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UNITED STATES UNITED IRELAND

Christmas reflection

A letter from Ireland

a Chara,

This day, next week, it will be all over. The big man, Santa (not Gerry Adams), will have called, the dinner prepared and demolished. From here on in, it will be turkey sandwiches.

Christmas is a time of traditions, old and new. In rural Ireland, the day after Christmas, St. Stephen's Day was a day to hunt the wren. Local boys and musicians would go from street to street in costume, singing and playing music in search of the magical wren.

In Britain, the same day is referred to as Boxing Day in celebration of the monarch giving presents to the poor. I'm sure you can guess that in our house, it was never referred to as Boxing Day.

For us, the 26th of December was the time when all our extended family would come together. As a child, it was when grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins would all gather in my parents' house, and the craic was always mighty. Stories were told, the leftover turkey consumed, and a drink or two taken.

I remember one uncle organised a game of hide and seek for all of us kids—no small challenge for about fifteen of us in a small two-and-a-half-bedroom house. We ran upstairs, crawled under beds, jumped into wardrobes, feet sticking out from behind curtains, we giggled, and we waited. And we waited. And we waited. Until we realised he was not looking for us but looking to get rid of us and some peace!

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Quinnsmas. It is still a joyous occasion.

For too many years, Christmas was marked by negotiations in the peace process that would go right up to the wire and sometimes would be suspended on Christmas Eve and recommence on December 27th. Thankfully, that hasn't happened in a couple of years. Other years, there would be a crisis that meant working over the holidays. One year, it was a record freeze that burst pipes and led to water outages across Ireland.

This year, touch wood, all looks quiet.

There is always a tinge of sadness at Christmas as we remember friends and family we have lost or, as is all too common in modern Ireland, those who have immigrated. For me, it's a time to reflect and be thankful for all those who came before us, to appreciate those who are with us, and to look forward to the coming year.

I would like to thank all our friends across the US and Canada for your support, good humour, hospitality, and commitment to Irish Unity.

Enjoy the break, and if it all gets too much, you can always organise a game of hide and seek.

Nolliag Shona Daoibhisa,

Ciarán

Ciarán Quinn is the Sinn Féin Representative to North America

Watch: December Video Update

Watch our latest video update! Sinn Féin's Representative to North America and Friends of Sinn Féin's Executive Director discuss the latest legacy developments, a review of all the progress and growth in 2025, and a preview of what's in store for 2026!

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Thank you!

Thank you for your generosity during our recent fundraising drive! You make a difference in all the work we do. This year's growth and next year's plans wouldn't be possible without you, and we greatly appreciate your support!

Watch: Irish Unity Education Webinar with guest Gerry Adams

November's guest for our Irish Unity Education Webinar series is former Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams.

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Supreme Court ruling disappointing and concerning for families campaigning for truth and justice

Sinn Féin MP Paul Maskey has said this week's Supreme Court ruling in the case of Paul 'Topper' Thompson who was murdered in 1994 effectively gives the British Secretary of State a veto over inquests and any potential new investigations for families.

The West Belfast MP said, "Today's ruling is extremely disappointing and indeed concerning for the Thompson family and all families campaigning for truth and justice.

"The Thompson family have been campaigning over three decades showing incredible strength in the face of obstruction by the British state and their ongoing refusal to grant even a basic level of justice to victims' families.

"This case is yet another example of the contempt shown by the British government towards families seeking answers about what happened to their loved ones.

"Today's ruling effectively hands full power to the British Secretary of State, giving them a veto over inquests and any potential new investigations for families. This is

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“I will stand with the Thompson family as they continue their brave fight to uncover the truth about Paul’s murder.

“We need a legacy process that commands the confidence of victims’ families and is rooted in the principles agreed at Stormont House — not one based on cover-up and denial.”

Read the latest issue of Éire Nua

The latest issue of Éire Nua is now available. Read all about the latest work being done for a new and united Ireland, get updates on events from around the world, and more!

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IN THE USA

DIASPORA MEET ON UNITY

By Greg O'Loughlin

Friends of Sinn Féin hosted a series of three Irish Unity People's Assemblies for the Diaspora in the Northeast of the United States in late October. These were the ninth, tenth, and eleventh Irish Unity People's Assemblies organized across the US over the last year, which drew more than 1,100 people in attendance from coast to coast. Previous events featured Sinn Féin speakers Pat Cullen MP, John Finucane MP, and Dara Hughes MP, with stops in Cleveland, OH; Columbus, OH; Pearl River, NY; Washington, DC; Cincinnati, OH; Nashville, TN; Chicago, IL; and San Francisco, CA.

This run of events included stops in Hartford, CT; Boston, MA; and Philadelphia, PA. Special guest Mairéad Farrell, TD for Galway addressed hundreds of supporters and activists from all over the region.

Late autumn in New England can feel like a movie set. Vibrant foliage, fall festivals, pumpkin patches, and apple orchards abound as Mairéad made her way from city to city accompanied by Sinn Féin's Representative to North America Ciarán Quinn and Friends of Sinn Féin's Executive Director Greg O'Loughlin. The setting was bested only by the energy and engagement at every stop where the crowds that gathered jumped right into the work of planning and preparing for a new and united Ireland.

In Hartford, more than 150 activists gathered

at the Irish American Home Society to hear from Ms. Farrell and to work in small groups at their tables in order to make plans and organize action. A rare weekend afternoon event made it possible for families to participate, and featured pipers, a local Irish dance school, and a reception after the work to help solidify the connections made.

The fireside chat portion of the event was hosted by Tricia McIvor, who led Míaréad through a series of questions that had been suggested by registrants. It was a highlight of the series, and it provided the audience with an opportunity to learn more about the role of activists in the work.

Later in the week, more than 100 people convened at the home of the Boston Firefighter's Local 718, Florian Hall. Boston's host for the fireside chat portion was none other than long-time activist and Irish Republican Kathleen Savage. Kathleen and Mairéad not only answered the many questions suggested by the attendees, but also worked their way through a myriad of topics and events that provided a special review of Boston's long history of support.

Activists young and old jumped at the chance to discuss the actors and the work involved in creating a new and united Ireland and to make plans for next steps.

More than 100 people came out to

Philadelphia's Commodore John Barry Arts and Cultural Irish Centre in spite of pouring rain and flood warnings. The room filled quickly and the warmth of the greetings and of the gathering quickly vanquished the cold, raw evening.

The fireside chat in Philadelphia was hosted by Terry Welsh, Pennsylvania's Chair of the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians Freedom for All Ireland Committee and was a great conversation. Afterwards, attendees were eager to engage with the small group work and discussion questions. Philadelphia has been a center of Irish Republican activism in the United States for decades and the crowd was ready, willing, and able to dive into the deep end of organizing and next steps.

All of these events were made possible by the work of volunteer activists and supporters. The progress made and the work to be done on the horizon is clearer than ever and that is thanks to the dozens of volunteers, hosts, donors, and activists.

Plans for events next year are already underway. In the meantime, it is clearer than ever that Irish America is ready to work for a new and United Ireland and to be part of the generation that makes it happen!

Greg O'Loughlin, Executive Director, Friends of Sinn Féin

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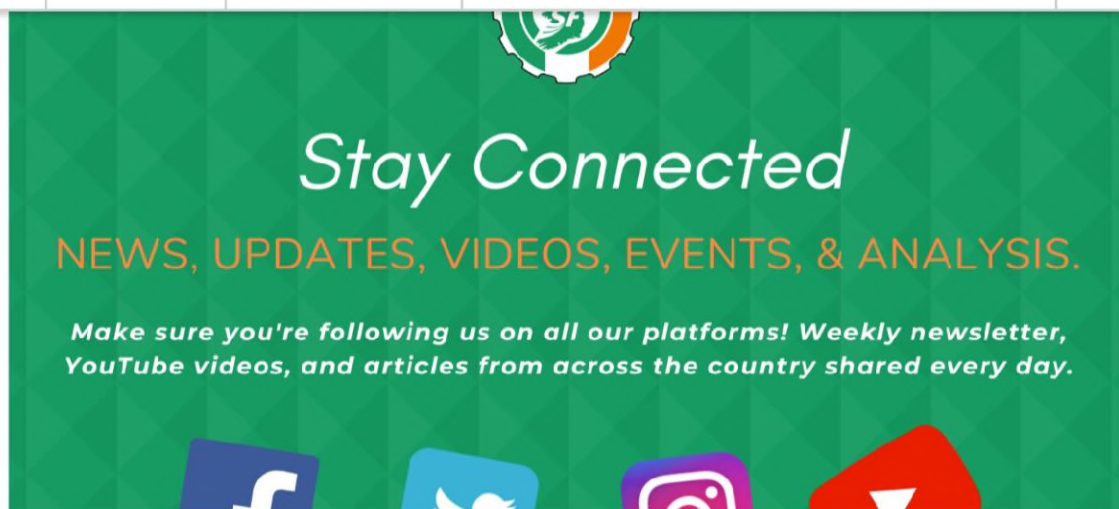
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Mary Lou McDonald calls on British PM to intervene in Hunger Strike protest

Sinn Féin Leader Mary Lou McDonald has written to the British Prime Minister Keir Starmer to express her serious concern at the life-threatening situation facing six prisoners in Britain who are currently on hunger strike.

She has urged him to intervene urgently to resolve this situation before it ends in a tragic loss of life.

Ms. McDonald said, "Today I wrote to the British Prime Minister to express my concern at the life-threatening situation facing six prisoners in Britain who are currently on hunger strike. This protest has arisen as a result of the lengthy pre-trial detention of these individuals following arrests in actions to stop the genocide in Gaza. Some of the individuals have been held for more than a year without trial.

"The health of those on hunger strike has deteriorated significantly in recent days and there is an immediate concern about Qesser Zuhrah who has been moved to hospital after 47 days on hunger strike. This is now a serious humanitarian crisis.

"Urgent action is needed and I have urged the British Prime Minister to engage directly to find an immediate resolution to this protest.

1/9/26, 5:40 PM

Happy Christmas!

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Oifig Mary Lou McDonald TD
Office of Mary Lou McDonald TD

David Lammy MP
Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice
Ministry of Justice
102 Petty France
London
SW1H 9AJ
18 December 2025

Secretary of State, a chara,

RE: Health and well-being of eight prisoners on hunger strike in Britain

We, the undersigned parliamentary representatives of Sinn Féin (Ireland), write to express our grave concern regarding the imminent danger to life of eight prisoners in Britain who have embarked on a collective hunger strike.

The prisoners' protest is in direct response to their prolonged pre-trial detention by your Government. Some of these prisoners have been held for over a year without trial. The right to a fair trial, including reasonable bail conditions, is an absolute right that must be protected in any democratic society.

However, despite increasing concerns about the conditions of the prisoners' detention, the health and well-being of those on hunger strike is now extremely alarming. The well-being of the longest serving hunger striker, Qassem Zuhair, has rapidly deteriorated after over 47 days on the strike. She has now been hospitalised.

We urge you as a matter of urgency to engage directly with the prisoners and their legal representatives, Imran Khan & Partners, to find an immediate resolution to this ongoing protest. With that, the human and legal rights of the prisoners must also be fully respected, including their need for unrestricted access to medical care.

We believe your government must act immediately to ensure that this crisis is immediately resolved before any of these eight young people die or incur permanent harm to their health and well-being.

Is sinne to meas:

Mary Lou McDonald TD
Michelle O'Neill MLA



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