



## MODERATE NATIONALISTS

O'Neill's reforms were **WELCOMED** by many moderate nationalists as a welcome 'first step' towards more civil rights.

As a result NICRA called off their marches in response to create a 'breathing space' to reduce tension and encourage more reform

## PEOPLES DEMOCRACY

Peoples Democracy was set up as a new movement. They were more a more radical nationalist group made up of many students.

They **were not happy** with the limited nature of the Five Point Programme. They wanted much more considerable reforms.

They were not prepared to stop marching continued marching and announced their Belfast to Derry March for January 1969. This was attacked by loyalists at Burntoltet bridge (a spark for the troubles which would follow)



## UNIONISTS

Many unionists were **dismayed** at the five point programme.

They viewed it as a product of fear and the weak leadership of O'Neill. Many saw it as giving in to the threat of violence. Many felt the position of unionism was under threat.

Hard line unionist opponents such as William Craig and Ian Paisley were able to gain a great deal of support due to the tension of the time.

THE FIVE POINT PROGRAMME WAS A MAJOR SET OF REFORMS INTRODUCED BY NI PRIME MINISTER **TERENCE O'NEILL** ON 22nd NOVEMBER 1968.

It was introduced under pressure from the British Prime Minister **HAROLD WILSON** who was **dismayed** at the scenes of violence shown at the Derry March in October 1968.

Both Prime Minister Wilson and O'Neill hoped the reforms would **reduce nationalist anger**, stop **NICRA marches** and **reduce the tension** in N. Ireland.



**WHY 1968?**  
O'Neill was under serious pressure by the end of 1968:

**NATIONALISTS:**

By the **end of 1968**:

- They were **unhappy** and **frustrated** 😞 😞
- O'Neill's promised reforms on civil rights had provided much hope but had not materialised. There were **still major issues** over **voting, gerrymandering, discrimination in jobs and housing** and **security** issues like the special powers act. O'Neill had did little to change these pressing issues (or simply didn't have the power to change things)
- **Unionist policies still dominated** (University in Coleraine rather than Derry; New city named "Craigavon")
- **NICRA marches had been openly attacked** in controversial circumstances in **Derry** in October 1968. This was shown on television and seemed to show police violence towards NICRA. It caused much anger and concern. Violence was becoming an issue as marches were met by unionist counter-demonstrations. Many nationalists were encouraged and empowered by the publicity which was reaching around the world. Things seemed to be getting out of control with tensions building between communities.

**UNIONISTS:**

Unionism was becoming increasingly divided under O'Neill.

A major political divide began to grow between

- 1) **Liberal Unionists** who wanted reform and fair treatment for the catholic population and
- 2) **Conservative and more hard line elements** in unionism that wanted **no change** and worried about increasing tensions and the threat of a United Ireland. They included unionists like Craig, Faulkner and Paisley.

**BRITISH GOVERNMENT:**

The British government were **confused, worried and frustrated** by the increasing violence in Northern Ireland.

They had left the Province to its own affairs for decades and had little understanding of the complexities. They were embarrassed about a call for Civil rights in the United Kingdom.

**They put pressure on O'Neill to introduce reforms.**

## BACKGROUND

## REACTION TO FIVE POINT PROGRAMME



## O'NEILL'S FIVE POINT PROGRAMME

### AIMS OF 5 POINT PROGRAMME

**WHAT WERE O'NEILL'S AIMS FOR THE FIVE POINT PROGRAMME?**

The five point programme addressed many of the concerns and demands of NICRA. It promised that reforms would be introduced by 1971.

O'Neill desperately hoped that this would **bring an end to the civil rights marches** and the resulting tension and violence which was breaking out around them.

However, the Five point Programme **didn't address every NICRA concern** as this could **alienate harder line unionists and split the OUP further.**

- Aug 1968 Caledon Squat
- Aug 1968 Coalisland to Dungannon March
- October 1968 Derry March (violence)
- Nov 1968 FIVE POINT PLAN
- Dec 1968 NICRA calls of marches to allow 'breathing space'
- Jan 1969 Peoples Democracy March And attack at Burntoltet bridge - tensions increase.

## ULSTER AT A CROSSROADS SPEECH

O'Neill accompanied the Five Point Programme with a speech in **December 1968** which became known as the **CROSSROADS SPEECH**.

In a direct television broadcast O'Neill **pleaded** with people in Northern Ireland - from **both sides** - to **reduce the tension** and work together to **compromise** and move forward... otherwise, he warned, there would be **bloodshed** and violence.

**RESPONSE**  
His speech was **accepted** by **NICRA** and they did announce a **halt** to their marches.

**HOWEVER**, it was ignored by **PEOPLES DEMOCRACY** - who announced plans for their Belfast to Derry March

It was also **heavily criticised** by O'Neill's **hard line Unionist critics** who believed O'Neill was weak and giving in to threats. **CRAIG**, another Unionist in O'Neill's Cabinet was **fired** for speaking out against the speech. It showed the deep divisions.

## The FIVE POINTS

**1) HOUSING**  
Council housing in Northern Ireland would be allocated on a **points basis (need not creed)**

**2) VOTING REFORM**  
New local government reforms would help end the practice of extra business votes (A move **towards** one man, one vote)

**3) LONDONDERRY REFORMS**  
A new Development Commission would replace the old Londonderry corporation (known for gerrymandering)

**5) OMBUDSMAN**  
A new **independent** ombudsman (a neutral authority) would be appointed to deal with **complaints** about things like **discrimination**

**4) SPECIAL POWERS ACT**  
It was promised that 'certain sections' of the Special Powers Act would be removed

## WHAT WERE THE FIVE POINTS?