

Submitted as feedback to the Working Group on Unification Referendums on the Island of Ireland Interim Report – 12 January 2021

Hi,

Quick intro / why I'm interested. I'm in Scotland (which does at least nominally have a locus in the GFA) but basically a long-time observer /student of Irish politics and particularly religion .. I've an interest in the theological notions that have historically legitimated the use of violence. You'll appreciate that Scotland also has a stake in the Union and an interest in possible knock-on effects of a border poll vote for unification. And, of course, a significant Unionist / Orange presence.

First .. thank you for the updates. They're immensely helpful.

Question: what consideration has been given to the political structure of the united Ireland that could potentially come into being, and to what extent do different options there affect the 'offer' made to Unionists.

More particularly, has any consideration been given to some continuing role for the NI Assembly in a United Ireland? The possibilities seem to me to be wide open. There's every option from Irish government being very heavily focused on / exercised by 'Dublin' .. which presumably is a very alienating prospect for Unionists .. through to a very 'devolved' structure with considerable powers for Stormont.

I'm thinking about this partly in the light of Scotland's indyref 2014, when the Scottish govt produced very detailed proposals, but left open issues which it emerged were important to Unionists, such as currency. And obviously, by contrast, the Brexit referendum where people were voting for a leap into the dark.

Sorry, long email .. no long answer required. But if there are any obvious discussions of this that you could point me to, I'd appreciate that.

Harry Smart