

SINN FEIN DUBLIN CASTLE

25 November 1994

NOTICE OF QUESTION:

Re funding to Irish language schools in the North

This week, the British government's Education Minister, Michael Ancram ruled that no grant aid was to be given to Meanscoil Feirste, the only Irish language secondary school in the Six Counties. This disgraceful decision casts a question mark over the British government's commitment to recognition of nationalists cultural and educational rights.

In the area of parity of esteem, their decision is a clear indicator of the British government's refusal to acknowledge the rights of parents and children to education through Irish. Respect for cultural tradition is a cornerstone of parity of esteem. I ask that the Dublin government and this Forum and all cultural organisations lend their moral and financial support to the campaign to keep the Meanscoil open.

Gerry Adams, Sinn Fein Delegation

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NOTICE OF QUESTION: Re British Army

Sinn Fein wish to give notice of a question on the behaviour of the British army in West Belfast. There have been several incidents of serious harassment of nationalists in the area recently and it should be noted that the regiment involved, the 1st Battalion Parachute Regiment has the worst record of violent harassment of nationalists over the last 25 years.

The most recent serious incident was on Wednesday November 16. John Hillock, while on his way to work that morning was set upon by a gang of paratroopers and badly beaten.

Parties in attendance at this Forum including Sinn Fein have quite correctly recorded concern at other violent acts. It is important that the activities of British crown forces receive our attention also not least because of the need to build confidence at this critical phase of the peace process.

Gerry Adams, Sinn Fein Delegation.