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UNITED STATES UNITED IRELAND

Losing another generation

A Letter From Ireland

a Chara,

I've been thinking about emigration. We are losing another generation. This time to Canada, Australia, and Britain. My own daughters will be leaving soon.

In the past people were forced into emigration by poverty, unemployment, or repression. Today is different. There are jobs. In the South we are reaching full employment.

The generation emigrating is leaving good jobs and trades. The single biggest issue is housing. A generation in work that cannot afford to rent. A generation that has lost all hope of owning a permanent home and raising a family.

The housing crisis is undermining the economy and society. Essential public sector workers, guards, nurses, and teachers are being priced out of our cities. Tenement living is now back in Dublin. We have a record number of homeless families.

Companies are facing recruitment issues with living costs and rents pushing up wages.

Into this crisis has stepped some who claim that Ireland is full. Ireland is not full, our population has not yet recovered from the famine. We are a wealthy and relatively underpopulated island.

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crisis was caused by Irish landlords, developers, and politicians.

The housing crisis is Irish-made. In the 1950's when the Irish state was impoverished they built houses. Young families could secure public housing with the security of tenure. Houses were affordable and home ownership was an option. There was always a private sector for those who would not fit into the public or home ownership models. The same was true in Belfast where I grew up.

Public housing was sold off to tenants and never replaced by similar levels of new investment. The public housing stock was reduced. The market would provide housing. Developers controlled the supply and cost of new housing. Private landlordism increased as did rents and house prices. A self-perpetuating cycle of increasing costs. This worked for the market with greater returns on investment. It has failed society and the economy.

The problem is entirely man-made (and mostly led by men). It can be solved. It is not complicated, We need to build affordable public sector homes with the security of tenure. Develop affordable homes for families to invest and live in, and regulate the private sector.

These are not radical ideas. They have and will work. They are from the Ireland where I grew up. At a time when a house was a home and not a commodity.

This housing crisis cannot be blamed on anyone outside Ireland. It was and remains the creation of years of Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael governments.

It will only be changed by a change of government. Sinn Féin has the people and policies to build a new Ireland.

One in which I hope all our children will return.

Have a great weekend.

Is mise,

Ciarán

Ciarán Quinn is the Sinn Féin Representative to North America

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Sinn Féin President and Vice President meet with the Taoiseach and Tánaiste

Sinn Féin President Mary Lou McDonald TD and Vice President Michelle O'Neill MLA have met with the Taoiseach Leo Varadkar and Tánaiste Micheál Martin in Government Buildings earlier this week.

They discussed with the Taoiseach and Tánaiste the need to ensure that the North-South Ministerial Council meets as a matter of priority.

Teachta McDonald said, “I met with the Taoiseach Leo Varadkar and Tánaiste Micheál Martin, along with Sinn Féin Vice President Michelle O'Neill, this evening.

“We discussed recent political developments in the north, including the restoration of the Executive and the need for the newly restored institutions to deliver for all communities.

“We discussed the importance of a cross-border approach to infrastructure investment by the government to assist in driving the all-Ireland economy.

“Now that the Assembly, and Executive are restored we must also ensure that the North-South Ministerial Council is functioning again soon, as a vital institution of the Good Friday Agreement.

Sinn Féin Vice President Michelle O'Neill MLA said, “This evening I met with the Taoiseach and Tánaiste in Dublin, along with Sinn Féin President Mary Lou McDonald. I outlined my commitment to delivering for all communities as a First Minister For All, including resolving the public sector disputes and addressing key issues such as childcare, special educational needs supports to help workers and families.

“We outlined the need to take a cross-border approach to key infrastructure projects on the island. This must include delivering on the A5 major road scheme, Casement Park and Narrow Water Bridge.

“I also outlined the importance of the North-South Ministerial Council meeting without delay. By working together, we can deliver for all communities and unlock the potential of our economy and infrastructure.”

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February Video Update

This month, we learn more about the historic election of Michelle O'Neill, the upcoming Irish Unity Summit, and more. Watch and share!

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Attempts to ‘run down clock’ on legacy inquests cynical and cruel – Finucane

Sinn Féin MP John Finucane has described claims that state bodies are attempting to ‘run down the clock’ until the Legacy Act is enacted as ‘cynical and cruel’.

The North Belfast MP said, “I welcome and agree with the assessment of former Police Ombudsman Nuala O’Loan that state bodies are attempting to ‘run down the clock’ until the Legacy Act is enacted. This is a cynical and cruel move.

“Sinn Féin have said for some time that a consequence of the British government’s shameful Legacy Act is to incentivise state bodies to ‘run down the clock’, and to avoid their legal duties in our courts.

“Heartbroken families have been fighting for years, determined to get truth and justice for their loved ones.

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before that date.

“This is yet another example that the Act’s interests were never in the interests of victims and families, rather in the interests of British state forces involved in the murder of, and serious human rights violations against, Irish citizens.

“The shameful Legacy Act is a flagrant breach of international human rights law. The Irish government’s interstate case is a welcome step in challenging this.

“We will continue to stand with those families as they challenge this cruel and cynical law, and as they continue to campaign with dignity and determination for truth and justice.”



O'Neill pays tribute to Francie Molloy's decades-long contribution to civil and equal rights for all

Commenting on news that her long-time friend and colleague Francie Molloy is to step down from elected politics Sinn Féin Leas-Uachtarán Michelle O'Neill MLA said, “Francie Molloy has made a huge contribution to politics and the peace process here.

“He was heavily involved in the early Civil Rights Movement, including the protest outside the Caledon Squat in 1968 which is often considered as the spark for people in their demand for better housing, better jobs, and civil rights.

“Francie has been involved in political activism his entire adult life, and has been elected many times as a Councillor, MLA, and MP and served as a member of the party’s Ard Chomhairle during some of the most era-defining stages of the peace process.

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