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Brief: C VIII

EXPRESSIONS TO BE AVOIDED (AND NOTES ON OTHER TERMINOLOGY)

A: GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS

UK/GB

- The UK is political expression, Great Britain is a geographical term. Great Britain consist of England, Scotland and Wales: NI is part of the UK (ie the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) but not part of GB. NI people put considerable store by the proper use of the two terms.

"The Mainland"

Unacceptable. Reference should be made to "GB".

"Across the Water"

- A local term which refers to Great Britain.

British Isles

- A geographical term including the UK and the Republic, but not popular in the Republic.

"These Islands"

- A way of avoiding the problem above.

Northern Ireland

- Ulster

- The 9 county Province of Ulster comprises the 6 counties in NI plus Monaghan, Cavan and Donegal in the Republic of Ireland. The term Ulster is not strictly correct when applied to NI but is nonetheless used by both communities but particularly by Protestants. Best Avoided, save in compounds: "Ulsterman".

- The 6 Counties

- A term commonly used by the Catholic community and by people of the Republic of Ireland. To be avoided.

- The North of Ireland

- Ditto.

- The North

- An acceptable colloquialism used by both communities.

- The Province

- Not strictly accurate but acceptable term.

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- West/East of the Bann
  - The Upper and Lower Bann divide Northern Ireland from North to South. East of the Bann are counties Down and Antrim, which are heavily populated and Protestant dominated.
  - West of the Bann are Counties Armagh, Fermanagh, Londonderry and Tyrone which are more sparsely populated (together they hold only 36% of the population) and the overall community contains slightly more Catholics than Protestants.
- Orange/Green Areas
  - The term "Orange" (Orange Order etc) applies to Protestant/Unionist areas. The term "Green" refers to Catholics/Nationalist. Neither term is acceptable publicly but is common shorthand, in private conversation.
- Londonderry/Derry
  - Londonderry is the correct terminology for the City as it is enshrined in a Royal Charter, although usually used by Protestants, and "Derry" by Catholics. Both communities are however proud to be called "Derry-men". The Protestant (Church of Ireland) Bishop is Bishop of 'Derry and Raphoe'. The District Council is now named "Derry City Council", chosen by a majority vote of the Council to the fury of unionist councillors.
- "Being out here"
  - Unacceptable. This is provocative.
    - The phrase "being over here" is more often used, but should be avoided.

The Republic of Ireland

- The Republic/The South
  - Both are acceptable colloquialisms.
- The 26 Counties
  - A term used largely by the Catholic population. Unacceptable for Minister's use.
- The Free State
  - Official name of Republic 1922-37. Sometimes used as a slightly derogatory term particularly used by extreme republicans. No longer in common usage. Unacceptable.
- Ireland
  - A term with an all-Ireland connotation. Best avoided.

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- The 32 Counties
  - A term used largely by the Nationalist population and the Republic to refer to the island of Ireland. To be avoided.
- Eire
  - Official name of the Republic 1937-1949. Means island of Ireland and implies claim to the 6 Counties. Used sometimes as a derogatory term by Northern Protestants for the Republic. Unacceptable.

The political overtones of this terminology are well demonstrated by the description of "Irish Whiskey" in recent EC regulations and corresponding domestic legislation concerning alcohol. The EC regulation described Irish Whiskey as whiskey produced in Ireland or NI, the UK legislation referred to whiskey produced in NI or the Republic of Ireland, and the Republic's legislation referred to whiskey produced in any part of Ireland.

**B: THE NI POPULATION**

The Two communities/  
the two parts or two  
sides of the community

- Both refer to the Catholic/Protestant divide. The latter is now preferred usage since publication of the 1982 White Paper "Northern Ireland - A Framework for Devolution". Both acceptable.

**(i) The Protestant Community**

- The Majority Community
  - An acceptable term.
- Unionists
  - Ditto
- Protestants
  - Ditto.
- Loyalists
  - A term with overtones of militancy. Best avoided, except in the context of "Loyalist paramilitaries".
- Orangemen
  - Unacceptable, except when specifically referring to members of the Orange Order.
- Prods
  - A term of abuse when used by Catholics. Unacceptable.

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- Blackmen
- Refers to members of the Royal Black Institution, senior section of Orange Order. Term acceptable to Unionists - not usually required by Ministers.
- (ii) The Catholic Community
- Roman Catholics/Catholics/The Minority Community
- Acceptable terms.
- Nationalists or the Nationalist Side of the Community
- A common term referring to persons with an aspiration for Irish Unity (normally Catholics) by peaceful means. Acceptable.
- Republicans
- A potentially offensive term which is generally taken to refer to those who countenance the use of violence to promote Irish Unity (as in Irish Republican Army). To be avoided.
- Fenians
- A term of abuse, originally members of the Fenian Organisation, a secret Nationalist Organisation of the late 19th century. Unacceptable.
- Taigs
- An abusive local slang used by some Protestants. Unacceptable.

C: POLITICAL TERMINOLOGY

Devolution

- The devolution of legislative and executive powers to a NI legislature and Executive which would be ultimately subordinate to Westminster.

Majority Rule )  
Stormont Rule )  
The Stormont System)

- System where the majority party, formed the Government at Stormont 1921-1972. In the case of NI, the government would now be formed by a Unionist party or a Unionist coalition and the representatives of the Catholic side of the community would form the opposition. These terms are the battlecries for some Unionist politicians.

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Integration

- The idea of complete absorption of NI into the UK system of government favoured in particular by Enoch Powell. (There is an "integrationist" wing in the UUP and a "devolutionist" wing).

Local Government Reform/  
Re-organisation

- The restoration to NI's 26 local councils of a range of powers roughly similar to those held before 1973. (The District Councils operate on a straight party strength/majority vote basis, but are elected by PR/STV.)

UTLG

- "Upper Tier of Local Government". A concept proposed by Unionists to "fill" the so-called "Macrory Gap", ie the administrative gap between the (UK) Westminster Government and NI's local councils with a body or bodies on the lines of a Regional Council (cf: Strathclyde).

Power-sharing or  
Partnership

- Generally a system proposed by the SDLP and Alliance whereby all constitutional parties with elected representatives have a role to play in government. However, since the 1974 Executive, this term has become widely understood as referring to a system whereby the elected representatives of constitutional nationalism would be entitled to places in an Executive, ie institutionalised power-sharing.

Participation

- An alternative phrase for power-sharing developed by the Alliance Party in order to avoid the overtones which the term "power-sharing" acquired in the minds of Unionists (ie the power-sharing Executive of 1974.)

"An Acceptable Form  
of Government"

- A term widely used by Ministers and Government representatives to refer to any system of government which would be acceptable to a majority in both sides of the community (and to UK Government and Parliament.)

"Mainly Catholic SDLP"  
"Non-Sectarian Alliance"

- Unacceptable. Both terms are journalistic expressions.

"Taoiseach"(pronounced Teeshuck)

- The acceptable reference to the Irish Premier.

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"The Dail"

- Correct term for the Irish Lower House of Parliament.

IONA

- 'Isles of the North Atlantic'. An acronym for the political proposals for a federal relationship between 'these Islands' (qv). Sometimes advocated by Sir John Biggs Davison.

Security

British Army/The Military

- Terms used by Catholics. Unacceptable. Ministers should refer simply to "the Army", or "The Security Forces" as a collective term.

The Maze (Prison)

- Acceptable. Referred to as "HM Prison, Maze".

H-Blocks )  
Long Kesh )  
The Kesh )

- Unacceptable terms used by Nationalists referring to the Maze Prison.

Irish Naval Patrols

- Unacceptable. Reference should be to "Irish Naval Visits". The term "Patrol" might be taken to imply the exercising of policing powers over the Loughs common to NI and the Republic.

UDR/UDA

- The UDR (Ulster Defence Regiment) is a locally recruited regiment of the Army and an important but controversial constituent of the Security Forces.

The UDA (Ulster Defence Association) is the largest Loyalist paramilitary group: several UDA members have been convicted of serious terrorist crimes.

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
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