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DURKAN COMMENTS ON EAMES/BRADLEY REPORT

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SDLP Leader and Foyle MP Mark Durkan MLA has called for today’s Eames/Bradley report to be given full and careful reflection.

Mr Durkan said victims need truth, remembrance and recognition.

He said: “This report needs to be given full consideration and careful reflection in and around and in its specific recommendations.

“A group who have engaged in such a degree of contact and consideration with the victims, parties, authorities and other interests should not have its work completely rubbished by those who have a poorer record in engagement or sensitivity.

“While the group might have better presented their recommendations that is no excuse for any of us but to fully address their body of proposals and assess their worth in terms of victims and wider community and future generations.

“The obvious emotions being expressed at the moment are poignant evidence that we cannot simply shrug the past off or ignore its currency not just now but in the future too.

“Victims have a mix of needs in terms of truth, remembrance and recognition. These will not be met if politics simply patronises them or ghettoises them.

“For the character of our wider society and our future political health we need to create a means of registering and recovering the truth of what happened to people, families and individuals and to reflect both the brutality and futility of all that was suffered by all.

“Careful contemplation of this report and what it might mean for each other might give us a basis for sustainable reflection on our past.

“Dismissing or ditching it entirely because of some questionable proposals questionably made will not.

“Parties need to be measured and sensitive in this context and governments must be open and responsible.

“It would be a travesty if the challenges of dealing with the past and choices for doing so on a

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moral basis are reduced to partisan bartering crudely traded against other outstanding issues.

“The SDLP has been and remains absolutely consistent in appreciating the totality of hurt suffered by all victims and still being suffered.

“We have been equally steadfast in pressing the duty of truth on those who created those victims in the name of whatever cause.”

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