S.F. President Gerry Adams MP, ~~said~~ replying to Garret Fitzgerald's repudiation of Sinn Fein said that it appeared as if Sinn Fein's electoral experience in the 6 counties, was going to be repeated in the 26 counties, with Garret Fitzgerald in the role of Ian Paisley.

Mr. Adams said,

'We have fought elections in the 6 counties in contests where it was Sinn Fein versus the rest, and against a background of hysterical condemnations from Unionists, British ministers, SDLP leaders, Protestant and Catholic church leaders, the Orange Order and the Dublin government. Since our entry into 6 counties elections, Ian Paisley has fought every election on the slogan Smash Sinn Fein. It now looks as if Garret Fitzgerald is going to take over Mr. Paisley's role in the 26 counties. He should

catch himself on. We in Sinn Fein know that we would contest elections in the Freestate against the entire Irish establishment. Once again it will be Sinn Fein versus the rest. Dr. Fitzgerald is not telling us anything we didn't already know. I challenge him to lift the censorship act of Section 31 to permit the citizens of the 26 counties to hear both sides of the debate'.

Commenting on the establishment of another party by Ruairi O'Bradaigh Mr Adams said, 'This comes as no surprise. While the leadership of this party have clearly put themselves on a hook, something which they will regret in the future, the door is still up for the small number who mistakenly followed them, to come back to the republican struggle. The S.F. Ard Fheis democratically reached a decision, a clear majority of Sinn Fein voted for this and the vast majority of delegates accepted the decision. For a member of former leadership to refuse to

accept this is ridiculous. They clearly come to the Ard Fheis with their minds made up and set against accepting any vote other than their own. They clearly wanted to have their cake and eat it. While I have refrained from engaging in the type of publicity campaign they have orchestrated, and while I have no intention of falling into the trap which clearly suits only Free State and British interests, once the media spotlight goes off this diversion, then time will show that far from Sinn Fein splitting, the West County Hotel leadership represents only a small splinter, supported by a small number to re-enact engaged in a sad and rather pathetic attempt to a handful of disgruntled former members. There were the events of 1970 even though the conditions have changed totally.

over two thousand republicans at the S.F Ard Fheis. Just over one hundred, some who weren't even at the Ard Fheis, went to the West County Hotel. Many of them, in time, will realise their mistake and when they do they will find the S.F leadership is not lacking in comradeship or understanding of their plight.

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In the meantime, we and the vast majority of republicans throughout Ireland and abroad will get on with the challenging task of building a radical + relevant republican alternative to Garret Fitzgerald's missile on one hand and partition and the British presence on the other hand.

Sinn Féin