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**UNITED IRELAND**

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# If not us, then who? If not now, then when?

## A Letter from Nashville

a Chara,

I am writing from the road, as I am leaving Nashville for Cincinnati and then onto Chicago for a series of discussions on Irish Unity as part of Sinn Féin's Commission on the Future of Ireland.

Nashville is one of my favourite places to visit in the US. It's laid laid-back approach to life, great food, incredible music, and inspiring history. On this trip, I been more exposed to the history of the civil rights struggle in Nashville and across the South.

At Fisk University, Pat Cullen, Greg, and I visited the church in which Dr. King, Malcom X, John Lewis all spoke. The funds to build the church were raised by tours of the Fisk Jubilee Singers tours of Ireland and Britain. Beneath the church was a warren of old tunnels that ran under the campus. It was in these tunnels that small groups of activist would meet to plan their civil disobedience campaigns.

The rise would the civil rights movement in Nashville and across the South would inspire a generation of activists in Ireland. Just as the calls for equality were met with state violence in Nashville, so to would the civil rights in the North of Ireland.

This trip is an opportunity to explain political developments, the opportunity we now have to achieve Irish unity and to examine the role of activists to realise that opportunity.

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The world is ours to define. A new and united Ireland is ours to build.

It was my job to introduce Pat and set a context for the evening. Anyone who knows me knows that I can speak for hours about the Good Friday Agreement, its provisions, its impact, and potential. Some have even had to endure me speaking on the issue.

It was a challenge to describe this point in our history, the opportunities we face, and the challenges to be overcome, the complexities and subtleties of nation-building, overcoming division, and building reconciliation. To achieve this, we must build a wide coalition to vindicate the rights of the people in the Good Friday Agreement to self-determination by way of referendums in the North and the South of Ireland.

The US as guarantor of the agreement, has a central role in ensuring its implementation. That is why we are in Nashville, Cincinnati, and Chicago. All can be part of building a new and united Ireland, a home for all who share the island.

But how to wrap this up in a two-minute introduction? The writing was on the wall in the Civil Rights room in the Nashville Public Library.

Above the door was a quote from John Lewis, "If not us, then who? If not now, then when?" Two simple but profound challenges. The answer is simple, we are the generation to bring about unity and the work begins today. Thank you, John Lewis, and thank you to all who have come out to meet with us.

Have a great weekend

Ciarán

**Ciarán Quinn is the Sinn Féin Representative to North America**

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## Pat Cullen MP in Nashville

While in Nashville, Pat Cullen visited Nashville City Hall before appearing at the Irish Unity People's Assembly: Diaspora. She said, "It is great to be in Nashville and meet Nashville Council woman Emily Benedict to talk about Ireland, Nashville and the future."

A full report of the event and other stops on the visit coming soon.

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# Chicago Irish Unity People's Assembly: Diaspora

The "Irish Unity People's Assembly: Diaspora" is coming to **Chicago, IL** on Saturday, May 31st Pat Cullen MP will be our special guest. Info & registration links below.

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

CHICAGO, IL

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# 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 THODHCHAÍ  
NA hÉIREANN

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## Irish Government can no longer hold a veto on Irish Unity

By Pat Cullen, Sinn Féin MP

I was privileged to be elected as a Member of Parliament (MP) by the people of Fermanagh and South Tyrone in the general election last year. As a proud Sinn Féin Representative, I carry on the tradition of those who came before me.

Ours is a border constituency. When Ireland was divided, we and our neighbors in the counties of Donegal, Leitrim, Cavan, and Monaghan found ourselves in two different

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In 1981, Bobby Sands, while on a hunger strike, was elected to the position I now hold. He and nine other prisoners would lose their lives that year, and many more would be killed and injured on the streets of the North before the hunger strike would end. Those dark days of conflict are thankfully over.

Writing from his prison cell, Bobby Sands wrote about the cause of Irish Unity: “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.”

That is why I agree with Bobby Sands that everyone has a role to play and that includes diaspora.

I will be traveling to Nashville, Cincinnati, and Chicago next week for a series of Commissions on the Future of Ireland sponsored by Friends of Sinn Féin. These follow other events in the US and Canada and are part of a wider series of citizens' Assemblies hosted by Sinn Féin across Ireland.

These events are an opportunity to learn more about Irish Unity. An opportunity for you to inform the work of Sinn Féin, and most importantly, to identify your role in building a new and united Ireland.

When the British and Irish governments dismissed the potential of the peace process and refused to engage, it was the people of Ireland and our diaspora who acted and brought them to the table.

Together, we can challenge the refusal of the Irish Government to plan for unity. Together, we can build a new and united Ireland.

Bobby Sands, unwashed and naked, except for a blanket wrapped around him, suffered the brutality and deprivation of the prison regimen. It was to the breaker's yard for Irish Republicanism. He would remind his comrade that their cause was historic and just. That victory was possible, and everyone had a role to play. Their revenge would be an Ireland that echoes with the laughter of children.

Irish Republicanism is stronger now than at time.

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## Op-Ed: Irish Government can no longer hold a veto on Irish Unity

Sinn Féin MP for Fermanagh and South Tyrone Pat Cullen says that when it comes to Irish Unity, change will come from below.

Pat Cullen, Sinn Féin MP @patcullen9 May 16, 2025



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# Electing the Irish president should be the democratic right of all our citizens

By Declan Kearney

In early May, I brought a motion to the regional Assembly in the north of Ireland urging all members, regardless of different political outlooks, to call upon the Irish government to fulfil its responsibility and finally extend the right to vote in Irish presidential elections for the hundreds of thousands of Irish citizens living in the northern state.

I pointed out that it is long past time for the Irish government to correct this democratic deficit and set the date for a constitutional referendum on allowing Irish citizens in the six counties to have a vote in presidential elections.

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enshrined within our peace settlement, the Good Friday Agreement (GFA).

The motion was overwhelmingly passed by the Assembly in spite of churlish opposition from some unionist members. This landmark vote by the Assembly has helped to bring a renewed focus to the rights of Irish citizens living outside the 26 counties.

Central to the GFA is a recognition of every citizens' birth right in the north to identify as Irish, British or both if they so choose, and to be accepted as such.

It was also agreed then that the Irish government would amend article 2 of the Irish constitution granting the right to full Irish citizenship.

As a result, the duty of the Irish government has been clearly established in the Irish Constitution under Article 2. This underpins the birth right of everyone born on the island of Ireland to be part of the Irish nation.

The right for us who are Irish in the north, to identify as Irish citizens is equally recognised under the terms of the GFA itself.

Twelve years have passed since the 2013 Constitutional Convention in Dublin when participants voted overwhelmingly (in fact, by a margin of 78%), to support extending the franchise to Irish citizens living in the north, and also to those living abroad.

That democratic position has been further endorsed by all the main parties in the southern state, including government parties.

Due to a lack of progress on the proposal to hold a referendum, Sinn Féin brought legislation to Dáil Éireann in 2014 on extending presidential voting rights.

In 2017 the Irish government agreed to a referendum to amend Article 12 of the Irish Constitution to meet its obligation, but no progress has been made on that commitment.

Notably the Programme for Government of 2020 contained a pledge to extend presidential voting rights to Irish citizens in the north and beyond. Yet nothing was done.

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Government, published earlier this year.

This is a regressive omission and constitutes a further denial of clearly defined and recognised rights for Irish citizens. It runs counter to the popular democratic will, and the wishes of Irish citizens in the north and across the global Irish diaspora.

So here we are in 2025, with a presidential election on the horizon and despite years of promises and commitments from Dublin governments, and we are no further forward.

The indifference of successive Irish governments towards this clearly established right is inexplicable, and it is unacceptable.

[\*\*READ FULL STORY HERE\*\*](#)

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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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**DOCFEST**  
SPECIAL SCREENING WORK IN PROGRESS

## GERRY ADAMS: A BALLYMURPHY MAN

Directed by **TRISHA ZIFF**

**SUNDAY, JUNE 1st**  
**7:30pm**  
**Vogue Theater**  
3290 Sacramento St.  
San Francisco, CA 04115

TICKETS AND MORE INFORMATION:











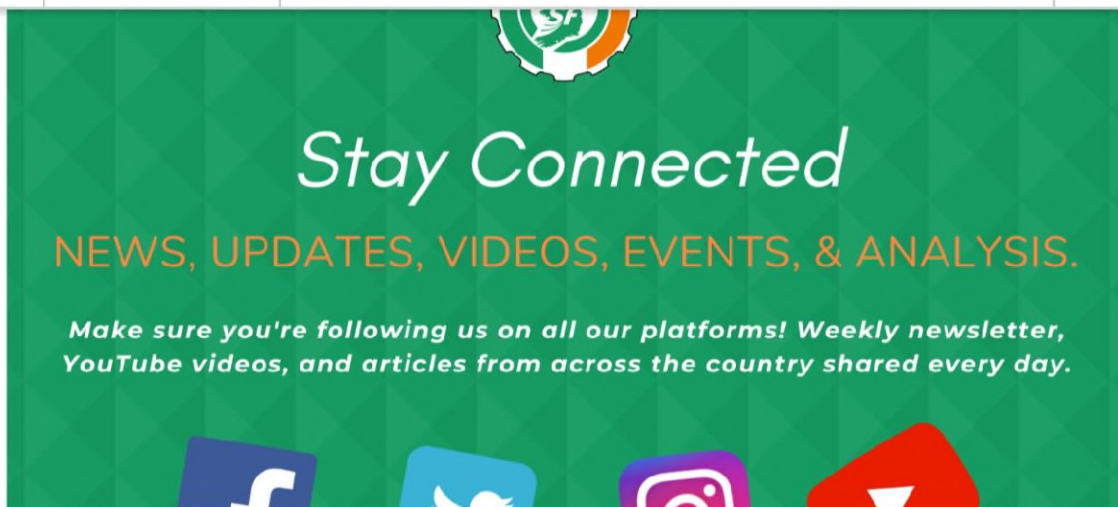
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