



“A CONSISTENT
& DOGGED
ADVOCATE FOR
CIVIL & HUMAN
RIGHTS,
EQUALITY &
PEACE”

MARK DURKAN



“ for being a consistent advocate for civil and human rights, equality and peace, playing a crucial role in giving moderate nationalists a political voice in a period of history where violence has been the norm, and for playing a stellar role in initiating the Northern Ireland peace process.”

Mark Durkan has been the MP for Foyle since 2005 prior to which he served as the Member of The Legislative Assembly for the same constituency. He was the leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party, which he joined in 1981, until 2010. Mark was on his party's negotiating team during the period leading up to the Good Friday Agreement and then served as Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland alongside David Trimble between 2001 and 2002 during one of the most crucial phases in the Province's political history.

Mark first became involved in politics during his student days when he was elected Deputy President of Queen's Students' Union. The following year, he moved to Dublin after being elected Deputy President of the Union of Students in Ireland, USI. In 1984 he returned to Derry to work for John Hume as his Westminster As-

sistant. He subsequently became a key figure in the party, organizing MP election victories for Seamus Mallon and Eddie McGrady in 1986 and 1987.

In 1990 Mark became Chairperson of the SDLP, serving until 1995, and was elected to Derry City Council in 1993. He was a key member of the SDLP team during the negotiations leading to the Good Friday Agreement and was described by journalists as its "chief draftsman".

After leading a resoundingly successful 'yes' campaign for the SDLP, Mark was elected to the Northern Ireland Assembly in 1998 for Foyle. He was appointed to the Northern Ireland Executive as Minister for Finance and Personnel. He implemented a raft of radical initiatives including setting up the Executive Programme Funds, a mechanism for ensuring that public money was spent according to the

priorities of the people rather than the practices of the past.

He has been a consistent advocate for civil and human rights, equality and peace, and has been a crucial player in assisting moderate nationalists to find a political voice in a period of history where violence has been the norm. He has a strong pedigree on many issues - including justice issues, economic development, healthcare and children's rights. He has established a reputation as a leading advocate on international development issues and on civil liberties, and was described by Liberty as an 'incredible and powerful ally' for human rights.

Mark is currently the Chairperson of the Assembly Enterprise Trade and Investment Committee. Mark, a keen Manchester United fan, lives in Derry and is married to Jackie. They have one daughter, Dearbháil.