



JIM NICHOLSON UNDERSTANDS THE ISSUES AND HAS THE COMMITMENT TO DELIVER THE BEST DEAL POSSIBLE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND FROM EUROPE. NORTHERN IRELAND NEEDS QUALITY, FULL-TIME UNIONIST REPRESENTATION IN BRUSSELS AND STRASBOURG. JIM NICHOLSON PROVIDES IT. HE WORKS FOR ULSTER; HE WORKS FOR YOU.

GIVE JIM NICHOLSON YOUR **No. 1 VOTE** ON THURSDAY, 10th JUNE

ELIMINATING FRAUD AND CORRUPTION

Despite the Commission's assurances, a lax attitude to fraud still characterises the EU institutions, as has been highlighted recently in a major corruption scandal at the Commission's statistics agency. Jim Nicholson is one of a group of MEPs that has been pressuring the Commission to accept its political responsibility in this affair. Jim Nicholson believes that **the much-needed reform of how the EU works means that its current openness to fraud must be addressed.**

PROTECTING CONSUMERS

We all have the right to know the origin of the food we eat and the right to expect food that is wholesome and safe. In part, this can be achieved by traceability and clear labelling. In addition, **we need tougher border controls to prevent illegal and unsafe products entering the UK food chain.** Sadly, still too much poor quality produce is entering the market at a cost to consumer health and the economic viability of local producers. Furthermore, until there is a consensus on the issue, **Jim Nicholson believes that consumers must have the right to choose whether or not to purchase GM products.**

THE SOCIAL DIMENSION

Since the Labour Government signed the Social Chapter in 1997, a raft of measures has been passed that make EU and British labour markets less flexible, add to burdens on business and threaten to destroy jobs here in Northern Ireland. More such measures are in the pipeline if Socialist MEPs have their way.

Jim Nicholson and his allies have argued for best practice by employers to be promoted on a voluntary, flexible basis and have resisted attempts to impose new legislation where a thorough cost-impact assessment has not been carried out. **Jim Nicholson has also fought attempts to harmonise taxes upwards** towards the levels of some of our EU neighbours, particularly taxes on jobs and business investment.

A EUROPE FOR URBAN DWELLERS

Europe has to be about people. Jim Nicholson fought successfully for the retention of the Urban Initiative for Towns and Cities. He promotes the Partnership initiative associated with the PEACE programme here. Much useful work has been done to regenerate some of our most impoverished areas, but a sea of red tape is still frustrating this worthwhile initiative. Northern Ireland needs a balanced and complementary development of urban and rural areas. The existing multiplicity of agencies, boards and quangos should be streamlined under the ongoing Review of Public Administration so that EU funds can make the maximum positive impact on urban regeneration and the overall quality of life. **Jim Nicholson is a strong supporter of plans to redevelop our provincial capital, Belfast,** making it more attractive to shoppers, workers and tourists by pedestrianising the maximum number of areas.

TOURISM

Northern Ireland is a beautiful place, but our tourism sector only contributes 2% to our overall GDP. Our tourism industry still lags behind the rest of the UK and the Republic of Ireland. Jim Nicholson has lobbied hard in Europe to promote Northern Ireland as a premier tourist destination and has helped secure significant EU tourist infrastructure funding. The UK is one of the few countries within the EU that does not apply a reduced sales tax on tourism. **Jim Nicholson is working with his UUP Westminster colleagues to apply pressure on the Chancellor of the Exchequer to lower the level of VAT on tourism.**



A FUTURE FOR RURAL NORTHERN IRELAND

Jim Nicholson has been active on the European Parliament's Agriculture Committee for 15 years and defended the interests of the Northern Ireland farmer. He has been involved in all four major reforms of the Common Agricultural Policy to date, including the mid-term review, and sat on the temporary committee dealing with BSE. The Common Agricultural Policy is perceived to have been an expensive failure that has resulted in low farm incomes, high prices for consumers, a drift from the land, pointless red tape, and damage to the Third World.

Reform of this system has to be real and meaningful to give hard-working and efficient farmers a fair deal instead of featherbedding those who have come to treat the CAP as some sort of private bank resource. Jim Nicholson's view is that the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (NI) has to be weaned away from the idea that Brussels regulation can never be questioned. The development of a Regional Food policy would enhance and stimulate the efforts of those producers working within the local rural economy and reduce the distance that animals in the food-chain are transported. Recognition must be given to the development of the Northern Ireland Speciality Food sector. Priority needs to be given to the linkages between the food industry and tourism, and strategic opportunities sought to present Northern Ireland as a distinctive, quality-led food region of excellence.

A FUTURE FOR OUR FISHERMEN

Should Northern Ireland's fishing industry continue to decline as it has in recent years it is conceivable that a day will come when we will have no fishing industry at all. **The Common Fisheries Policy has been an unmitigated disaster and ending it is the only way to secure a future for our ports at Kilkeel, Portavogie, and Ardglass.** Arrangements would be made, thereafter, to restore regional or national control of what were once rich fishing grounds. Jim Nicholson regularly articulates that case on the Fisheries Committee of which he has been a member since 1989.



Ulster Unionists
MANIFESTO



1 Jim Nicholson

June 10th, 2004

Jim Nicholson 2004

On 10th June, Jim Nicholson, the UUP candidate, seeks your support to continue his work for the people of Northern Ireland in the European Parliament. **Jim Nicholson is the only candidate with proven experience, commitment and knowledge of the European scene.** His record as an MEP since 1989 speaks for itself.

Simply British

CREATING INFLUENCE FOR UNIONISM

Ulster Unionists are adamant that it is for the people of Northern Ireland to decide their own constitutional destiny. Self-determination is a key European concept. As such, we should not be afraid of forming alliances with likeminded people.

Jim Nicholson believes that Northern Ireland's best interests are served by making the Unionist case at the centre of European political power. As such, he is a member of the European Democrats section of the EPP-ED, the largest political group in the Parliament. He enjoys all the advantages of

being in the centre-right mainstream while having complete freedom to support Euro-realist views. **Jim Nicholson has brought Unionism in from the margins.** He will not be a voice in the wilderness.

His influence is demonstrated by the fact that, despite being the only Ulster Unionist, **Jim Nicholson heads the Parliament's crucial committee dealing with the EU's relations with the USA.** That gives him remarkable access in Washington and invaluable opportunities to present the Unionist position to the world's only superpower.

GOVERNED ACCORDING TO OUR LAWS AND CUSTOMS

The EU, regrettably, has not been as effective as Jim Nicholson would like in dealing with international terrorism – or our own homegrown terrorism. Sensible cooperation between countries in the fight against international crime is welcome but it can be achieved without resort to a European Police Force and European arrest warrants.

The UUP is a signatory to the European Charter against racism, cherishes diversity and supports a humane asylum policy in Northern Ireland. Unionists comprehend pluralism much more naturally than nationalists, who seek to make everyone the same. The free movement of peoples across borders is a reality with which we must come to terms. **Controlled immigration can be beneficial but abuse of the asylum laws cannot be tolerated.**


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A EUROPE OF NATIONS, NOT A SUPER-STATE

Jim Nicholson is a Euro-realist. He approaches the EU from the position of a mainstream Unionist, **supporting cooperation between free nations for mutual advantage.** He is opposed to over-regulation and harmonisation measures in key areas where Westminster is the best judge. Jim Nicholson welcomes the Prime Minister's decision to let the British people decide on any new European Constitution. **The EU Constitution would have profound effects on the way we are governed.** The people should have their say when it is agreed, not when it suits Labour's electoral interests. An EU Constitution might have been useful if it just consolidated existing treaties. In reality, it is yet another attempt to create an EU super-state. **Jim Nicholson will continue to oppose the EU Constitution in the European Parliament and in the referendum.** The priority of the EU should not be to create a federation but to revive the Eurozone's flagging economy.

KEEPING OUR OWN CURRENCY

Since 2002, the Euro has co-existed with the British Pound and the Swedish and Danish currencies exploding the myth that a single market must have a single currency. Indeed, Sterling has outperformed the Euro. **Jim Nicholson believes it is in the UK's national interest to retain Sterling** and control over interest rates, exchange rates and tax policy. To surrender them would threaten our basic concept of democracy – that we are governed and taxed by those we elect and can dismiss. In Northern Ireland we have seen what happened **when the Irish Republic adopted the Euro. It was an excuse to raise prices.** In continental Europe, convergence was only achieved at a huge cost in unemployment terms. We in Northern Ireland share an open Border with the Eurozone, though, and must have the flexibility to deal with either Pounds or Euro.

A GENUINE SINGLE MARKET

Jim Nicholson is convinced that, instead of trying to concoct an EU super-state, time and effort would be better spent bringing a single market to completion. There is a belief that some states do not enforce the rules as rigidly as the UK and that British business is disadvantaged. Not only is there not sufficient consultation before rules are adapted for UK implementation but we need simple, effective mechanisms to address complaints. **Jim Nicholson is proposing a Single Market Ombudsman to intervene where domestic barriers to free trade exist** and to allow Northern Ireland businesses to compete on a level playing field.

Jim Nicholson strongly supports the moves to create a transatlantic market embracing the EU and the USA in a range of areas by 2015. He advocates a deepening and broadening of this process, further opening US markets to Northern Ireland businesses, and reducing the barriers to US investment in Northern Ireland.

A COMPETITIVE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

At Lisbon, it was agreed that **the EU should aim to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world.** It is a concept Jim Nicholson supports but will not

come about while the EU continues to regulate, interfere and dictate. Business must have the freedom to produce wealth and growth. Jim welcomes the use of the Extended Impact Assessment on the Unfair Commercial Practices directive, which highlighted that improvements can be made.

Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) are the backbone of the local economy. **Jim Nicholson knows the EU could do more to guide small firms towards funding possibilities.** Nearly a third of a billion Pounds earmarked for British SMEs between now and 2006 remains untapped. Northern Ireland must aim for its fair share. Jim Nicholson has been active too in encouraging the EU to take a 'light touch' approach to regulation of e-commerce so that we can compete with Asia.

CARING FOR ULSTER'S ENVIRONMENT

Environment is one of the areas of broadest EU competence. Jim Nicholson wants to make sustainable development more than just a slogan. At the same time, **he has been fighting unnecessary legislation proposed by Greens and Socialists that works against business competitiveness.** The European Commission must be held to account for costs arising from directives. Those on waste water, packaging waste, and electrical waste have been enacted without any thought as to the costs involved.

The current Labour government has been in such a haste to sign up to EU waste directives that it has given little consideration to the consequences. The cost of failing to tackle the issue of landfill is now falling on ratepayers. Jim Nicholson is convinced that **there is a need to promote domestic environmental service industries.** Otherwise, fridge mountains will become a blight on our landscape. Equally, there is a need to generate energy from waste where that is feasible. Jim Nicholson is happy to report, though, that his efforts to remove tax disincentives from restoring property rather than building anew are beginning to bear fruit.

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MAKING TRANSPORT EFFICIENT

A modern economy simply cannot function without an efficient transport infrastructure. This is an area where the UK could learn valuable lessons from some of our EU partners. While access to the mainland from Northern Ireland has been improved, Jim Nicholson knows there is no room for complacency. **Road and rail travel times within Northern Ireland and the island of Ireland can be improved.** Belfast to Dublin takes over 2 hours by train to cover a distance of 100 miles. Yet, in France, the Paris-Marseilles route (nearly 500 miles) takes just three hours. Jim Nicholson will fight for urgent EU assistance with further track and rolling-stock upgrades. Few of us have not enjoyed low-cost air travel in recent years. **Air services could benefit from even greater liberalisation** with a final end to state aid to failing carriers but not at the expense of safety. Jim Nicholson has been active in this area on the European Parliament's Regional Transport and Tourism Committee.

GETTING THE MOST OUT OF REGIONAL POLICY

Undoubtedly, with the welcome admission of former communist states, regional assistance will drift gradually eastwards. A third of the EU budget goes towards helping poorer regions so this subject occupies much of Jim Nicholson's time. With your help on June 10th, **he will continue the fight for Northern Ireland's needs to be met.** The effectiveness of current EU regional policy has to be questioned, however. It is too complex, too bogged down in red tape and costs far too much to administer. The Assembly had some success in addressing our infrastructural deficit and there


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CHEAP FUEL IS A MUST

Secure and reliable supplies of energy are essential ingredients in a modern economy. We all know the disadvantages Northern Ireland business labours under in terms of energy costs. This, coupled with our over-reliance on Middle Eastern oil, should stimulate research into alternative energy technologies. Jim Nicholson feels we in the UK have not exploited the potential of wave technology. Nevertheless, **Jim Nicholson holds that the EU aim that we should be providing 10% of our power from renewable sources by 2010 is unrealistic.** We need a public debate before scarring our environment with thousands of wind turbines. **Jim Nicholson supports the Government's objective that 5.75% of transport fuels should come from bio-fuels** by 2010 but without tax advantages for conversion we will be left behind by other member states.