

**Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 2009**

**Speech by Steven Agnew, Green Party European election candidate 2009 for Northern Ireland.**

**A New Economy – A Green Economy - A Green Economy Creates Jobs**

**Good morning everyone. Firstly I wish to thank the Green Party for nominating me for the European election. While other Northern Ireland political parties treat Europe as a political backwater, in which to dump their waste, we in the Green Party recognise its importance. Most of the legislation which affects our lives is initiated in the European Parliament. This is particularly true in the case of environmental policies, virtually all of which have been initiated in Europe.**

So don't worry, it's not all up to Sammy.

**The Green Party has 43 members in the European Parliament from 14 different countries. We have played a major role in the creation of legislation that has helped to protect our environment, set ambitious targets for renewable energy, increase social protection and protect biodiversity. I want to join that team and continue the great work that the Greens are doing in Europe.**

The current crisis in economics and climate presents us with a real opportunity for change. I want to seize that opportunity, as failure to do so will be a greater sin than leading us here in the first place.

**Everyone knows the problems; the 'triple crunch' of job losses on a massive scale, fuel poverty, and of course climate change.**

**I have a solution that will tackle all three together.**

**A solution that will create tens of thousands of jobs here in Northern Ireland.**

**A solution where new Green technologies will bring energy security to Northern Ireland.**

**A solution that will ensure that Northern Ireland plays its part in the fight against climate change.**

**A Green Industrial Revolution.**

A Green Industrial Revolution can create a new Northern Ireland where our indigenous industries will thrive once more, harnessing our unique natural resources and the manufacturing skill and industrial entrepreneurialism of our people.

We can already see it happening here at Harland and Wolff. We see the skills, developed during the Industrial Revolution being adapted to meet the challenges of this new era. The Yard, once regarded for its ship building is now assembling turbines for new wind farms and last year assembled the first prototype wave turbine the SeaGen to generate tidal energy.

This is only the beginning.

These new industries must be nurtured and expanded to provide new jobs to replace those that are currently being lost.

We have the best natural resources in Europe for renewable energy production. We should be providing the lead, instead we lag behind countries like Germany where they have created a quarter-of-a-million jobs in their renewables sector with three-quarter-of-a-million more predicted in the next 10-years.

I want to see us tap into this resource to bring energy independence to Northern Ireland and end the fluctuation in energy prices that has seen thousands driven into fuel poverty.

**Energy efficiency measures such as the insulation of homes can create much needed jobs in the construction sector, as well as reducing energy bills, and reducing emissions.**

**Sustainable waste solutions based on the principal of reduce, reuse, and recycle. Be wary of those who talk green but support incineration which would lock us into 30-years of waste creation.**

**We must shift expenditure to more sustainable forms of transport and the creation of a public transport system that people will want to use.**

Green thinking has entered the mainstream on the international stage and it is time for Northern Ireland to emerge from the margins.

US President Barack Obama got elected on the promise of a Green New Deal; 5 million new green jobs and the doubling of America's renewable energy production within two years.

**My proposals are radical in their thinking but they are also underpinned by sound economics and based on cutting edge science and technology.**

They can create jobs for those whose skills lie dormant and for our young people who are ready to embark on new careers.

**I offer;**

**New jobs not old thinking.**

**Innovation not stagnation.**

**To lead the way, not lag behind.**

**Vote Green!**