



Where is our referendum?

Now that Gordon Brown has foolishly signed up without a whimper to the recycled EU Constitution, he must deliver on the Labour Manifesto pledge of a referendum. Make no mistake, this "Reform Treaty" involves further massive haemorrhaging of sovereignty to Brussels. Quite apart from establishing the apparatus of statehood for the EU, with a President, Foreign Policy Supremo and legal personality enabling the EU to make international Treaties, it, very significantly, gives up the national veto on dozens of more policy areas. It is the old Constitution merely by another name.



As for the UK's supposed "red lines", these will degrade to mere pink smudges, soon to be rubbed out by a federalizing European Court of Justice. Blair had opt outs on the last Constitution, they were no more durable or meaningful than what Brown has this time. Opt in, opt out, shake it all about, its still the same old game of building the European Superstate.

Thus, democrats demand a referendum. Just as Brown ran scared from an election, so he is now running scared from letting the British people have their say on this latest ruse to further deplete member states of sovereign power.

EU pressed to back case against Libya

Jim Allister MEP, in a debate in the European Parliament, has called on the EU to back the litigation by victims' group, FAIR, against Libya. Libya was forced to pay out for the Lockerbie atrocity, by the same token it should pay reparations for the IRA terrorism which it equipped and funded in the UK.

Mr Allister also directly linked deputy First Minister McGuinness to the Libyan venture.

In the course of his remarks Mr Allister said:-
"Libya was made to pay for the Lockerbie terrorist atrocity. But Libya, as a global sponsor of terrorism, has yet to make full reparation.

The IRA's vile campaign of terror reached its most deadly when equipped with Libyan semtex and weaponry, permitting Martin McGuinness and its other Army Council leaders to unleash the most vicious phase of their campaign. Without Libya hundreds of innocents would not have died. Thus, I back the campaign, by victims' group FAIR, to bring Libya to international account by forcing it to pay compensation, as with Lockerbie.

Just as the EU pressurised Libya over the Bulgarian nurses, so it should support justice for IRA victims by pressing Libya to settle the litigation issued against it by FAIR in USA."

McCartney...Quinn...IRA still in business

With echoes of the Robert McCartney murder, Paul Quinn was killed by a gang widely reputed to belong to the IRA. Sinn Fein, of course, deny republican involvement, just as they did with the Northern Bank robbery, Castlereagh etc. They lied then, so why should anyone believe them now? The real issue is will the authorities tell the truth.

Commenting Jim Allister said, "The suggestion that the IRA killed Paul Quinn requires absolute clarity from the PSNI and the Garda, with no phoney distinctions being made between "organisational acts" and actions by individual IRA members.

If a gang of 15 IRA men beat a man to death, then it is an IRA murder. No ifs and no buts. Thus the police, without fear of political consequences, must objectively state their assessment. Likewise, the politicians, particularly the DUP, must face up to any consequences if it is found that the inextricable partner of their partner in government, Sinn Fein, murdered this young man."

Allister enters immigration debate

In a speech in the European Parliament in Strasbourg, Jim Allister MEP tackled the thorny issue of immigration. Dealing with the huge influx from Eastern Europe since EU Enlargement in 2004 the Ulster Euro MP said the inability of the UK to "rectify the grave miscalculation" it made with its "open door" policy, was itself an indication of how much power we had foolishly ceded to Brussels.

In the course of his remarks Mr Allister said:-

"The ability of a nation state to control its own borders and change its immigration policy, as required, is a tangible demonstration of sovereignty. The fact that the UK cannot now

rectify the grave miscalculation, which it made in 2004 with its open door policy to eastern Europe, is a telling indication of just how much sovereignty we concede to belong to this club.

I say grave miscalculation, because instead of the 13,000 predicted immigrant workers, we've had 750,000, with a related massive drain on our welfare system of millions per annum in child benefit and tax credits for children who don't live in the UK but qualify because their fathers work there. Yet, because of the rules of the EU we are powerless to do anything about it. And yet some would have us concede even more powers to Brussels. What fools!"

Allister speaks out on Chinese dangerous toys issue

In a debate in the European Parliament in Strasbourg on the import of dangerous toys from China, Jim Allister MEP identified the incident as linked to the folly of punitive EU regulation having driven manufacturing out of Europe.

In the course of his remarks Mr Allister said:-

"It is indisputably right that Mattel should have recalled these dangerous toys, but a number of pertinent issues arise.

Firstly, for all our consumer protection laws *it was not the EU, or any EU agency, which picked up on the danger*, but rather the parent US manufacturer. Does that not tell us something about the efficiency and reliability of our own protections?

Secondly, we impose on our own indigenous industry - in all spheres - severe standards and demands ranging from Health & Safety to CO2 emissions, yet we throw open our doors to Chinese goods which are the product of woeful production conditions, fall far short of what we

require of our own factories and come from plants which belch out emissions as if there was no tomorrow. Little wonder we've driven so much manufacturing to the Far East, but with what net global gain?

In fairness to both the workers and consumers of Europe its time we brought sense and order to our approach. *If we hadn't decimated our own manufacturing by punitive regulation, then, maybe now we wouldn't be so dependent on China and its shoddy goods."*



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Jim Allister MEP visiting the Balcas site at Enniskillen during a tour of business in the West

Allister steps up pressure on Special Advisers

"I have been pressing the new regime for months on the issue of publicly-funded special advisers. After almost 5 months, and a complaint to the Ombudsman, I have now received a partial reply.

It is clear from this response that no checks have been conducted on criminal records and no security-vetting whatever has been carried out. Thus we have Party appointees, with the status of civil servants, running around exempt from the restraints applicable to all other civil servants and immune from having to declare if they are convicted criminals, even convicted terrorists. This is disgraceful, though on a par with a regime which itself embraces unrepentant terrorists at its very heart. Bearing in mind the scandal of "Stormontgate", what possible justification is there for exempting these individuals from any form of security vetting?

I note that despite me specifically asking as to "the protocols and arrangements" which exist in respect of the appointment of special advisers, OFMDFM tried to conceal the existence of a DFP Code of Practice on the subject, issued in March 2007. Why was this? Surely, this is a most pertinent document, which happily I had discovered in an earlier FOI application.

It is my belief that key requirements of this Code have been breached in several of the

appointments, particularly by Sinn Fein. Among the rigorous requirements of the Code are that Ministers should consider "a wide field of candidates", that a job description should exist, that the process is documented, and that selection is made on sustainable and lawful grounds.

I have, therefore, written further to the Head of the Civil Service in searching terms. I have invited him to agree, in light of the Code, that it would not be acceptable if a political party either compiled the pool of candidates or made the choice? I continue, "Are you satisfied, in particular, that such did not happen in the case of Sinn Fein? I ask this, not least, because of the apparent lack of expertise in agricultural issues of the person appointed to advise the minister at DARD."

I am also pressing to know the full salary package of these 18 special advisers. As is clear from OFMDFM's letter this is something they are anxious to conceal. I trust I don't have to wait another 5 months for reply, not least since it has recently been confirmed by OFMDFM that the target date for replies is 10 working days!"

Full correspondence can be viewed at <http://www.jimallister.org/default.asp?blogID=757>

We need public clearing of the air on Causeway

Statement by Jim Allister MEP:

"I find most people are shocked by the daily revelations over the Causeway debacle.

How UNESCO, the National Trust and EHS can offer professional advice against the private proposal and yet the Minister smiles upon it, is unexplained and baffling for most.

The Giant's Causeway is North Antrim and Northern Ireland's greatest natural asset. It belongs to us all. Its exploitation through a much-needed visitors' centre should not be a matter for private profit. Thus, I oppose the DUP Environment Minister's "minded" decision to grant permission to Seymour Sweeney's private proposal. The fact that Mr Sweeney is a DUP member and, it turns out, close associate of Ian Paisley Junior, only adds to the public unease.

The teeth-pulling manner in which Ian Paisley Junior's links to Mr Sweeney have had to emerge has accentuated the public disquiet. When the Causeway issue began to unfold we had the economical declaration on public radio by Ian Paisley Junior that he "knew of" Seymour Sweeney. It has since turned out that Ian Paisley Junior and Mr Sweeney have in fact a long-standing relationship. I think the people of North Antrim expected more openness and transparency from Ian Junior.

I recall when the Columbia 3 were unmasked Sinn

Fein claimed only to "know of them" - in fact they turned out to be inner confidantes. We don't expect such economy of language from Unionist Assembly Members.

In light of the drip-feed manner in which Mr Paisley Junior has dealt with this matter, I think we are entitled to a full, unvarnished account from him of every facet of his relationship with Mr Sweeney.

In light of the clear declaration from UNESCO that they never approved Sweeney's proposal and believe the visitors centre must be on the original site, the First Minister also owes a detailed explanation as to how he, using the weight of his office as an MP, came to represent the opposite to the Lottery organisation. It's time for all involved to come clean. Politicking with this issue could ultimately jeopardise our world heritage status."



Allister comments on Robinson's Dublin speech

Statement by Jim Allister MEP:

"Last month I issued a statement commenting on how Michelle Gildernew was manipulating the agriculture portfolio to suite Republicans' united Ireland agenda. I wouldn't expect anything else from a member of Sinn Fein/IRA. But I must say that I was surprised to see Peter Robinson's



department issue a press release headed "*North-South Co-Operation Essential for Global Success*"!

North-south economic co-operation has its place, but it is not the highway to economic heaven. Seeing our economy and infrastructure through all-island spectacles, rather than as an intrinsic part of the much larger and inherently more stable UK economy, would be a mistake. I regret therefore the absence of the essential east-west

dynamic and trajectory from Mr Robinson's Dublin speech on 4th October. The Republic is tied into the eurozone, with its interest rates set by the European Central Bank, we are not, nor should we be. The agenda for a "united Ireland" is predicated on economic fusion. Unionists should not play this game."

OFMDFM has failed victims - Allister

Statement by Jim Allister MEP:

"OFMDFM has failed victims. The announcement of yet further months of delay in appointing a Victims' Commissioner, after several promises of early progress and broken deadlines, shows just how inefficient and poor OFMDFM is in delivering on important issues. The pretence that it has nothing to do with their inability to agree is as convincing as Gordon Brown's explanation for running away from an election.

If the process was tainted by its Direct Rule genesis, then why did it take the First Minister and deputy First Minister 6 months to realise this? There was no such talk when they were promising an appointment in July and then September. Now suddenly this excuse emerges; it lacks credibility. My own suspicion is that McGuinness has exercised his veto, underscoring how unworkable is the joint office of OFMDFM and how repulsive it is to many that someone with McGuinness' antecedents

should have any say on victims issues, never mind a veto on the appointment of a Commissioner.

There are huge issues awaiting action for victims, arising from Bertha McDougall's report, but at least a year will be lost, most of it because of **dithering and dispute** under supposedly effective and transparent devolution.

Ian Paisley tells us that people "*may have been deterred from putting themselves forward*" when the process started under direct rule. Does he seriously believe that those who suffered at the hands of the Provisional IRA will be more likely to put themselves forward knowing that the final stage of the appointment process will involve an interview with none other than Martin McGuinness and himself? Ian Paisley once described McGuinness as being stained by the blood of innocents (8/5/2001), now McGuinness is to have equal say in picking a Victims' Commissioner. What an obscenity!"

Allister calls for an end to dogfighting

In the European Parliament in Brussels, Jim Allister MEP is spearheading a campaign to put an end to dogfighting in the European Union. Mr Allister was appalled by the recent Panorama documentary which brought to light the extent of the cruel practice in Northern Ireland.

Having already made representations to the European Commission on the subject, the Euro MP launched a Written Declaration which describes dogfighting as barbaric and illegitimate and calls on the Commission to ensure that the "sport" is stamped out within the EU.

Speaking at the launch of the declaration, Mr Allister said:-

"Dogfighting can only be described as gruesome, savage and wholly unnecessary. There is no logical reason that can explain the practice of training dogs to be killed. I was disgusted by the revelations made by the BBC documentary earlier this year and I hope that other MEPs will join me in the fight to bring this illegal activity to an end.

Dogs as young as ten months old are being trained to fight other dogs. They are usually baited with puppies, cats and other small animals throughout their training to strengthen

their viciousness. Fights last on average one hour but may last up to and over two hours coming to an end only when one dog can no longer continue.

A further issue highlighted in the declaration is that of pet passports. Not only can passports be obtained for dangerous dogs wrongly described as "mixed breed" but owners often make their own pet passports using their home computer and printer. The procedure for obtaining and monitoring pet passports must be improved and secured. I would urge the public to support measures to ensure that this despicable practice is stamped out once and for all."



IRA Army Council controls ill-gotten gains

During an exchange in Question Time in the European Parliament Jim Allister MEP alleged the Army Council of the IRA is controlling and managing a portfolio of several hundred million euros, accumulated from organised crime activities. Mr Allister cited this - which he described as an "obscenity" - as one of the reasons why the Army Council has not been disbanded.

Responding to a statement by the Portuguese President of the Council on EU efforts to combat organised crime, Mr Allister asked:

"I expect the Minister would be appalled by any link between organised crime and any govern-



ment within the EU. Yet, that is exactly the situation in Northern Ireland where Sinn Fein, a lead party in government, is inextricably linked to the IRA whose illegal Army Council controls a

portfolio of several hundred million euros, accumulated from the IRA's organised crime activities. This is one of the reasons why the Army Council has not been disbanded. Will the Council join in condemning this obscenity and press IRA/Sinn Fein to disband its illegal Army Council forthwith?"

Commenting afterwards Mr Allister said,

"One of the lamentable failures of the DUP has been to accept Sinn Fein as a bona fide partner in government while the Army Council of its IRA remains operative. One of its key functions is to control and manage its huge portfolio of ill-gotten gains. How the DUP can be disinterested in this obscene situation is beyond my comprehension.

I have, therefore called on the EU, since it avows total opposition to organised crime in all its manifestations, to challenge Sinn Fein, as a party of government within the EU, to act to disband the Army Council and end its hoarding of organised crime proceeds. There is no denying that the IRA has grown fat on organised crime for years. Does anyone seriously doubt that its Army Council does not control its multi-million pound portfolio? Hence, one of the reasons why it still exists."

Poots runs away on flags issue

Statement by Jim Allister MEP:

"Following the disgraceful behaviour of the IRFU in refusing to have the National Anthem sung or the Union Flag flown at the rugby international at Ravenhill, I have been engaged in correspondence with Edwin Poots on his policy pertaining to the flying of our national flag at major sporting events. Minister Poots, pathetically, has run away from the issue.

I had asked him 3 simple questions:

- whether he had made any representations to the IRFU about the flag and the anthem at the Ravenhill game;
- whether he was interested in introducing protocols governing the flying of flags and playing of the National Anthem;
- and whether he would require the flying of the national flag, the Union Jack, at any national stadium.

With a rudeness which does not befit a Minister of the Crown, he refuses to answer and says I can assume whatever I wish on the subject. Patently, Minister Poots has no answers. He ought to have, because he should have policies on these important issues. As we've seen Sinn Fein ministers, like Ruane in Education, have no hesitation in peddling their political dogma, but this DUP minister, it seems, has nothing to say on promoting the flying of the Union Jack. Shame on him!"



The full correspondence on this issue can be viewed at:

<http://www.jmallister.org/default.asp?blogID=761>

A reflection on recent political events by Jim Allister MEP

For a party unconcerned by dissent, the DUP has got itself well wound up. The contrast between chuckling with Sinn Fein/IRA and the personal invective towards me and other past members of the party is quite telling. It is strange how councillors while giving years of service were valued members, but once they resigned became "headbangers", even "flat-earthers"!

There is nothing "flat-earth" in holding to democratic standards which identify Sinn Fein/IRA as unfit for government, cherry-picking on the rule of law as unacceptable and mandatory coalition as an absurdity (or, "out of the question" as declared in the DUP's abandoned manifesto of 2005). Nor is continuing attachment to the illegal Army Council progress.

It's not only in terms of Sinn Fein/IRA that we've had minimal delivery, because, despite all the spin from Stormont, there is little of substance to show. No meaningful legislation, no Programme for Government and no agreed Budget. We have, of course, had our share of dubious decisions, like Sinn Fein's preferential promotion of Irish language schools (where was the Unionist veto to block this?) and a "minded" decision to facilitate private profit at the Causeway - to the advantage of a man with some "fishy" connections. Is this the transparent, open, good government that we waited all these years for?

On the letters page of the News Letter most days there is a spate of contributions giving sycophantic praise to the DUP/Sinn Fein regime. Many of these are not written by the person under whose name they appear, rather they are the handiwork of paid hacks in DUP Headquarters, or as Ian Paisley once quaintly described them "the

servants". I know how DUP HQ works. It is a letters factory. Indeed recently extra staff has been recruited to increase production.

Of course, speech writing is not so onerous now. Formally original thought was required to attack the UUP alliance in government with unrepentant terrorists. Now, all they have to do is dust down David Trimble's old speeches to lambast those who now stand on the ground once occupied by the DUP. It's a funny old world!

The arrogance and intolerance of those now dedicated to joint rule with Sinn Fein/IRA towards dissident opinion is quite staggering. But then, there is nothing quite like the fervour of the convert. This arrogance is at its most raw when it gives voice to the mindset of how dare anyone offer an alternative to the electorate. Predictably, "vote-splitter" is trundled out. What was it the pot called the kettle?

With the two unionist parties now working the Belfast Agreement, who are those, who still reject its ethos and trajectory, to support? Thus thousands will stay at home, particularly in the safe seats. So providing a vehicle for expression of such opinion, far from diminishing the unionist vote, would in fact maximise it.



Jim Allister and Mairead McGuinness MEP signing the anti-dogfighting declaration in Brussels

Allister speaks of 'sham fights' at Stormont

Speaking to an Orange gathering in Moneyrea Orange Hall, County Down, Jim Allister MEP welcomed recent backbench attacks in the Assembly on the scandalous 12 August rifle-carrying march in Belfast and the attack on Minister Ruane for favouring Irish Language schools. However, Mr Allister said welcome as these stances were, they amounted to **mere sham fighting and firing of blanks because maintaining the equilibrium of the DUP/Sinn Fein government was the paramount concern, which meant really effective action would not be permitted.**

Mr Allister continued:-

“Of course it is right that these matters are pursued, but sadly only controlled hostilities are permitted. Nothing which could destabilise will be countenanced by the leadership. Hence, the failure to challenge the Irish Language education decision by use of the much-acclaimed accountability mechanism. **Why did the DUP not call in this decision, as they assured us they**

would if and when Sinn Fein ministers acted contrary to unionist interests? Preferential funding away from state education to unnecessary Irish education is a classic decision which should have been stopped. It is well and good to condemn it, but when the mechanism to reverse it is said to exist and is not used, then, it puts the condemnation in a more meaningless category.

Likewise, with the 12 August march. It patently breaches support for the rule of law to parade the streets of Belfast glorifying terrorism with rifles. Yet, again, a default mechanism was supposed to exist to deal with such Sinn Fein failures, but, of course, nothing has been done.

Why, because, the preservation of the regime is more important to those that matter than the keeping of pledges. While, particularly if there is an election announced, we will see much more **sham fighting** with Sinn Fein, thinking voters will see it for what it is and recognise that the chuckle photos tell the real tale.”

Allister opposes increase in Republic's seats in Europe

Jim Allister MEP has attacked a proposal that the Republic of Ireland should have an increase of MEPs from 13 to 15.

The Constitutional Affairs Committee of the parliament is presently considering parliamentary representation for each member state in preparation for the next EP election in June 2009. Under anticipated Treaty changes the total number of members must drop to 750. By natural mathematical formula the Republic's representation should drop from 13 to 12, while the UK would drop from 78 to 72, with Northern Ireland retaining 3 members. Yet, a campaign, in defiance of the mathematics, is being mounted by one of the Republic's MEPs, Kathy Sinnott, to increase their quota to 15 and reduce the UK to 61.

Jim Allister told the Constitutional Affairs Committee that such would utterly distort the balance of representation from the British Isles to the gross advantage of the Republic. With a population of 1.7M, each MEP in Northern Ireland would represent over 600,000 citizens, but there

would be 1 MEP for every 300,000 in the Republic. Such is not on, said Mr Allister. Thus he supports the reduction in the Republic's quota to 12, or less, which still gives them disproportionate representation, as normally happens with smaller member states.

Mr Allister confirmed that he was hopeful that if the Republic's loses a seat then Sinn Fein will lose its Dublin representative, Mary Lou McDonald. “Such”, said Mr Allister, “**would be in the interests of us all in these British Isles.**”



Allister writes to Paisley over Enniskillen tribute

Statement by Jim Allister MEP:

"Following the revelation that the Fire Service has removed a photographic tribute to the victims of the IRA's Remembrance Day bomb in Enniskillen in 1987, I have written to the First Minister calling for action to withdraw any so called "equality guidance" under which such a disgraceful decision could be taken.

Since OFMDFM has responsibility for "equality issues", as well as victims, it is up to Ian Paisley to act to ensure such decisions cannot be taken under the guise of any equality agenda for which his department has ultimate responsibility. There really isn't much point in him having executive responsibility for equality issues if he can't

speedily right this insulting wrong. He can't hide behind the Equality Commission because a review of their guidance can be initiated. Of course to act, given the nature of his joint office, he is beholden to Martin McGuinness agreeing, which is the ultimate disgusting irony, given his organisation's complicity in Enniskillen."



MEP has useful meeting with DSD Minister

Jim Allister MEP recently met Social Development Minister, Margaret Ritchie in Brussels.

Commenting Mr Allister said, "We had a useful meeting focussing on the funding opportunities for DSD issues under the 2007-13 Financial Perspective. I was pleased that the Minister saw as the priority, in PEACE expenditure, projects capable of delivering lasting economic benefit. I stressed my view that hitherto too much PEACE funding had been wasted on froth.

We also discussed the need to encourage

community infrastructure, particularly in minority Protestant areas. In this regard I see scope for sensible use of DSD's Modernisation Fund and Shared Spaces programme to help better equip community facilities, including orange halls where such are the hub of community interaction.

I commended the Minister on her robust stand against the advancement of paramilitarism and discussed alternative, non-paramilitary, funding opportunities in loyalist areas."



Log onto www.jimallister.org to read the latest press releases and statements.

Learn more about the workings of Europe, listen to Jim's speeches in Parliament and much more online.



If you would like a free copy of Jim's book, 'Leading for Ulster: Speaking for you in Europe', then please phone (028) 90 655 011



All editions of the monthly newsletter 'Brussels Briefing' are available to download at my website, www.jimallister.org

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

Farming News

Allister responds to red meat Task Force report

Commenting on the Red Meat Task Force report MEP Jim Allister said it was a sobering wake-up call on the plight of the industry.

He said, "The last CAP reform was supposed to create the conditions where the market would generate growth and stability. Hence, it was argued subsidies could go. What has happened, of course, is that while production subsidies have indeed gone, the Single Farm Payment, contrary to its purpose, is having to heavily subsidise loss-making producers. Since this conflicts with the purpose and promise of CAP reform, the Commission should be urgently re-assessing the position.

The greatest inhibitor of the market turning the situation around is the distortion inflicted by the twin impact of government's cheap food policy and the multi-national supermarkets suppressing prices, but not their own profits.

The report shows that both the retailers and the processors are making money, but the producers are losing hand over fist. This staggering deficit, or subsidisation by farmers, amounts to £180 million. No industry can survive on these negative margins. Supermarkets and Government need to waken up to these realities."



Kyprianou pressed again on Brazilian beef imports

In the Agriculture Committee Jim Allister MEP pressed Commissioner Kyprianou on continuing imports of Brazilian beef. The Commissioner had been called to appear before the committee to answer deep-seated concerns about his inaction despite animal health failures in Brazil. After 45 minutes of an address by the Commissioner avoiding the kernel of the issue, Mr Allister put it strongly to him as to what were the shortcomings, deficiencies and shortfalls in animal identification and control of animal movements which the March 07 FVO inspection had identified and why,

since such existed, were EU consumers being subjected to Brazilian imports resulting from such a position.

Commissioner Kyprianou confirmed that the next FVO inspection in Brazil will be in mid-November and that the final FVO report from the March 07 visit will be published in late November or early December.

Commenting Mr Allister said:-

"The more I listen to Commissioner Kyprianou, the more I am convinced that the trade implications of taking on a large exporter like Brazil is the over-riding reason for the Commission's inaction. If this was some small country the Commission would have acted far sooner. In consequence I continue to believe that risks are being taken with the health of EU consumers so as not to upset South America in the context of the WTO negotiations. It is a case of trade rules over health."



Wipeout looming in Intensive Sector

Speaking in a late night emergency debate on agriculture in the European Parliament, Jim Allister MEP warned that our intensive livestock sector was facing meltdown. Spiralling feedstuff prices and poor farmgate returns were driving the pig, poultry and other sectors to the wall.

Supporting the end of "set aside", whereby some acreage is kept out of production, Jim Allister said:-

"At a time of spiralling and punitive increases in feedstuff prices, which is so hurting our intensive livestock sector, it is criminal to lock out of production land capable of decreasing

our reliance on foreign imports. Thus, set aside must go, and go now.

But more is needed, including a proactive plan to address the looming crisis in our intensive sectors. For my part, such must include hands-on pressure on the multinational supermarket chains to give up the pricing strategy which suppresses farmgate prices. If this does not happen, then we are facing wipe out in much of our intensive sector. Such would be the greatest failure of agriculture policy of our time and something you Commissioner must urgently address."

Allister answers distortions about Single Farm Payment

Speaking in a debate in the European Parliament, Jim Allister MEP opposed further proposals by Brussels on the publication of individual receipts of farm subsidies. This controversial issue has already led to a distorted public view of farm incomes, because no mention is ever made of the reality that without the much publicised Single Farm Payment most farmers could not survive. In reality it is subsidising the EU's untenable cheap food policy. Thus to headline it as a hand-out, when in truth it puts cheap food on the consumer's table, is most unfair.

In the course of his remarks Mr Allister said:-

"It can be a fine line between transparency and privacy. Many farmers, in my view rightly,

resent the details of their Single Farm Payment being plastered over the internet because of the distorted perception of free handout which it creates.

The reality, of course, is that for most the SFP is in fact subsidising our cheap food policy. Take the beef sector. A Task Force report in my constituency demonstrates beef producers are losing 260M Euro pa; only their SFP keeps them going by subsidising production. So when it is publicised that a farmer received 40,000 euros it misleads, for there is no mention that at the same time he is losing 50,000 Euros or more in his production operation. To be fair publication should be accompanied by typical profit and loss statistics from commodity sales."



Jim Allister MEP recently visiting Fivemiletown Creamery

Is Water Review outcome EU compliant?

Statement by Jim Allister MEP:

“The opposition of the Review Panel on water charges to metering raises a potential breach of EU obligations. Under the water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC member states by 2010 are required to have in place water-pricing policies which *“provide adequate incentives for users to use water efficiently”* (ARTICLE 9).

I see nothing in the review which addresses this obligation. Plainly, metering would provide an incentive to users to use water efficiently. By rejecting metering and failing to identify any alternative incentive for efficient use of water, it seems to me that if the policy advocated by the review panel was adopted, then we might well be in breach of this EU Directive and face possible infraction proceedings.

Quite apart from any bearing of the Water Framework Directive, I strongly feel metering in itself is a proper option and one that consumers

should not be denied. Many farming families already have meters, so why should they pay other than for the water they use. Other consumers should be entitled to opt for metering and thus escape the nonsense of linkage to house valuation.

I must also observe that the fact that the review indicates we can expect to pay increased water charges by 2010, if accepted by the executive, will be confirmation of the failure of Ian Paisley’s personal election pledge to make delivery of a Treasury financial package, sufficient to avoid additional water charges, a pre-condition to devolution.”



Executive chaos

Statement by Jim Allister MEP on recent political events:

“From the heady promises of unified, transparent government, serving the interests of all, we have soon descended into factional Executive infighting, where the interests of the DUP/Sinn Fein Coalition are paramount. Little wonder, because an Executive based on the absurdity of mandatory coalition can never have the essential collectivity capable of providing good government.

This episode has been an eye-opener for many. First, we had Peter Robinson’s bad-tempered dance on top of a procedural pin, leading to a gang-up on a Minister doing the right thing. Now, we have a Minister alleging sharp practice within the Executive. What a spectacle!

For my part, I have no doubt that few believe it is right that any paramilitary organisation should get taxpayer’s money under any guise, and, therefore, there is widespread support for Margaret Ritchie and dismay in respect of those that are trying to thwart her.”

What caused the change of heart?

July 31, 2007 First Minister Ian Paisley hails freedom of information disclosures in Northern Ireland and declares that Stormont departments are “making considerable strides towards achieving our goal of more open government”

October 4, 2007 The Belfast Telegraph, using the Freedom of Information Act, reveals that DUP leader Ian Paisley made highly questionable claims while lobbying for a grant for would-be Giant’s Causeway centre developer Seymour Sweeney

October 8, 2007 First Minister Ian Paisley threatens to curtail Freedom of Information provisions, while slamming use of the Act by *“lazy journalists who will do not any work.”*