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UNITED STATES UNITED IRELAND

Violence in Belfast

A letter from Ireland

a Chara,

I am sure that many of you have seen the violent scenes that unfolded in Belfast this week. First, the brutal knife attack on Monday evening, and then the scenes of Unionist mobs attacking police, the fire service, families, homes, and cars.

The assailant on Monday night was a Sudanese man who had been granted the right to stay in the North by British Immigration officials. I only mention his ethnicity and status, as that was the basis for a racist mob to rampage and attack the homes of people of colour.

In Ireland, most violent attacks are carried out by white Irishmen. The vast number of abusers of women and children are white Irishmen. Yet these abusers are seen as exceptions to the norm.

When a person from an immigrant community engages in violence, regardless of circumstance, it is portrayed by some as the norm for that community. That is racism. In reality, there is good and bad in all communities.

Last week I was in San Francisco, with Sinn Féin Vice-President Michelle O'Neill. We celebrated the connections between our two great nations. We visited the proposed site of a monument to An Gorta Mór overlooking the Golden Gate Bridge. The monument will remember all of those who fled hunger and poverty in Ireland to make a new life for themselves on the West Coast of America.

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all those who fled political persecution in Ireland from Wolf Tone to the present day. These were the economic immigrants and asylum seekers of their time. In the US, they faced intimidation and discrimination from nativists. The same played out in Britain. Portrayed as lazy, stupid, drunken, and violent. "No Irish need apply", was added to job adverts.

They could not be fully American as they were Irish and "Roman" Catholic. It took generations for the Irish to find their place in America, and yet some of those offensive stereotypes persist.

On Monday, I was showing former Congressman Jamaal Bowman around Belfast. I took him to Bombay Street to see the wall that separates the communities and that marks the spot at which pro-British Unionists mobs attacked and burnt down the homes of Irish Catholics in 1969. These sectarian pogroms lit the fuse for thirty years of conflict.

I never thought that within twenty-four hours I would be witnessing similar pro-British Unionist mobs attacking the homes of immigrants. Sectarianism and racism are two sides of the same coin. The Irish know the cost of both; however, some seem to have forgotten their history.

Immigration to Ireland is a relatively new phenomenon and has been poorly handled by the government parties of Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael. They have created and sustained a housing crisis, increased inequality, and undermined public services. The easy answer for some is to blame immigrants for the failings of successive British and Irish governments.

Currently, asylum seekers make up a small proportion of immigrants. We have full employment, and immigrants are essential to our economy, particularly our health services.

In the South asylum seekers do not have the right to work and are entitled to the equivalent of only \$50 per week and emergency accommodation. If no accommodation is available, they are provided with a tent to sleep on the streets. The body that determines applications has been underfunded, leading to long delays. The current service does not work well for applicants nor for the state. The only people who prosper are the private providers of emergency accommodation.

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controlling immigration in the North. This has failed the citizens and the new Irish alike.

The legacy of the British colonial project in Ireland based on sectarianism now morph into racist attacks for a minority in the unionist community.

Lastly, to read social media, you would believe that Ireland is full and our culture is under attack. Neither is true. Our population has still not recovered to pre-famine levels, and our language, music, and sports are going strong. We Irish come in all shapes, sizes, colours and faiths.

Given our history of emigration, the discrimination we faced abroad, and our experience of sectarianism at home; religious discrimination or racism has no place in Ireland. The tiny violent minority that took to the streets, or their keyboard warriors does not represent the people North or South.

Is mise,

Ciarán

Ciarán Quinn is the Sinn Féin Representative to North America

Nobody has the right to spread fear, to intimidate or to terrify innocent families – Mary Lou McDonald TD

"We witnessed racist, intimidation and violence orchestrated by Loyalist and far-right thugs.

"People hellbent on whipping-up hatred for their own ends.

"Many of those leading this violence are the same people who will burn tricolours on top of bonfires on the twelfth of July."

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

Washington, DC! Join us for a conversation with Mary Lou McDonald. Hear an address 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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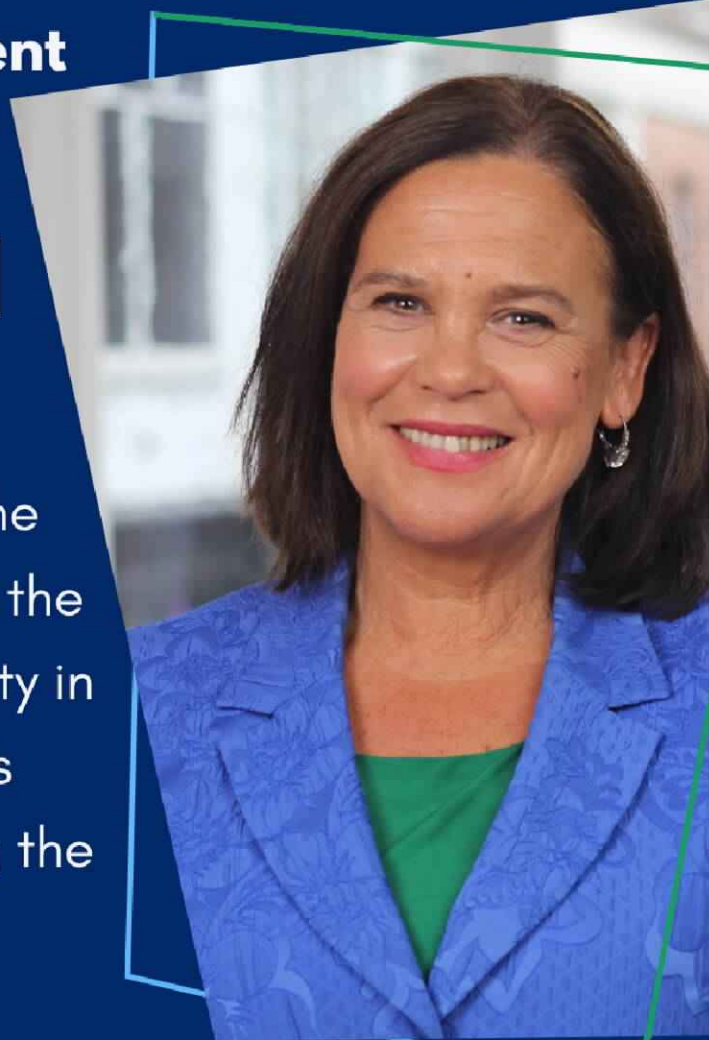
Friends of Sinn Féin & The New 32 Project present:

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.



Sinn Féin Vice President Michelle O'Neill in San Francisco

From The Irish Echo: In what was her first visit to the West Coast since her election as First Minister of Northern Ireland, Michelle O'Neill last week met with Irish

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Over 250 people heard the Sinn Féin vice-president interviewed by local activist Nóra Scally onstage at the Irish Cultural Center on Friday past while the previous day she had been guest of honor at a labor leaders lunch which was backed by Mike Casey of the Hotel workers union and Charley Lavery of the Operating Engineers.



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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Join us for the Irish Unity Book Club - All are Welcome!

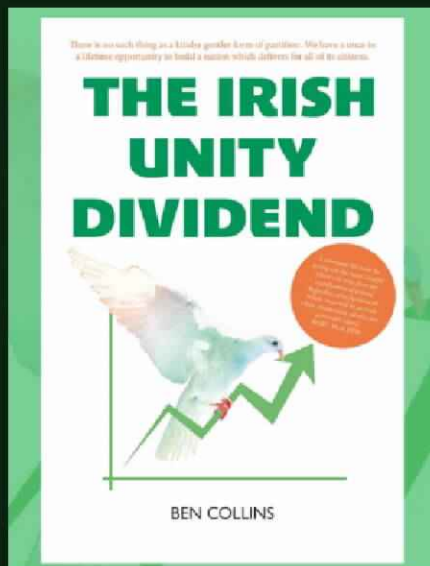
Join activists, readers, and leaders from across the country who will be learning more about the details and plans for a new and united Ireland. Friends of Sinn Féin will be hosting an online Study Group to read and discuss Ben Collins' *The Irish Unity Dividend*.

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.**

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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

REGISTRATION OPEN TO ALL
NATION-WIDE BOOK READ

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If you think a friend or a colleague would like to get this sent to their inbox for free every week, [send them a link to our website and encourage them to sign up!](#)

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Public Inquiry into murder of Pat Finucane begins after 37 years



Sinn Féin MP John Finucane said on Wednesday, "After 37 years, as the public inquiry into my father's murder begins, our family is more determined than ever to uncover the full truth about what happened."

Pat's widow and John's mother Geraldine said, "If a public inquiry into the murder of Pat Finucane can finally examine publicly the collusion that plagued our society for so many years, there is hope that a real process of healing can begin."



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