

CONSULTATION ON "A SHARED FUTURE."

I am a Civil Servant offering personal views on this consultation paper.

Firstly as a general observation, all reasonable people should welcome the development of any new strategies which serve to promote community relations, and one can only but hope that whatever comes out of this exercise produces positive and lasting results. The paper offers many excellent and challenging proposals and I have only one serious observation to make about it at points 1. and 3. below. The other comments which I make are relatively minor ones.

1. "Specific Policy Aims"- Section 2.

While I would strongly support the promotion of better relations and that the promotion of **respect** for different cultures would be an important part of this, I fail to see how the **promotion** of the **celebration** of different cultures, nice idea that this may sound, will have a beneficial effect on bringing people together. In my view fostering separate identities will serve to move communities even further apart.

2. " Fundamental principles" Section 3

I think the reference in the last line of paragraph 2 is somewhat exaggerated, set in the context of NI as a whole.

I believe that the Churches should also be acknowledged as a key leadership Group. (paragraph 4)

To say that division exists "throughout" NI is I think over stated. (last line of the page.)

3. "Central government"-Section 4

DCAL is referred to as the Department which should assume express responsibility for leading actions to develop an appreciation of and respect for the cultural diversity **which so enriches society in NI**. I think most people in NI would not

agree that cultural diversity should be described in such glowing terms. In addition, to underline the view I expressed at point 1, it would be inappropriate to "mainsteam" or financially "support" cultural diversity. In my opinion this would promote increased division.

Thank you for providing an opportunity to input into this process. I am happy to be regarded as a respondent who supported the paper's proposals generally.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barry Todd", written in a cursive style.

Barry Todd