



## An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

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## Summary

### UUP Opening Statement - Molyneux

Molyneux's opening statement reflects the arid integrationism of the UUP in recent years. The following are the main themes emerging from the statement:

- One of the declared aims of the Talks is to replace the present Anglo-Irish Agreement by "a far wider all-embracing British-Irish Agreement, co-extensive to the entire territory of both nations in the British Islands";
- It is an "essential prerequisite" that any devolved structure should not operate "within the framework of the present Anglo-Irish Accord - in whole or in part";
- Another declared objective is the "withdrawal of Articles 2 and 3 from the Irish Constitution together with the Preamble".
- The elected representatives from Northern Ireland must enjoy the same rights of legislative/administrative influence and participation as "all parts of the Kingdom". In specific terms, this means an end to the Orders in Council procedures at Westminster, and the establishment of a Select Committee for Northern Ireland;
- The UUP will not accept "any system of governance which could not equally be applied to any other regional entity within the United Kingdom";
- In regard to the framework of a devolved institution, the "key test" must be durability (though it is not clear from the statement what this means); a second test must be "conformity with democratic principles" (which is a coded

rejection of institutionalised power-sharing); and a final test must be "built-in safeguards against destruction by irresponsible authorities" (the "irresponsible authorities" in mind would appear to be Westminster and the EC Institutions);

- The UUP is said to be not "unmindful of the much smaller number" who hold different views; their grievances - real or imagined" - must be redressed."so that they may live in peace and contentment within the United Kingdom".

#### Comment

Molyneaux's opening presentation will tend to confirm the worst fears of those who felt the UUP were basically not serious about this process. His approach is narrow and sterile, without a hint of openness, generosity or imagination. He does not even acknowledge - let alone engage in - the fundamental debate about how the two identities in Northern Ireland are to be reconciled.

On the evidence of this text, Molyneaux appears not to harbour any real hopes or ambitions for the process. Among the more depressing passages (bottom page 7) is his ridiculing of the idea that "our modest level of talks" can do anything to end violence; "We are only too well aware that even if we achieve complete success, the effect on the terrorists will be null".

It may be of course that Molyneaux deliberately pitched his opening address to be as unforthcoming as possible. In the more likely event that this is a foretaste of what is to come from the UUP, it can only reinforce our view of the crucial need for both Governments to give a sense of direction to the process.

Anglo-Irish  
19 June 1991