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NORTHERN IRELANDS LARGEST POLITICAL PARTY



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DODDS - SCURRILOUS ACCUSATION WITH ABSOLUTELY NO FOUNDATION

The DUP's North Belfast MP Nigel Dodds has refuted claims from David Burnside, of the Ulster Unionist Party, that the DUP are committed to protecting Sinn Fein members from investigation about historical crimes. Mr Dodds responded by saying,

"This criticism comes from a man who has occupied every possible position on the failed Belfast Agreement. He was a supporter but also a supposed sceptic. No one could ever establish where he really stood? During election



campaigns in South Antrim he could be pro-Belfast Agreement at one door, then anti-Agreement at the next. We do remember that he stood by his party when they placed fully armed republicans in government on three occasions.

The idea that the DUP is providing immunity cover for Sinn Fein representatives is a scurrilous accusation with absolutely no foundation. Where has Mr Burnside been over the last few years? We have said on countless occasions that everyone is equal



under the law and equally subject to the law. There can be no equivocation regarding the rule of law. That is what the DUP has founded its strategy upon. Indeed, the police have rightly stated that 'no one is immune from prosecution.'

We have stated that no party should be in government without being committed to solely peaceful and democratic means, with a clear support for the police, the courts and the rule of law. We laid out those conditions when David Burnside's party was in government with Sinn Fein, while there was a fully armed and functioning Provisional IRA. Indeed when David Burnside's party was sitting in government we tabled motion after motion calling for the exclusion of Sinn Fein until they met our democratic standards but the UUP refused time and again to give us their support. It was not the DUP who was protecting Sinn Fein.

David's party was incapable of standing up to republicans. They caved in on every occasion and failed to promote our unionist interests. It was people like David Burnside who rubbished the DUP strategy. They thought we could not force the PIRA to decommission – but we did. They never thought we could get Sinn Fein to endorse the police, the courts and the rule of law - but we did.

We will not take lectures from David Burnside about how to deal with Sinn Fein. After all what did the UUP ever achieve apart from unaccountable, unstable and unsustainable government?"

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