

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

IRELAND



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note prepared for Yonisevich's meeting with US Bishops
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References by Members of Sinn Fein to support for or links
with the I.R.A.

SI6281

Sinn Fein support for the I.R.A.

(i) 'An Phoblacht' of 4 November, 1982 referred to a motion passed at the Sinn Fein Ard Fheis (end-October, 1982) that "all candidates in national and local elections and all campaign material be unambiguous in support of the armed struggle".

i) In the 'Irish Times' of 28 November, 1983, Gerry Adams was quoted as saying at the Kilmichael Commemoration ceremony the previous day that the killing of British soldiers and the R.U.C. in the North was "legitimate". He went on to say that "of course, the people engaged in the I.R.A., whether men or women, were freedom fighters....." He also mentioned that he would welcome young people joining the I.R.A. although he claimed he had not actively advised them to do so.

In an interview in the 'Irish News' of 10 July, 1984, Gerry Adams said: "My position and the position of Sinn Fein simply is, that the I.R.A. is justified, as are oppressed people anywhere in pursuance of national independence, in carrying out an armed struggle".

Sinn Fein Links with the I.R.A.

Sinn Fein representatives, while giving their unequivocal support to the "armed struggle", have been very careful to avoid reference to any direct links with the I.R.A. which might lead to prosecution. However, leading members of Sinn Fein have been jailed for terrorist-type offences in the past. For example, Sinn Fein Assembly member, Martin McGuinness admitted in a Dublin Court in 1973 that he was an officer in the Derry brigade of the I.R.A. He was eventually sentenced to six months imprisonment for I.R.A. membership. Another example is John Noonan, Sinn Fein candidate in the recent European elections, who has also been in jail for terrorist-type offences.

3. Sinn Fein's Position vis-a-vis the Institutions of this State

Sinn Fein does not accept the legitimacy of the Irish Parliament any

more than that of the Westminster Parliament or British institutions in Northern Ireland. If a Sinn Fein candidate were elected to Dail Eireann, he would not take his seat. The I.R.A. have engaged in criminal activities to a significant extent in the South: well over 200 persons (about one fifth of our prison population) are in jail here for subversive-type offences. Members of the security forces here have been murdered by the I.R.A.

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