

BY: S. D. L. P.

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*Ms. Nolan  
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**Social Democratic & Labour Party**  
Páirtí Sóisialta Daonlathach an Lucht Oibre



**SDLP**

Cranmore House,  
611C Lisburn Road,  
Belfast BT9 7GT

Telephone: 668100.  
Fax: 669009

## SDLP ELECTION STATEMENT ISSUED AT LAUNCH OF SDLP CAMPAIGN ON MONDAY, 20 MAY 1996

The central issue in this election is clear. It is to create a mandate to send parties to all party talks. The objective of those talks is an agreement among our divided people, creating institutions which will have the allegiance of all sections of our people. This is the only way to achieve the lasting stability which is the basis of lasting peace. All stable countries in the world, particularly countries with divided or diverse communities, are stable because their system of government is based on agreement and has the allegiance of all sections of their community.

The logic of that position is that we have to accommodate in our new institutions the legitimate rights of all sections of our community and, in particular, of our two main traditions. This challenge will require new thinking on all sides. It will not be easy but, given that the opportunity now exists to end the killing on our streets for ever and take the gun and bomb out of our politics, it is a challenge to which we must devote all our energies. We will be considerably strengthened in our approach to that challenge by a very strong mandate from the people.


The SDLP also believe that while we are engaged in consistent dialogue in order to reach political agreement we should work together with the other main parties on matters of common concern particularly on serious social and economic problems. By doing so we can build the trust that will help us in the more difficult political dialogue. Over the years the SDLP have made major contacts across the United States and in Europe. 1996 is not 1920 and the time has come to look outwards and to recognise that we cannot live apart in today's world in which all countries are interdependent. We are prepared to work through our established contacts with others in a spirit of cross community partnership to seek inward investment and to market the products of our small industries.

Let us now leave behind the rhetoric of the past centuries and prepare our society for the challenges of the 21st century. We are asking the voters to join with us in this election by coming out in strength to give the SDLP a strong and clear mandate to achieve the lasting peace and stability on which we can seriously tackle, with the aid of the massive international goodwill, the serious social and economic problems of our society and begin an era of real politics.

Ends

FAO JOE HACKETT

PST, PSS, S/S Ó hUiginn,  
Counsellors A-I, Section,  
Messrs Teahon, Donlon &  
Dalton, Ambassadors  
London & Washington,  
Joint Secretary



John Hume MP MEP Party Leader

Seamus Mallon MP Deputy Leader

Eddie McGrady MP Chief Whip

Member Party of the Party of European Socialists and Socialist International

