

by-election in August, winning (or personating) over 1000 votes. But its leadership is heavily involved in UDA paramilitary activities and it is little more than the shop window for a fairly nasty organisation.

5. The disadvantages of direct contact with the UDA or the ULDP are similar to those of contact with proscribed organisations and are set out above. But there would be possible advantages:

- (a) the UDA/ULDP is a much larger and more amorphous organisation than the UVF/FUP or indeed PIRA/PSF, and has roots and considerable influence in loyalist working class areas. To be able to speak to them direct would increase our knowledge of attitudes in a section of opinion which could become increasingly important (especially if Ministers propose to follow policies which set unionist teeth on edge).
- (b) though it would be wrong to exaggerate the point, we might hope through direct contact to explain what the Government is doing and get messages through which might help on some occasions. For example, in May this year Andy Tyrrie, the UDA leader, played a useful and constructive role, together with the WP-RC, Paddy Devlin and others, in scotching Provo plans for a major sectarian confrontation in Belfast. It would have been useful to have had direct contact with him then. Similar occasions may arise in the future.
- (c) whether we like it or not, the UDA is a political as well as a paramilitary body, in a way neither PIRA nor the UVF, for example, are. Tyrrie uses his political influence; he writes articles, talks to other politicians, and is very much part of the Belfast political scene. (We know that he is keen to open a channel of communication with Government.)
- (d) we might hope (though I fear with little confidence) to encourage the UDA towards a political rather than paramilitary role (which Tyrrie professes to want).

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NAUK, CJ4/3963, memo to David Wyatt from David Blatherwick, 19 October 1981, p. 2