



## Chuckle Brothers go to Brussels

Joint First Ministers, Ian Paisley and McGuinness, have been to Brussels. Reveling in their designation as “the Chuckle Brothers”, Ian Paisley even found time to joke about the Northern Bank.

Robbed by the IRA, typifying the ill-gotten gains of the Provos, now, sadly, the Northern Bank can be the subject of merriment by the First Minister!

Before they arrived in Brussels Jim Allister took the opportunity to address to Commission President, Barroso, some uncomfortable truths about McGuinness. In a pointed letter challenging Barroso to face McGuinness on key issues, the MEP said:

*“On Thursday 10 January 2008 you are due to meet Martin McGuinness and Ian Paisley in Brussels.*

*Before you do so I wish to draw some matters to your attention. I do this in the context that you and the Commission have made several robust statements about the evils of terrorism and its advancement. You have also commented on the necessity for governments to be resolute and untainted in their dealing with anti-democratic forces. Moreover, the EU marks annually a European Day for the Victims of Terrorism.*



*As you should be aware Mr McGuinness, - long associated with the IRA, which brought 2000 terrorist deaths to the UK - himself has terrorist convictions, having been apprehended in a car containing explosives and ammunition. Though he now jointly leads the administration in Northern Ireland, his Party, Sinn Fein, still maintains a military wing, which only recently murdered a young man, Paul Quinn - something which sadly he and those with vested interest in propping up the present governmental arrangements do not wish to face up to.*

*You will also be aware of the infamous and still unsolved murder of Robert McCartney, again by IRA members, and which the deceased’s sisters bravely highlighted in their visits to the EU Institutions.*

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## MEP launches guide to Reform Treaty (Constitution)

For those interested in the detail of the new EU Reform Treaty (repackaged Constitution), Jim Allister QC MEP has published on his website 'A Guide to the Treaty of Lisbon'. It can be viewed at:

[http://www.jimallister.org/uploads/\\_253.pdf](http://www.jimallister.org/uploads/_253.pdf)

Commenting Jim Allister said:-

**'Whereas for most it is enough to know that the Reform Treaty:**

**\*siphons further powers from the member states to Brussels, not least by radically reducing the availability of the national veto,**

**\* and confers the trappings of superstatehood on the EU, through a permanent President, Foreign Minister and bestowing legal personal-ity on the Union;**

**some may want to study the matter more deeply. In this regard I trust they will find this guide a useful and objective tool.'**

## Chuckle Brothers go to Brussels

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*You may be surprised to learn that despite protestations of commitment to the rule of law, Sinn Fein's IRA still clings to its illegal "Army Council".*

*You might, therefore, think it appropriate to press your guests about these matters as I'd expect you to be uncomfortable that a government anywhere within the EU should have within its ranks those whose organisations are still associated with murder and terrorist structures. You are in a position to powerfully advance the interests of democracy and peace by raising these issues.*

*Having long promoted the European Arrest Warrant within the EU, you might also think it appropriate to express disappointment at the recent failure in Northern Ireland of such an extradition application in respect of someone wanted for a terrorist bombing in Germany. Since Mr McGuinness himself personally denounced the European Arrest Warrant application, you might express displeasure at the failure of any governmental figure to support this EU weapon against terrorism.*

*Thus, you could do a service to everyone in Europe who believes exclusively in peaceful and*

*democratic means, if you were to raise these issues."*

Commenting Jim Allister said, "McGuinness and Ian Paisley like to stride the world stage while all the time McGuinness is an unrepentant terrorist, who far from embracing the European ideals of freedom, democracy and the rule of law, represents a Party which still has a military wing, which still murders, and an illegal Army Council. Thus I thought it appropriate to remind President Barroso of the pedigree of McGuinness and to invite him to raise issues such as the McCartney murder - upon which the EU was effectively engaged by the McCartney sisters - the Quinn murder and McGuinness' opposition to the use of the European Arrest Warrant.

Some years ago when the MEP Ian Paisley would have been doing what now falls to me, but, sadly, now he accompanies McGuinness as if he were a statesman, not an unrepentant terrorist."

During the visit the MEPs were invited by the Northern Ireland Executive Office in Brussels to a reception in honour of the First Minister and deputy First Minister, but "as I give no honour or acknowledgement to McGuinness, I declined", said Mr Allister.

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## MEP commends Church of Ireland Gazette editorial on Bill of Rights

"The editorial in the Church of Ireland Gazette, opposing a Bill of Rights specific to Northern Ireland, was a breath of fresh air. Its clarity of thought and ability to identify the dangerous political agenda at work, was such as to put many politicians to shame.

In Northern Ireland we already have adherence to the European Convention on Human Rights, the Human Rights Act, entrenched anti-discrimination laws, statutory equality requirements flowing from Section 75 of the NI Act and, if the EU Reform Treaty is ratified, in time we will be subject to the EU Charter of Fundamental Freedoms. Patently, from a perspective of need, there is no requirement for a further "Bill of Rights". Thus, the Gazette is right when it detects political machinations as the driving motivation.

It is seen, correctly, by those promoting it as a means to drive a further wedge between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK and, because a parallel process is intended for the Republic, it is part of the all-island harmonisation which is the means to the end of Irish unification. I cannot better it, so I merely repeat what the Gazette editorial said,

*"It is obvious that there are those in the Stormont establishment who want a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland, as opposed to the UK as a whole, because they want Northern Ireland to relate more closely to the Republic of Ireland than to the rest of the UK...A Bill of Rights is such a foundational document that, if there has to be one, it should refer to the entire UK; it would be inconsistent for there to be different fundamental rights in different parts of the one country. For many reasons, a Northern Ireland Bill of Rights is plainly and simply wrong."*

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## Allister slams Fishing Negotiations in Brussels

"It is hugely disappointing and a considerable failure by the local Minister that for the ninth year in a row we are heading into a "temporary" spring closure affecting our whitefish fleet. Even more appalling is the further savage cut in "days at sea". When this limitation was first introduced 3 years ago in 2004, our prawn fishermen were allowed 264 days at sea. With this year's further reduction of another 10% we have lost 80 of those days and are now down to 184 days. Gildernew should not have agreed to this.

All that has been gained for Northern Ireland is a very modest increase of 5% in the haddock quota in circumstances where expectations were much higher and the species is in abundance. With no increase in prawns, plaice or herring and yet another 18% cut in cod, there is nothing to cheer about in this package. It's no comfort for the



Minister to protest that things could have been worse.

Another huge failure is the negotiations under "the Hague Preference". Under this anachronistic arrangement between the UK and the Republic quotas are traded. This year we have suffered a major setback with getting back only 150 tonnes of cod compared with 300 tonnes last year. Thus in Northern Ireland we stand to lose nearly one third of our present cod allowance.

This is appalling and a dismal failure by the Minister. Why did she let the Republic off so lightly? She went to Brussels promising much, but is returning with little. She gave away much more than she gained."

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## DARD could help Glenarm salmon fishery

"Having been disappointed by the negative response so far of DARD to the jellyfish wipe-out of Northern Salmon, and believing compensation was payable, I took the matter directly to Commissioner Borg. He has now confirmed to me in a letter that under point 4.6 of the Guidelines on State Aid, the local Department could grant aid to make good damage caused by "natural disasters or exceptional occurrences". Unfortunately, neither the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance 2000-2006, nor the

European Fisheries Fund 2007-2013 provide for direct EU aid, but it is now clear DARD could help.

The losses at Glenarm were clearly the result of an "exceptional occurrence" and, therefore, DARD could and should seek approval from Brussels to pay compensation to get this valuable aquaculture venture up and running again. I trust there will be no more feet-dragging on this issue."

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## "McGuinness could, but won't, deliver for Omagh victims"

Following the acquittal of the one person charged with the Omagh bombing, Jim Allister said,

"As victims have already aptly observed, Sinn Fein could do much to provide justice for those robbed of loved ones by the Omagh bomb and now plunged into fresh despair by the outcome of the criminal proceedings.

The Sinn Fein leadership could deliver the community cooperation necessary to bring the bombers to justice, but consistent with Minister

Gildernew's infamous avowal that she would not recommend constituents to give information on dissident terrorism, they hold back, choosing rather to let the families suffer.

In truth, if McGuinness and his ilk told all they knew, then many crimes could be solved and justice delivered to countless families. Sadly, behind their weasel words is an overriding loyalty to the republican cause which makes their supposed commitment to the rule of law a fraud and a deceit."

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## Allister rejects any Devolution of Policing and Justice

Responding to the anticipation by Ian Paisley Junior of the devolving of policing and justice powers to Stormont Traditional Unionist MEP Jim Allister said:-

“For decades the IRA butchered policemen and assassinated judges. Thus, most people rightly recoil in horror at the thought of Sinn Fein getting anywhere near policing and justice powers in Northern Ireland. Just a year ago DUP MPs pledged it was out of the question for a political lifetime. Now, they anticipate the conditions in which it could happen.

A real problem with devolving policing and justice is the powers it gives Martin McGuinness. OFMDFM would make the recommendations on appointments of all senior judges (ie. LCJ and the Lord Justices of Appeal), appoint the Attorney General and exercise powers to remove judges. None of this could be done without McGuinness’ approval, so this self-confessed IRA commander would have critical control over the judiciary.

It is nauseating to think that someone who was a principal in the terrorist IRA, which murdered a Lord Justice of Appeal and his wife (Lord & Lady Gibson), and several other judicial figures, should ever get anywhere near having an input into judicial appointments in Northern Ireland. Such should be repulsive to all law abiding citizens and of itself enough to cause Unionists to determine that the devolution of policing and justice is a non-starter.



It saddens me that in negotiations, despite my urgings, the DUP did nothing to try and remove these powers from OFMDFM. Likewise, I cannot comprehend why Ian Paisley Junior should think that in any circumstances McGuinness should get anywhere near exercising such powers.

### Allister answers Weir

Stung by the MEP’s expose of the DUP’s willingness, at some point, to see McGuinness given a say over the Judiciary, Peter Weir MLA tried to divert attention by suggesting it was Jim Allister who had shifted position, causing the MEP to retort:

“In politics the right to challenge what another politician says is central. However, it should be fairly based and not built on concoction. Thus, I am astounded at Peter Weir’s assertion that in opposing the devolution of policing and justice, I have changed my position. I refer him back to the first of many statements by me on this subject on 1 December 2006. I will even provide him with the link:

<http://www.jmallister.org/default.asp?blogID=545>

He will see that what I warn of today, namely McGuinness getting a say in controlling our Judiciary, lay at the heart of what I said then.

Within the DUP I was always on the side of those who then were saying no devolution of policing and justice in a political lifetime. The fact that they, and he, may now be saying something different shows it is they, not me, who have changed. So, please, Mr Weir get your facts right and when you are at it why don’t you give us the benefit of your opinion as to whether McGuinness should ever get a say in appointing and removing our judges? I think he must never have that power, and I’ve always thought that, but what does Peter Weir and the DUP think now on that vital question? Let’s hear from you.”

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## New Year Message from Traditional Unionist MEP Jim Allister

“It is a time to look both back and forward.

Despite the pretence of the DUP leadership, 2007 was a bad year for Unionism and for the Union. Once more we have unrepentant terrorists at the heart of our government, while their wicked Army Council still functions and Sinn Fein’s military wing murders Paul Quinn. And, all this, with barely a squeak of protest from those who made their careers out of denouncing weakness by others, but now find IRA/Sinn Fein’s company congenial and the Belfast Agreement palatable. Instead of the promised “battle a day” it’s a “chuckle a day”.

It’s been a year of broken promises, all in the pursuit of office. In his New Year’s message last January, among Ian Paisley’s lavish promises, under the heading “Delivery to Our Satisfaction”, was the specific assurance that the ill-gotten gains must be returned. Soon they were the forgotten gains! Likewise forgotten was further delivery by Sinn Fein - including removal of all terrorist structures - “tested and proved over a credible period” and the guarantee, as a prerequisite, of a mega financial package to underpin devolution.

The government we’ve had has been far from the “good government” promised. Our education system is in chaos, we are, after all, to pay for our water, we have a dysfunctional OFMDFM which can’t even deliver the promised Victims’ Commissioner and the Causeway has been so mishandled as to beggar belief. Of greater long-term significance is the acceleration in north/southern, far beyond the pace under Direct Rule. The all-island harmonisation process is under way, as crafted by the Belfast Agreement in keeping with its long-term trajectory of Irish unification.

I believe, in retrospect, 8th May 2007 will be looked back upon as the pivotal turning point in setting Ulster on the wrong road.

Thus, 2008, for me, will be a year of seeking to energise and give voice to traditional unionists who still rightly reject IRA/Sinn Fein in our gov-



ernment, believing them to be utterly unfit to govern a state they are dedicated to destroy: occupying the honourable ground once held by those now head over heels in government with Sinn Fein. Being the conscience of those who avowed to resist such also has its role to play.

Encouraged by the initial response to ‘Traditional Unionist Voice’, throughout 2008 I look forward to more and more unionists coming to the realisation that the present devolution, built upon the corrupted basis of the Belfast Agreement, is not delivering as promised, but rather is trundling them in a direction they do not wish to go.

On the national scene the UK will take a vital decision affecting the future of our nation for generations to come. The EU Reform Treaty, or Constitution as it should be more properly called, is up for ratification. The unifying demand of all democrats must be that Government delivers on its manifesto commitment to hold a referendum. This Treaty strips further powers from our nation, creates the apparatus of statehood for the EU and sucks us deeper into the vortex of euro-federalism. It is not in our national interest. We are entitled to have our say, rather than have it rammed through Westminster on a whipped vote.



All editions of the monthly newsletter ‘Brussels Briefing’ are available to download at my website, [www.jimallister.org](http://www.jimallister.org)

There, you can also sign up to receive each new edition, either by post or by e-mail.

## Eames-Bradley Commission should be 'ashamed of itself'

"The Eames/Bradley Commission ought to be ashamed of itself if it is considering whitewashing the past by creating circumstances where an amnesty would be afforded to vile terrorists. Historical revisionism is nothing new - the Provos have been at it for years, seeking to present their grubby terror as "a just war". To now have it suggested that Lord Eames will help them on with it is appalling.

What Northern Ireland endured was an insurrection of terrorism, waged not by soldiers but by low-life criminals who planted cowardly car bombs, shot their victims in the back, but never stood to fight, face to face, as soldiers do. It must not be sanitised in any shape or form.

Innocent victims want justice, nothing more, nothing less, and the reward of amnesty has no part to play in such. We've had the due process of the law emasculated enough by the early releases of the Belfast agreement, without adding further insult. If this is how the Eames/Bradley Commission is thinking, then it should be wound up immediately."

### Allister presses Paisley over Amnesty

Traditional Unionist MEP Jim Allister has called on the First Minister to say what OFMDFM, as the department with responsibility for victims, is doing to refute and oppose this monstrous suggestion of an amnesty for terrorists..

Mr Allister has written to the First Minister as follows:-

*"Dear First Minister,*

*With OFMDFM having responsibility for victims' issues, I write to enquire what representations OFMDFM has made to the Eames/Bradley Consultative Group lobbying against any suggestion of an amnesty for terrorists, the legitimisation of terrorism by according them the status of soldiers in a war and the idea that a revamped HET should employ ex-terrorists to aid investigations.*

*As you must be aware all of these suggestions are deeply offensive to innocent victims and as the department with responsibility for victims it would be a shocking dereliction of duty if OFMDFM was not vigorous in opposing these monstrous ideas. Please assure me, therefore, that OFMDFM will do so, and, if not, why not.*

*Yours sincerely,"*

Commenting Mr Allister said, "If Ian Paisley as First Minister in the department supposed to look after victims can't deliver for victims on this issue, then there is not much point in him holding office. Of course, he will need McGuinness' permission to act, but, then, that is the folly and foolishness of the terms of office which he accepted."

### Tell Eames-Bradley Consultative Group what you think

You can make your views clear directly to Lord Eames by posting your observation on the group's website at <http://www.cgpni.org/your-views/?action=form> You are encouraged to do so.

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## Allister calls on Police Ombudsman's Office to root out anti-Police culture

"Following the acquittal of a police officer, just before Christmas in Enniskillen Magistrates Court, and the scathing condemnation of the investigative approach of the Police Ombudsman's Office by the RM, as fully reported in the 'Impartial Reporter' of 28 December 2007, I am calling on the new Police Ombudsman to explain why this investigation was conducted in the appalling manner described by the RM.

This adverse judicial indictment of the Ombudsman's Office and its methodology suggests

an anti-police culture and blatantly deficient investigative processes. I would wish to hear why the investigation was conducted in the manner exposed by the court and as to what steps the new Ombudsman proposes to rectify the failings highlighted by this foolhardy prosecution.

I believe the new Ombudsman must take a root and branch look at the anti-police culture inherited from Nuala O'Loan and prevailing among investigators."

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# Farming News

## Executive incompetence putting intensive sectors at risk

Jim Allister QC MEP has said he is alarmed at the Executive's incompetence as the poultry industry attempts to put in place measures essential to the sector being able to comply with the Nitrates Directive and IPPC.

The Traditional Unionist MEP said,

“A temporary EU derogation was secured to enable poultry litter to be heaped in fields until 31st December 2008. On the basis that the derogation is quickly coming to an end, an off-farm solution to dispose of litter is absolutely essential to the future sustainability of the local poultry sector.”

“I was frankly amazed then, to learn that after a year and a half of Government delay, Invest NI have finally decided to reject a joint proposal for Environment and Renewable Energy funding from Moy Park, O’Kane Poultry and Glenfarm Holdings, which would have had the capacity to handle nearly the entire bulk of poultry litter produced in Northern Ireland. This, despite the fact that then Agriculture Minister Lord Rooker recognised an off-farm solution, ‘would be critical in allowing key agri-food industries and their associated farms to maintain their current levels of production and employment’”.

“Furthermore, I am less than impressed by Minister Foster’s response, when I wrote to her asking what provision she would make in the interim, should a gap in time occur between the derogation for field storage of litter ending, and a new off-farm facility coming online. I wrote on the basis that the Environment and Heritage Service, an Agency under her Department’s remit, will be in charge of enforcing compliance with the requirements of the Nitrates Directive. Far from committing to take a tolerant approach in the circumstances, the Minister stated that it will fall on the poultry sector to investigate alternative sources for the safe and reliable disposal of their waste products to take them past the end of December 2008.”

“It appears to me that unless the Executive get their act together, and adopt a joined-up strategic approach to this very serious issue, then our poultry industry could face a very real threat. I suspect poultry producers will want to know when will local Ministers start working with the industry towards achieving a sensible outcome, on the basis that it is clearly producers who will be the fall guy if all else fails.”

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## Allister raises concerns with Kyprianou

Jim Allister QC MEP has written to EU Commissioner Markos Kyprianou, requesting clarification on the Commission’s decision to impose restrictions on Brazilian Beef imports.

The MEP said,

“Obviously, it is encouraging that measures to restrict Brazilian Beef imports have been agreed, albeit only after great reluctance and delay from the Commission. However, I concur with the LMC’s disappointment that the Commission has stopped short of a complete ban with immediate effect of Brazilian beef imports.”

“Having received recent correspondence from the LMC on this issue, I have written to press the Commission for clarification on a number of questions -these are:

1. Why were new restrictions not implemented with immediate effect, on the basis that important human and animal health issues are at stake?

2. When will the findings of the FVO’s November Report be made publicly available? 3. How will the Commission monitor the effectiveness of new restrictions, and when will these be reviewed?”





## 2008 New Year Agricultural message from Jim Allister MEP

“As 2007 demonstrates our agri-food sector is frequently subjected to the highs and lows of an unpredictable roller-coaster. Coping with the unpredictable is part of the challenge.

Having had a fantastic bounce in the milk sector in 2007 the challenge in the incoming year is to capture stability. As the Commission determines to end quotas in 2015, we must begin our preparations early and adjust as necessary. I believe this year Government should begin working with the industry to prepare for this sea change.

My biggest worry for 2008 is our intensive sector. Caught in the pincher of runaway feed prices, low returns and punitive costs from coping with effluent disposal requirements, we need urgent action. I will continue to press the EU to speed its GM procedures so as to open up to us cheaper options, but the mind set that the market can solve everything also needs to be tempered. The willingness, despite earlier resistance, to permit export refunds in the pigmeat sector was a welcome recognition of reality. Locally, government must act with urgency to resolve the crisis created by the refusal of promised funding to the Rose Energy project. This is vital for the poultry sector. Likewise, on farm and other schemes must be fast-tracked for our pig

producers. By the end of 2008 derogations run out and will not be easily extended. We need action now.

The long-awaited clamp down on Brazilian beef exports - again evidence that persistence with Brussels pays off - must be used as a window of opportunity to rejuvenate the beef sector. If prices don't improve, then everything foreseen in the Red Meat Task Force, and worse, will result. With much Brazilian beef out of the market we must retake the supermarket shelves and, importantly, the supermarket giants must respond to their responsibilities in guaranteeing a fair price. Farmers can't go on producing at a loss. Just as 2007 was good for milk, so, I trust, 2008 will be good for our beef producers. They are long overdue a break.

As we go forward to meet the challenges of 2008 my pledge is to continue to fight tenaciously in Brussels on behalf of our farming interests. Persistence in 2007 paid off on Brazilian beef and on export refunds for pigmeat products; so in 2008 we have our targets, particularly for the intensive sector. We must succeed.

I wish everyone in the agri-food industry a happy and prosperous New Year.”

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### Agriculture a Poor Relation in Executive Priorities

In response to the Executive's Draft Programme for Government and Budget for 2008-2011, Jim Allister QC MEP says devolution is not delivering for agriculture.

The MEP said,

“The Political Parties promised much in the run up to devolution, that a local Assembly would be a panacea for farming's difficulties. However, the Executive's performance to date, compounded by the priorities - or more accurately, the absence of meaningful priorities in the Draft Budget and Programme for Government is a real cause for concern.”

“There is no mention of practical initiatives such as the introduction of mandatory country of origin labelling of beef sold in the food service and catering sectors, which is being demanded

by the industry. Moreover, on one hand the Executive talks of being committed to sustainable development, while on the other, there is no mention of translating this into local procurement of food for the public sector, which we know through initiatives in Scotland and elsewhere can be done.”

“The Draft Programme for Government focuses heavily on the Executive investing £45 million into improving the competitiveness of the agricultural industry. However, the reality that this is being funded by modulation deductions from farmers' single farm payments, something completely at odds with the situation in most other EU Member States, is not mentioned. In total, Modulation deductions equate to farmers writing a cheque to Government for £163 million, which more than cancels out any competitiveness benefit.”

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“Within the Draft Programme for Government, we see targets to reduce TB in cattle by 27% by 2011. Again, no clarity is given on how this target is to be achieved, and in particular, if the



Executive will take the decision to actively manage TB within the wildlife reservoir. Efficiencies are to be made in the area of animal health, while it would appear that this is to be achieved through offloading costs onto industry under the guise of ‘cost sharing’.”

“It would appear agriculture is a poor relation in the Executive’s priorities as outlined in the Draft Budget and Programme for Government documents. Moreover, any promise of a financial package as a ‘Peace dividend’ would also seem to be non-existent, with the overall tone of the Budget giving the impression of an Executive strapped for cash.”

### “Cutting off our nose to spite our face” - Jim Allister’s verdict on EU stance on GM animal feed

Taking part in the GM animal feed hearing on Tuesday 18th December in the Agriculture Committee in Brussels, Jim Allister MEP reiterated the need for urgent action by the EU. This, he warned, is an issue of concern for everyone involved in the consumer food chain, with repercussions on food prices and security of supply, and the effects due to intensify during the course of 2008.

“Not only”, said the MEP, “are EU farmers spending 55% more on animal feed than elsewhere in the world, but they do not have access to the cheapest feed supplies (GM soya and maize) and are currently paying a premium of €70/tonne premium for non-GM. In consequence the EU livestock sector is increasingly uncompetitive against imported meats from countries such as Brazil and Thailand which use GM feed.”

Mr Allister continued, “We really are cutting off our nose to spite our face in Europe. We won’t let our farmers use cheaper GM varieties but then outsource food supply to countries which not only use GM, but produce their food under lesser regulatory standards than we insist upon in the EU. How does that serve consumer or producer interests?”

It is a lamentable failure of the EU that after years of deliberation we are still bogged down in a conundrum over GM. Talk about “fiddling while Rome burns”; we have an intensive sector going to the wall and all some seem able to do is get

excited lest a speck of GM should touch the politically correct garb in which they wrap themselves.

I say it is vital that EU farmers have freedom to choose any type of animal feed that meets their customers demands - GM or otherwise. Isn't that what the free market, which Brussels loves to espouse, supposed to be about? To get there we must have synchronous approvals between the EU and major suppliers and we must abandon



the folly of zero tolerance to facilitate international transport of animal feed and compounds.

There are enough pressures on our livestock sectors without this self-inflicted lunacy. We cannot allow EU meat production to go into decline at a time of huge pressure on supplies worldwide. To do so would involve an unacceptable risk in terms of security of EU supply of quality meat at affordable prices, as well as having serious consequences for EU biodiversity, landscapes and the rural economy.”

## Allister hits out at Budget and Programme for Government

In a hard-hitting 22 page response to the consultation on the draft Programme for Government and the draft Budget, Traditional Unionist MEP, Jim Allister, has not spared the Executive. The full document can be viewed at [http://www.jimallister.org/uploads/\\_254.pdf](http://www.jimallister.org/uploads/_254.pdf)

Describing them as essentially “non-documents”, because of their paucity of content, he highlights the fact that after 30 years of what has been called neglect under Direct Rule, a Programme for Government is produced running to just 17 pages - which cannot even manage a page per department.

“When one wonders why the PFG is so scant, DCAL provides a ready answer”, says Mr Allister. “When asked to outline his legislative plans for the next year Minister Poots replied:

*“The implementation of the Libraries Bill to establish a new Library Authority for Northern Ireland is the only planned legislation for the next year.”*

If, as the parties repeatedly claim, Northern Ireland has been missing out due to inaction by Direct Rule Ministers over the past 30 years, how is it that the DCAL Minister cannot think of anything to do?”

In his response Mr Allister makes a number of trenchant criticisms. By way of background he highlights the lamentable failure to deliver on the promise that devolution would be accompanied by huge financial package from Westminster. Having quoted the DUP Manifesto commitment that such a package was a “*pre-condition*” to devolution, the MEP says, “What are the reasons for the Executive’s failure to secure a financial package? Both Messrs Blair and Brown knew that Northern Ireland’s politicians were bursting to obtain high office. Why, therefore, would they believe all the hot air about an enormous cash injection for Northern Ireland being a ‘precondition’ for the return of devolution? Patently they did not, and called the parties’ bluff.”

Dealing with historic under-investment Mr Allister condemns the Executive for having nothing to say about it being republican, and “*loyalist*”, terrorism which diverted money away from

frontline services. He comments, “It would seem that the Executive would like to blame all of Northern Ireland’s economic ills on the “Brits”, while ignoring the primary cause of historic under investment in Northern Ireland - the terrorist campaign in which at least two members of the Executive played an active part.”

Given the Executive is so strapped for cash, the Traditional Unionist MEP slams the increases in expenditure on north/southern. Going through each of the north/south implementation bodies, he highlights massive increases in their funding, at a time when hospitals are struggling to make ends meet.

**Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights:** Expenditure proposed to *rise by a massive 27.3%* in 2008-09 and by 2010-11 expenditure is *set to rise to by 39%*.

**Language Body:** is to get a *12.3% increase* in 2008-09.

**Tourism Ireland:** DETI has earmarked £14.3 million for Tourism Ireland in 2008 - 09 *rising to £17.2 million* in 2010. This contrasts with a *fall in the proposed expenditure on the development of tourism in Northern Ireland* from 16.1 million to 15.1 million over the same period.

**Inter-Trade Ireland:** budget allocation is set to *rise by a huge 38.1%* in 2009-10. There is a *further rise of 7.6%* proposed in 2010-11, meaning that over the period covered by the Draft Budget *the allocation for Inter Trade Ireland rises by 45.7%*.

**North /South Special EU Body:** While almost every area of DFP witnesses cuts, with expenditure on Civil Service Personnel Services be cut by over 44%, it is proposed that expenditure on the North/South Special EU Body remains static, even though it now has less EU money to disperse.

**Food Safety Promotion Board:** The minister for Health has made no secret of the fact that he regards the Draft Budget allocation to his department as inadequate, yet it is proposed that within his budget the useless Food Safety Board’s allocation of funds remain static.

Commenting Mr Allister said, “When devolution was last in operation under UUP/SDLP control the DUP rightly proposed that north/south funding be stripped away and diverted into frontline services. Now, that they have the power, sadly, instead, they are advocating increased expenditure on this dangerous tom-foolery!”

The MEP also reflects generally on north/south cooperation, commenting, “The Draft Programme for Government refers extensively to working ever closer with the Republic of Ireland administration through ‘day to day contact’. Despite claiming North/South and East/West should have equal status -itself objectionable for an integral part of the UK -the predominant focus is in fact North/South.

Within the Executive’s priorities for Government, the so called East/West dimension hardly merits a mention, while the North/South relationship is seemingly becoming more formalised and institutionalised, no longer solely through North/South bodies, but now with integration in Northern Ireland’s internal Departmental affairs. The type of North/South ‘day to day contact’ referred to in the Draft PFG has thus far equated to proposals by the Education Minister for a complete overhaul of our established and hugely successful education system in line with that of the Republic of Ireland; and the Agriculture Minister acting as

though Northern Ireland is a satellite state of the Republic of Ireland, through consorting with her Southern Ministerial counterpart on every area of policy.

While the Draft Investment Strategy contains a section headed “*Benefits of North/South Co-operation*” and “*Co-operation in Border Areas*”(5) there is no section dealing with the benefits of East-West co-operation. This in itself demonstrates the relative importance of the two as far as the Executive is concerned.

Under “Co-operation in Border Areas” the Draft Investment Strategy states that there will be “*a particular focus on cross-border links*” (DIS, 5).

It goes on to state that the ‘upgrading’ of transport links ‘*along the Dublin-Belfast corridor will ensure that this corridor forms a major axis for economic development on the island*’ (DIS, 5). Nowhere in any of the documents which form part of this consultation is there a commitment to further develop East-West transport links, despite their deficiency. Why is there no talk of working with the Scottish Executive on such practical issues?

“Sadly, these documents give no room for hope that good government, strengthening our position within the UK, awaits us. Rather, mediocrity, under-funding and a proclivity for north/southerly, is to be the order of the day.”

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## MEP raises fuel smuggling with EU & Secretary of State

Following the latest expose by the News Letter of fuel smuggling, Traditional Unionist MEP, Jim Allister, has raised the matter afresh with both the Secretary of State and the EU Commission.

Focusing with the Secretary of State on the suggested softly, softly approach which political considerations induce, Mr Allister protests that any toleration of “an acceptable level” of smuggling must be abandoned and new tough powers introduced to include withdrawing petrol retail licences and permitting disabling of fuel tanks used to store illegal fuel.

Also, since fuel smuggling distorts free trade and gives rise to unfair competition, the MEP has also raised the matter with the EU Commission and invited it to respond.





## MEP slams move on European anthem and flag

Traditional Unionist MEP Jim Allister has slammed a proposal, before the European Parliament's Constitutional Affairs Committee, for the Parliament to espouse and use on official occasions the European anthem and flag, despite the exclusion of such symbols from the Reform Treaty.

Speaking in Brussels Mr Allister said:-

"The Parliament wants these symbols for one reason only, to inflate its ego and attach the trappings of statehood to the EU. I have a much better anthem and flag, thank you very much, and I'm not about to trade them for these tawdry baubles of Euro-federalism.



"Ode to Joy" may be a very nice tune, but it means less to the average European citizen, particularly the average British citizen, than "Jingle Bells". Though like "Jingle Bells" it heralds a fantasy, the fantasy that the EU is good for you, but unlike "Jingle Bells" it will damage your national sovereignty and right to control your

own destiny! More "Code to Destroy" than "Ode to Joy".

This proposal exposes the insatiable fanaticism of Europhiles. The ink isn't dry on a Treaty which deliberately excluded these symbols, and yet here is the Parliament arrogantly insisting that they will give them official status nonetheless. And then they have the audacity to say they do this for the purpose of "reconnecting with the citizens of Europe".

If Europe wants to reconnect with the citizens of Europe, then show them some respect and begin by letting them have their say through referenda on the very Constitution which you are ramming down their throats. Don't talk about respect for citizens and then connive to deprive them of what they deserve most, a democratic say on their own future. My constituents don't want an EU anthem and flag, they want the right to say "yes" or "no" to a Constitution which robs their nation of further powers."

## Dromore by-election 13 February



For the first time since the **DUP/Sinn Fein Chuckle Coalition** came to power, there will be a test of unionist electoral opinion in a by-election in the Dromore wards of Banbridge Council on 13 February. Also, for the first time **Traditional Unionist Voice** will be in the field with candidate, **Keith Harbinson**, a Dromore solicitor. Mr Harbinson is also deeply involved with the Loyal Orders and in sporting activities as a football referee.

Speaking of his candidature Keith Harbinson said, "I am honoured to offer the people of Dromore and District a chance to have their voice heard and to represent them in local government on local issues. Many are sickened by the cosying

up to Sinn Fein at Stormont, especially given the Assembly's failure to deliver anything of substance to date, while physical attacks on our culture continue. The question for every unionist voter is whether what is being done under the **Chuckle Coalition** is being done in your name?"

Commenting Jim Allister MEP said, "I am delighted that we can offer a candidate of the calibre and ability of Keith Harbinson. Working among the people of Dromore he is well versed in the local issues and has the professional capacity to give them excellent representation on Banbridge Council, where we already have a hard-working councillor, Stephen Herron.

I look forward to this campaign as the first opportunity for unionist voters to pass their verdict on what has been done in their name at Stormont: unrepentant terrorists at the heart of government, the IRA's evil Army Council still in operation, Sinn Fein's military wing still carrying out such crimes as the murder of Paul Quinn, and all this while Ian Paisley chuckles away with McGuinness."

To help in this election phone **90655011**