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UNITED STATES UNITED IRELAND

The Turning of the Tide

A letter from Ireland

a Chara,

Have you ever noticed how the tide turns? At first it's imperceptible; then the landscape subtly changes. Lines in the sands are breached. Suddenly the water is lapping your feet, and the sands beneath your feet have shifted.

The mini heat wave this week across Ireland has gone to my head, and I have not retired to the beach. The last month has been significant in the Irish Unity debate.

Three weeks ago, Sinn Féin President Mary Lou McDonald tabled a Bill in the Dáil (Irish Parliament) that would oblige the Irish Government to begin planning for Irish Unity. If enacted, it would have obliged the Irish Government to draft a "Green Paper" on Irish Unity – a high-level policy paper outlining the vision of a new and united Ireland, including the economic and governance model, the rights of citizens consistent with the Good Friday Agreement, delivery of public services and relationships with Britain post-partition amongst an array of issues.

It also sought to establish a representative Citizens Assembly to examine particular issues in the unity discussion. The Assembly would be randomly selected, hear expert opinion, and agree on recommendations to send to the government. This form of participative democracy is well established in the South, where it has dealt with some of the most sensitive constitutional issues such as marriage equality and the provision of abortion. Both of which were adopted in subsequent constitutional referendums.

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Agreement recognised the right of people who share the Island to self-determination through referendums in the North and the South. If both jurisdictions on the island vote for Unity, Ireland will be united.

Over the past number of weeks, we have witnessed the tide changing. Simon Harris, leader of Fine Gael and the Tánaiste (deputy Prime Minister) in the government, announced that his party would begin planning for Unity. The Social Democratic and Labour Party, the party of John Hume, hosted a conference on Irish Unity. A leading member of Fianna Fáil, possible future leader, and current Justice Minister James O'Callaghan said that referendums before 2030 were possible.

All parties in the Dáil now support planning and preparing for Unity, except "Fianna Fáil – The Republican Party". This places the party, on the same side of the debate as pro-British Unity Parties in the North of Ireland. The leader of Fianna Fáil and current Taoiseach Micheal Martin last week said that Unity would take more than soundbites and then, paradoxically, refused to outline any plan beyond his soundbite.

This week, in the Dáil the parties of Government Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael, and their independents voted down the Sinn Féin Bill.

Simon Harris, the leader of Fine Gael is now exposed, one day claiming that now is the time to start planning for unity and the next as a member of government voting against planning for unity.

Meanwhile Micheal Martin, the leader of Fianna Fáil refused to follow the lesson of King Cnut when he ordered the tide to turn back. The tide is changing, the majority of the of the parties across all Ireland and its people see the wisdom in planning and preparing for Unity.

Fine Gael needs to stop flip-fopping on the issue. Fianna Fáil should now be known as the "former Republican Party". This is a time to redouble our efforts to ensure that the Irish Government actually lives up to its obligations to build a new and united Ireland.

Is mise,

Ciarán

Ciarán Quinn is the Sinn Féin Representative to North America

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Reunification: A New Deal for The People of Ireland – Mary Lou McDonald’s Speech in the Dáil

Sinn Féin leader Mary Lou McDonald’s speech during Dáil debate on the Planning for Constitutional Change Bill 2026 in full:

Tonight, the Dáil can take a major step towards Irish Unity in our time.

Tonight, we can begin the final length of our national journey from peace to reunification.

The Bill Sinn Féin brings before the Dáil this evening is historic.

If passed, it would be the first-ever legislation directing the government to start planning and preparing for a United Ireland.

The Bill compels the Taoiseach to produce and publish a government Green Paper and set out its vision for reunification.

It will also establish a first-ever All-Ireland Citizens’ Assembly on Irish Unity to consider these proposals.

It would put the work of uniting Ireland at the very heart of government and the Oireachtas.

The story of our nation is a story of challenge, adversity and struggle.

But more importantly it is a story of perseverance, hope and overcoming incredible odds.

A story of enduring belief that a better future for Ireland is possible.

That spirit is best reflected in the achievement of the historic Good Friday Agreement in 1998.

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an historic, international success story in peace-building.

It created space to acknowledge the hurt, pain and loss on all sides. To build a bridge of understanding, a pathway for healing and a process for real reconciliation.

The Good Friday Agreement was about institutional arrangements and human rights standards.

However, at the very core of the agreement is the provision of the right of all the people, north and south, to determine Ireland's future at the ballot box by way of referendums.

And we now need to do the work necessary to plan and prepare for the people to vote on a United Ireland.

[READ FULL STORY HERE](#)



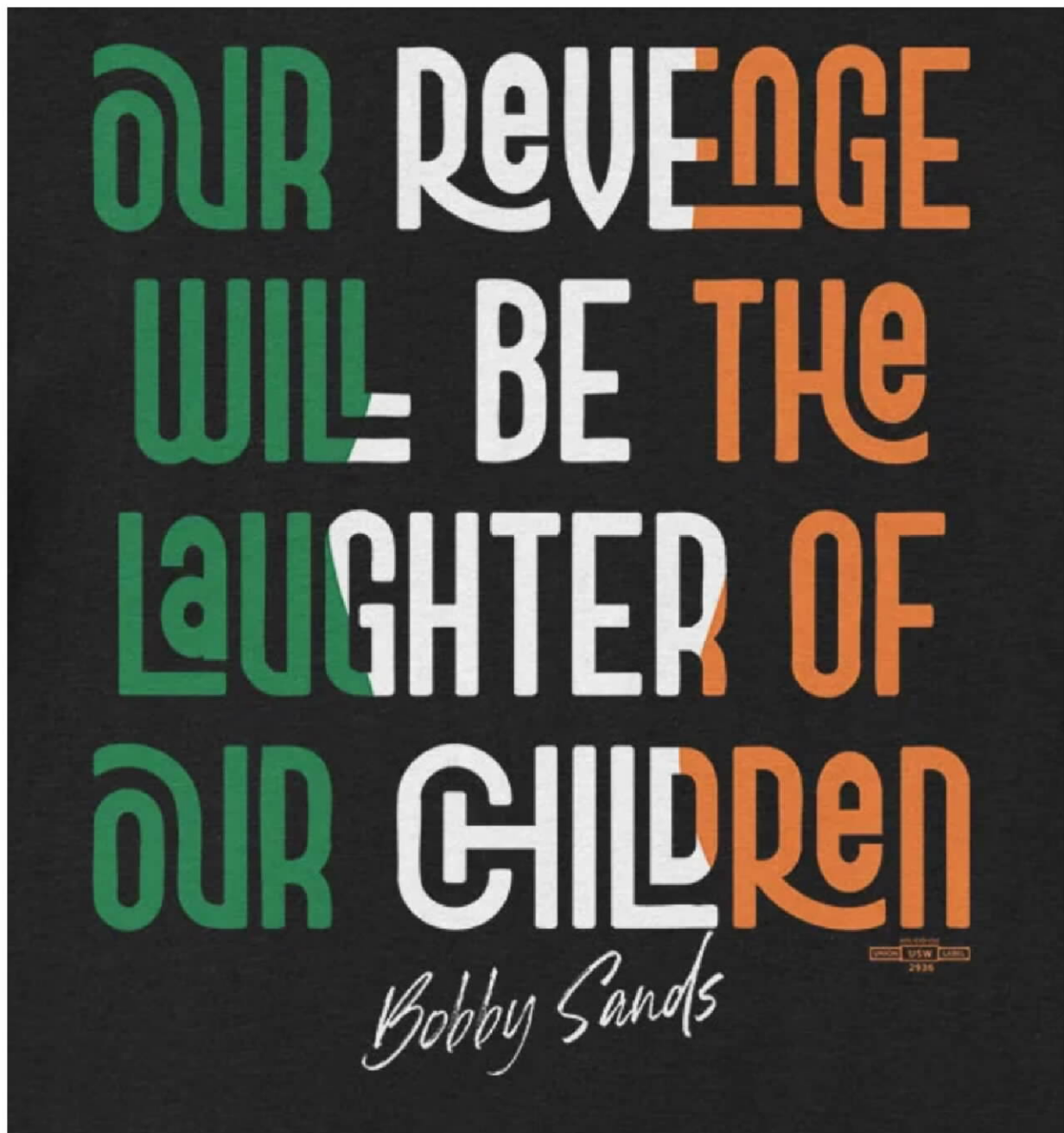
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**Join us for an evening of story and song to remember one of
the most daring prison escapes and rescues in history!**

**Wednesday, August 19, 2026
New York Irish Center
7:00pm**

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