

Briefing Note

The Government's review of its relationship with Sinn Fein, which will begin tomorrow, will focus mainly on the question of whether Sinn Fein intends to continue to give political support to the armed struggle being waged by the IRA. In the past Mr. Gerry Adams accused the British Government of embracing the rhetoric of peace making but avoiding the real challenges. The real challenge now for Mr. Adams himself is to answer two simple questions:-

- (1) Has he yet gone to the IRA to ask for a ceasefire, and if not, why?
- (2) Does his party continue to support the "armed struggle" of the IRA?

These are simple political questions, and the Government will be looking at what Sinn Fein and the IRA do and say over the immediate future, to see if a clear answer is given to these questions. Democratic politicians in other jurisdictions will also be watching how Sinn Fein answers the questions.

The Government wants Sinn Fein to answer these questions for themselves. It wants an answer to these questions that is simple, genuine and convincing, not tactical or semantical.

Sinn Fein must avoid the temptation to blame others for the dilemma they find themselves in because of the contradiction between their own talk of peace, and the IRA action in Adare and Manchester. This political dilemma can only be resolved if Sinn Fein answers these simple questions about their party policy.