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UNITED STATES UNITED IRELAND

The Writing on the Wall

A Letter from Ireland

a Chara,

This week marked the anniversary of the death of Bobby Sands on a hunger strike in Long Kesh Prison in 1981. Forty-four years later, his sacrifice continues to inspire. To mark the anniversary, the people of Twinbook unveiled a statue in his honor.

Bobby had moved to the estate in 1972 after his parents were intimidated out of a religiously mixed estate in North Belfast by unionist paramilitaries. Twinbrook was a sink estate built on the outskirts of West Belfast. At the time, the local unionist-controlled council refused to service the estate, there were no amenities, little by way of public transport, and unemployment was widespread.

He was 18 years old when they were forced to move and would subsequently join the Irish Republican Army. By the end of that year, he was arrested and imprisoned. As his conviction related to the conflict, he was granted political status. In gaol, he read widely and engaged in political education,

Released in April 1976, he returned to Twinbrook and threw himself into community organising, working with the local tenants association, securing public transport, and promoting Irish language classes and youth groups. He saw no difference between local campaigning and national liberation. He reorganised Sinn Féin in the area and continued as an active IRA volunteer.

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reversed political status and tried to present republican prisoners as criminals.

Years of protests by the prisoners were met by brutality and an unbending British Government. Bobby Sands, then the Officer Commanding of the republican prisoners, volunteered to lead a hunger strike in the knowledge that he would likely die.

While on a hunger strike, he was elected as an MP, demonstrating the lie of Margaret Thatcher's assertion that he and his fellow prisoners were criminals without popular support.

Throughout those brutal years of protest and starvation, he never gave way to bitterness. Famously saying that, "our revenge will be the laughter of our children."

Bobby Sands died on March 5th, 1981, at the age of 27. He would be followed by nine other Hunger Strikers before it ended in October of that year.

The legacy of Bobby Sands is evident throughout Twinbrook. The estate and surrounding areas have developed with amenities and a thriving community. It is represented by Sinn Féin councillors, MLAs, and an MP. The party is the largest across Ireland, and the Good Friday Agreement secured a peaceful pathway to Irish Unity.

The sacrifice of the hunger strikers was immense. Their actions inspired thousands of others to act of resistance, becoming active in communities, driving change, and supporting Sinn Féin.

Bobby Sands wrote, "Everyone, Republican or otherwise, has their own particular part to play. No part is too great or too small, no one is too old or too young to do something."

We have further to travel to achieve a new and united Ireland. We face opposition from the British and Irish governments. But we all have a role to play, that is why the upcoming Irish Unity Commission hearings in Nashville, Cincinnati, and Chicago are so important. That is why you are so important.

Have a great weekend.

Ciarán

Ciarán Quinn is the Sinn Féin Representative to North America

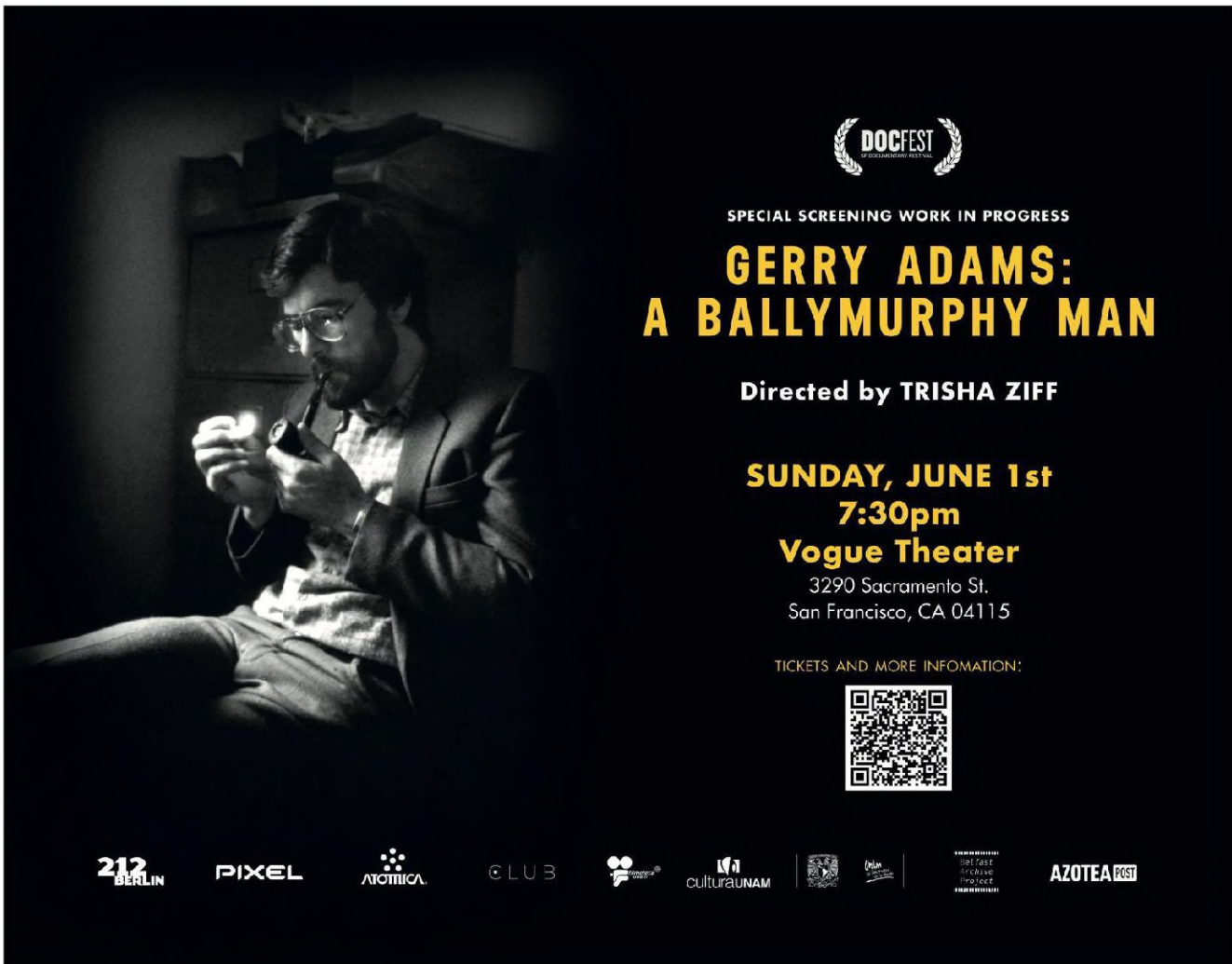
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Special Screening of New Gerry Adams documentary in San Francisco - streaming options available

A new film - Gerry Adams: A Ballymurphy Man will be shown in a special screening on Sunday, June 1 at 7:30 at the Vogue Theater in San Francisco. Streaming options will be available in late May. Learn more by clicking below.



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Pat Sheehan pays tribute to Bobby Sands as new statue unveiled in

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Sinn Féin MLA, Pat Sheehan, has called on Republicans to redouble their efforts for the cause of Irish freedom during his speech at the unveiling of Bobby Sands statue in Twinbrook.

The West Belfast MLA, was the main speaker at the event which took place on the 44th anniversary of the death of Bobby Sands on hunger strike in 1981.

Reflecting on the “heroism and sacrifice” of Bobby Sands and the other hunger strikers, Pat Sheehan said in “2025 we are closer than ever to undoing the injustice of partition and re-uniting our country”.

“Their bravery set in motion a series of events that makes the momentum for political and social change unstoppable and irreversible,” said Mr. Sheehan, who also took part in the hunger strike.

“That momentum will carry us forward to the realisation of an Irish national democracy. A republic where the rights and identity of all our people, of whatever persuasion or background will be accommodated and cherished.”

Mr Sheehan continued: “The Orange state is gone. Unionist domination is gone.

“There are more republicans than ever before and Sinn Féin is the biggest political movement on this island.

“Therefore, the opposite of what was intended by the British has come to pass. Not only was criminalisation defeated but the injustice of partition and the role of the British state in Ireland was exposed to international scrutiny as never before.”

Paying tribute to Bobby Sands, Mr. Sheehan said: “Bobby Sands didn’t die just to prove he was right. He had a vision, a belief and an idea that his suffering and death would lead to a better world for the rest of us.

“Today we are in a better place. We no longer need or expect our young men and women to risk their lives and liberty on active service, or to hunger strike in prison cells.

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happen. It's then, as Bobby said, we will see the rising of the moon.”

Concluding with a quote from the diary of Bobby Sands, Mr. Sheehan said: “I may die, but the Republic of 1916 will never die. Onward to the Republic and the liberation of our people.”

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Nashville, TN, Cincinnati, OH, & Chicago, IL to host “Irish Unity People’s Assemblies” Register today!

The “Irish Unity People's Assembly: Diaspora” is on the move and coming to [Nashville, TN](#), [Cincinnati, OH](#), and [Chicago, IL](#)! Pat Cullen MP will be our special guest. Info & registration links below.

Be a part of the conversation about creating a new & united Ireland!

THE COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF IRELAND



Wednesday, May 28th, 2025
Nashville, TN
Scarritt Bennett Center

Featuring Pat Cullen, MP
A conversation with the diaspora, the descendants of Ireland, and all those who support Irish unity.

AN COIMISIÚN UM THODHCHÁÍ NA hÉIREANN

THE COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF IRELAND



Thursday, May 29th, 2025
Cincinnati, OH
Irish Heritage Center of Cincinnati

Featuring Pat Cullen, MP
A conversation with the diaspora, the descendants of Ireland, and all those who support Irish unity.

AN COIMISIÚN UM THODHCHÁÍ NA hÉIREANN

THE COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF IRELAND



Saturday, May 31st, 2025
Chicago, IL
Irish American Heritage Center of Chicago

Featuring Pat Cullen, MP
A conversation with the diaspora, the descendants of Ireland, and all those who support Irish unity.

AN COIMISIÚN UM THODHCHÁÍ NA hÉIREANN

NASHVILLE, TN

CINCINNATI, OH

CHICAGO, IL

Senator Conor Murphy nominated to Oireachtas Good Friday Agreement Committee

Sinn Féin Seanad Leader, Senator Conor Murphy, has been nominated to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement.

As a lead negotiator since the 1998 Agreement, Senator Murphy has dedicated nearly three decades to advancing its principles and ensuring their implementation.

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across all parties to strengthen North-South co-operation, deepen the All-Ireland economy, address legacy issues, promote reconciliation, and continue to prioritise Irish unity during this mandate.

“Having been in the Assembly and Executive since 1998 my political efforts were shaped by a commitment to the Good Friday Agreement, and its full delivery. Now as we look to the future, I am bringing the voices of people in the North directly to the Oireachtas, and to the work of this committee.

“This is a moment of opportunity and change. We must use it to shape a shared, inclusive future on this island.

“I am engaging across party lines, urging the Irish Government to begin serious preparations for a united Ireland – planned, inclusive, and respectful.

“The lessons of Brexit are clear and we cannot afford to be unprepared. Dialogue must begin now, involving all communities – unionist and nationalist, British and Irish, North and South.

“The Good Friday Agreement provides the democratic, constitutional framework. A referendum is on the horizon by the end of this decade, and we must ensure any transition is orderly, inclusive, and shaped together for the benefit of all.

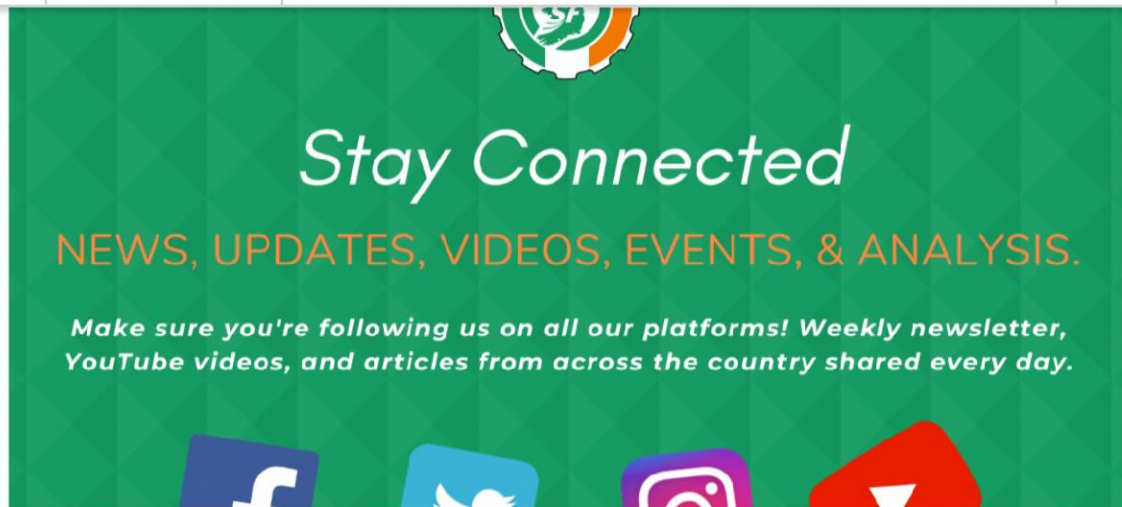
“This committee has done vital work in this space. I look forward to contributing to its progress in this term.”

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Friends of Sinn Féin President Mark Guilfoyle in Irish Echo: Momentum for Irish Unity is Growing

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A United Ireland: The Political Project of Our Generation

By Mark D. Guilfoyle

Over the years, I have helped more than a few clients navigate the bureaucracy in Kentucky state government.

The first question to answer is whether to adopt a top-down or bottom-up approach. Top-down means you start with the Governor and work your way down to the career employees to effect a solution. Bottom-up means you start at the lower levels of the bureaucracy and work your way up to the Governor.

I was reminded of this dynamic when I read the recent opinion piece by Leo Varadkar in the Belfast-published Irish News. Varadkar stated: "As is always the case, the impetus for great change must come from below. It will not come from above."

He was referring to the reunification of Ireland.

I was privileged to be in the audience to hear Varadkar speak in Philadelphia at the Gala Dinner of Ireland's Future on April 10.

In his remarks, Varadkar stated that every generation has its great cause and that he saw ours as "the cause of uniting our island, working to build a new home where all traditions, all stories, and all people belong."

Specifically, Varadkar stated that "I believe building a new Ireland, a United Ireland, is the political project of our generation."

I could not agree more. It was fitting that Varadkar made these remarks directly under a portrait of Abraham Lincoln, the great Kentuckian who gave everything to preserve our Union in the United States.

But, what does Varadkar mean when he says that the impetus for great change must come from below? Surely he had in mind the efforts of grassroots organizations like Ireland's Future, a cross-party, cross-community organization that promotes the shared responsibility of delivering constitutional change within the



Leo Varadkar speaking in Philadelphia.

framework of the Good Friday Agreement.

One of its stated objectives is to "promote detailed planning for referendums, North and South, to give people a meaningful choice on their constitutional future."

Niall Murphy and the entire Ireland's Future Board should be commended for bringing their work to Philadelphia.

The Gala was an immense success and, as Varadkar mentions in his opinion piece, Irish America has a vital part to play in building a new and United Ireland. In a truly bottom-up approach, we all can work to promote and plan for a United Ireland, individually and through social and political organizations.

"In his remarks, Varadkar stated that every generation has its great cause and that he saw ours as "the cause of uniting our island, working to build a new home where all traditions, all stories, and all people belong."

Reconciliation is certainly one of the objectives of the GFA, but it spans the democratic process of constitutional change in both a divided and a united Ireland. Reconciliation is not a prerequisite to constitutional change. As Varadkar correctly notes, the GFA "provides for a democratic mechanism by which Ireland can be united once a majority of both sides of the border want it."

Martin's erecting a reconciliation hurdle to a border poll is an obvious ploy to slow-walk Unity.

The good news is that Irish Government elites cannot halt the Unity discussion. Ireland's Future is not waiting for a top-down solution. Good for them.

For our part, the Friends of Sinn Féin is organizing a series of fora in the U.S. at which individuals can learn about planning for a United Ireland and have their say. "The Commission on the Future of Ireland: Diaspora" has already held successful programs in Cleveland, Columbus, Rockland County, New York and Washington, D.C. In May we will have programs in Nashville (May 28), Cincinnati (May 29) and Chicago (May 31).

Momentum for Unity is growing, and here's hoping the Irish Government will take note.

Mark Guilfoyle is a lawyer in Covington, Kentucky. He serves as President of Friends of Sinn Féin, Inc.

Unfortunately, Varadkar is also right when he states that a United Ireland will "not come from above."

In fact, the Irish Government is in retreat on Unity. Its Programme for Government 2025 is silent on Irish Unity as a goal. That silence speaks volumes.

In a recent interview in the (Belfast) Newsletter, Taoiseach Micheál Martin could not even bring himself to utter the words "United Ireland." He admits that the government is simply not planning for unity referenda. What a disgrace.

Worse still, Martin is engaging in a deliberate distortion of the Good Friday Agreement by claiming in a recent speech that the main purpose of the GFA is to foster "reconciliation," before consideration of constitutional change.

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Thank you!

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