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Independent Loyal Orange Institution

IMPERIAL GRAND LODGE

IMPERIAL GRAND MASTER

Rgt. Wor. Bro. George Dawson,
10 Cambridge Avenue,
Ballymena,
BT42 2EN



IMPERIAL GRAND SECRETARY

Wor. Bro. R.J. Johnston.

Mr. John Bruton,
Leinster House,
Dublin.

14th April 1995.

Dear Mr. Bruton,

Please find enclosed the response of the above Institution to the recently published "Frameworks for the Future" document.

The response has been formulated after careful study and consideration and restates our Unionist position which is not negotiable.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'George Dawson'. The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

George Dawson
Imperial Grand Master

**Frameworks
for the
Future**

REJECTED

INDEPENDENT LOYAL ORANGE INSTITUTION

Frameworks for the Future - REJECTED.

Introduction

The Independent Loyal Orange Institution represents members in Northern Ireland, England and Scotland. It is not linked to, or dominated by, any political party but rather expresses views independently formed and representative of a general Unionist position. We have read, and carefully studied Frameworks for the Future and have concluded that it is a carefully constructed plan for the British Government to abandon the loyal and longsuffering people of Northern Ireland. These Frameworks can have only one outcome - A United Ireland. We reject that concept and these Frameworks on the same basis as our Forefathers and the founders of the State of Northern Ireland, - "We will not have Rome Rule." //

We can expect that over the next few weeks and months the propaganda machines of the British and Irish Governments will be working overtime to characterise Unionists as intransigent and negative in their response to the proposals. The Governments will seek by blackmail and bribery to marshall public opinion in support of the document. Blackmail will be used since those who oppose the document will be castigated as being against peace and prosperity, and bribery will be used as the government propagandists calculate the millions of pounds to be poured upon us if we capitulate and surrender our Protestant and British heritage.

As Unionists we promote and support:

- 1) The maintenance of the British way of life.
- 2) The strengthening of the links between Northern Ireland and the rest of the United Kingdom.
- 3) The protection of our Civil and Religious Liberty as guaranteed by the Protestant Religion.
- 4) The Equality of all men under the law.
- 5) Democracy and the supremacy of the ballot box.
- 6) Good neighbourly relations with all our neighbours in a global economy.
- 7) Prosperity based upon the ingenuity and thrift of our people, not dependent on handouts.
- 8) A responsible attitude to society which emphasises what we can do for our country and not what our country can do, or far less owes to us.

This Framework Document negates these Unionist principles and must be rejected.

The Lineage of the Document

These Frameworks could best be described as a MISH - MASH OF TIRED OLD ANTI UNIONIST IDEAS. Far from being of the future they are firmly entrenched in past failures. The North/South bodies are reminiscent of 1973 and Sunningdale. Paragraph 5 of the "New Framework for Agreement" reminds us of the detested phrase coined at the Thatcher/ Haughey summit in 1981 namely "the totality of relationships". In 1985 in the objectionable Anglo-Irish Agreement the British Government conceded a role for Dublin in the affairs of Northern Ireland. These proposals seek to INSTITUTIONALISE that role (New Framework para 42). We do not recognise the legitimacy of that role. It is noteworthy that throughout the document direct links are drawn with the Downing Street Declaration of 1993. All of these previous documents and initiatives have been rightly rejected by vast sections of Unionism, how then can any proposals based

The Status of the Document

Government spokesmen have gone to great lengths to persuade us that this is purely a discussion or consultative document. THIS IS PATENTLY NOT TRUE. In fact a consideration of the document itself will show this to be untrue.

The proposals on Devolution are described as "the British Government's ideas". The Framework is described as a "shared understanding-between the British and Irish Governments". Paragraph 41 (Framework) goes further and speaks of the governments pursuing 'joint objectives' and 'laying foundations', while paragraph 9 speaks of the two governments deploying "their political resources" in support of the agreement. Naturally, given such forceful and intimidatory language we are not surprised to find that the Governments "strongly commend" the document (page vi parall). However, the same paragraph goes further and clearly states that the proposals CANNOT be rejected but must be discussed and agreed upon. Finally, in a further revelation of the true nature of the document we find that, according to paragraph 47 (Framework), if the Northern Ireland Assembly ceased to function (as so many have in the past), the two Governments would ensure that the functions of the North/South body would continue to develop, whatever the will of the people.

In this document the Governments declare their intentions. They establish a strategy with goals and objectives. In short the British Government want out of Northern Ireland and the Irish Government are to be facilitated in their takeover of our Province. Only the timescale has not been published. Any negotiations based on this document could have only one outcome - an outcome into which the British Government have been bombed by the I.R.A.; an outcome which is unconditional surrender; an outcome which Unionists can never accept. This document is a one way road to a United Ireland.

Fundamental Problems with the Document

This document is unacceptable because it has a flawed basis. From the outset of the document the phrase "the people of Ireland" is used. This phrase is a creation of John Hume and in reality exists only in his mind. There is not now, and never has been, an entity which can be called the people of Ireland. We are different peoples, not one. We are different by identity, by religion, by history, and by culture. The use and acceptance of the term, "the People of Ireland" sets the ethos of the document and inevitably leads it to all Ireland structures. We do not accept this foundational principle of the document therefore its outcomes are similarly flawed and rejected.

From its false basis the document moves on to other unacceptable ideas. The term 'Parity of Esteem' is introduced. This, of course, sounds quite reasonable until one thinks through the implications from a Nationalist perspective. Parity of Esteem actually means the acceptance of the Union Flag and the Irish Tricolour as national flags, the use of the National Anthem and the Soldiers Song and possibly a multiplicity of police forces. This is a recipe for disaster.

The document goes further in that it downgrades Unionism to an Aspiration. (para 7 framework). As Unionists our birthright has been downgraded to an aspiration, not a right or a reality, while Nationalists are guaranteed "to be part, as of right, of the Irish Nation." (para 21). As a sop to Unionists the document contains, and much has been made of this, a promise by the Irish Government to, "introduce and support proposals for change in the Irish Constitution".

We have been told that this refers to Articles Two and Three, but that is not stated in the document. What the changes will be is also not stated. Indeed we have no guarantee that the people of the Republic of Ireland will accept any proposed changes. Thus Dublin has been enabled to assert and realise its illegal territorial claim rather than be forced to change it. Such is the mood of capitulation by the British Government.

The document claims to challenge, "Strongly held positions on all sides." We have searched the document in vain for any challenge to the Nationalist position, rather it promotes the Nationalist agenda which has been jointly empowered by both Governments. N

Faulty Proposals in the Document

The proposals in the document can be summarised as involving an Assembly, North/South and East West bodies and a Referendum. We will take these in turn.

(i) The Assembly

On pages 3&4 of the document the Government sets out fourteen criteria for any assembly, and in the rest of the document fails to satisfy these criteria.

- * This Assembly is a travesty of 'Democratic Principles' being bound by weighted majorities, panel vetoes and members banned from service in its committees. It certainly is not acceptable or reflective of the wishes of the electorate.
- * The Assembly would not be widely acceptable because of its unworkability, its bias in favour of Nationalism and because it would be subservient to the North/South body.
- * This Assembly is a recipe for political instability.
- * From the outset the assembly would be restricted by balance mechanisms and dominated by outside bodies. Far from being capable of development it would stifle democratic wishes and views.
- * Such a complex set of mechanisms would be unworkable.
- * The Assembly as envisaged would entrench division in that the value of Unionism and Unionist votes are debased.
- * Unionist Constitutional Parties would be denied any role at the Head of Department level in this Assembly and in "contentious legislation" each vote would be worth only a fraction of a Nationalist vote.
- * With so many undemocratic checks and balances it is difficult to imagine how this Assembly could be either effective or efficient.
- * The ideas for this Assembly are old and tired.
- * Clearly the Assembly has defined relationships with All Ireland Institutions but contrary to the assertion in the document it will be alienated from U.K. Institutions.
- * Far from "managing" any relationships this Assembly would be bound and gagged in its relationships.
- * It is already clear that there could be no 'public endorsement' for this Assembly.
- * The powers of the North/South body would be greater than those delegated to the Assembly.
- * The Supremacy of other bodies outside the Assembly would mitigate against 'public accountability ... within Northern Ireland'.

(ii) Over Arching Bodies (North/South - East West)

The various, and complex, over arching and interlocking structures would ensure that the N.I. Assembly would be caged in an All Ireland Prison overseen by a Council of Ireland which would be given "dynamic and executive" functions. Unionists would forever be confined to suffering under an inbuilt Nationalist Majority in this embryonic form of a United Ireland.

The Range of powers given to the North/South body is alarming. We utterly reject any attempt to "harmonise" our Province with the Irish Republic. We further reject the suggestion that there should be any Executive or Consultative Role for Dublin in the affairs of this part of the United Kingdom.

As one example of a matter over which the body would have Executive control the Governments have cited " Culture and Heritage". Unionists can only shudder at the prospect of Irish Republicans assuming executive control over our Protestant and British culture and heritage. This is tantamount to giving Adolf Hitler the responsibility for Jewish Cultural Affairs.

An example given for "harmonisation" is Education for Mutual Understanding. Our views on this attempt by the British Government at Social Engineering are well known and documented. (Education for Mutual Understanding or Education to Manipulate the Under-aged? 1990 I.L.O.I.) However to hand such a scheme to an all Ireland body shows an extreme insensitivity to Protestants.

(iii) The Referendum.

Given the emphasis and proposals in the document the promise of a referendum is virtually meaningless. By the time any Referendum was held the process outlined by the governments would be irreversible. Moreover, even the promise of such a referendum is ambiguous, if not contradictory. In the Introduction (para 3) we are told that the 'outcome' of talks would be subject to such a referendum, while in the document itself (Annex A para 5) we are told that any "agreement" would be subject to a vote. This matter requires urgent clarification.

We have already noted that "Contentious Legislation" placed before the Assembly would be subject, not to a straight majority, but to a heavily weighted majority. Clearly it is obvious that proposals which have to be put to a Referendum are by their nature also Contentious. If they were not then there would be no need for a Referendum in the first instance. Yet the Referendum will be accepted on a straight majority basis - WHY? Surely what is deemed to be fair for Nationalists must also be applied to Unionists. In this matter we demand Parity of Esteem. Perhaps the Governments are emphasising once again that UNIONIST VOTES ARE WORTH LESS.

CONCLUSIONS

We have been saddened but not surprised by the proposals contained in "Frameworks for the Future". In summary we have found that the document lacks vision, lacks balance, lacks an understanding of the Unionist position, is unrealistic and presents a real barrier to the discussion and resolution of common problems within our community.

Unionists cannot negotiate or discuss within the confines of this document or these proposals, they are flawed and must be rejected.

We are confident, however, THERE IS A BETTER WAY.

CIRCULATION

Mr. John Major (Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great
Britain and Northern Ireland)
Mr. John Bruton (Prime Minister of the Republic Of Ireland)
Mr. Bill Clinton (President of the United States of America)
Sir Patrick Mayhew (Secretary of State for Northern Ireland)
Mr. Tony Blair (Leader, British Labour Party)
Mr. Paddy Ashdown (Leader, Liberal Democrats)
Mr. James Molyneaux (Ulster Unionist Party)
Dr. Ian Paisley (Ulster Democratic Unionist Party)
Mr. John Hume (Social Democratic and Labour Party)
Mr. John Alderdice (Alliance Party of Northern Ireland)

Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland
Imperial Grand Black Chapter of the British Commonwealth
Apprentice Boys of Derry
Ancient and Illustrious Order of Knights of Malta (Sixth Language)

The Press