport, tourism and certain aspects of agriculture. And to facilitate efficient co-operation in these areas the setting up of autonomous agencies with executive authority was not ruled out. The UUP proposals were based on what were seen as practical and workable arrangements. Details on the membership and size of the Inter-Irish Relations Committee would be worked out with the Government and the other Northern parties.

The election of a new Northern Ireland Assembly was the third rung of the UUP plan. This would be elected by PR, which has become the preferred electoral system of all the local parties, except for Westminster elections. The Assembly would administer the North using a committee system and the chairmanship of these committees would be divided out among the constitutional parties on a pro rata basis.

Ken Maginnis, the Ulster Unionist MP for Fermanagh-South Tyrone, who wrested his seat from Independent Nationalist Owen Carron in 1983, attended the six months of negotiations last year aimed at getting a settlement. The talks collapsed in failure last November. The 55-year-old former primary teacher, who is UUP Spokesman on Security, is very bitter at the way he and his colleagues were treated during the protracted discussions, particularly when they came to Dublin. He said they and their proposals — were not taken seriously.

Maginnis emphasised — using a

phrase coined by Dick Spring in relation to Articles 2 and 3 of the Constitution — that their proposals were "not cast in bronze". He told me in the course of a long interview at his Dungannon home: "Of course, they are negotiable." He said the proposals were still on the table and it was up to the SDLP and the Government to respond.

Mr Maginnis said they did not, at any stage, make the removal of Articles 2 and 3 of the Constitution a precondition for participating in the Mayhew talks. "We were not going to say that the very first thing that must be done is to run back to the Republic and persuade the people to vote 'yes' in a referendum," he said.

"What we were going to say was right what have you got on offer, what have I got and what have we in common. And, at some stage, we would have raised the major problem of the irredentist territorial claim."

Mr Maginnis said the Rev Ian Paisley and his Democratic Unionist Party had become impaled on Articles 2 and 3 at the very beginning of the negotiations. "What he did was find a convenient slogan," the Ulster Unionist explained. "It did not take a lot of thought. It did not place him under any obligation to think his way through."

The plan produced by the Ulster Unionists during the talks were aimed at satisfying the SDLP's three demands: minority rights would be guaranteed; nationalists would have a meaningful role in the administration of Northern Ireland; and there would be a recognition of the desire of the nationalist community to forge closer links with the Republic.

Mr Maginnis said there were two main reasons why the negotiations failed. One was the bitter personal squabbling between the Taoiseach,

Albert Reynolds, and the then Minister for Industry and Commerce, Des O'Malley, arising out of their conflicting evidence to the Beef Tribunal and the other was the intransigence of SDLP leader John Hume.

"We saw an Irish government delegation that was ill-prepared, preoccupied with other things and that was quite honestly bored out of its mind in so far as important things were happening back in the Oireachtas. They felt there were other things that they should be doing, like getting out to the electorate," said Mr Maginnis.

As for the SDLP leader, he was not prepared to consider anything that did not fall within the narrow fixed parameter of eventual Irish unity, Mr Maginnis told me. Mr Hume sought to move in the stages outlined in the report of the New Ireland Forum — from Joint Authority to a Federal Ireland and then a United Ireland.

He said the SDLP leader's talks with Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams were "moving towards some sort of proposal relating to a Federated Ireland."

"That is not on," Mr Maginnis declared angrily. "Only John Hume can honestly believe that he does not need to take any notice of the Unionists. It is only a step on the way to final unity. You are not going to get the Unionist people to go down that road at all. Not that the Unionists have entered into the equation. John Hume has been quite singular in his determination that he will not talk to Unionists."

THERE is an ever-increasing sense of hostility to John Hume within the Ulster Unionist Party. Mr Maginnis put it this way: "I believe that John Hume is a major part of the Northern Ireland problem. He is beginning to believe that he, alone, without any contribution from the Unionists, can bring about some sort of miraculous solution. And all he is doing is encouraging a likely confrontation."

Mr Maginnis was also dismissive of Dr Paisley. "I think he is man without imagination," he said. "He is almost the antithesis of John Hume. John Hume's imagination deceives him and this leads him into deceiving others. Paisley's problem is that he is a man without imagination and whose power of recall is only as useful as he wishes it to be."

A GREAT WEEK FOR THE IRA — Conor Cruise O'Brien: Page 17

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TANIA OBREZA'S



HOROSCOPE

ARIES

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(MARCH 20 — APRIL 20)

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SLURROUND yourself with friends - it's not a time to be alone. Unusual work opportunities could come from unlikely sources. Romance is also looking good and you may travel this week, or contact friends or colleagues from abroad.

CANCER

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(JUNE 21 — JULY 22)

WHIRLWIND romance could leave you breathless, but beware being too idealistic. Remember, the higher the pedestal you place lovers on - the further they have to fall. One more warning - secret liaisons could be dangerous liaisons.

LEO

Phone 1550-131 408

(JULY 22 — AUGUST 23)

BRACE yourself for a week of over-spending. However, after the shopping spree is over, take a long, hard look at your bank balance. Then make time to sit down and carefully calculate a sensible, practical budget. You'll need it.

VIRGO

Phone 1550-131 409

(AUGUST 23 — SEPTEMBER 23)

PATIENCE and staying power won't be your strongest virtues this week. Instead of wasting time on lost causes, you'll simply move on to something else. Financially, this could prove to be an extremely successful and lucrative week ahead.

LIBRA

Phone 1550-131 410

(SEPTEMBER 23 — OCTOBER 23)

NEW friendships will be formed, but with one special individual having a tremendous impact on your life. This is also a week to listen to your intuition as it will be guiding you in the right direction. Good fortune is on your side.

SCORPIO

Phone 1550-131 411

(OCTOBER 23 — NOVEMBER 22)

SENSING inevitable changes in your life, it's now time to plan for the future as no detail will be overlooked. This could therefore be a tremendously successful week, especially in all work and career matters. Travel is also likely.

SAGITTARIUS

Phone 1550-131 412

(NOVEMBER 22 — DECEMBER 22)

YOU are constantly on the go, so personal and professional responsibilities may be neglected. Confusing news could disrupt daily routine, so perhaps it's time to escape to a more tranquil setting. Don't rely too heavily on others.

CAPRICORN

Phone 1550-131 413

(DECEMBER 22 — JANUARY 20)

REBELLING against authority and restrictions, this week you won't take no for an answer! Interference in your life will not be tolerated. Avoid trying to achieve too much too quickly and don't promise more than you can deliver.

AQUARIUS

Phone 1550-131 414

(JANUARY 20 — FEBRUARY 19)

WORRYING too much could create problems which need not have existed in the first place. Don't force the pace, go with the flow. Listen to both your instinct and intellect and this could become a week of tremendous achievements.

PISCES

Phone 1550-131 415

(FEBRUARY 19 — MARCH 20)

TAKE advantage of any unexpected opportunities - they may be the chance you've been waiting for! An new romance could also be the tonic you need. However, minor financial frustrations may cause health problems around the 11th.

SUNDAY is always a special day and I've always loved it. I start the day early, about 130am with freshly squeezed orange juice. Then if it's not raining too heavily I go for a game of golf, usually accompanied by various members of my family. It's the only day that I actually sit down and read all the newspapers.

I'm always the one to cook the lunch on Sunday which I thoroughly enjoy, they don't let me near the kitchen in the restaurant. Lunch consists of traditional fare - roast meat with gravy and vegetables. My seven children all get together with us as well as my four grandchildren.

An important part of my business is wine tasting, we have 3,000 different wines in the restaurant at different times. I believe the better the company you're keeping, the better the wine will taste. My children are varying ages so this enables



PHONE Tania's NEW Horoscopes lines for detailed star predictions for the next week. Lines are updated every Saturday at 9.00 p.m. and remember, Sunday is OFF PEAK all day.

Calls cost per minute: 58p peak; 44p off peak.