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UNITED STATES
UNITED IRELAND

Making Sense of the By-Elections

A letter from Ireland

a Chara,

Last weekend, the votes were counted in two by-elections (special elections). One in Dublin Central, an urban constituency, and the other in Galway West, comprising Galway City and a vast tract of rural Gaeltacht.

It was a disappointing election, as Sinn Féin finished second in Dublin to the Social Democrats and down the field in Galway, with the seat going to one of the government parties, Fine Gael.

Two different constituencies returning Centre-Left and Centre-Right candidates. I say disappointing, as I believe neither will deliver the kind of new and united Ireland that the people so desperately need and desire. But that is democracy.

I am always mindful of President Clinton's words: "The American people have spoken—but it's going to take a little while to determine exactly what they said."

While it is always interesting to try to guess, it is dangerous to draw conclusions from two vastly different constituencies, where hyper-local candidates and issues can skew results but not have an impact on a national scale. It would be like comparing a district in Massachusetts to one in New Mexico or a riding in Quebec to one in Alberta.

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support other left-wing parties. A first preference for Sinn Féin, then encouraging voters to give preferences to other left-wing candidates.

In the Galway election, when the Sinn Féin candidate was eliminated, 75% of his transferable votes went to parties and independent candidates on the left, and 25% to a rural party. The battle for the seat was between a centre-right candidate of Fine Gael and the rural party candidate of Independent Ireland.

In the final round of vote counting, it was the left-leaning parties' votes that elected the centre-right candidate. This was not a surprise, as the Irish Labour Party had supported Fine Gael in previous Governments.

In Dublin, the election battle was between left-wing parties, with the Sinn Féin candidate taking second place to the Social Democrats after nine rounds of transfers.

This result meant that, for the first time in history, the constituency has no representative from the government parties, Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael.

The votes across both constituencies vary dramatically. Looking at the winning parties, Fine Gael got 20% in Galway and 10.7% in Dublin, while the Social Democrats got 19.7% in Dublin and 7% in Galway. Independent Ireland did not contest the election in Dublin.

However, over time, trends become a little more clear. In 2007, Fianna Fail got 44% of the vote in Dublin and is now at 4%. In Galway, over the same period, their vote has collapsed from 37% to 9%. Sinn Féin's vote has more than doubled, returning TDs in both constituencies.

Until very recently, Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael controlled both government and opposition, and they could rely on smaller left parties to make up the numbers. That is no longer the case. Across the state, polls indicate that Sinn Féin has made up ground and is now the largest party, while support for Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael has fallen.

The by-election results offer an important snapshot of opinion in two very different constituencies and two very different sets of results. The analysis of what the people have said will take some time to work out.

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Is mise,

Ciarán

Ciarán Quinn is the Sinn Féin Representative to North America

Sinn Féin Vice President Michelle O'Neill to speak in San Francisco Friday, June 5

San Francisco, do not miss this opportunity to hear from Sinn Féin Vice President Michelle O'Neill on Friday, June 5th at 7:30pm. This is an exciting moment in Irish history and this is your chance to hear directly from one of the leaders making history!

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Sinn Féin Vice President Michelle O'Neill

Friday, June 5, 2026 - 7:30pm
United Irish Cultural Center
San Francisco, CA



Friends of Sinn Féin Store: OPEN

T-shirts, tote bags, mugs, and more!

All items are made in the USA and are printed by Union Labor.

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Mary Lou McDonald to speak in Washington, DC on June 25th

Washington, DC! Join us on Thursday, June 25, 2026 at 6:00pm for a conversation with Mary Lou McDonald, the President of Sinn Féin, the largest political party in Ireland and Ireland's first woman leading the Opposition.

Hear an address from Mary Lou McDonald, followed by a fireside chat hosted by our friends at The New 32 Project. There will be time to meet and greet afterwards, as well as a chance to connect with activists who are part of the work being done to plan and prepare for a new and united Ireland.

Tickets are very limited and are required to attend.

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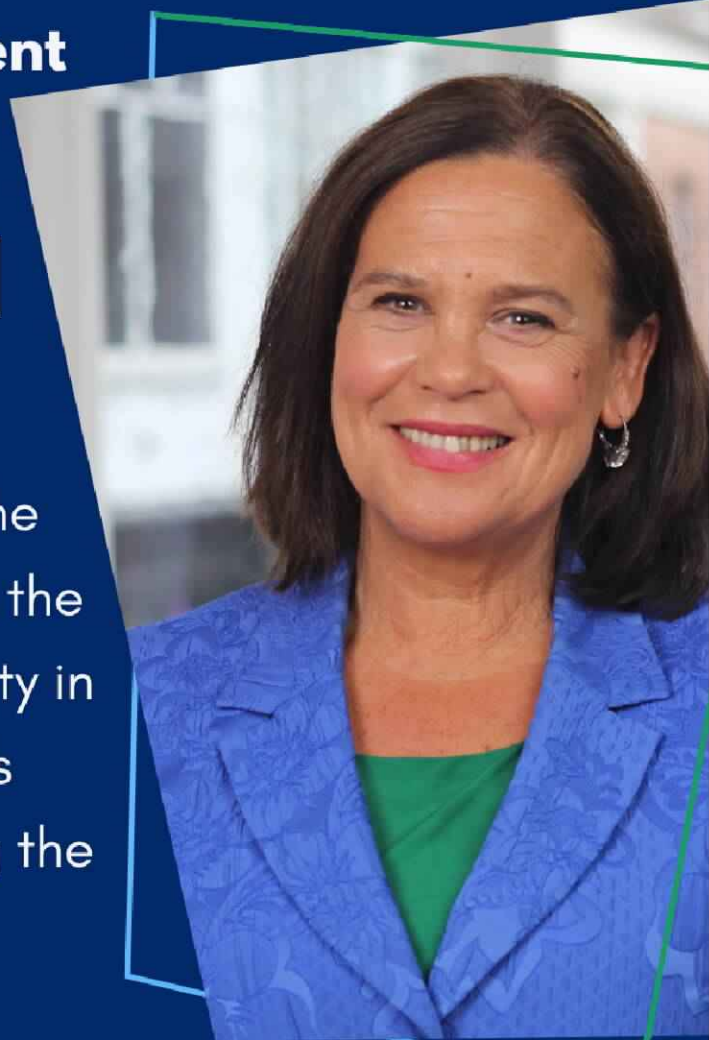
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Friends of Sinn Féin & The New 32 Project present:

A conversation with

Sinn Féin President**Mary Lou
McDonald**

Join us for a
conversation with the
leader of Sinn Féin, the
largest political party in
Ireland and Ireland's
first woman leading the
Opposition.



6:00pm, Thursday, June 25
Exiles - 1610 U St NW,
Washington, DC

Tickets are required & limited.



Irish Unity Book Club - All are Welcome!

Want to learn more about the benefits of a new and united Ireland? Want to connect with others from across the country who are curious about the same? Want to discuss the details of what a United Ireland will mean for education, health care, and more? Good news! We are hosting an online Study Group to read and discuss Ben Collins' *The Irish Unity Dividend*.


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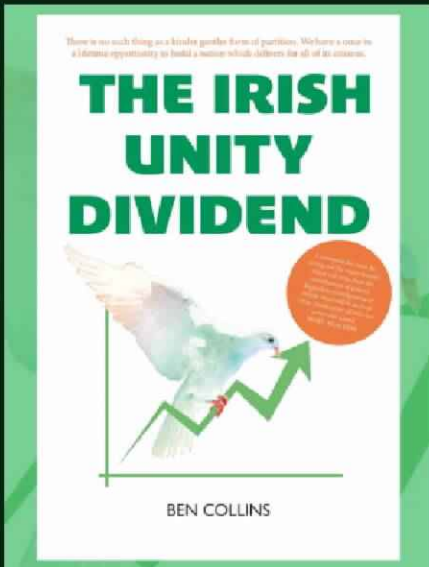
about the details and plans for a new and united Ireland.

We will meet on Zoom at 7:00pm ET on the last Tuesday of the month, starting in June. Meeting dates are on June 30, July 28, and August 25.

As a bonus, we will host a special call with author Ben Collins exclusively for participants in September.

[LEARN MORE AND SIGN UP HERE](#)

FRIENDS OF SINN FÉIN




BEN COLLINS

ONLINE STUDY GROUP

Irish Unity Study Group

Reading: *The Irish Unity Dividend*

Last Tuesday of each month
June 30 · July 28 · August 25

7:00pm ET · Online via Zoom

- All are welcome - free to join
- Study guide provided
- Facilitated small-group discussions
- Last call in September with special guest, Author Ben Collins

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A celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the returning of the Catalpa



Join us for an evening of story and song to remember one of the most daring prison escapes and rescues in history!

Wednesday, August 19, 2026

New York Irish Center

7:00pm

Tickets and more information coming soon!



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Read previous editions in the [Newsletter Archive](#).

Watch videos, interviews, webinars and more on our [YouTube Channel](#).

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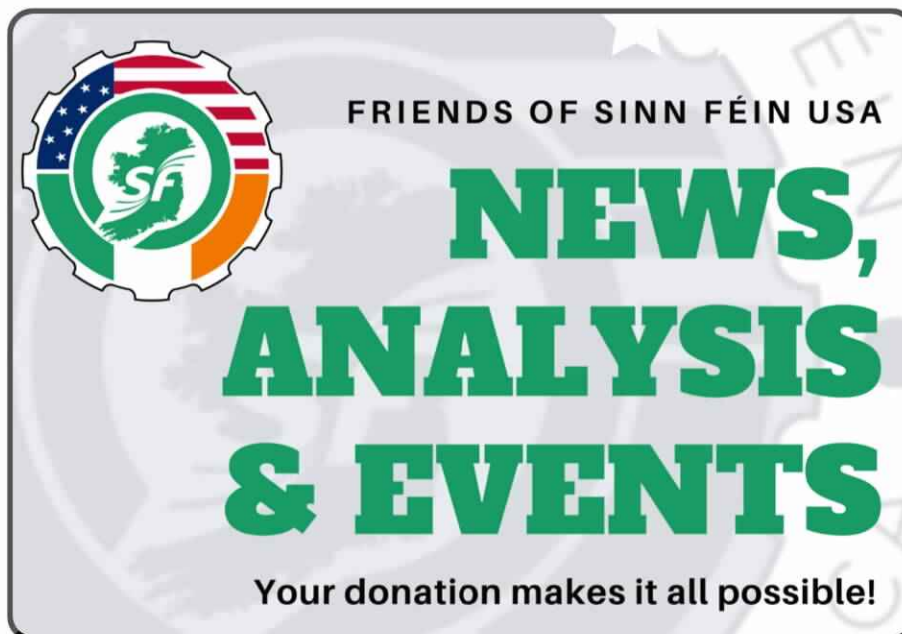
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