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UNITED STATES UNITED IRELAND

Chaos must make way for peace and progress

A Letter from Ireland

a Chara,

There seems to be more chaos than progress in politics lately, both globally and locally. Speculation is mounting that the leadership of Prime Minister Rishi Sunak could be challenged. If he is replaced, the new occupant of 10 Downing Street will be the third prime minister installed without an election.

The current crisis is due to the resignation of a senior Minister who was to introduce the government's new Bill on Immigration. He believed that it did not go far enough as it was still bound by human and civil rights laws, namely the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

The application of the Convention is an explicit commitment in the Good Friday Agreement. This international legislation is important as it binds the British to the minimal recognition of the rights of citizens.

The British system is without a constitution. A government with a parliamentary majority can change the laws and rights of its citizens as it sees fit. The British parliamentary system is bound only by the framework of international agreements and laws, and domestic legal precedents. A parliament can abandon these agreements and legislate at will.

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This issue is not only restricted to immigration. Early on in the Brexit process, a British Minister stood up in Westminster to declare that new legislation would only break international law in a limited way. Just imagine trying that defense to a cop: "Yes, I do intend to break that speed limit but I have the right to do so in a limited way."

Earlier this year the same government passed the Legacy and Reconciliation Act that prevents victims of violence during the conflict from accessing the courts, police ombudsman investigations, or even an inquest for their loved ones.

This legislation breaks several agreements with the Irish government and political parties. It is also a clear breach of the rights of citizens under the ECHR. It has been left up to victims to litigate against this act.

The Irish Government could and should take the British Government to the European Courts for breach of the Convention. This would expedite the legal process by 10 years. So far they have failed to do so.

When countries can walk away from international agreements, laws, and institutions people suffer.

Russia felt free to invade Ukraine. Israel has long been in breach of international laws and agreements. None of which is an excuse for the brutality of Hamas. Israel is now bombing schools, hospitals, and UN resources. None of which is excused by the actions of Hamas.

Here is the thing, when the rule of law is undermined, the rule of force takes over. The UN has been relegated to a spectator. The international community needs to assert the rule of law.

Governments, like nonstate actors, must be held to account. Chaos must make way for peace and progress.

Have a great weekend.

Is mise,

Ciarán

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Dialogue must be concluded within days and Executive immediately restored – Michelle O'Neill

Sinn Féin will attend political roundtable on Monday.

First Minister Designate Michelle O'Neill has said Sinn Féin will attend the political roundtable meeting, but said dialogue must be concluded within days and the institutions immediately restored.

Michelle O'Neill said, "I wrote to the British Secretary of State Chris Heaton-Harris last Friday emphasising the gravity of the current situation and the imperative for him to take urgent action, and immediately bring an end to the protracted and prolonged negotiations between the British Government and the DUP.

"Sinn Féin will attend the political roundtable on Monday.

"We stand ready to engage on the budgetary challenges devastating our public services which demand proper financial resources from the British Government to address the fact we are underfunded.

"This dialogue must be concluded promptly within days, with the Executive and Assembly immediately reinstated."

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Oireachtas Committee request inter-state case against British government's

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Sinn Féin MP John Finucane has welcomed the decision of the Oireachtas Good Friday Agreement Committee to write to the Taoiseach to request that the Irish government initiate an inter-state case against the British government's shameful Legacy Act.

The North Belfast MP said, "The Oireachtas Good Friday Agreement Committee has agreed to write to an Taoiseach to request the initiation of an inter-state case regarding the British government's Legacy Act.

"This Act is appalling and has been roundly condemned by victims, victims' families and human rights organisations."

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Relatives for Justice address the Joint Committee on the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement

Watch 'Relatives for Justice' address The Joint Committee on the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement in regards to the UK's Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act 2023.

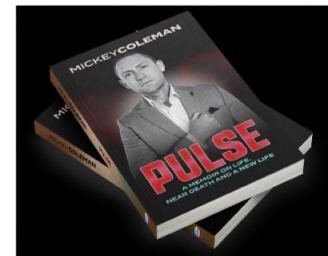
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Life, Near Death, & A New Life

Pulse – A Memoir On Life, Near Death, And A New Life, by Mickey Coleman and Damian Harvey

Reviewed by Ciarán Quinn

Biographies are my favourite genre of writing. Done well, they offer all the colour, light and shade of a life lived.



For full disclosure, I know Mickey Coleman. He is a dedicated supporter of Friends of Sinn Féin and Irish Unity. That is why it was with some trepidation that I picked up this book.

The aching questions in my head: “What if it was poorly written? What if it included some dark secret that I didn’t want to know.”

I quickly realised that I had nothing to worry about. Working with co-writer Damian Harvey, they have crafted an accessible and revealing reflection on a life.

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Married to Erin with two young sons. In many ways he had everything. Until one day when it was almost ended by a heart attack with only a 6% recovery rate.

The book is not a straightforward chronological story. It unfolds in a way that is true to the quoted proverb from Confucius: "Every man has two lives, and the second starts when he realises, he has just one."

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