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UNITED STATES UNITED IRELAND

Not in the gift of any British Prime Minister

A letter from Ireland

a Chara,

British Prime Ministers show a particularly ill-informed arrogance toward Ireland. It is not new. In 1981, as the Hunger Strike ended and war raged in the streets, Margaret Thatcher claimed that the North was as British as her constituency of Finchley.

Before becoming Prime Minister, Andy Burnham spoke at the Alliance Party Conference and likened Belfast to any British northern industrial town. Last week, he returned to Belfast as Prime Minister and declared that talk of Irish Unity referendums was "off the table" and that talk of unity was divisive!

Sinn Féin leaders said the statement breached the Good Friday Agreement, as did political representatives across Ireland, the Co-Chair of the Congressional Friends of Ireland, Representative Richard Neal, and Representative Brendan Boyle.

Within hours, the clarifications began; the British Prime Minister supported the Agreement's provisions and said a unity referendum was not on his agenda "today". It was very much on the agenda of Sinn Féin President Mary Lou McDonald, who led a party delegation including First Minister Michelle O'Neill and John Finucane to meet Andy Burnham.

The vast majority of people in the North and South endorsed the Good Friday Agreement, which enshrines in International law the right of the Irish People to national self-determination via referendums. That right is not in the gift of any British Prime Minister to take "off the table".

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alone, by agreement between the two parts respectively and without external impediment, to exercise their right of self-determination on the basis of consent, freely and concurrently given..."

The Agreement provides for the governments to call such referendums at any time and that a referendum in the North must be called if constitutional change is likely. No criteria must be met before a referendum can be called ie" without external impediment", but there is an (opaque) threshold beyond which one can no longer be refused.

Both governments continue to hide behind the nonsense that a threshold must be met before holding referendums, placing retaining the status quo at all costs over a commitment to democracy and the right to self-determination.

Prime Minister Burnham is an English unionist, viewing the North of Ireland as the same as Scotland and Wales, despite the relevant governments being led by pro-independence parties. The future constitutional position of Scotland and Wales rests with a predominantly English Government in Westminster. In Ireland, the right to self-determination is a matter of International Law and in the hands of the people.

It should not be a surprise or a shock to find out a British Prime Minister is a unionist. That is a political reality, and one we must recognise, challenge, and change. The reaction to his comments from across Ireland and the US moved their public position.

We, all who support the Good Friday Agreement and the people's right to self-determination, must act to secure unity referendums. That means political parties in Ireland, civic society and supporters in the US and Canada calling out both governments for their continued refusal to honour democracy and let the people have their say.

Andy Burnham is not the first to come to Ireland believing he can set the parameters of our future; seven British Prime Ministers have visited with that goal over the last ten years. Hopefully he will be the last.

Have a great weekend.

Is mise,

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Book Talk with Author Ben Collins - Registration Open

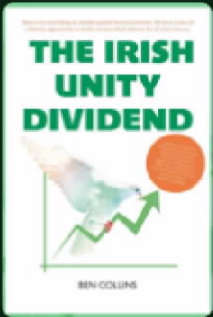
Join us on Saturday, September 19th for a special call with author Ben Collins. Dozens of Irish Unity activists and supporters have spent the last three months reading and discussing his book 'The Irish Unity Dividend.' He'll join us for a conversation about what's next for Irish Unity as well as the details and ins and outs of his book. It's a free call and ALL are welcome to join. Space is limited - registration link in comments. [REGISTER HERE](#)

FRIENDS OF SINN FÉIN



The Irish Unity Dividend

Live Q&A and discussion with the author!



WEBINAR

Saturday,
September 19th
12:00 noon ET
Online via Zoom



BEN COLLINS

REGISTRATION OPEN TO ALL
NATION-WIDE BOOK READ

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WATCH NEW VIDEO Update

Sinn Féin Representative to North America Ciarán Quinn and Friends of Sinn Féin Executive Director Greg O'Loughlin discuss a recent decision about Garvaghy Rd, review events, in New York and Pittsburgh, and more.



Orange Order's true intention is to re-establish repeated unwanted parades on Garvaghy Road

Commenting on the Orange Order application to march down the Garvaghy Road, Sinn Féin councillor Catherine Nelson said, "The issue of unwanted Orange marches on the Garvaghy Road is closed.

"Today's announcement from the Orange Order reveals their true intention, which is to re-establish repeated unwanted parades on the Garvaghy Road.

"This march is steeped in a history of hate, sectarian violence, and murder.

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"The people of Garvaghy Road do not want this parade forced through their area. It is a non-starter.

[READ FULL STORY HERE](#)



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6th Annual Martin McGuinness Chieftains Walk NYC - Sun Sept 13

Join us for the 6th Annual Martin McGuinness Chieftains Walk as we honor Martin's extraordinary legacy of leadership, peace, reconciliation, and the continuing journey toward a united Ireland.

This year, we are honored to welcome Martin's daughter, Gráinne Hargan, who will travel from Ireland to join us for the walk.

Whether you have walked with us before or are joining for the first time, we invite you to stand with friends from across the Irish-American community in support of the work of the Martin McGuinness Peace Foundation and our shared vision of peace, reconciliation, and Irish reunification.

[MORE INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION HERE](#)

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6TH ANNUAL CHIEFTAIN'S WALK

WALKING TOGETHER FOR PEACE, RECONCILIATION & A UNITED IRELAND

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 13 2026

SPECIAL GUEST
Gráinne Hargan
Martin's daughter, traveling from Ireland to join us.

PIER 25
West Street & N. Moore Street
New York, NY

9:00 AM
REGISTRATION & OPENING CELEBRATION

10:00 AM
CHIEFTAIN'S WALK BEGINS

Walk with us along the beautiful Hudson River waterfront from Pier 25 to Pier 45 and back.

HONORING MARTIN MCGUINNESS AND SUPPORTING THE WORK OF THE MARTIN MCGUINNESS PEACE FOUNDATION

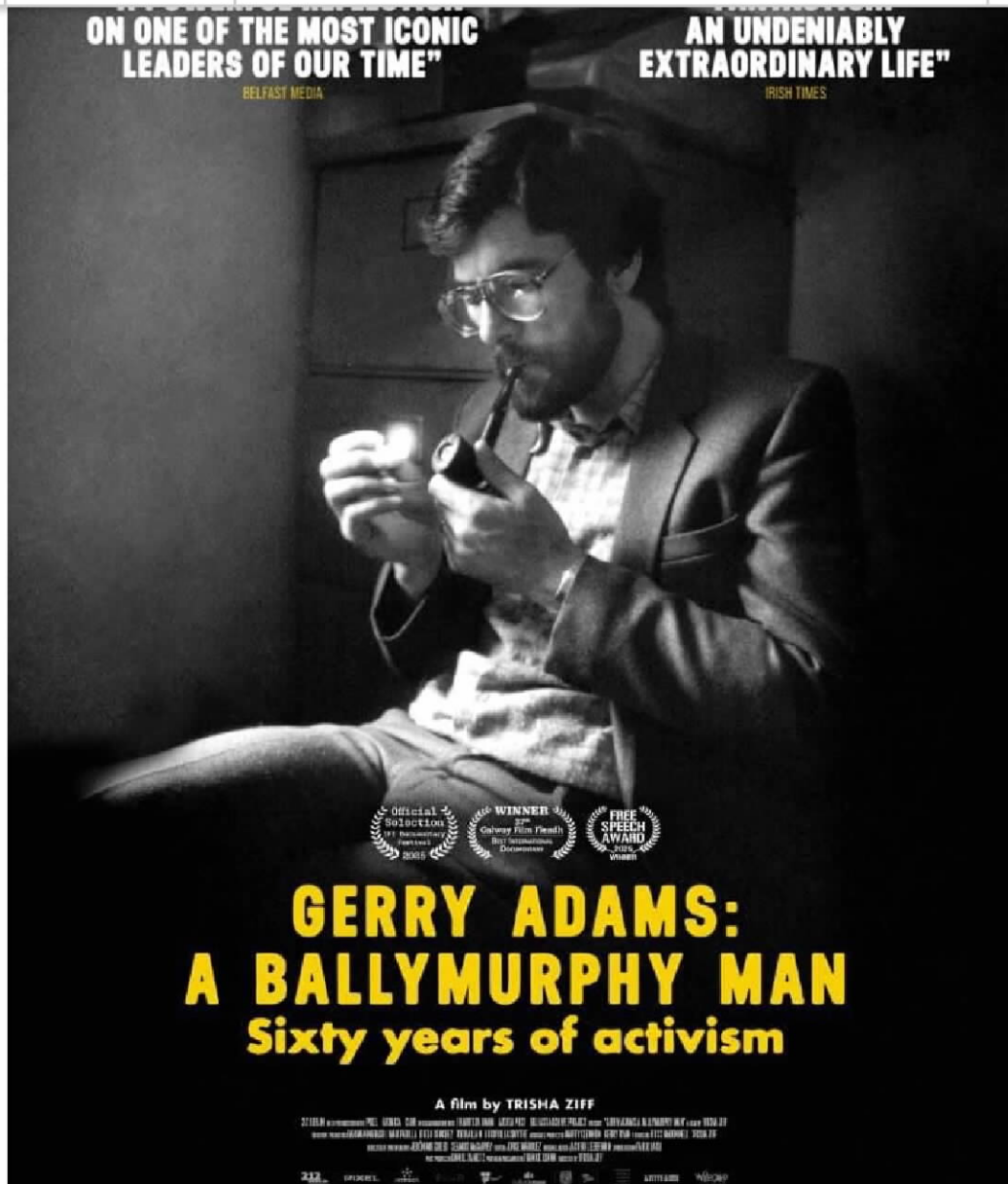
New York Screenings of 'Gerry Adams – A Ballymurphy Man'

'Gerry Adams – A Ballymurphy Man' will be shown at the New York Irish Center on [Thursday, September 24th](#) and [Friday, September 25th](#). Click the date to get tickets now!

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NEW - Virtual Irish Unity People's Assembly for the Diaspora

Join us on Sunday, October 25th at 12:00 noon ET for a special virtual Irish Unity People's Assembly for the Diaspora. We will be joined by Conor Murphy - Member of the Seanad Éireann, The Oireachtas Committee on the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement, and former Minister for the Economy.

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THE COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF IRELAND



Sunday, October 25, 2026

12:00pm Noon ET

Virtual - Zoom

Conor Murphy

Member of the Seanad Éireann

Oireachtas Committee on the

Implementation of the

Good Friday Agreement.

Former Minister for the Economy

AN COIMISIÚN
UM THODHCHAÍ
NA hÉIREANN

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