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UNITED IRELAND

Shelter from the storm

A letter from Ireland

a Chara,

I am writing to you from Boston, where we have been snowed in, and our flights home have been cancelled.

Getting caught up in a storm seems like the perfect metaphor for this trip. We began with a series of engagements in Washington with supporters and congressional offices.

At that stage, the focus of the conversation was on Greenland and the threat of invasion from President Trump and its knock-on impact on the EU and Ireland. It seems so surreal to be writing about the US considering invading a European and NATO ally. But these are the times in which we live. By the end of the week in Washington, the immediate threat had subsided.

The relationship between the US and the EU is being redefined by tariffs and changing policy. The recently published National Security Strategy recognises the special relationship between the US and Ireland, but lays out a new approach to Europe to which Ireland is an integral part. The outworking of that strategy is not clear, and old assumptions and ways of working are no longer valid. The EU will have to redefine its relationship with the US and the rest of the world.

Ireland will be caught up in this storm. As political and trade relations are changing, it was comforting that the real and special relationship between Ireland and Irish America remains strong. Congressional support for Ireland, our peace agreement and Irish Unity is both bipartisan and resilient. It is with the company of friends that we find shelter in the storm.

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On leaving Washington, I travelled to New England for an event to mark the anniversary of Bloody Sunday. I met up with Sinn Féin councillor and Bloody Sunday Trust board member, Aisling Hutton.

In Rhode Island, Aisling updated supporters on the campaign to achieve justice for those killed on the streets of Derry in 1972. Aisling acknowledged the role played by Irish Americans in holding the British to account and the ongoing support for the bereaved families.

The following day, we travelled to Springfield, Massachusetts, for a showing of the documentary, "Gerry Adams a Ballymurphy Man" hosted by Rep. Richard Neal. After the screening, I took part in a panel discussion with Rep. Neal, chaired by my good friend Billy Tranchese. The discussion focused on the role played by Irish America in progressing the cause of peace, the protection of the Good Friday Agreement and in securing Irish Unity.

Then came the storm. An event planned for Hartford the following day had to be abandoned, and we headed to Boston.

We live in turbulent times. This week has demonstrated that with good friends, we can and will come out the other end. I want to thank all those who took time out in Washington to meet with us, and in particular those in Rhode Island, Springfield and Hartford who looked after us so well.

Have a great weekend.

Ciarán

P.S. I have now arrived home to floods in Ireland!

Ciarán Quinn is the Sinn Féin Representative to North America

Register now: January Irish Unity Education Webinar with Niall Murphy

Niall Murphy is a Belfast based solicitor and partner in the practice of KRW Law. In recent years he has represented the victims and survivors of the Loughinisland and Ormeau Road atrocities.

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of St. Edna's GAC, and a founder and Governor of Gaelscoil Éanna. Niall is a Director of Relatives for Justice, a member of the Development Panel to the Northern Ireland Human Rights Fund and also sits on the Board of the West Belfast Theater Company 'Brassneck'.

Join us on **Saturday, January 31st** for a conversation and Q&A about the work and planning being done to prepare for a new and united Ireland.

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**Sinn Féin Councilor in Rhode Island to
provide update on Bloody Sunday Trust**

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Sinn Féin Councillor Aisling Hutton visited Rhode Island on Friday to provide an update on the Bloody Sunday Trust Campaign.

After the event, she said, "It was an honour to attend the Rhode Island Céilí Club to commemorate Bloody Sunday and to give an update on the ongoing efforts for truth, justice and accountability.

"Sincere thanks to the 1916 Committee for their incredible hospitality and welcome. It was deeply appreciated and speaks volumes about the strength of community and commitment that exists here.

"Irish America has played, and continues to play, a vital role in supporting Ireland and our efforts to unite our Island. From solidarity shown decades ago to the support given today, that bond remains strong and meaningful.

"The backing, understanding and encouragement from Irish America has mattered . It mattered then, it matters now, and it will continue to matter as we carry this work forward.

"I was very honoured to visit the memorial garden in Rhode Island in memory of The Famine, The Hunger Strike and The Easter Rising. A moment of remembrance honouring our dead and the strength of the Irish Disapora.

"Go raibh míle maith agaibh to everyone who attended, listened, and stood in solidarity."



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Bloody Sunday: January 30, 1972

A date that reverberates still. The day innocence died.

As civil rights protesters marched through the streets of Derry, the British Army opened fire - murdering 14 and injuring many more.

54 years on, we carry their names with us as we build the Irish nation anew - united, equal and free.



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Michael Kelly, age 17
Hugh Gilmour, age 17
Kevin McElhinney, age 17
John Young, age 17
Gerald Donaghey, age 17
William Nash, age 19
Michael McDaid, age 20
James Wray, age 22
William McKinney, age 26
Patrick Doherty, age 31
Gerard McKinney, age 35
Bernard McGuigan, age 41
John Johnston, age 59

DUP leader’s ‘insensitive and contemptuous’ remarks towards Bloody Sunday families should be withdrawn

Sinn Féin MP John Finucane has hit out at comments by DUP leader Gavin Robinson in relation to today’s PPS decision not to prosecute British soldiers investigated for perjury.

Mr Robinson suggested the Bloody Sunday families should “move on” without the need for “endless pursuits of others.”

The North Belfast MP said, “The contemptuous and frankly insulting remarks earlier by the DUP leader on yet another painful and difficult day for the Bloody Sunday families were appalling.

“This is not the first time Gavin Robinson’s behaviour has been crass, arrogant and wholly insensitive to what the Bloody Sunday families continue to experience.

“In stark contrast to the DUP leader’s disgraceful commentary, the Bloody Sunday families continue to demonstrate remarkable dignity, determination and strength in the face of ongoing denials of justice.

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when fighting for truth and justice.

“Gavin Robinson should retract his remarks and issue an apology to the families.”

Irish Unity and the St. Patrick’s Day Season: A Call to Irish America

By **Brendan McGovern**

Every St. Patrick’s Day season, Irish politicians, office holders, and public figures cross the Atlantic to join parades, dinners, dances, and cultural celebrations across the United States. These visits generate warmth and goodwill, but this year they must also generate clarity. For Irish Americans who support a United Ireland, this season offers a real opportunity to speak directly and be heard.

Irish Unity no longer sits on the horizon as an abstract idea. Demographic change, the impact of Brexit, and sustained political momentum North and South have moved the question firmly into the present. The Good Friday Agreement already provides the democratic pathway through referendums. The Irish people endorsed that framework overwhelmingly. Political will now determines the pace.

Irish America has always stepped forward at moments like this.

The Proclamation of 1916 addressed the “exiled children of Ireland” because the authors understood that the diaspora formed part of the national project. Irish Americans supported the Rising, sustained the War of Independence, remained engaged through decades of conflict, and played a decisive role in advancing the peace process. Those contributions shaped history. They continue to matter.

That responsibility did not end with the Good Friday Agreement.

As Irish officials arrive this spring, they should hear one clear message everywhere they go. Irish America expects leadership on Unity.

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Reconciliation and Unity advance together. Planning for a United Ireland strengthens reconciliation by creating certainty, stability, and shared purpose. Delay weakens trust and prolongs division.

Every conversation matters. At parades, receptions, fundraisers, and community events, Irish Americans should speak plainly. Ask direct questions. State expectations clearly. Do you support unity referendums under the Good Friday Agreement? Do you support planning for a United Ireland now? Will you bring that message back to Ireland?

This St. Patrick's Day season must look forward, not backward.

Irish Unity will arrive because people insist on it, organize for it, and speak about it openly. Irish America stands strong. Every visitor from Ireland should return home knowing that Unity commands support, Unity commands expectation, and Unity approaches with confidence.

This article was submitted by reader and supporter Brendan McGovern. If you have a piece that you would like to be considered for publication, please send it to greg@friendsofsinnfein.com.

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