

Ireland

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KEN LIVINGSTONE'S INVITATION TO MORRISON AND ADAMS

'Red Ken' Livingstone, leader of the GLC and 26 Labour GLC councillors have invited Gerry Adams and Danny Morrison to visit London on 14 December. They have made it clear that the invitation was made privately ie it is not an official invitation by the GLC itself. During the visit Morrison and Adams plan to meet Labour MPs as well as GLC councillors and address a public meeting in Islington Town Hall.

Morrison is quoted today as saying "We want to explain what exactly is going on that all the British myths have been shattered by the Sinn Fein victory in the recent elections and that the Republican movement and the Liberation struggle in Northern Ireland have public support".

Reaction among Labour MPs is mixed - Merlyn Rees has condemned the invitation and visit while Clive Soley has given it a guarded welcome. Conservatives and Unionists are united in condemning it.

Line to take

The Northern Ireland Office and Ministers have no comment to make on the invitation, and you should turn down interview bids on the subject.

The Home Office is the lead department. They are saying:

1. Ken Livingstone's views are a matter for Ken Livingstone.
2. British citizens are free to move about Britain as they wish.
3. If asked, they are outlining the terms of the Prevention of Terrorism Act viz any police force may detain for 48 hours (extendable to 5 days) any persons suspected of involvement in terrorist activities; alternatively any force may apply to the Home Secretary for an Exclusion Order preventing such persons from visiting a particular area. The Home Office are being very careful to emphasise that these powers apply only to persons suspected of being involved in terrorist activities.

The invitation was actually issued by Stephen Bundred, GLC Labour councillor for Islington North; he was interviewed on TV last night (Sunday) and made the following remarks:

"You can't have it both ways; you can't encourage people to take part in the democratic process then refuse to deal with them when they get elected as Jim Prior has done."

If asked about this, you should refer to our existing line on dealing with Sinn Fein Assemblymen:

"There is a major difference between groups who use the democratic process solely and those who use the democratic process in

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conjunction with supporting or endorsing violence to achieve their political ends. They are the ones who are trying to have it both ways. Because of that, NIO officials and junior Ministers will deal with Sinn Fein Assemblymen on constituency matters only."

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Press Office

6 December 1982

Sources:- Home Office Press
Office
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