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**Ulster Unionist Party  
PRESS RELEASE**

RELEASE TIME:

**SPEECH**

**BY**

**THE RT HON J H MOLYNEAUX MP**

**TO**

**THE ULSTER UNIONIST PARTY  
CONFERENCE**

**IN**

**THE WHITE HORSE HOTEL,  
LONDONDERRY,**

**SATURDAY 26TH OCTOBER 1991**

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Education has been debated at some length today and you will be glad to know that I do not intend to go over that ground again.

However, I do reserve the right to offer educational guidance to some would-be politicians. For example I have neglected the education of Dr Alderdice. I should have done more to enlighten him during the Brooke Talks on the day he questioned me about our proposal for a Select Committee. His difficulty was that he asked the wrong questions but received the right answers.

Two weeks ago the same Dr Alderdice, egged on by that select band who opted out of politics when it ceased to be profitable, parroted the ridiculous smear that the Unionist leaders were responsible for the murders in North Belfast. Another circus would do the trick provided the tent is at Stormont - not at Westminster. But only five months ago Dr Alderdice was telling the world he would talk about anything, any time, anywhere, which is what you would expect of the leader of a wheely bin party.

His deputy, Mr Close, accuses me of whipping myself into a "fury of lethargy". At least he has been taking lessons - presumably from Willie Whitelaw who once accused Harold Wilson of "going around stirring up apathy".

Following our meeting with Mr Brooke on 20 September I suggested that the three Parliamentary Parties representing Ulster at Westminster should continue to do their plain duty in the place where they are paid to be. Up bobbed Dr Alderdice to complain that I was excluding him. Of course he is excluded - not by the devious Molyneaux but by the Ulster electorate which decided unkindly not to elect him.

That electorate was even more unkind in the 1989 European Election when the good Doctor got only 5% of the Province wide vote - a mere .34 of one percent ahead of the Conservative candidate.

The Northern Ireland Conservatives too have neglected their lessons. So let me try again.

From 1970 to 1974 the Ulster Unionist Members of Parliament loyally supported the Heath Government but begged to differ on the Northern Ireland Office experiment conducted at Sunningdale. For that crime we were excluded from the Conservative Parliamentary Party when the General Election results were declared on 1 March 1974.

Ignoring that lesson the Northern Ireland Conservatives, until a fortnight ago, imagined that they could oppose and condemn Northern Ireland policies and get away with it. They knew better when they arrived in Blackpool to be politically kneecapped and given a hundred lines - "I must obey the Northern Ireland Office".

If in their manifesto they dare to wander from Stormont paths they will need no modern Daniel to interpret the writing on Holywood walls - you have been weighed in the balance and found wanting!

Now that they are home from Blackpool, sadder than when they arrived they would do well to remember that you can not live in Rome and fight with you know who - neither can you live in North Down and be uncivil to the present squatters in Stormont.

For the past six months we have been bored stiff with the guessing game about the date of the General Election and the news industry will return to that with a vengeance after Christmas. The current fad is the prospect of a hung Parliament. It is unlikely that there will be a hung Parliament because the English electorate is less stable than ours. They are going to be bombarded with predictions based on astrology and anything other than sound political perception. At the end of it all mainland British voters will have a rush of blood to the head. They will be frightened and stampeded into whichever camp finds favour with the news industry. So let's have done with idle chatter about a hung Parliament.

That advice will upset the calculations of the opponents of Unionism whose fevered imaginations compel them to believe that any of Her Majesty's Ministers who utter a word of sense about Ulster has done a dirty deal with the dreaded Unionists. Such fanciful notions are without foundation.

For our opponents the real truth is far more terrifying, because the obvious shift in attitudes in Government and in Parliament results from an overdue recognition of the justice of the Unionist case; from a discovery that we were right and they were wrong; from a realisation that Roman Catholicism is not synonymous with Nationalism. Above all, a conclusion that Unionism and Nationalism owe allegiance to two separate sovereign states.

London misconceptions are being steadily eroded and Unionists need to step up the process of education.

Gone already is the notion that Ulster's problems spring from religious intolerance - it was easy to sell that to people who had no religious beliefs themselves. A former Leader of our Party - the late Brian Faulkner was the first to expose that fallacy when he said:-

"Given the history of the SDLP and particularly their attitude that Northern Ireland had no right to exist, it was natural that Unionists should feel strongly against SDLP in government".

Even now, Nationalists require a guaranteed place in government not for Roman Catholics but for Roman Catholics who are committed to Irish Unity.

In Britain it is now seen as unreasonable to demand that a privileged place be given to those who do not wish to belong to the United Kingdom and who have demanded (and in the Anglo-Irish Agreement have been given) institutions designed to obliterate Ulster's right to exist.

It has not escaped notice that when Unionists are exhorted to engage in summits they are expected to bargain with three Nationalist parties in the south and one in the North - four parties united by the one objective of removing Ulster from the United Kingdom.

Nationalism is an Irish and not an Ulster philosophy and stands opposed to Unionism which speaks for Protestants and Roman Catholics who wish to be British citizens.

While Unionists and Nationalists can and do co-exist and co-operate they can not be forced into one straightjacket any more than the people of Yugoslavia.

British Ministers have also become aware of the difficulty in linking their comparatively stable political system with a permanently unstable system in Dublin which has its instability guaranteed by proportional representation elections.

Newspapers prosper on weekly forecasts of the defeat of Irish Governments and such uncertainty is no base on which to build stable arrangements.

With Europe and the world in a state of flux we need to be clear headed about The Union.

It is natural for some to imagine that the Union exists merely in written documents. But the Union is far more than that.

It is a feature which has evolved over centuries until it has become a constitutional fact. It has drawn together four widely different regions and cemented them with political institutions which are flexible enough to adapt to change without weakening the structure. Even the sheer villainy of the Anglo Irish Agreement has failed to dent it to any great extent.

Indeed the misguided draftsmen of the Anglo Irish Agreement failed to see that the solid obstacle of the Union would be their undoing.

Regrettably the tension and the instability they created remains with us and manifests itself in steadily increasing violence.

Mrs Thatcher, who mistakenly lent her authority to the Agreement, has confessed to a feeling of guilt over the treatment of the people of Hong Kong. Last week she apologised and bitterly regretted her role in the Television franchise muddle. It is unthinkable that she will withhold her regrets from the people of Northern Ireland and not assist John Major to right so great a wrong - particularly now that Dr Fitzgerald has revealed the extent of the conspiracy, and we have separate documentary evidence of the bullying activities of the Reagan administration.



's guardians of the Union we need to be particularly alert to efforts being made to supersede the Union by the imposition of an undemocratic monolith. At Maastricht in December the Foreign Office will fall victim to the "form of words" tactic which has been so often employed against us.

I said at the Brooke talks that we are approaching the last meaningful General Election in Britain's history. Thereafter the authority of the Westminster Parliament will be reduced to little more than that of a County Council, in administrative and legislative terms. I did not expect to be vindicated only last week when our Brussels masters told Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Transport that he must not construct in the County of Kent the channel link railway he had announced with a flourish of trumpets at the Conservative Party Conference.

If the Maastricht Agreement is not repudiated by the British people at the general election, then what is left of the Westminster Parliament will have lost its authority to continue to impose direct rule - and for that matter the Anglo Irish Agreement on Northern Ireland. Because of this probable surrender of authority our MEP and Party Chairman Mr Nicholson; the Officer Team and the Parliamentary Party will be taking the initiative in staking out our right to regional administration. We could not contemplate a situation where administrative decisions were taken by a United Kingdom Parliament which had surrendered its own authority to Brussels.

The Party Chairman has, quite rightly, advised us to continue the avoidance of recrimination; to adhere to our opinion that no good can come of post mortems on the Stormont talks.

We must look ahead.

The Secretary of State was doing just that on 3 July when he informed the House of Commons that he had concluded that the talks should be brought to an end. He repeated the message a few minutes later when he said "I hope it might be possible for fresh talks to take place".

We stand on common ground with the Secretary of State who has never used the word "resume". He, too, is prepared to put the past behind. It is not in his nature, nor mine, to look back in anger - if only because it is bad for the blood pressure and worse for the soul.

Mr Chairman, you know that the team of Party Officers and staff have been beaver away steadily since 3rd July. Strategy has been outlined and tactics decided. First instalments will soon be submitted to government. Fresh discussions got under way a month ago and contacts are developing steadily. I intend that these discussions should broaden to include senior and junior Ministers from various Whitehall departments and with other parties. That wide approach is essential if we are to make real progress in extirpating terrorism from whatever source; if we are to repair constitutional damage and bring our influence to bear on law making and law enforcement. We shall fearlessly do our duty as the fourth Party in the Parliament of the United Kingdom because in all these great issues there is a United Kingdom dimension. Just as we made our contribution to the nation in time of war so shall we not shirk from whatever it takes to cope with the evils which seem to increase as the shadow of war is lifted.

The Parliamentary Party, more than any other element, is aware of that challenge. Every day it is strengthening the Union. A record number of Ulster Unionist Members of Parliament serve on United Kingdom Select Committees; are taking their places on various Commissions; ensuring that there is an Ulster voice on bodies such as the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and on the Inter Parliamentary Union.

With our co-operation the Northern Ireland Committee was established in the time of the Labour Government. We are coming close to the setting up of a Select Committee for Northern Ireland affairs.

All parties are coming to see the justice of legislation by Bill and away with those wretched Orders in Council.

I address a special appeal to Officers of Associations and Branches. Do not expect Unionist members of Parliament to absent themselves from the place to which you elected them. They are the advance guard - not the Home Guard!

We must step up the fight for our Councillors to be given a real job of work. It is nothing short of an insult to Councillors and those who elect them to be deprived of real opportunities to demonstrate their ability to serve the community ten times better than that monstrous regiment of quangos which behave as if they have a divine right to rule.

It is an even greater insult to impose upon Councillors curbs, restrictions and penalties, in the form of the proposed Code of Conduct, which no government would dare to impose upon Members of Parliament.

This is probably the greatest conference in the past decade. No one could stand in my place and be unaffected by the sheer determination, enthusiasm and vitality of it all.

In the years which have passed since you invited me to lead you I hope I have never seemed to embark upon an ego trip.

Today I cannot conceal from you a feeling of humility mixed with pride. I have never been more conscious of my historic responsibility to lead - not just this great Party, but the thousands who trust us to care for them and protect them. The clear signal from all of them is that they are frustrated beyond measure by the blind refusal of successive governments to forswear futile summitry and take practical steps to reinstate democracy. We owe it to our fellow citizens to send an answering signal from this Conference in Londonderry proclaiming the resolve of our Officer team; our Parliamentary Party and all our Councillors - plus all who have come here today, to take an initiative for which we invite the support of every citizen.

I have become aware not of the years that have passed but of what needs to be done in the time that remains.

It is a curious feeling that all that has happened to me since I made my first speech at the age of thirteen, has been a preparation for the challenge of the next twelve months.

I get impatient with soothsayers who predict that nothing will happen this side of the General Election.

I reject utterly such pessimistic chatter. There is work to be done from Monday.

There are opportunities to be grasped in the new Session which The Queen will open on Thursday.

The Foreign Secretary has admitted that the debate has moved on.

The world is a different place.

There is no room in it for the faint-hearted.

Of course, we have a General Election to win.

Of course, we must go flat out to grab pole position

And, above all, we must resolve to win.

To win - not because an election is an end in itself.

But to win decisively, to prove that we have bounced back from the betrayal of 1985;

That we have reasserted our authority and gained a mandate to put a reasoned case for the people of an Ulster inseparable from the Kingdom to which they wish to belong.