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NORTHERN IRELANDS LARGEST POLITICAL PARTY

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DUP NEWS**Latest News:****SINN FEIN'S PARADE WILL DAMAGE CITY'S ECONOMY**

ROBIN Newton East Belfast DUP MLA has described the attitude of Sinn Fein regarding the Belfast RIR Homecoming Parade as being damaging to political progress, embittering relationships and damaging to already under pressure city centre retailers. Robin Newton said,

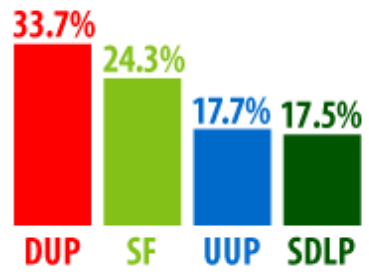
"It is very difficult to understand Paul Maskey's political mind-set as he calls hundreds of republicans onto the streets in opposition to the troops' homecoming parade, an event that will honour soldiers who have served, respect those who have been injured and pay tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice in foreign fields. He expresses his opposition to the Royal Irish Regiment being present and the "illegal" war in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, there are many in those countries who are only too glad of the military being there.

In organising their controversial counter parade and rally, which is in danger of getting out of control, Mr Maskey is damaging his own case when in future in Belfast City Council or at Assembly level he seeks support for projects with a nationalist ethos. His behaviour does nothing for community relations and damages the limited political progress that has been made. It is the city's image which will suffer from such a misguided protest.

It is not too late for Sinn Fein to see good sense in this matter. Paul Maskey can pull

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back from a situation that will embitter relationships, damage the city's economy and may well end in carnage. Sinn Fein have another 364 days and 23 hours to hold a protest against the war if that is their real intention."

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