

Sinn Fein

Background Note

At the Sinn Fein annual conference on 3 February, Mr Gerry Adams outlined a "peace process" and referred to the "inevitability of talks" between the Government and Sinn Fein. Unionist MPs in particular are vociferously opposed to any suggestion that the Government might talk to Sinn Fein (some suspect 'behind the scenes' negotiations involving a ceasefire). The Government has consistently made it clear that there can be no contact with Sinn Fein before there has been a definite and prolonged renunciation of its support for violence.

CPLHILL/3925/MD

Sinn Fein

D J R HILL
CONSTITUTIONAL AND POLITICAL DIVISION

The government has consistently made clear that we will have no dealings with Sinn Fein while it supports the use of violence.

[If Sinn Fein wants to be treated like a constitutional political party it will need to behave like one.]

cc PS/Secretary of State (L&S) - B
PS/Paymaster General (L&S) - B
PS/Minister of State (L&S) - B
Mr Pilling (L&S) - B
Mr Thomas - B
Mr McNeill - B

PARLIAMENTARY SECTION - B

PM'S QUESTIONS: SINN FEIN

I attach a revised line for No 10 on Mr Maginnis's response to Mr Adam's speech. At PUS's suggestion it follows more precisely the line taken in the Prime Minister's recent letter to Mr Trimble.

I should be grateful if, subject to the Secretary of State's approval, you could arrange for this to be substituted for the material I submitted earlier today.

Signed: David Hill

D J R HILL
Constitutional and Political Division
4 February 1991

BNC

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