



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

The following analysis of the St Andrews Agreement is the work of a young Christian man from Co. Fermanagh. His name has been withheld here but the 22 elected DUP representatives to whom this was emailed were supplied with his name.

I believe that the DUP is to be commended for the stand they have taken since 1998. I was delighted by the electoral progress they have made in recent years.

I wish to make it absolutely clear that I hold Dr Paisley in the highest regard. I have personally benefited greatly from his ministry.

I would ask the reader to remember this as they read the following.

I am aware that as of this moment the St Andrews's Agreement is only an agreement between the British and Irish governments. However, I am deeply concerned by the fact that the DUP seem to be contemplating signing up to the deal or something very like it. St Andrews, to my mind, is incompatible with the party manifesto and the public statements of senior party figures.

I voiced my concerns in the following article which was emailed to six MPs and sixteen MLAs.

It was sent in the spirit of "consider lest ye be mistaken".

1. The 2005 DUP manifesto talks about the "renegotiation" of the Agreement.

It contains a photograph of the Agreement in a waste paper basket.

It is made clear in the document that this is not a new agreement. Rather it is a paper which merely makes "practical changes to the operation of the institutions of the Agreement" of 1998.

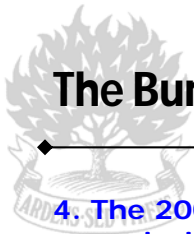
2. The 2005 DUP manifesto promised "accountability of all North-South matters to the people of Northern Ireland".

St Andrews says that, "any changes to the existing arrangements would require the specific endorsement of the Assembly and the Oireachtas".

How can something be described as "accountable" to the people of Northern Ireland if changes require the agreement of a foreign government?

3. The 2005 manifesto promised that there would be "no terrorists in government".

Look at the Sinn Fein website and please explain to me how a party which glorifies the actions of the hunger strikers are not terrorists.



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

4. The 2005 DUP manifesto promised, "verifiable, transparent and complete decommissioning, photographed and witnessed".

This statement was made on a page which contained the statement, "UNLIKE THE UUP, WHEN WE SET DEMANDS, WE MEAN THEM AND WE ADHERE TO THEM" along the bottom in capital letters and in a much larger font than the rest of the type on that page.

i. The decommissioning was not "verifiable". To "verify" means to "establish the truth or correctness of by examination or determination" (OED). Can anyone tell me how the weapons were destroyed, where the weapons were destroyed or how many weapons were destroyed?

ii. The decommissioning was not "transparent". To be "transparent" something must be "evidently obvious" (OED). The fate of Denis Donaldson suggests that it is anything but "evidently obvious" that the IRA got rid of all their guns.

iii. It was not "complete". To be "complete" means, "having all parts, entire; finished". I do not think that Mr Donaldson's family would say the IRA's decommissioning was "complete".

iv. I am still waiting to see the photographs.

v. The decommissioning was "witnessed" by a Provo priest who went on to describe Protestants as "Nazis".

5. The 2005 DUP manifesto stated, "inclusive, mandatory coalition government which includes Sinn Fein under d'Hondt or any other system is out of the question".

ANNEX D of St Andrews contains the "TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ST ANDREWS AGREEMENT". It states, "26 March: Power devolved and d'Hondt run".

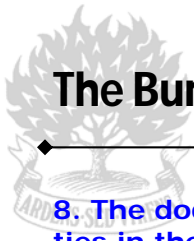
6. In November 2004 Dr Paisley said that the IRA had to repent and "wear sackcloth and ashes".

Prior to 2005, DUP manifestos talked about the "Blair necessities" having to be met before the party would share power with republicans. I would suggest that many people would like this "Dr Paisley necessity" to be met before Sinn Fein be considered for government.

Gerry Adams has stated on the BBC since St Andrews, "we are not repenting". Are the DUP happy about sharing power with unrepentant terrorists?

7. Dr Paisley said that republicans had to hand back all "ill-gotten gains" before they could enter government.

When has this happened?



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

8. The document calls for the Northern Ireland Executive to "encourage the parties in the Assembly to establish a North-South parliamentary forum".

Is the DUP happy about encouraging more North-Southery?

9. St Andrews says that, "The Government will introduce an Irish Language Act reflecting on the experience of Wales and Ireland and work with the incoming Executive to enhance and protect the development of the Irish language".

I freely acknowledge that I am ignorant as to the contents of language legislation in the Republic or Wales but I fear that all the road signs in Northern Ireland will be bilingual. Will this not, in Mr Allister's phrase, "erode the Britishness" of Northern Ireland?

The DUP may claim that they oppose this but I seem to remember a certain party which used to be fond of telling the UUP that they could not "cherry pick" from deals which they had signed up to.

10. The "cherry picking" phrase, to my mind, also applies to St Andrews when we consider the following quote, "The Government will work with business, trade unions and ex-prisoner groups to produce guidance for employers which will reduce barriers to employment and enhance re-integration of former prisoners".

11. "The Governments are committed to working with all the parties to establish a platform for long-term economic stability and reform necessary for a newly restored Executive."

"The GovernmentS"? Why is Dublin giving us money? The phrase "Greeks bearing gifts" springs to mind.

12. St Andrews gives the IRA the credit for the current situation in NI: "We believe that the transformation brought about by the ending of the IRA's campaign provides the basis for a political settlement."

13. The document commits those who sign up to it to "observ[ing] the joint nature of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister".

I find the prospect of Dr Paisley (or any other Unionist for that matter) having a relationship with Martin McGuinness similar to that which Mr Trimble had with Mr Mallon nauseating.

How can any Unionist even contemplate having a Siamese twin like relationship with a man who said very recently, without the slightest hint of shame, never mind repentance in sackcloth and ashes, that he had taken up the gun and the bomb?

14. In Saturday's edition of the "Newsletter" a DUP document was included. I



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

have many issues with this document but will highlight just one point.

It states, "The St Andrews Agreement requires republicans to openly support the police".

Talk is cheap. In the 1980s councillors had to swear that they were against terrorism before they could take their seats. Did this stop Sinn Fein sitting on councils?

When you are a murderer I imagine that it's very easy to silence any qualms of conscience about telling a lie.

Since St Andrews was published the PSNI have accused the IRA of killing a man while they were supposedly on ceasefire. Why does the DUP not make it a precondition that republicans hand over those responsible for this crime?

If they really did "openly support the police" surely they would have no problem doing this.

The writer has since come across the following quote from the great Unionist leader Lord Carson which he feels is very relevant in the current situation:

**"God give us men - a time like this demands
Great hearts, strong minds, true faith and willing hands,
Men whom the lusts of office do not kill,
Men whom the spoils of office do not buy,
Men who possess opinions and a will,
Men who live honour, men who cannot lie."**