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Durkan remarks on collusion attempting to re-write history

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Sinn Féin Assembly member Alex Maskey has accused the SDLP leader Mark Durkan of 'insulting the intelligence of victims of collusion'. Mr Maskey, himself a victim of British Agent Brian Nelson, made his remarks after the SDLP leader claimed that the release of the Police Ombudsman report into the murder of Raymond McCord Junior would finally prove allegations of collusion where true. Mr Durkan however ignored the fact that for two decades when collusion was at its height the SDLP dismissed collusion as 'republican propaganda'.

Mr Maskey said:

"Many people within the broad nationalist and republican community, but particularly victims of the collusion policy, were stunned yesterday when Mark Durkan attempted to claim that the Police Ombudsman Report into the killing of Raymond McCord justified their position on collusion. He attempted to spin the lie that the SDLP had been trying to expose the reality of collusion for years. The exact opposite is the case.

"The SDLP supported the RUC. The SDLP supported the RUC Special Branch. The SDLP encouraged nationalists to co-operate with these organisations at the time when they were controlling and directing unionist murder gangs. In 1985 after the Anglo-Irish Agreement the SDLP told us that the British now had a neutral position on the six counties. The SDLP swallowed this lie and attempted to sell it to the nationalist community. At the same time the British were re-arming the death squads through South Africa and updating their intelligence through people like Brian Nelson.

"But what annoys and upsets victims of the British collusion policy most is that when Sinn Féin along with Human Rights and victims organisations were seeking to expose this policy when it was at its height, the SDLP publicly dismissed concerns about collusion as 'republican propaganda'. Indeed in my own case the SDLP briefed the media that it was their belief that the attempt to murder me was carried out by fellow republicans. No amount to spin from Mark Durkan can alter this reality. Indeed his attempts to rewrite history on this issue are insulting the intelligence of victims."ENDS

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