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UNITED IRELAND

'Make Up Your Mind' Time

A Letter from Ireland

a Chara,

It is decision time for the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP). More than two years ago they blocked the operation of the North-South Ministerial Council, an institution that is an essential element of the Good Friday Agreement. The Council coordinates the work of all-Ireland bodies and cooperation between government departments in Stormont and Dublin. It is one leg of the three-legged stool of institutions that are interdependent, the others being the Assembly and Executive in the North, and the British-Irish Council.

Twenty months ago the DUP collapsed the Assembly and Executive in the North. This forced an election in May 2022. In this election, Sinn Féin became the largest party and the party's Vice President, Michelle O'Neill, became the First Minister in a new Executive. Michelle would be the first non-unionist to hold this position in the history of the State. The DUP was relegated to second place, and unionism lost its overall majority in the Assembly.

The initial collapse of the institutions by the DUP was in protest of the British Government striking a post-Brexit deal with the European Union (EU). The government in the North has no role in negotiations with the EU. This deal was later refined in the further negotiated Windsor Framework, which was completed in February this year.

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have suffered. The opportunity for business to prosper under the agreements has been lost to the DUP's intransigence.

What started as a protest at the EU-British agreement has been sustained by the refusal of the DUP to respect the vote that made Sinn Féin the largest party and Michelle O'Neill the First Minister. Ireland was partitioned on the basis of a sectarian headcount, and this partition was sustained by discrimination and repression, designed to ensure that an Irish Republican would never be elected leader. But times have changed, and Ireland, North and South, has moved on.

This week the British Government hosted all-party talks on a financial settlement that would come into effect if and when the Executive was re-established. All local parties agreed that more money would be required to fund public services. All but the DUP agreed that a government should be established to conclude the talks and to access the finances offered.

The Windsor Framework is now operational, and negotiations on finance will conclude and come into effect when the Executive is re-established. Yet the DUP is still holding out. It would appear that the issue is a refusal to accept the outcome of the May 2023 election and serve alongside a Sinn Féin First Minister in an Executive of equals.

For over 100 years unionism has enjoyed the power of being a majority and holding the top spot in government. I suppose when you are used to that degree of privilege for so long, equality looks like a loss.

It is now decision time for the DUP. Do they accept the outcome of the May 2023 election and equality, or hanker for a time long gone?

If it is the former then let's get on with the business of government. If it is the latter the Irish and British Governments need to agree on the next steps in the short term and the medium term. As for society, it is moving on and looking to the future. That conversation is focused on Irish Unity.

Have a great weekend.

Is mise,

Ciarán

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Irish government must take inter-state case against shameful Legacy Act – Finucane

Sinn Féin MP John Finucane has said the Irish government must take an interstate case against the British government's shameful Legacy Act.

The North Belfast MP was speaking after Taoiseach Leo Varadkar today told the Dáil the Irish government will decide before 17 January 2024 whether it will take an inter-state case against the British government's shameful Legacy Act.

John Finucane MP said, "I would urge the Taoiseach to confront this denial of human rights and breach of international human rights law through an interstate case and international action against the British government.

"Last week the Oireachtas Joint Committee on the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement unanimously agreed to write to the Taoiseach calling on the Irish government to take an interstate case.

"Already we have seen families taking individual cases against the British government's cynical and cruel Legacy Act.

"These families should not have been forced to take individual legal action.

"This could have been prevented if the Irish government had taken an inter-state case against the Legacy Act. They can still do this and I would strongly encourage them to do so to prevent more families having to take this course of action."

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Trade Unionists for a New & United Ireland Host Conference in Belfast

Trade Unionists for a New and United Ireland (TUNUI) held a two-day conference last month in St Comgall's, Belfast to mark the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Good Friday Agreement.

The two-day conference had contributions from International Trade Unionists including Koldo Sanz from the Lab Union in the Basque country, Jamal Juma from the New Federation of Palestinian TU. There were also Trade unionist representatives from Ireland, Scotland, Catalonia, Valencia, Galiza, Brittany and Corsica.

Gerry Mc Cormack, Deputy General Secretary of SIPTU spoke alongside Anne Speed and Conor Mc Carthy from UNISON. Frank Connolly, author of 'United NationThe Case for Integrating Ireland' gave a comprehensive contribution.

Muireann Dalton updated the conference on the ongoing outreach and campaigns across Ireland. She spoke of the success of Ireland's Future events and Sinn Féin's Commission on the Future of Ireland. All speakers stressed the importance of A Citizens Assembly on Irish Unity being established immediately.

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Sunday families - Soldier F will face murder trial

Sinn Féin MLA Pádraig Delargy has expressed solidarity with the Bloody Sunday families following news that Soldier F will stand trial in the Crown Court.

The Foyle MLA said, “My thoughts today are with the Bloody Sunday families and their ongoing efforts to achieve justice for their loved ones.

“For almost 52 years they have remained resolute, determined, and courageous. The people of Derry will continue to support them on that journey.

“This is another example of why the British Government wants to slam the door shut on truth and justice for families with its outrageous and cynical Legacy Act.

“I would urge the Irish Government to challenge this shameful Legacy Act by taking an interstate case. This is a denial of human rights and a breach of international law, and the government must protect the convention rights of Irish citizens.

“We will continue to stand with the Bloody Sunday families every step of the way as they continue to pursue justice through the courts.”



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MLAs should be back to work on Monday, doing the job they've been elected to do.

We need a pay deal for public sector workers & a properly funded budget.

This must be a top priority for any Executive if it is to succeed.

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Irish Government Must Act Against Britain - No More Delays



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International Human Rights Day. They call on the Irish gov to initiate an interstate case against the British gov & its disgraceful Legacy Act.

"Revolutionaries" Shane MacGowan and Chuck Feeney both laid to rest in Ireland



"Revolutionaries" Shane MacGowan and Chuck Feeney both laid to rest in Ireland

"Neither took no for an answer. Both will be missed. Their contributions to Ireland will be celebrated for generations to come."

Ciarán Quinn @IrishCentral Dec 11, 2023



This week two Irish revolutionaries were brought home to rest. One was born in New Jersey, Chuck Feeney, and the other was born in Kent, England, Shane MacGowan.

In many ways, both were polar opposites. Shane MacGowan lived in the limelight. An outspoken poet, writer, drinker, and musician. Chuck Feeney was a successful businessman, who gave everything and shunned publicity and praise.

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were interned in Glasnevin close to the graves of other revolutionary leaders. Shane's requiem, a riotous celebration of a life. A procession and a céilidh in a church.

Both made a real difference in the lives of others in Ireland and further afield. They were of Ireland; but not from it. They were in the words of our proclamation, "our exiled Children".

[ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN IRISH CENTRAL - READ FULL STORY HERE](#)



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