

Patronising Unionists are a gift to Irish unity

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I hope the new First Minister of Northern Ireland, Michelle O'Neill, likes being patronised because she was in abundance yesterday.

First, there was Rishi Sunak, of [whom the Guardian reports](#):

Rishi Sunak has urged the new Northern Ireland executive to focus on "the day-to-day things that matter to people", not constitutional change.

And the same report made clear that:

In an interview this morning Sir Jeffrey Donaldson, the DUP leader, said that he did not agree with O'Neill about a referendum taking place within a decade and that she was wrong to raise the issue. He told Sky News:

"I don't agree with that at all. I think that Michelle O'Neill, instead of focusing on a divisive border poll - she says she wants to be a first minister for all, well that means the unionist community ...

Let's move forward together. Let's focus on the issues that really matter to people. They're not interested in a divisive border poll."

It's quite remarkable that after two years of total political pettiness that Donaldson should tell O'Neill that she should stick to day-to-day issues and not pursue her political interests.

Sunak was equally patronising.

If they think their comments help the cause of keeping Ireland in the Union I think both are very seriously mistaken. I can only see O'Neill reacting by telling them where they can shove their opinions, and to be candid, rightly so.