

# UNITY NEWS

#TIME4UNITY  
#AM LE HAONTACTH

NUAHT NA HAONTACTHA

NOVEMBER SAMHAIN 2023



## TIONÓL POBAIL GAELTACHTA CHONAMARA

Chruinnigh slua mór os cionn 80 duine ag Tionól Pobail Gaeltachta Chonamara ar an gCeathrú Rua an Luan, 27ú Samhain, an chéad Tionól dá saghas de chuid Choimisiúin Shinn Féin um Thodhchaí na hÉireann in Iarthar na hÉireann, ag cur leis an 10 gcrúinnithe san iomlán reachtáilte go dtí seo ó Bhéal Feirste go Port Láirge. D'oscail TD Shinn Féin do Ghailimhe, Mairéad Farrell, an Tionól sular thug Pearse Doherty TD píosa cainte mar réamhrá. Bhí iarUachtarán an Pháirtí Gerry Adams i láthair freisin.

Chuir Cathaoirleach neamhspleách an Tionóil Máirín Ní Ghadhra tús leis an gcomhrá agus labhair 15 cainteoir ón urlár ar réimse mór ábhar lena n-áirítear meath na Gaeilge, tithíocht sa Ghaeltacht, easpa cead planála do theaghlaigh Gaeltachta, seirbhísí sláinte, an easpa meas don Ghaeltacht i mBaile Átha Cliath, agus bhrath formhór acu go dtiocfaidh deireadh leis an Ghaeltacht laistigh de cúpla bliain muna bhfuil gníomh ar leith déanta. Ar an bPainéal neamhspleách don Tionól Pobal, bhí:

Breandán Ó Beaglaóich,  
Róisín Ní Chinnéide,  
Máirín Ní Choisdealbha-Seioghe.

Tríd is tríd, bhí plé bríomhar agus láidir ann faoi chás na Gaeilge agus na Gaeltachtaí in Éirinn sa lá atá inniu ann agus cad a theastaíonn in Éirinn Aontaithe. Chríochnaigh an Tionól le héileamh ar an Rialtas Tionól Saoránach a chur ar bhun faoi Éire Aontaithe, chomh maith le Tionól Saoránach faoin nGaeilge.



#Time4Unity Am d'Aontacht



# CONAMARA GAELTACHT PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY

A large attendance of over 80 people attended the Conamara Gaeltacht People's Assembly in An Ceathrú Rua on Monday, 27th November, Sinn Féin's Commission on the Future of Ireland's first such Assembly held in the West of Ireland, adding to ten in total held across Ireland so far, from Belfast to Waterford.

Galway Sinn Féin TD Mairéad Farrell opened the Assembly followed by introductory remarks from Pearse Doherty TD. Former Party President, Gerry Adams was also in attendance.

The Assembly's independent Cathaoirleach Máirín Ní Ghadhra began the discussion and 15 speakers from the floor made contributions on a range of topics from Irish language decline, housing in the Gaeltacht, lack of planning permission for Gaeltacht families, health services, lack of respect for the Gaeltacht in Dublin and most felt that unless something is done the Gaeltacht will cease to be in a few years time.

The independent Panel for the People's Assembly consisted of: Breandán Ó Beaglaóich, Róisín Ní Chinnéide, Máirín Ní Choisdealbha-Seioghe.

All in all a lively and robust discussion was had about the state of the Irish language and the Gaeltachtaí in Ireland today and what must happen in a United Ireland.

The Assembly ended by calling on the Government to establish a Citizens' Assembly on Irish Unity and a Citizen's Assembly on the Irish language.

Footage from the Galway event can be watched here:



#Time4Unity Am d'Aontacht

# COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF IRELAND UPCOMING EVENTS

In 2022 Sinn Féin established the Commission on the Future of Ireland. The aim of the Commission is to undertake a broad and deep consultation with people all across the island and beyond on our shared future.

So far, there have been 11 public initiatives which have included People's Assemblies, a women's assembly, youth assembly, engagement with the agricultural sector & those from rural communities and a Gaeltacht Assembly. All of these initiatives have been hugely successful in terms of engaging with wider civic society on the topic of Irish Unity.

Throughout 2024 the Commission will continue to hold public and private events, to produce reports and videos of events, to communicate with past attendees and to gather written contributions.

We are pleased to announce the first of our events for 2024 have now been scheduled. See details below:

SAVE THE DATE | SÁBHÁIL AN DÁTA



## FERMANAGH PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY

**THURSDAY, 22ND FEBRUARY 2024**  
**WESTVILLE HOTEL, ENNISKILLEN**  
**7PM**

HOSTED BY SINN FÉIN'S  
COMMISSION ON THE  
FUTURE OF IRELAND



SAVE THE DATE | SÁBHÁIL AN DÁTA



## WEST TYRONE PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY

**TUESDAY, 27TH FEBRUARY 2024**  
**FIR TREES HOTEL, STRABANE**  
**7PM**

HOSTED BY SINN FÉIN'S  
COMMISSION ON THE  
FUTURE OF IRELAND



## HAVE YOUR SAY ON THE FUTURE OF IRELAND

In addition to the public events the Commission is also accepting written contributions.

Get in touch and have your say on our future. Reach out to your friends, family or groups and organisations in your area and ask them to get in touch.

Tá Coimisiún um Thodhchaí na hÉireann ag Sinn Féin i mbun rannpháirtíocht dhomhain ar an saol atá amach romhainn.

Bí mar chuid de phlé reatha agus plé atá ag fás maidir le hÉirinn nua a thógáil.

Is féidir leat ionchur scríofa a chur isteach i nGaeilge nó i mBéarla.



## AN COIMISIÚN UM THODHCHAÍ NA hÉIREANN

### Glac páirt sa chomhrá ar Éire Nua amach anseo

Is féidir leat d'uailmhianta, na rudaí a bhfuil tú ag dúil leo, nó aon ábhar inní ata ort a chur isteach i scríbhinn ag [www.sinnfein.ie/futureofireland](http://www.sinnfein.ie/futureofireland) nó trí ríomhphost a chur chuig [commission@sinnfein.ie](mailto:commission@sinnfein.ie)

## ABAIR LEAT

Sinn Féin

[www.sinnfein.ie/futureofireland](http://www.sinnfein.ie/futureofireland)



# Time 4 Unity Am d'Aontacht



# *Crann na Saoirse*

*- have you planted yours yet?*

Areas are continuing to plant Crann na Saoirse. Some in memory of comrades and others as a reminder of the key importance of Irish Unity to the future freedom and prosperity of the Irish people.

This month Fermanagh Sinn Féin activists planted a Crann na Saoirse in Derrylin. These trees will grow tall in a free and united Ireland.

Why not plant your own Crann na Saoirse?

For your clann? Your club? Your community groups? Yourself?

Help the environment and bring pleasure to a future generation.



**#Time4Unity** Am d'Aontacht

# BUSTING THE MYTHS

## ON IRISH UNITY

Belfast Sinn Féin have been continuing with their campaign to 'Bust the Myths' on Irish Unity. Leaflets have been produced and circulated to homes across the constituency. This month they also hosted a successful 'Myth Busting' conversation in a crowded North Belfast Cafe.

Some of the myths they have busted are below:

### THE SOUTH CAN'T AFFORD THE NORTH

**FALSE.** Academic research shows how reunification could provide a major boost to the all island economy. The southern economy, while in need of reform, is consistently ranked highly on global performance indexes. However, border counties and the west of Ireland are disadvantaged by partition and Dublin government policy. Reunification would unlock the full potential of our island economy.

### I'D HAVE TO PAY FOR HEALTHCARE

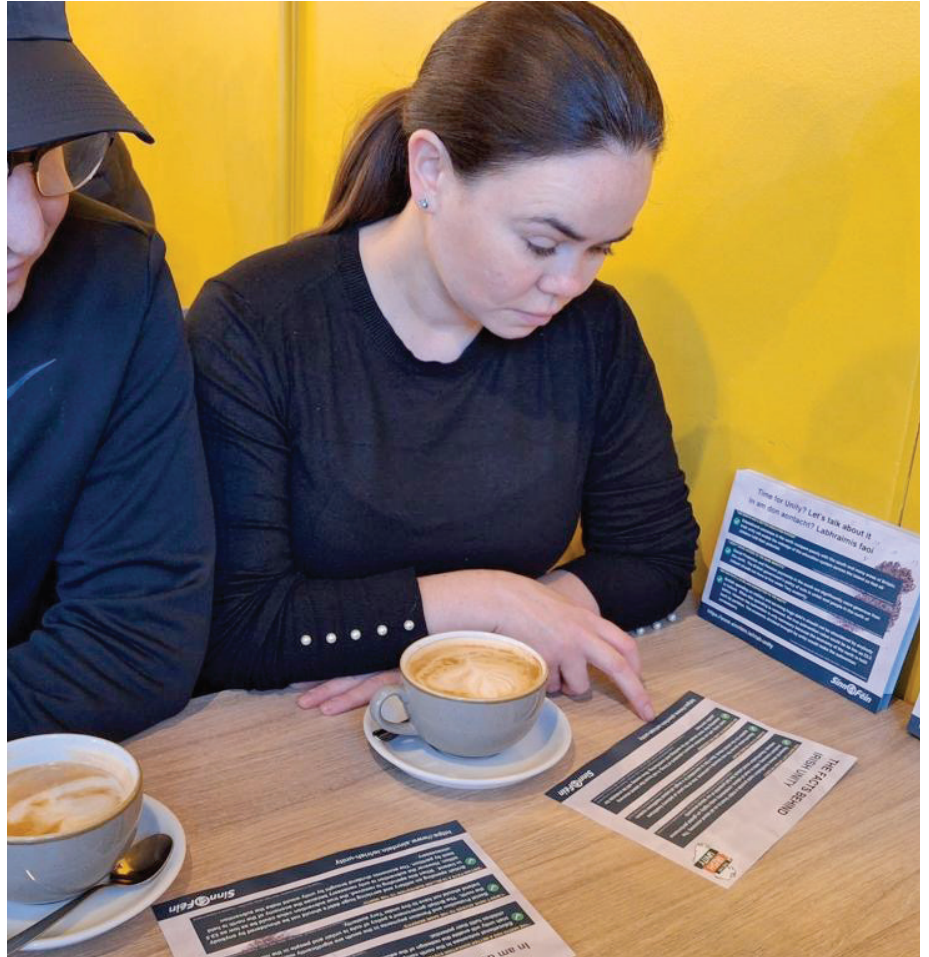
**FALSE.** Reunification paves the way towards a universal, free at the point of delivery healthcare system for the whole island. Sinn Féin is committed to a single all-island healthcare system. This is the most sensible way to plan and deliver healthcare to the whole population of Ireland.

### MY STANDARD OF LIVING WILL DECREASE

**FALSE.** Irish Unity will not threaten anyone's standard of living, it will boost the island economy meaning that more people will be working and contributing. That means more money is available for public services.

### THE NORTH HAS A BETTER EDUCATION SYSTEM

**FALSE.** Educational outcomes in the north compare poorly with the south and many areas of Britain. Irish unity will



enable the redesign of the education system across the island so that all children fulfil their potential.

### I WON'T HAVE ACCESS TO THE SAME BENEFITS

**FALSE.** Social Protection and Pension payments in the south are significantly more generous than the north. The British government's policy of cuts is unfair and people in the north of Ireland should not have to live under Tory austerity.

### BRITAIN PAYS A £9BILLION SUBVENTION TO THE NORTH

**FALSE.** British spending on military, servicing huge debt and overseas interests should not be shouldered by anybody in Ireland. When this spending is removed, and pension obligations are

met, the true subvention value could be as low as £2.5 billion. However the subvention is only necessary because the economy of the north is held back by partition. The economic dividend brought by unity would make the subvention unnecessary.

### A UNITED IRELAND WILL NOT ACCOMMODATE PROTESTANT, UNIONIST AND BRITISH IDENTITY

**FALSE.** The Good Friday Agreement provides protections for identity. The Good Friday Agreement will also protect identity in the new united Ireland. Furthermore, people of all traditions will be protected in law. The new Ireland provides an unparalleled opportunity to end divisions. Sinn Féin envisages a future based on equality and the unity of Catholic, Protestant and Dissenter.



# UNITING IRELAND CAMPAIGNING

Over the past few weeks Uniting Ireland campaigning briefings have taken place in each of the cúige areas. These briefings focused on the need for local activism on the issue of Irish Unity. Particularly, on the party's demand for the Irish government to establish a Citizens' Assembly to plan for our future and the demand for a unity referendum as provided for in the Good Friday Agreement.

There is a role for public representatives in this work within the institutions and within their constituencies also.

Areas should use the following suggestions as ways of promoting the unity message locally and ensure consciousness raising initiatives are key to local work plans.

## WHY NOT ORGANISE A UNITY THEMED EVENT IN YOUR AREA?

### Things you can do:

- Incorporate Unity literature into local campaign stalls and political canvasses
- Use the large Unity banner in your area
- Organise a cycle for unity, unity walk, mountain climb day of action etc.

## GNÍOMHACHAS AR AONTÚ na hÉIREANN

Cén fáth nach n-eagróidh tú imeacht ar théama na haontachta i do cheantar?

### Rudaí a thig leat a dhéanamh:

- Litríocht faoin Aontacht a bheith mar chuid de stallaí feachtais áitiúla agus i stocaireacht pholaitiúil.
- Úsáid a bhaint as an mbratach mór Aontacht i do cheantar.
- Rothaíocht nó siúlóid nó siúlóid sléibhe nó lá gnímh ar son an hAontachta a eagrú.



#Time4Unity Am d'Aontacht

# Respectful talks on new Ireland needed, says DUP founder member

DUP founder member Wallace Thompson spoke this month at an event at the Royal Irish Academy, which was organised by ARINS in association with Queen University Belfast.

He spoke about the importance of 'respect' when moving towards a new Ireland. Mr Thompson said,

"The failure of the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union means talks now about the future of the island of Ireland are now necessary.

"We can blame the Brexiteers. We can blame our own attitudes within unionism. We can blame the European Union. We can point the finger in all directions. But the reality is it just has ended badly.

"It has changed things quite dramatically from my own personal perspective as well as to how we move forward.

"I would 'probably' not now be showing a willingness to talk about a united Ireland if Brexit had gone well. That's been unionism's problem: the ones you thought should be your friends very often turn out to be your worst enemies.

"Northern Ireland is now constitutionally in a new position because of the creation of a sea border for trade between Northern Ireland and Britain that Mr Johnson said he would never allow. It is the fallout from Brexit that has made me think more deeply.

"The irony is I'm still strongly in favour of maintaining the union, but I am open to looking at other options. But it has to be done in a very, very respectful way and over a long period of time.

"But those who are telling me in Ulster that we must stand firm against all attempts to make us think of our future, that we must maintain the union, are the very ones who are then also saying that the union has been fractured by Brexit.

"So, on one hand we have been told that to talk of even thinking of a new future for the island is heresy and blasphemy, that we must stand firm for the union. And yet they're telling us the union is broken. And I haven't yet heard anyone who's in a position to say how we can repair that break.

In referenced to the British monarchy Mr Thompson said that is something that he "can take, or leave, to be perfectly honest with you". He made it clear he is not "an ardent royalist", though the Union Jack "is dear to me, it's part of my upbringing".

He continued,

"I had been brought up to believe that the Tricolour was 'the enemy's flag' but I fully understand the symbolism behind it – that it represents nationalism and Orangeism with peace between them.

"That is what we are aiming for here. The Tricolour itself I wouldn't be overly perturbed with one way, or the other, but I think we are going to have to start from a blank sheet for all of those things.

"There is an emotional attachment to Britain and the Union Jack among unionists. But, it's an attachment to something that doesn't exist any more. When I look at Orange banners I see pictures of great men from the past, of people fighting battles in the Somme or whatever, and you're looking at the aristocratic sort of background.

"But that Britain is gone, that is a parade of the past. None of that exists now. There's a sentimental attraction to your heritage, but as your heritage changes you've got to be realistic to accept that things are changing.

The conservative beliefs of evangelical Protestants in Northern Ireland would have to be accommodated if a new Ireland is created in the years or decades ahead.



My grandparents' generation had signed the Ulster covenant to prevent 'Rome rule' and later fought at the Somme to protect the British empire, but the empire has now gone and the influence of the Catholic Church has completely changed.

"I'm driven by my faith, and that is primarily what drives me. My unionism is important, but my Protestantism is more important.

"The whole dynamic has changed and we live in a secular United Kingdom. The Republic is now a much more secular society. That in itself throws up challenges for me because I have to recognise that in that context of a secular mindset across these islands, my views are very much minority views and might be seen by some as anachronistic to the point of being absurd. But I still hold to strong moral ethical views based on what I believe to be Bible truth. My concern would be that whatever arrangements are made constitutionally in the future within the UK or in some all-Ireland arrangement that what I hold dear will be preserved, protected and recognised.

"There are so many people from all traditions in Northern Ireland who bear trauma from the Troubles who have suffered from the loss of members of their families and who are still looking for answers to questions and looking for justice.

"It's deep within the psyche of the unionist people, the siege mentality of Protestantism is something that's not easy to understand unless you're inside it. As a people, we've always felt our backs be against the wall, we're always being attacked.

"What comes across perhaps to other people as triumphalism and arrogance actually is a fearfulness an insecurity,

"So I think as a unionist, I have to say let's look at this collectively, because we're all hurting. Now, my fellow unionists might say most of the attacks that have been done have been done by republicans on loyalists. But it's a two-way process.

"If we are going to go forward on a mature basis we have to recognise that a lot of people have suffered an awful lot of hurt in Northern Ireland. And we can't allow it to trap us going forward."

# UNITING IRELAND ROUND UP

**IRISH UNITY SUMMIT** MARCH 1ST 2024  
FOR A NEW AND UNITED IRELAND  
SPECIAL GUESTS, PANELS, MUSIC, & MORE  
INCLUDING



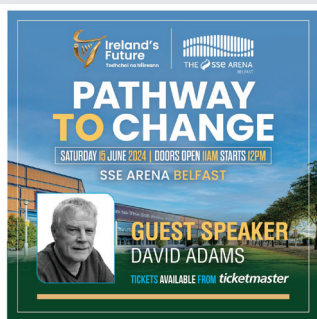
**BRENDAN O'LEARY**  
AUTHOR & PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL  
SCIENCE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

## IRISH UNITY SUMMIT, NEW YORK

Professor Brendan O'Leary has been announced as one of the special guests who will be in attendance at the Irish Unity Summit which will take place on March 1st 2024, in the Great Hall, Cooper Union, New York. Tickets are free and will be released on January 15th.

## IRELAND'S FUTURE

Ireland's Future have announced Former Loyalist leader David Adams as one of their guest speakers at the 'Pathway to Change' conference which will be held in the SSE Arena, Belfast on June 15th 2024. Tickets for the event can be purchased here:

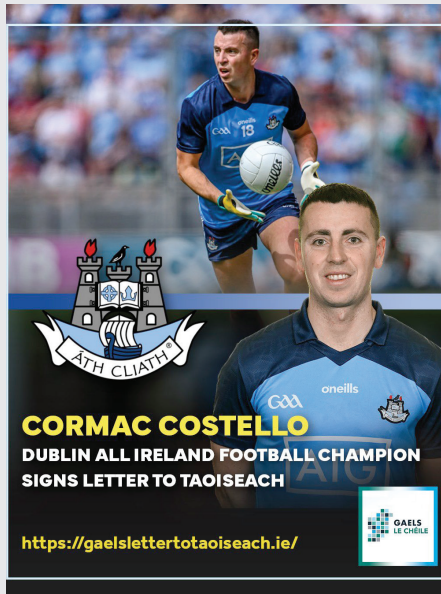


Ireland's Future  
THE SSE ARENA  
**PATHWAY TO CHANGE**  
SATURDAY 16 JUNE 2024 | DOORS OPEN 11AM STARTS 12PM  
SSE ARENA BELFAST  
GUEST SPEAKER  
DAVID ADAMS  
TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM [ticketmaster](#)

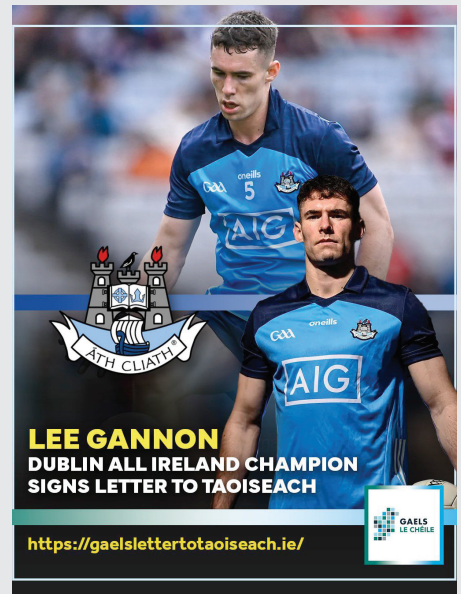


## GAELS LE CHÉILE

Gaels across Ireland are continuing to support the campaign for a Citizens' Assembly to be established on Irish Unity. Notable high profile Gaels who have signed the letter to Leo Varadkar this month include Dublin County stars Lee Gannon and Cormac Costello. You can support their campaign by signing the letter at [www.gaellettertotaoiseach.ie](http://www.gaellettertotaoiseach.ie)



**CORMAC COSTELLO**  
DUBLIN ALL IRELAND FOOTBALL CHAMPION  
SIGNS LETTER TO TAOISEACH  
<https://gaellettertotaoiseach.ie/>



**LEE GANNON**  
DUBLIN ALL IRELAND CHAMPION  
SIGNS LETTER TO TAOISEACH  
<https://gaellettertotaoiseach.ie/>

## ACHIEVING A NEW IRELAND WORKSHOP AT QUEENS UNIVERSITY

Professor Colin Harvey hosted a workshop this month at Queens University which focused on how to achieve a new Ireland. Topics covered included the current context, where deliberations are now and what should happen next. He said the responsibility now rests with change advocates and commencing with an all island civic initiative makes considerable sense.



#Time4Unity **Am d'Aontacht**



# FROM THE UNION TO A NEW IRELAND

Former British soldier and Ulster Unionist party officer Glenn Bradley spoke in the Duncairn Complex in November with senior Republican Seán Spike Murray, exploring his transition from a loyalist heartland and unionism to joining civic nationalist group Ireland's Future and planning for a New Ireland.

Glenn Bradley talked through his own personal history from being in the British Army operating in the North, his involvement in the negotiations of the Good Friday Agreement, and his hopes for the future around the need for true reconciliation and to address Unionist fears.

Glenn also spoke about how ultimately the interests of all people on this island are best served by coming together and ending Britain's misrule of the North.

The retired British soldier is among a growing number of unionists who are now receptive to the idea of constitutional change.

When the Irish government establishes a Citizens' Assembly on Irish Unity the voice of unionists and progressives in their community are needed for effectual change.

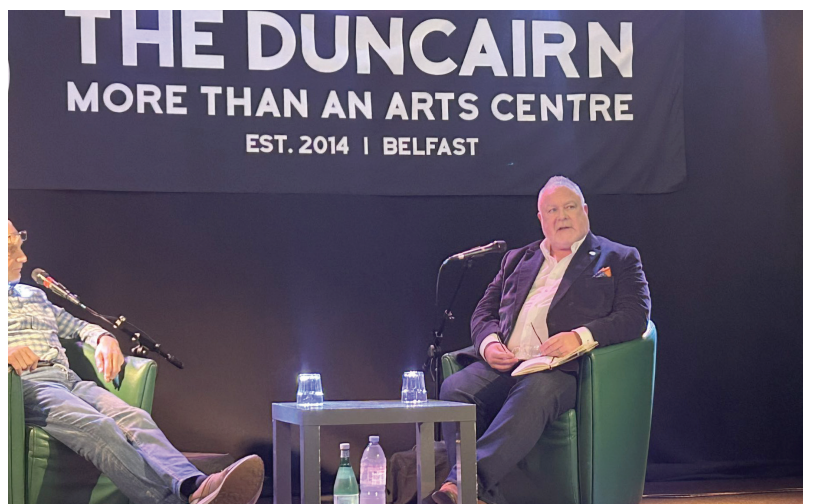
Bradley had his road to Damascus moment with the result of the Brexit referendum which focused in his mind that the only solution for the people of this island is the cause of Irish Unity.

"For me Brexit totally tore apart any illusion that we were in a union of equals – Scotland and Northern Ireland forced out of Europe against their will".

Seán Murray, who grew up 300 metres from Glenn, one in Clonard the other in Woodvale, talked of combating "genuine unionist fears" of what may be done unto them in a new Ireland.

He stressed that "we don't want another generation to experience what we experienced and live through what we lived through".

That "the Good Friday Agreement gives a roadmap to affect change" to build a shared Ireland where young people will "never have to go on active service" nor will "have to spend the best years of their lives in a prison cell".



# All I want for Christmas is a United Ireland.

## LAST MINUTE GIFT IDEAS

Uniting Ireland themed Christmas presents are still available to purchase from the Sinn Féin Book shop, An Fhúiseog and the Sinn Féin stall in the Kennedy Centre, Belfast.

Click here to see some of the stock available:

The Lark Store / An Fhúiseog – An Fhúiseog / The Lark Store  
Sinn Féin Online Shop ([sinnfeinbookshop.com](http://sinnfeinbookshop.com))



ENGLISH	IRISH	PRONOUNCED
Happy Christmas!	Nollaig Shonail	Null-ig hun-a
Santa Claus	Daidí na Nollag	Daddy nah null-ig
Christmas has come around again	Tá an Nollaig buailte linn arís	Taw un null-ig bool-cha ling areesh
May we all be alive at this time next year	Go mbeirimid beo ag an am seo arís	Guh mer-rim midge byo egg un am shuh areesh
Christmas Cake, Christmas Pudding and Mince pies	Císte Nollag, Maróg na Nollag & Píoga Mionra	Kee-shta null-ig, Mar-oge na null-ig, Pee-oh-ga min-ra

CATCH UP NOW ON THE IRISH UNITY SECTION AT THE ARD FHEIS BY CLICKING BELOW:



## RESOURCE FOR ACTIVISTS

All of the recent articles and significant contributions on the United Ireland theme are available on the Sinn Féin website. Log in to [www.sinnfein.ie/irish-unity](http://www.sinnfein.ie/irish-unity) for all of the news on uniting Ireland.



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[sinnfein](https://www.facebook.com/sinnfein)

[irish.unity@sinnfein.ie](mailto:irish.unity@sinnfein.ie)