

Non-nationalist politics in a bi-national consociation: the case of the Alliance Party of Northern Ireland

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Through a case study of the Alliance Party of Northern Ireland, this article examines the contention that consociational power-sharing, in its determination to include dominant and conflicting identity groups, exalts these identities and excludes others including gender, class and other ethnicities and nationalities. The article describes and assesses the Alliance Party's arguments that the power-sharing arrangements in Northern Ireland are philosophically objectionable, practically ineffective, and politically detrimental to parties which, like Alliance, are designated as 'others'. The article finds that the party's critique of consociationalism as implemented in Northern Ireland is overstated and that the party has been able to play a number of pivotal roles in the new politics.

Northern Ireland's Belfast/Good Friday Agreement is one of the most studied consociational settlements.¹ The 1998 accord (hereafter 'the Agreement') appeared to enable the region's transition out of decades of political violence and exclusion, making Northern Ireland, for many analysts, "the key confirming case for consociational theory".² However, the Agreement has also faced an array of academic, political and civil society detractors, many of whom have focussed on the specific criticism of consociational power-sharing which is the subject of this special section: that in its determination to include the dominant and conflicting national identity groups, consociationalism exalts these identities and excludes others, including gender, class and other ethnicities and nationalities.³

This article examines the 'exclusion amid inclusion dilemma' through the case study of the Alliance Party of Northern Ireland. As the main cross-community party, Alliance is the principal political critic and, it would say, political sufferer, of the claimed exclusionary side-effects of power-sharing. Within the Assembly, it has, along with a handful of much smaller

parties, eschewed the designations – denoting national preference – of ‘unionist’ and ‘nationalist’⁴ in favour of the third option offered by the Agreement: ‘other’.

This article assesses the party’s arguments that the power-sharing arrangements are philosophically objectionable, practically ineffective, and politically detrimental to ‘other’ parties. It argues that the party’s condemnation of the Agreement, while commensurate with Alliance’s ideological outlook, is overstated. In fact, the party has been able to play pivotal roles, in particular, sustaining a valuable and distinctive critique of post-Agreement politics and society in a similar manner to an opposition party in a ‘normal’, non-consociational arrangement. Within the voluminous literature on the Northern Ireland conflict, there is still a paucity of research on the Alliance Party,⁵ though the party has been subject to comparative examinations with moderate parties in other conflict zones including Israel and South Africa,⁶ and Bosnia.⁷ The ensuing analysis is based on party documents located in the Northern Ireland Political Collection of the Linenhall Library in Belfast, as well as a select number of interviews with party representatives.

While study of the main ‘other’ party in Northern Ireland reveals much about the operation of consociationalism in Northern Ireland, caution is required when deriving wider conclusions. McCulloch notes that no two cases of power-sharing are the same and many (including the Good Friday Agreement) exhibit “hybridity”, defying categorization as solely liberal or corporate, direct or indirect. For this reason generalizations are difficult, and “careful case analysis – or even single-institution analysis – is required”.⁸ Nevertheless, the article proposes that the Alliance Party’s perspective does underscore the general insufficiency of an elite-level accommodation in resolving violent inter-communal conflict: if consociationalism has the potential to be transformational, it must be conducted by accommodating leaders and accompanied by a clear strategy for improving inter-group relations at all levels.

The Alliance Party and the Northern Ireland conflict

From the late 1960s until the late 1990s, Northern Ireland experienced a period of anti-state and sectarian violence known as ‘the Troubles’. At issue was the constitutional status of Northern Ireland; nationalists and republicans (pro-Irish and mainly Roman Catholic) desired Northern Ireland to become part of a united Irish state while unionists (pro-British and mainly Protestant) wished the region to remain in the United Kingdom (UK). In 1998, a peace process culminated in the Agreement. As well as providing for security and human rights reforms, the accord established a devolved, regional assembly in which unionists and nationalists would share power.

The Alliance Party is the oldest and most successful party to draw support from both communities, though its percentage vote share has rarely reached double figures. In the 1998 Assembly election following the Agreement, the party won six seats (6.5 per cent of the vote). Since 2007, the party’s fortunes have been on a modest rise. It won seven seats in 2007 (5.2 per cent), eight in 2011 (7.7 per cent), and eight in 2017 (9.1 per cent).⁹

Founded amidst the political turmoil at the outset of ‘the Troubles’, the party’s launch document asserted that there was an urgent need for a party whose “primary objective is to heal the bitter divisions in our community”.¹⁰ Alliance has based its reconciliatory politics on a number of claims regarding identity in Northern Ireland. First, the party stresses that many people in Northern Ireland identify with neither unionism nor nationalism, constituting a moderate and non-aligned “third tradition”.¹¹ Second, echoing the constructivist critique of consociationalism’s supposed “primordial pessimism”,¹² Alliance has a particular view of the nature of group identity itself:

We acknowledge that people identify with and belong to religious, ethnic, cultural and regional communities. These however are not permanent or stable, but are open and fluid. People ... can belong to many groups, have a complex identity, and have loyalties to different structures and levels of government.¹³

Third, Alliance argues that unionism and nationalism are inherently destabilising. Shared institutions of government require a shared identity and allegiance to function, and so political stability requires the diminution and transcendence of unionism and nationalism: “As long as we cling to two mutually exclusive “identities”, our conflict is likely to rumble on”.¹⁴

As a non-nationalist party in a region subject to historic and violent nationalist contestation, Alliance has, inevitably, struggled to convey and convince that its non-aligned identity is genuine and coherent. It has been accused of being both ‘really’ a unionist party and, less often, ‘really’ a nationalist party. The perception of the former is due mainly to the party’s explicit position that Northern Ireland should remain in the UK as long as a majority wish – what is known as the principle of consent – and the fact that a majority of its voters tend to be Protestant.¹⁵ However, Alliance continues to insist that it is neither unionist nor nationalist. Alliance candidate Duncan Morrow points out that many Protestants in Alliance are there because they are self-consciously *not* unionist and fixated on the national issue:

‘We are what seems to be impossible for people to even accept: utterly and absolutely pragmatic about the [Irish] border. It is not a metaphysical issue for us, it is an issue of how do we best organize this community so that we can best live together.’¹⁶

Critique of consociationalism in the Agreement

Throughout ‘the Troubles’ Alliance consistently supported the establishment of cross-community power-sharing but it opposed any version of such that would privilege or potentially entrench existing ethno-national identities.¹⁷ As the party feared and predicted, the 1998 Agreement appeared to do precisely that. Most inimical to Alliance’s politics was the requirement of Assembly members to designate themselves ‘unionist’, ‘nationalist’ or ‘other’.¹⁸ The party believed that embedding group labels into the highest level of government offended its liberal values and threatened the emergence of a shared identity that transcended nationality. In 2017, the party was still referring to designations as “institutional sectarianism”.¹⁹

Furthermore, the purpose of designations was to facilitate cross-community voting arrangements which Alliance argued were unfair. Certain key decisions in the Assembly require:

- (i) either parallel consent, i.e. a majority of those members present and voting, including a majority of the unionist and nationalist designations present and voting;
- (ii) or a weighted majority (60%) of members present and voting, including at least 40% of each of the nationalist and unionist designations present and voting.²⁰

Alliance argued that such mechanisms meant that the votes of parties designated ‘others’ counted less than those of ‘unionists’ and ‘nationalists’. This relative powerlessness, the party claimed, could de-incentivize voters from supporting non-unionist/nationalist-designated parties.

Alliance also believed that the Agreement’s inclusive ‘grand coalition’ – another classic consociational idea – in which all parties eligible under the d’Hondt formula could enter the Executive may lead to fragmented, uncoordinated government. Alliance would have preferred the Executive to be formed by parties who could agree a common platform and attain a weighted majority of Assembly representatives.²¹ Overall, in tune with several

academic critics, Alliance judged that the Agreement's version of power-sharing was insufficiently 'integrationist': lacking incentives to moderation that could encourage centripetal rather than centrifugal dynamics.²²

Nevertheless, Alliance supported the Agreement in full in the belief that the deal had the potential to be a transitional mechanism, a means to the end of Alliance's vision of a liberal, group-blind democracy. In an internal party discussion document dated August 1997, Stephen Farry encouraged the party to regard any structures which privileged group rights that emerged from the negotiations as temporary "affirmative action" and an "honourable compromise".²³ The party's aim was to catalyze the transition through its own political growth in the post-Agreement dispensation. Thus, although Alliance was highly critical of consociational aspects of the Agreement which it thought illiberal, a rationale of consociationalism as a transitional measure with transformational potential has been articulated by consociationalism's supporters in very similar terms to the Alliance Party.²⁴

'Other' dilemmas in the new politics

There remained, however, a contradiction between Alliance's desire to support the Agreement in the hope that it could create a conducive context for the expansion of centre ground politics, and the party's principled rejection of certain of the accord's procedures. This tension came to a head in two episodes in 2001. In the June Westminster election of that year (using the first-past-the-post electoral system), Alliance refrained from running in several constituencies in order to assist pro-Agreement unionist candidates who were being challenged by anti-Agreement figures. Justifying his decision to step aside in North Down, Farry said that "people should view a vote for Hermon [pro-Agreement Ulster Unionist Party

(UUP)] as not necessarily a vote for Ulster Unionism but for the Agreement” and that opting not to run was a “one-off”.²⁵ The decisions not to contest seats spurred the resignation in protest of the party’s deputy leader, Séamus Close.

This electoral strategy foreshadowed a more dramatic contortion of principle later in the year: the affair concerning re-designation in the Assembly in early November 2001. Three Alliance Assembly members re-designated as ‘unionist’ – temporarily for seven days – in order to provide the required ‘unionist’ votes for the election, by parallel consent, of the First and Deputy First Ministers.²⁶ Writing in the *Irish Times* newspaper before the vote on 5 November, David Ford, the new Alliance leader, said that the situation in which the party found itself “stank” but “some of us are reluctantly prepared to hold our noses for a week”.²⁷ But subsequent survey evidence showed that a majority of party members opposed re-designation,²⁸ while two Alliance MLAs refused to do so at the time.

The party portrayed this episode as proof of the flaws in the Agreement and vindication of its policy preference for weighted majority voting.²⁹ But the voting system remained, and the episode highlighted the vulnerability of both the Agreement and the position of the Alliance Party. Indeed, some observers saw the re-designation affair as an indicator of the increasing decline of the party, notwithstanding Alliance’s promise that it would not be repeated.³⁰

The course of political events meant that Alliance did not face serious pressure to re-designate again. The Assembly was suspended in October 2002 and, on its return in 2007, contained a secure pro-power-sharing majority on both sides. Suspension, which was due to alleged spying by Sinn Féin, meant Alliance could portray its policy of voluntary coalition as not only now ideologically preferable to a grand coalition, but also offering a path out of the deadlock. Alliance also contended that communal designations were responsible for the polarization within unionism and nationalism and the concomitant impasse. After the

November 2003 elections in which the hardline Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and Sinn Féin made significant gains, Farry wrote that the “swing to the extremes” was entirely predictable:

The principle cause of this result is the institutionalized sectarianism within the Agreement. Rather than trying to create a new political culture in which all parties seek to work in the common interest, the Agreement has entrenched a system of intra-ethnic competition within two separate Unionist and Nationalist polities.³¹

Whether or not the election result was due to “institutionalized sectarianism within the Agreement” – and it is doubtful, as we now explore – the squeeze on the centre ground in this period was evident. Alliance’s vote share fell from 6.5 per cent in 1998 to 3.6 per cent in 2001 (Westminster) and 3.7 per cent in 2003 (Assembly).

Assessing Alliance’s critique

Alliance’s criticisms of the Agreement have been roundly rejected by the settlement’s scholarly supporters. McGarry and O’Leary argue, first, that recognizing that unionism and nationalism are the two, long-expressed preferences of most people in Northern Ireland does not amount to an assumption that these preferences or identities are immutable and, second, that there are a number of liberal, non-corporate dimensions to the Agreement.³² For example, there is the Single Transferable Vote electoral system which allows cross-community transfers, duties of impartiality placed on ministers, and powerful human rights protections. Most significantly, the d’Hondt method of proportionally allocating ministerial posts allows any party that meets the threshold to enter government – regardless of its

designation. Alliance benefitted from d'Hondt when it finally qualified for a ministry (Employment and Learning) in 2011.

Alliance's claim that the voting system, which requires communal designations, is not only distasteful, but unfair, is supported by Rick Wilford, who calls it "patently undemocratic" that 'other' votes count less: Alliance is "a casualty of this anomalous and wholly unnecessary procedure [designation and parallel consent]".³³ To investigate Alliance's complaint, Alex Schwartz runs a series of voting simulations. He finds that there is some merit in the party's grievance but that, assuming parties vote *en bloc*, the voting rules are unfair to all smaller parties, not simply 'other' parties, since any smaller party's votes may not be required to meet the unionist and nationalist thresholds. Schwarz also argues that this unfairness is balanced to some degree by the 'super-legitimacy' provided by parallel consent rules, an important mechanism given the deficit of legitimacy that characterized government in Northern Ireland in the past.³⁴

It should also be noted that there is no evidence that designations have dissuaded voters from opting for 'others' as Alliance has speculated. It is unclear how much voters are even aware of designations, while voting that reflects the community divide has persisted for generations in Northern Ireland regardless of prevailing political arrangements.³⁵ Indeed, as Cera Murtagh finds, Alliance representatives themselves appear to be more exercised by the symbolic meaning of communal designations and their associated rules, rather than any substantive harmful effects on Alliance's electoral performance.³⁶

Also refuted by supporters of consociationalism has been the accusation, leveled by Alliance and many others, that inclusive coalition, plus rules such as parallel consent and the 'petition of concern' (a mechanism that can be triggered by thirty Assembly members forcing a decision to require parallel consent), produce ineffective, gridlocked, and unaccountable government. Christopher McCrudden *et al* caution against weighted majority voting due to

the impossibility of determining the right threshold. Moreover, they argue that the d'Hondt method of appointing an Executive provides an “automatic, elegant, transparent and democratic” means of forming a government, avoiding exclusion and protracted negotiations.³⁷

Those authors furthermore reject charges that the Assembly has been unproductive in making laws and lacking in accountability.³⁸ A significant amount of legislation has been passed and mutual vetoes have not led to gridlock. An opposition can be formed at any time since parties are free not to sit in the Executive if they so wish; indeed, the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) and UUP's decision to form an opposition in 2016 was arguably a demonstration of consociationalists' hope for a gradual, 'natural' dissolution of consociational structures.

'Other' opportunities

In sum, Alliance's criticisms regarding the illiberal, dysfunctional and polarising nature of post-Agreement politics are over-stated. In fact, not only is it unlikely that the Alliance Party's modest electoral performance has been the fault of the power-sharing architecture, the party has been able to play a number of pivotal roles which have aided political progress and furthered its political agenda.

Perhaps most significantly, Alliance took charge of the Justice Ministry in 2010 after policing and justice powers were finally devolved from Westminster to the Assembly. Due to the role that the perceived partiality of the police and judiciary had played in the conflict, and the role in violence of members of Sinn Féin, neither of the two main parties trusted the other to assume the sensitive role of Justice Minister. An Alliance member was deemed acceptable

by both – or at least less undesirable than a member of the opposing party – and given that the institutions would have collapsed otherwise, to that extent, Alliance became the very fulcrum of power-sharing.³⁹

One of the conditions of Alliance taking that role was progress on the so-called ‘shared future’ agenda, a government plan to tackle social segregation and promote reconciliation (a draft of which was in fact produced for consultation in July 2010). On this matter, Alliance exerted considerable influence throughout the post-Agreement period, crafting a distinctive and powerful discourse calling for a more integrated society and attempting to hold the largest parties to account regarding progress towards that goal – or lack thereof. In January 2013, in the ongoing absence of a viable, adopted Executive strategy, Alliance published its own shared future proposals, *For Everyone*, which it said could be a “blueprint” for an Executive strategy.⁴⁰ The DUP and Sinn Féin eventually published their own shared future document, *Together: Building a United Community*, in May 2013. Alliance acknowledged this strategy as progress but accused those parties of stealing its ideas. The subtitle, “building a united community”, was actually the name of Alliance’s previous major community relations document of 2003, while *Together*, like *For Everyone*, proposed all-party talks under an independent chair to resolve flags, parades and past (what became the Haass-O’Sullivan talks of autumn 2013).⁴¹

Two other critical interventions illustrate how Alliance was capable of playing an effective role, notwithstanding its small size and the unfavourable political climate. One was the party’s electoral success in 2010, when Naomi Long won Alliance’s first Westminster seat and defeated the DUP leader Peter Robinson in the East Belfast constituency he had held since 1979. The other was the decisive part played by Alliance in the circumstances leading to the 2012-13 flag protests. Holding the balance of power at Belfast City Hall, Alliance voted with the nationalist parties to reduce the flying of the British flag from City Hall from

365 days to 18. The decision led to weeks of street protests, some violent, by unionists and numerous acts of intimidation directed towards Alliance personnel. The magnitude of this decision, which Alliance viewed as a compromise position reflecting the diversity of the city, demonstrated that a small, 'other' party could still exert far reaching influence.⁴²

Conclusion

In the Northern Ireland example, it is difficult to substantiate the claims that parties holding an 'other' identity have been politically constrained by the consociational structures of the Good Friday Agreement, or that those structures have been the cause of political instability or polarization. Two more plausible explanations of the relative weakness of moderate, non-nationalist politics exist.

One is the fact that implementing the Agreement after 1998 required extremely challenging issues to be worked through, in particular, grievances related to the legacy of violence, and cultural contestation. These kept oppositional group identities salient. While Alliance opposed the determined inclusivity of the Agreement, it was this feature that helped to facilitate the moderation and accommodation of the DUP and Sinn Féin. The other, related, explanation is simply that not that many people in Northern Ireland understand identity and politics in the manner of Alliance, or at least not with sufficient conviction to vote for it. Britishness and Irishness, and their attendant political aspirations, remain dominant.

Nevertheless, the 'other' party impacted the new politics at key junctures and, in keeping with its founding purpose to "heal division", Alliance has provided a unique critical voice highlighting the larger parties' failure to recognize and address sectarianism. Alliance has done so in a period when the political agenda has been focussed squarely on buying in the

‘extremes’ and on establishing and maintaining an elite-level accommodation. The party’s key contribution has been to impress upon the parties and the public that, regardless of consociationalism’s necessity, such an elite-level accommodation is not sufficient for sustainable peace. For power-sharing to be genuinely transformative, attitudes and structures that engender trust, interdependence, and reconciliation must be deliberately and strategically promoted at all levels of society.

¹ For an account of how the Agreement meets – and somewhat deviates from – consociational principles see Brendan O’Leary, “The Nature of the Agreement,” *Fordham Journal of International Law* 22, no. 4 (1999): 1628-67.

² Rupert Taylor, “Introduction: The Promise of Consociational Theory,” in *Consociational Theory: McGarry and O’Leary and the Northern Ireland Conflict*, edited by Rupert Taylor (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), 10.

³ For a thorough debate of consociationalism in Northern Ireland see Taylor, *Consociational Theory*.

⁴ This usage of ‘nationalist’ refers to Irish nationalism, but both ‘unionism’ and ‘nationalism’ are nationalisms i.e. indicating a British and Irish identity respectively. In this article Alliance is described as a ‘non-nationalist’ party. This does not mean ‘non-Irish nationalist’ but that the party rejects being defined by a national identity.

⁵ The first full length volume on Alliance appeared in 2015: Brian Eggins, *History and Hope: The Alliance Party of Northern Ireland* (The History Press Ireland, Dublin, 2015).

⁶ Thomas C. Mitchell, *Indispensable Traitors: Liberal Parties in Settler Conflicts* (Westport: Greenwood, 2002).

⁷ Cera Murtagh, “Fighting for the Centre: Multi-Ethnic Parties in Divided Societies in Comparative Perspective” (PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2017).

⁸ Allison McCulloch, “Introduction: Contemporary Challenges to Power-Sharing Theory and Practice,” in *Power-Sharing: Empirical and Normative Challenges*, edited by Allison McCulloch and John McGarry (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017), 7.

⁹ All election results are taken from ARK “Elections” website, www.ark.ac.uk/elections (accessed 13 February, 2018).

¹⁰ Alliance Party, *Declaration of Intent: A New Political Charter* (Belfast: Alliance Party, 1970). Northern Ireland Political Collection.

¹¹ Allan Leonard, “The Alliance Party of Northern Ireland and Power Sharing in a Divided Society” (MA thesis, University College Dublin, 1999): 22.

¹² Paul Dixon, “Why the Good Friday Agreement is not Consociational,” *Political Quarterly*, 76, no. 3 (2005): 357-67, 360.

¹³ Alliance Party, “For Everyone”, file:///C:/Users/Student/Downloads/for-everyone.pdf (accessed 13 February 2018), 14.

¹⁴ Alliance Party, “Agenda for Democracy: Alliance Party Proposals for the Review of the Agreement,” <http://allianceparty.org/document/peace-process-papers/2004-good-friday-agreement-review/2004-01-07-agenda-for-democracy-alliance-proposals> (accessed 13 February 2018), 2.

¹⁵ David Mitchell, *Politics and Peace in Northern Ireland: Political Parties and the Implementation of the 1998 Agreement* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015).

¹⁶ Interview with Duncan Morrow, 20 May 2014.

¹⁷ Its guiding policy document was *Governing with Consent* (Belfast: Alliance Party, 1988). Northern Ireland Political Collection.

¹⁸ For the fullest expression of Alliance’s critique see Stephen Farry and Seán Neeson, “Beyond the Band-Aid Approach: An Alliance Party Perspective on the Belfast Agreement”, *Fordham International Law Journal* 22, no. 4 (1999): 1221–49.

- ¹⁹ Alliance Party, “How to Change Northern Ireland for Good: Manifesto 2017”, file:///C:/Users/Student/Downloads/2017-assembly-manifesto%20(2).pdf (accessed February 13, 2018), 11
- ²⁰ *Agreement Reached in the Multi-Party Talks*, 1998. CAIN Web Service, <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/agreement.htm> (accessed 13 February 2018), 5.
- ²¹ Farry and Neeson, *Beyond*; Alliance Party, *Agenda*.
- ²² *Inter alia*, Rupert Taylor, “The Injustice of a Consociational Solution to the Northern Ireland problem”, in Taylor, *Consociational Theory*, 309-30; Robin Wilson, *The Northern Ireland Experience of Conflict and Agreement: A Model for Export?* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010); Donald Horowitz, “The Agreement: Clear Consociational and Risky,” in *Northern Ireland and the Divided World: The Northern Ireland Conflict and the Good Friday Agreement in Comparative Perspective*, edited by John McGarry (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 89-108.
- ²³ Stephen Farry, *Power-Sharing: The Future for Northern Ireland?* Alliance Party discussion paper, August 1997, 26. Northern Ireland Political Collection.
- ²⁴ John McGarry and Brendan O’Leary, “Power Shared After the Deaths of Thousands,” in Taylor, *Consociational Theory*, 68-69.
- ²⁵ Stephen Farry, “The Right Thing to do – Comment on North Down Decision,” *Co. Down Spectator*, 24 May, reproduced on Alliance Party website, <http://allianceparty.org/article/2001/003628/the-right-thing-to-do-comment-on-the-north-down-decision> (accessed 13 February 2018).
- ²⁶ UUP leader David Trimble had resigned as First Minister four months earlier in protest at the lack of weapons decommissioning by the Irish Republican Army (IRA), Sinn Féin’s military wing, but was ready to return after some disarmament took place. Martina Purdy, *Room 21: Stormont – Behind Closed Doors* (Belfast: The Brehon Press, 2005).
- ²⁷ David Ford, “Tough Decision Leaves Alliance with a Role,” *Irish Times*, 5 November 2001.
- ²⁸ Jocelyn Evans and Jonathan Tonge, “The Future of the “Radical Centre” in Northern Ireland After the Good Friday Agreement,” *Political Studies* 51, no. 1 (2003): 26-50.
- ²⁹ Alliance Party, *Review of Assembly Designations and Voting System*, Alliance Party position paper, November 2001, 1. Northern Ireland Political Collection.
- ³⁰ See Evans and Tonge, “The Future”; Mitchell, *Indispensable Traitors*, 41.
- ³¹ Stephen Farry, “A Return to the Centre,” *Alliance News*, 29 January 2004, Alliance Party website, <http://allianceparty.org/article/2004/000227/a-return-to-the-centre-by-stephen-farry> (accessed February 23, 2013).
- ³² McGarry and O’Leary, “Power Shared”, 74-75. See also Robert Higson, “Anti-Consociationalism and the Good Friday Agreement: A Rejoinder,” *Journal of Peace, Conflict and Development*, 12, 2008, <http://www.brad.ac.uk/ssis/peace-conflict-and-development/issue-12/Anti-consociationalism-and-the-Good-Friday-Agreement,-A-Rejoinder.pdf> (accessed 13 February, 2018); Dixon, “Why the Good Friday Agreement”; Joseph Ruane and Jennifer Todd, “The Belfast Agreement: Context, Content, Consequences,” in *After the Good Friday Agreement: Analysing Political Change in Northern Ireland*, edited by Joseph Ruane and Jennifer Todd (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 1999), 1-29.
- ³³ Rick Wilford, “Northern Ireland: The Politics of Constraint”, *Parliamentary Affairs* 63, no. 1(2010): 134-155.
- ³⁴ Alex Schwartz, “How Unfair is Cross-Community Consent? Voting Power in the Northern Ireland Assembly,” *Northern Ireland Legal Quarterly* 61, no. 4 (2010): 349-62.
- ³⁵ Jonathan Tonge, *The New Northern Irish Politics?* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 218.
- ³⁶ Cera Murtagh, “Reaching Across: Institutional Barriers to Cross-Ethnic Parties in Post-Conflict Societies and the Case of Northern Ireland,” *Nations and Nationalism* 13, no. 3 (2015): 544-665.
- ³⁷ Christopher McCrudden, John McGarry, Brendan O’Leary and Alex Schwarz, “Why Northern Ireland’s Institutions Need Stability,” *Government and Opposition* 51, no. 1 (2016): 30-58, 36.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, 42-46.
- ³⁹ Derek Bell, *Why did the Alliance Party Decide to Join the Executive in 2010 and What are the Possible Consequences for the Party?* (MA thesis, Queen’s University Belfast, 2012).
- ⁴⁰ Alliance Party, “For Everyone”.
- ⁴¹ “OFMDFM Announcements are Another Missed Opportunity,” Alliance Party press release, 9 May 2013, <http://allianceparty.org/article/2013/007827/ofmdfm-announcements-are-another-missed-opportunity-alliance> (accessed 13 February 2018).

⁴² See Mitchell, *Politics and Peace*, 187-91.