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By Brian Rowan
Saturday, 8 November 2008

With just weeks to go to the publication of the Eames-Bradley report on the past, Gerry Adams has warned that any commission established by the British Government "is not going to get to the truth".

The Sinn Fein President was speaking to the Belfast Telegraph after an event in west Belfast organised by the Bobby Sands Trust to launch a new website.

"It's our very strong view that none of the combatants groups, or none of the partisan elements to this, can adjudicate over what happened," the West Belfast MP told this newspaper.

At Queen's University on Monday Denis Bradley — co-chairman of the Consultative Group on the Past — will set out its latest thinking.

The group is understood to be working to December 9 as the planned date for the publication of its report and recommendations, although it is

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not yet clear if that deadline will be met.

What are these?

"My strong view is that what the Eames-Bradley Group should be actually recommending is that an international agency like the United Nations should establish a process to meet the needs of truth recovery," Mr Adams said yesterday.

He has already called for an Independent International Truth Commission to be established, which he said should be supported by "all relevant parties" — understood to include the IRA.

But republican participation will depend on how any commission is established and what role the state will play in any truth process.

Yesterday the Sinn Fein leader said: "What I do know is that a commission established by the British Government and answerable and accountable to the British Government is not going to get to the truth any more than any process established by any of the other partisan elements.

"I mention the United Nations because that takes it entirely out of the local or indeed the Anglo-Irish element. It brings in an outside influence, experience and protocol," he continued.

"You see, I think it's important in terms of the people who live here, and we have to be mindful that we are a very small island and there were people killed on both islands, but here particularly in the north we're a very, very small population.

"So this is still very, very personal and hurtful for everybody involved and that's why it's important that people who clearly don't have an axe to grind and don't have a truth to cover up are brought into this," he added.

On a separate issue, the Sinn Fein President refused to be drawn on the continuing talks between his party and the DUP on the stalled politics at Stormont.

"I don't think it would be prudent for me to say anything other than Sinn Fein has been very, very focused in trying to get a breakthrough to the difficulties which face the process at this time," he added.

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