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FROM: C G MACCABE  
POLITICAL AFFAIRS DIVISION  
14 APRIL 1992

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Mr McCormick, DOE(NI)



1992 GENERAL ELECTION: RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The attached paper outlines the Election results in Northern Ireland and provides a broad-brush analysis of their impact as requested by No 10. At Annex A, the overall levels of party support at the Election are detailed, together with comparisons with the past two General Elections. Annex B comprises a schedule of the 17 constituency results.

[Signed CM]

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RN/8439

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1992 GENERAL ELECTION: RESULTS AND ANALYSIS FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

1. The only change in Westminster representation among the 17 constituencies was the much-reported victory of Dr Joe Hendron (Social Democratic and Labour Party) over Gerry Adams (Sinn Fein) in West Belfast. Thus, representation at Westminster is now:

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| Ulster Unionist Party (UUP)               | 9 seats |
| Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) | 4 seats |
| Democratic Unionist Party (DUP)           | 3 seats |
| Popular Unionist Party (UPUP)             | 1 seat  |

Background

2. The Election campaign in Northern Ireland was generally fairly low-key compared to that in Great Britain. The only issue raised during the campaign which may have an impact on the forthcoming Talks was a difference of opinion between Dr Paisley and Mr Hume over whether the Union was "on the table" in those Talks. That apart, the likely resumption of Talks was used by the four main constitutional parties concerned to demonstrate their commitment to progress and peace. Sinn Fein, who also claimed to be the party of peace, argued that they need to be involved in any Talks which were going to bring a resolution to the conflict.

Social Democratic and Labour Party

3. The main victors in the Election were the SDLP who, in addition to winning West Belfast, gained an extra 30,332 votes over 1987. Their share of the vote rose by 2.4% to 23.5%. They increased their support across Northern Ireland, and had their largest gains (at the expense of Sinn Fein) in the rural western constituencies of Mid-Ulster, where they confirmed their second place convincingly, and Fermanagh and South Tyrone, where they went ahead of Sinn Fein for the first time.

4. They also polled more heavily than expected in the marginal South Down constituency which they were defending with a 731 vote majority, but won with a majority of over 6,000. In addition to

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winning over some Sinn Fein voters, the increased turnout undoubtedly worked to their advantage and demonstrated the greater credibility the party now has with the electorate.

### West Belfast

5. The defeat of Gerry Adams by Joe Hendron was something of a surprise. A comparison of the figures with the 1987 General Election demonstrates that Adams received only some 30 fewer votes this time than last, and that the turnout was only 3% higher on this occasion. Hendron won, in part at least, because of tactical voting by Unionists. The Unionist candidate's vote was much lower than that received last time, and there were reports from the count that the ballot boxes from the Shankill Road area contained votes for Hendron. It is not, at present, possible to say with any authority how many such votes there were, but estimates suggest they exceeded Hendron's majority. Hendron explicitly acknowledged the support he had received from both sides of the community in his victory speech.

### Ulster Unionist Party

6. The UUP remain the largest party by a comfortable margin. Their share of the poll dropped both because the DUP challenged their sitting MPs in three of the Greater Belfast constituencies (reflecting the end of the pact agreed upon as a consequence of the Anglo-Irish Agreement which was in force in 1987 - although the two Unionist parties agreed again not to stand against each other in seats where a split vote might result in a Nationalist being elected), and the arrival of the Conservatives on to the electoral scene. They will have been disappointed not to take back South Down, Enoch Powell's old seat, from the SDLP but otherwise are fairly satisfied with their results.

### Democratic Unionist Party

7. The DUP held on to their three seats comfortably and, through fighting three more seats than 1987, saw their share of the vote rise. However, their failure to put down serious challenges to the UUP in the three contests mentioned above will have been particularly disappointing for them. The DUP seem to have lost out as a result of the aforementioned pact with their Unionist partners.

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### Sinn Fein

8. The loss of West Belfast and the further decline in their overall vote will have been a big blow to Sinn Fein. Although their vote held up in the largely Nationalist urban seats of West Belfast and Foyle (Londonderry) they lost support nearly everywhere else. The slide in their support should not, however, be overstated. The solid core of Sinn Fein support remains and is unlikely to be eroded at an accelerated rate in future. In his speech following the West Belfast declaration, Adams said that party policy will not change but there may now be pressure within the Provisional movement for the 'armed struggle' to take a more prominent position. Those questioning the continued campaign of violence may, on the other hand, see the fall in Sinn Fein support as linked to the party's association with PIRA.

### Alliance Party

9. The Alliance Party, who have been fighting elections for 21 years now, will be disappointed with the results and in particular at the failure of their leader, John Alderdice, to make a bigger impression in the East Belfast constituency. They undoubtedly lost some support to the Conservative Party, and may find it difficult to beat that rival in the next set of elections (the local government elections of May 1993).

### Conservative Party

10. Like the Alliance Party, the Conservatives draw most of their support from the Greater Belfast area, and despite having been beaten by Alliance Party candidates in all constituencies except North Down, will feel they performed creditably in their first province-wide general election. Their leader, Laurence Kennedy, had hoped to win North Down from Jim Kilfedder, but despite a good showing, the large personal vote for the latter meant the result was never in serious doubt. Both the Conservatives and the UUP (who this time supported Kilfedder) would be eyeing up the seat were the incumbent to decide to stand down next time.

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## Workers Party/New Agenda

11. Internal difficulties within the Workers' Party, which led to the formation of a splinter group - New Agenda - sabotaged any chance of making an impact they had. Their showing places them very much at the margin of Northern Ireland politics now.

## Conclusion

12. The 1992 General Election has confirmed the position of the UUP and SDLP as the main parties in Northern Ireland representing the two traditions. The results show the rise of moderate opinion across Northern Ireland at the expense of extremism, although the DUP's decline will remain slow for as long as Dr Paisley continues to lead the Party. The Alliance Party and the Conservatives are struggling to make a significant impact, a situation perhaps more worrying for the former because they have been fighting elections in Northern Ireland for 20 years longer than the Conservatives. Pressure will now be on the SDLP (particularly in West Belfast) to press the Government on unemployment and other socio-economic issues and they will need to develop an effective constituency service.

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|                       |                    |                   |                   |
|-----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|                       | 102,701<br>(13.4%) | 83,389<br>(11.4%) | 78,291<br>(10.0%) |
| ALLIANCE<br>PARTY     | 61,275<br>(8.0%)   | 72,671<br>(10.0%) | 68,695<br>(8.7%)  |
| CONSERVATIVE<br>PARTY | -                  | -                 | 44,608<br>(5.7%)  |
| Total Valid<br>Votes  | 769,278            | 730,132           | 785,123           |
| TURNOUT               | (72.3%)            | (67.4%)           | (69.8%)           |

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ANNEX A

PAB/7975/WKL/RN

|   | 1983<br>General<br>Election | 1987<br>General<br>Election | 1992<br>General<br>Election |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
|   | Votes                       | Votes                       | Votes                       |
| ULSTER<br>UNIONIST<br>PARTY                 | 259,952<br>(34.0%)          | 276,230<br>(37.8%)          | 271,049<br>(34.5%)          |
| SOCIAL<br>DEMOCRATIC<br>AND LABOUR<br>PARTY | 137,012<br>(17.9%)          | 154,087<br>(21.1%)          | 184,445<br>(23.5%)          |
| DEMOCRATIC<br>UNIONIST<br>PARTY             | 152,749<br>(20.0%)          | 85,642<br>(11.7%)           | 103,039<br>(13.1%)          |
| SINN FEIN                                   | 102,701<br>(13.4%)          | 83,389<br>(11.4%)           | 78,291<br>(10.0%)           |
| ALLIANCE<br>PARTY                           | 61,275<br>(8.0%)            | 72,671<br>(10.0%)           | 68,695<br>(8.7%)            |
| CONSERVATIVE<br>PARTY                       | -<br>-                      | -<br>-                      | 44,608<br>(5.7%)            |
| Total Valid<br>Votes                        | 769,278                     | 730,152                     | 785,123                     |
| Turnout                                     | (73.3%)                     | (67.4%)                     | (69.8%)                     |

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ANNEX B

## 1992 WESTMINSTER GENERAL ELECTION

### East Belfast

| Elec. 52,869          | Votes<br>Cast | % Poll | Turnout<br>67.7% |
|-----------------------|---------------|--------|------------------|
| *Robinson, P (DUP)    | 18,437        | 51.5   |                  |
| Alderdice, Dr J (All) | 10,650        | 29.8   |                  |
| Greene, D (Cons)      | 3,314         | 9.3    |                  |
| Dunlop D (Ind U)      | 2,256         | 6.3    |                  |
| O'Donnell, J (SF)     | 679           | 1.9    |                  |
| Bell, J (WP)          | 327           | 0.9    |                  |
| Redden Guy (NLP)      | 128           | 0.4    |                  |
| Majority              | 7,787         |        |                  |

### North Belfast

| Elec. 55,068       | Votes<br>Cast | % Poll | Turnout<br>65.2% |
|--------------------|---------------|--------|------------------|
| *Walker, A C (UUP) | 17,240        | 48.0   |                  |
| Maginness A (SDLP) | 7,615         | 21.2   |                  |
| McManus, P (SF)    | 4,693         | 13.0   |                  |
| Campbell, T (All)  | 2,246         | 6.3    |                  |
| Redpath, M (Cons)  | 2,107         | 5.9    |                  |
| Lynch, S (NA)      | 1,386         | 3.9    |                  |
| Smith, M (WP)      | 419           | 1.2    |                  |
| O'Leary, D (NLP)   | 208           | 0.6    |                  |
| Majority           | 9,625         |        |                  |

### South Belfast

| Elec. 52,050        | Votes<br>Cast | % Poll | Turnout<br>64.5% |
|---------------------|---------------|--------|------------------|
| *Smyth, M (UUP)     | 16,336        | 48.6   |                  |
| McDonnell, A (SDLP) | 6,266         | 18.7   |                  |
| Montgomery, J (All) | 5,054         | 15.0   |                  |
| Fee, L (Cons)       | 3,356         | 10.0   |                  |
| Hayes, S (SF)       | 1,123         | 3.3    |                  |
| Hadden, P (L&TU)    | 875           | 2.6    |                  |
| Lynn, P (WP)        | 362           | 1.1    |                  |
| Mullan, T (NLP)     | 212           | 0.7    |                  |
| Majority            | 10,070        |        |                  |

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## West Belfast

|              |            |        |               |
|--------------|------------|--------|---------------|
| Elec. 55,280 | Votes Cast | % Poll | Turnout 72.3% |
|--------------|------------|--------|---------------|

|                   |        |      |
|-------------------|--------|------|
| Hendron, J (SDLP) | 17,415 | 43.6 |
| *Adams, G (SF)    | 16,826 | 42.1 |
| Cobain, F (UUP)   | 4,766  | 11.9 |
| Lowry, J (WP)     | 750    | 1.9  |
| Kennedy, M (NLP)  | 213    | 0.5  |

|          |     |
|----------|-----|
| Majority | 589 |
|----------|-----|

## East Antrim

|              |            |        |               |
|--------------|------------|--------|---------------|
| Elec. 63,739 | Votes Cast | % Poll | Turnout 62.3% |
|--------------|------------|--------|---------------|

|                 |        |      |
|-----------------|--------|------|
| *Beggs, R (UUP) | 16,966 | 43.2 |
| Dodds, N (DUP)  | 9,544  | 24.2 |
| Neeson, S (All) | 9,132  | 23.3 |
| Boal, M (Cons)  | 3,359  | 8.6  |
| Palmer, A (NLP) | 250    | 0.6  |

|          |       |
|----------|-------|
| Majority | 7,422 |
|----------|-------|

## East Londonderry

|              |            |        |               |
|--------------|------------|--------|---------------|
| Elec. 76,912 | Votes Cast | % Poll | Turnout 68.6% |
|--------------|------------|--------|---------------|

|                       |        |      |
|-----------------------|--------|------|
| *Ross, W (UUP)        | 30,370 | 57.6 |
| Doherty, A (SDLP)     | 11,843 | 22.5 |
| Davey-Kennedy, P (SF) | 5,320  | 10.1 |
| McGowan, P (All)      | 3,613  | 6.9  |
| Elder, A (Cons)       | 1,584  | 3.0  |

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| Majority |  |
|----------|--|

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## Fermanagh & South Tyrone

|       |        |               |        |                  |
|-------|--------|---------------|--------|------------------|
| Elec. | 71,472 | Votes<br>Cast | % Poll | Turnout<br>78.0% |
|-------|--------|---------------|--------|------------------|

|                        |        |      |
|------------------------|--------|------|
| *Maginnis, K (UUP)     | 26,923 | 48.8 |
| Gallagher, T (SDLP)    | 12,810 | 23.2 |
| Molloy, F (SF)         | 12,604 | 22.9 |
| Kettyles, D (Prog Soc) | 1,094  | 2.0  |
| Bullick, E (All)       | 950    | 1.7  |
| Cullen, G (NA)         | 747    | 1.4  |

|          |        |
|----------|--------|
| Majority | 14,113 |
|----------|--------|

## Foyle

|       |        |               |        |                  |
|-------|--------|---------------|--------|------------------|
| Elec. | 75,970 | Votes<br>Cast | % Poll | Turnout<br>68.3% |
|-------|--------|---------------|--------|------------------|

|                    |        |      |
|--------------------|--------|------|
| *Hume, J (SDLP)    | 26,710 | 51.5 |
| Campbell, G (DUP)  | 13,705 | 26.4 |
| McGuinness, M (SF) | 9,149  | 17.6 |
| McIlroy, L (All)   | 1,390  | 2.7  |
| Mackenzie, G (WP)  | 514    | 1.0  |
| Burns, J (NLP)     | 422    | 0.8  |

|          |        |
|----------|--------|
| Majority | 13,005 |
|----------|--------|

## Lagan Valley

|       |        |               |        |                  |
|-------|--------|---------------|--------|------------------|
| Elec. | 73,688 | Votes<br>Cast | % Poll | Turnout<br>67.9% |
|-------|--------|---------------|--------|------------------|

|                     |        |      |
|---------------------|--------|------|
| *Molyneaux, J (UUP) | 29,777 | 60.8 |
| Close, S (All)      | 6,207  | 12.7 |
| Lewsley, H (SDLP)   | 4,626  | 9.4  |
| Coleridge, T (Cons) | 4,423  | 9.0  |
| Rice, P (SF)        | 3,346  | 6.8  |
| Lowry, A (WP)       | 582    | 1.2  |

|          |        |
|----------|--------|
| Majority | 23,565 |
|----------|--------|

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## Mid Ulster

| Elec.               | 70,410 | Votes<br>Cast | % Poll | Turnout<br>78.4% |
|---------------------|--------|---------------|--------|------------------|
| *McCrea, W (DUP)    |        | 23,181        | 42.3   |                  |
| Haughey, D (SDLP)   |        | 16,994        | 31.0   |                  |
| McElduff, B (SF)    |        | 10,248        | 18.7   |                  |
| McLoughlin, J (Ind) |        | 1,996         | 3.6    |                  |
| Gormley A (All)     |        | 1,506         | 2.8    |                  |
| Hutchinson H (Ind)  |        | 389           | 0.7    |                  |
| Owens, T (WP)       |        | 285           | 0.5    |                  |
| Anderson J (NLP)    |        | 164           | 0.3    |                  |

Majority 6,187

## Newry and Armagh

| Elec.             | 68,716 | Votes<br>Cast | % Poll | Turnout<br>77.0% |
|-------------------|--------|---------------|--------|------------------|
| *Mallon, S (SDLP) |        | 26,073        | 49.6   |                  |
| Speers, J (UUP)   |        | 18,982        | 36.1   |                  |
| Curran, B (SF)    |        | 6,547         | 12.5   |                  |
| Bell, E (All)     |        | 972           | 1.8    |                  |

Majority 7,091

## North Antrim

| Elec.             | 70,217 | Votes<br>Cast | % Poll | Turnout<br>64.9% |
|-------------------|--------|---------------|--------|------------------|
| *Paisley, I (DUP) |        | 23,152        | 50.9   |                  |
| Gaston, J (UUP)   |        | 8,216         | 18.1   |                  |
| Farren, S (SDLP)  |        | 6,512         | 14.3   |                  |
| Williams, G (All) |        | 3,442         | 7.6    |                  |
| Sowler, R (Cons)  |        | 2,265         | 5.0    |                  |
| McGarry, J (SF)   |        | 1,916         | 4.2    |                  |

Majority

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## North Down

| Elec.                | Votes<br>Cast | % Poll | Turnout |
|----------------------|---------------|--------|---------|
| 68,662               |               |        | 65.5%   |
| *Kilfedder, J (UPUP) | 19,305        | 42.9   |         |
| Kennedy, L (Cons)    | 14,371        | 31.9   |         |
| Morrow, A (All)      | 6,611         | 14.7   |         |
| Vitty, D (DUP)       | 4,414         | 9.8    |         |
| Wilmot, A (NLP)      | 255           | 0.6    |         |
| Majority             | 4,934         |        |         |

## South Antrim

| Elec.                                 | Votes<br>Cast | % Poll | Turnout |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|--------|---------|
| 68,292                                |               |        | 62.7%   |
| *Forsythe, C (UUP)                    | 29,956        | 70.9%  |         |
| McClelland, D (SDLP)                  | 5,397         | 12.8%  |         |
| Blair, J (All)                        | 5,254         | 12.6   |         |
| Cushinan, H (SF)                      | 1,220         | 2.9    |         |
| Dino-Martin, Denis<br>(Raving Looney) | 442           | 1.0    |         |
| Majority                              | 24,559        |        |         |

## South Down

| Elec.                    | Votes<br>Cast | % Poll | Turnout |
|--------------------------|---------------|--------|---------|
| 76,186                   |               |        | 81.3%   |
| *McGrady, E (SDLP)       | 31,523        | 51.2   |         |
| Nelson, D (UUP)          | 25,181        | 40.9   |         |
| Healy, M (All)           | 1,542         | 2.5    |         |
| Fitzpatrick, S (SF)      | 1,843         | 3.0    |         |
| Mackenzie-Hill, S (Cons) | 1,488         | 2.4    |         |
| Majority                 | 6,342         | 10.3   |         |

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## Strangford

| Elec.             | 68,901 | Votes<br>Cast | % Poll | Turnout<br>65.0% |
|-------------------|--------|---------------|--------|------------------|
| *Taylor, J (UUP)  |        | 19,517        | 43.9   |                  |
| Wilson, S (DUP)   |        | 10,606        | 23.6   |                  |
| McCarthy, K (All) |        | 7,585         | 16.9   |                  |
| Eyre, S (Cons)    |        | 6,782         | 15.1   |                  |
| Shaw, D (NLP)     |        | 295           | 0.7    |                  |
| Majority          |        | 8,911         |        |                  |

## Upper Bann

| Elec.                  | 68,422 | Votes<br>Cast | % Poll | Turnout<br>67.2% |
|------------------------|--------|---------------|--------|------------------|
| *Trimble, D (UUP)      |        | 26,824        | 59.0   |                  |
| Rodgers, B (SDLP)      |        | 10,661        | 23.4   |                  |
| Curran, B (SF)         |        | 2,777         | 6.1    |                  |
| Ramsay, W (All)        |        | 2,541         | 5.6    |                  |
| Jones, Collette (Cons) |        | 1,556         | 3.4    |                  |
| French, T (WP)         |        | 1,120         | 2.5    |                  |
| Majority               |        | 16,163        |        |                  |

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\* Sitting MP

### Note:

|          |                                    |
|----------|------------------------------------|
| UUP      | Ulster Unionist Party              |
| DUP      | Democratic Unionist Party          |
| SDLP     | Social Democratic and Labour Party |
| SF       | Sinn Fein                          |
| All      | Alliance                           |
| Cons     | Conservative                       |
| WP       | Workers Party                      |
| NA       | New Agenda                         |
| NLP      | Natural Law Party                  |
| Prog Soc | Independent Progressive Socialist  |

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