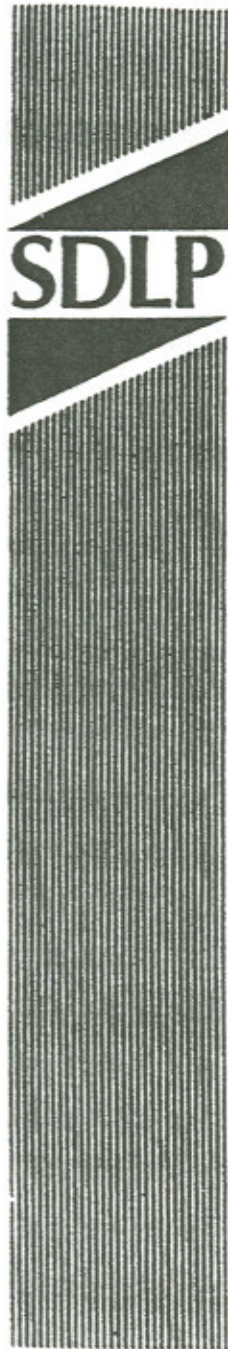


## **Appendix E**

**Communication Techniques from the Social Democratic and Labour Party of Northern Ireland and a Letter to supporters of the Labour Party of Britain**



# THE SDLP ORGANISATION HANDBOOK

**Social Democratic & Labour Party**

**38 University Street, Belfast. BT7 1FZ.**

**☎ (0232) 323428. Telex 747848**

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **COMMUNICATION**

#### **5.1 OBJECTIVES**

Effective communication is a key element in successful campaigning.

The SDLP is not a secret society existing solely for the benefit of its members.

We are in business to win the support of voters, men and women, for our policies and principles.

In your Branch you have a vital role to play in constantly communicating the SDLP message to the voters whose support you will be seeking at election time.

#### **5.2 TARGET AUDIENCES**

There are three groups of people with whom you need to be communicating:

- Members
- Supporters
- Electors

You need to be communicating with them on behalf of

- The MEP
- The MP or Constituency Representative
- The Councillors
- The Branch or Constituency Council.

### **5.3 MEANS OF COMMUNICATION**

- The Party Newslines or Branch Newslines.
- Press contacts.
- Press Releases.
- Photographs.
- Letters to the Editor.
- Phone-ins.
- Advertising and posters.
- Leaflets.

#### **Branch Newslines**

If the local Branch is producing its own Newslines, it is worthwhile bearing in mind the following:

- Keep each story brief and simple.
- Make it local as well as topical and use it to promote action.
- Use big type.
- Use cartoons and illustrations.
- Leave plenty of white space on the page.
- Use stories that keep the names of councillors, Constituency Representatives and prospective candidates before the electorate.
- Make sure it gets delivered.

If you are writing and delivering a regular Newslite no-one can say "We only hear from you at election time when you want our vote."

You can also use your Newslite to publicise fund-raising events and to encourage people to become members.

#### **Press Contacts**

- Get to know your local newspaper editors, reporters and photographers.
- Find out what kind of stories they are interested in.
- Read your local papers and study their style.
- Make sure you know their deadlines.
- Always be friendly. Don't argue with reporters or tell them what they should be writing.
- Give equal treatment to all reporters.

#### **Press Releases**

- Be accurate. Double check the spelling of names, places and dates.
- Type in double spacing. Make each sentence a separate paragraph.
- Put the most important point of the story in the first paragraph.
- Include a quote from someone you want to promote.
- Don't mention opponents by name. It only gives them free publicity.
- Try and write in the style of the papers you are sending to.



- Keep sentences short.
- Stick to the main points.
- Send a good black and white photograph.

"A picture is worth a thousand words".

### **Letters to The Editor**

Thousands of people read the letter columns in local papers. We must make sure we use the opportunity of letters columns to put across the SDLP point of view.

- Set up a letter writing panel
  - **keep press cuttings**
  - **monitor local issues**
  - **prepare draft letters**
  - **get people to write and send them.**
- Letters should be short and to the point.
- Concentrate on local issues or give national issues a local slant.
- Don't waste time attacking the newspaper.
- State your case and be positive.
- Take the lead on an issue. Avoid being defensive.
- Don't mention opponents by name. It only gives them free publicity.
- Make sure letters are being sent by as wide a range of people as possible and are not stereotyped in style.

### **Radio Phone-ins**

- Set up a phone-in panel to monitor programmes.
- Organise members or supporters to phone-in and put the SDLP point of view.
- Make sure they are supplied with suitable question and comment material.
- Be succinct - time will be short.
- Make sure you know when SDLP representatives are going to be interviewed on phone-ins.
- When you hear opponents being interviewed, don't just sit and fume. Phone up and question what they are saying.

### **Being Interviewed**

- Know your subject thoroughly.
- Decide which one (or maximum two) points you want to put across. You won't have time for more and the listeners won't remember them.
- Forget about the "millions out there". As far as the audience is concerned, you are talking to each one as an individual.
- Don't try and project your voice. You are not at a public meeting.
- Radio is a personal and intimate medium. Treat the microphone as a person you are speaking to who wants to listen to what you have to say.
- Avoid technicalities, but if necessary explain them as you go.

- Show that you know what you are talking about. But don't talk over people's heads. Equally, don't talk down to them.
- Say what you came to say. Once you've said it, stop.
- Before the interview, make sure you know what the interview is to be about, how long the item or programme will be, who else will be taking part, is it live or recorded, and why you have been invited.

#### **5.4 ADVERTISING AND POSTERS**

Advertising and posters announcing an event serve two purposes:

- They let people know what's happening.
- They let people know the SDLP are active in their neighbourhood.
- Keep your message clear and simple.
- Make sure you include essential information: dates, time, place etc.
- Use big type.
- Leave plenty of white space.
- Don't fly-post but make sure you put posters where people can see and read them.



## 5.5 LEAFLETS

Before starting work on a leaflet, make sure you know how many copies you are going to distribute and who is going to deliver them.

- Think about your target audience. Is the leaflet just going to members, to supporters and potential subscribers or is it for general distribution? You may need to vary the message for different audiences.
- Include a "feed-back box" on your leaflet, where appropriate. Communication is a two-way business and you can use a leaflet to find new members.
- Keep your leaflet simple.
- Keep the message brief.
- How long will it stay in a person's hand before it is thrown away?

That's all the time it's got to be read.

**So keep the words down.**

And all printed material:

Don't forget the **IMPRINT**

Anything you print and publish must by law carry the **full** name and address of both the publisher and printer.

e.g. Published by John Bradley, 89 Kilfinnan Road, Draperstown, Co. Derry. Printed by Quikprint Ltd., Industrial Estate, Magherafelt, Co. Derry.

## Enfield North Labour Party

Liberty House, 324 High Street  
Ponders End, Enfield. EN3 4HF  
Telephone 0181 805 8212

Parliamentary Spokesperson: **Joan Ryan**

Dear Resident,

## Welcome to Enfield North

I notice that your name has recently been added to the Electoral register. You may have moved to the area recently and as the Enfield North Labour Party Spokesperson on Parliamentary affairs I would like to welcome you to Enfield North.

We will be interested to hear your views and to offer our assistance on any Council related matter. **A Labour Councillor is available every Saturday**, at your local library, when open, **between 10 a.m. till 11.30 a.m. *no appointment is necessary.***

The London Borough of Enfield has been run by a Labour Council since May 1994. Since our election we have kept to the promises we made to the people of Enfield. In particular we have:

- **Opened a new Enfield Business Centre established at Enfield Highway, and Business and Innovation Centre opened at Mollison Avenue.**
- **More school places and better provision for children with special educational needs.**
- **Playgrounds re-instated and a further 6 refurbished.**
- **Enhanced recycling projects, especially with schools.**
- **Improved music tuition services.**
- **Enhanced pest control service developed.**
- **Hertford Road - joint revenues/benefit shop.**
- **"Anti-Poverty" Committee established - Clampdown on "Loan sharks"**



- **Major regeneration funding achieved:**

**£7 million European Development funds;**

**£500,000 European Social Funds - for training;**

**£1,895,000 Regional Selective Assistance Grant meant 463 jobs created and a further 143 safeguarded;**


**£1 million European funds for Youth Training Scheme.**

- **Shopmobility Scheme introduced in Enfield Town.**
- **Improved Disabled access ramps at libraries.**

This is in stark contrast to the Tories who at national level have broken promises on tax increases.

If you want to raise questions or discuss with me the issues that face the Country I would be pleased to hear from you. You can write to me, **Joan Ryan**, at the above address, or give me a call on 0181 805 8212. It will be good to hear your views.

Yours sincerely



**Joan Ryan**  
Labour's Parliamentary Spokesperson  
for Enfield North.

**PS.** I have enclosed a membership form to join the Labour Party, if you agree with us why not join now. If you would like to help us in any way then please contact my office.

**PPS.** Enclosed is a copy of New Labour's early pledges, keep this card and see that we keep our promises.

- **Cut class sizes to 30 or under for 5, 6 and 7 year-olds.**
- **Fast-track punishment for persistent young offenders**
- **cut NHS waiting lists by treating an extra 100.000 patients**
- **get 250,000 under-25 year-olds off benefit and into work**
- **set tough rules for government spending and borrowing; ensure low inflation; strengthen the economy.**