

On March 1st, 7 Irish American organisations came together to host the 'Irish Unity Summit: For a New and United Ireland' at Coopers Union, New York. Over 600 people attended the event which is evidence of the growing conversation on constitutional change domestically and internationally. Uachtáran Shinn Féin Mary Lou McDonald spoke at the event and talked about nation building and shaping a new future together. See some of Mary Lou's remarks below and a link to her full speech.

"Seismic, generational change is underway in Ireland. The old certainties are collapsing. A new chapter of Irish history is being written. Change is real, happening in real time. It must be acknowledged, understood, and grasped bravely with both hands. "As an Irish republican, I advocate for a

United Ireland. As an Irish republican, I see every single person who argues for the preservation of the Union with Britain, every person of British identity as an equal, no caveats or exceptions. All equal.

"To those citizens of the Unionist-British tradition, I say that we seek a future of partnership, equality, and progress with you. "The New Ireland we seek belongs every bit as much to the families of the Shankill as it does to the families of the Falls. Every bit as much to the families of Ballymena as the families of Ballymun.

"Imagine, for a moment, a new future free from a self-serving government in London. "Imagine all of us truly controlling our shared destiny. One Ireland. The Orange and the Green reconciled.

"One nation. All communities moving

forward together to the future. That's the dream.

"The partition of Ireland failed from the start. Failed all of us. There has been a profound cost to partition politically, economically, and socially. The policies implemented by the Tory government over the last decade have spelt disaster for the north, for Nationalist and Unionist alike.

"Tory austerity has ravaged vital public services and damaged the lives of workers and families. Tory governments in London never cared for the people of the north of Ireland.

"Unionist Leader, Edward Carson called it in 1921 when he said, "What a fool I was. I was only a puppet, and so was Ulster, and so was Ireland, in the political game that was to get the Conservative party into government."



Irish Unity Summit, New York cont'd

"Both the Irish and British government must face up to the reality that a momentous current of change is pulsing throughout Ireland. Instead of driving divisive and insulting legacy legislation, the British government must play a constructive role in moving society forward. The Irish government must lead.

"It's now imperative that the Irish government establishes a Citizens' Assembly to plan for Irish Unity, an Assembly where everyone is welcome, everyone is included, and everyone gets to share their ideas, their hopes, and their ambitions. "More and more people are now seriously considering the

future and the shape of constitutional change, and friends, the reunification of Ireland is firmly on the table.

"The work of nation building, of uniting Ireland, is about creating a home where everyone belongs. A nation is a collection of generations walking their length of the same

journey.

"Today, our generation holds the compass and the map. The people of Ireland get to decide the direction we take, not only for ourselves but for everyone who comes after us.

"Nation building is the task of the dreamers, the changemakers, and the future shapers.

"Just imagine the dream comes to pass. Imagine in ten years Ireland is united.

"History will forever record that we were the generation that made Irish Unity a reality, the generation that made history.

"I believe we must achieve it. I believe we can achieve it. I believe we will achieve it.

"Together, and in our time, we will realise the dream, we will finish the journey, we will shape the future – a new, united Ireland, a nation home for all."



TALKS ON A UNITED IRELAND SHOULD GET UNDERWAY

Mary Lou McDonald, Michelle O'Neill and Conor Murphy, also visited Washington this month for the annual celebration of St. Patrick's Day. It was an historic trip as it was the first time a Nationalist First Minister visited the US in this capacity.

Sinn Féin leadership took every opportunity to articulate the need for greater attention and planning for the conversation about Irish unity. From politicians to community meetings of labour leaders and supporters, it was clearer than ever that the time to plan is right now. Polling, voting trends, demographics, and election outcomes all point to a desire for clarity about what a United Ireland would look like and how we achieve it.

Congressman Richard Neale, who co-chairs the Friends of Ireland Caucus at Capitol Hill, said "My own sense is that there's a discussion happening within political parties. I think that there has to be a series of baked-in assurances - there would need to be no threat to any identities. I think that there would have to be some compromises again, along the way. But I think given the democratic nature of the Republic and Northern Ireland that the idea of a conversation is entirely appropriate."

Caucus co-chair, House of Representatives member Mike Kelly, said the US would support Ireland, "for what lies ahead".

Congressman Brendan Boyle, who also sits on the caucus, said "proper planning and preparation" was vital ahead of a poll. "I think the whole Brexit debacle is a great example of what not to do. What's really important right now is for people in Dublin and Belfast, but also in Washington and London and Brussels, to talk about and work through all the possible scenarios, the ramifications, how best to prepare."









In the most recent of An Phoblacht Colmán Mac an Chrosáin wrote about Irish Unity no longer being a 'pipe dream' and the importance of planning and preparing. To read more you can purchase the most recent edition of An Phoblacht by clicking here: **An Phoblacht March 2024**



Ní féidir an phleanáil d'Aontacht na hÉireann a sheachaint a thuilleadh

- Colmán Mac an Chrosáin- An Srath Bán, Co. Thír Eoghain

Ní bheidh smacht iomlán ag muintir an tuaiscirt ar ár dtodhchaí socheacnamaíoch féin agus muid fós faoi thoil pé rialtas atá i gcumhacht i Westminster

Fiú dá mbeadh an Tionól agus an feidhmeannas athbhunaithe, bheadh sé i gcoinne chúlra pholasaithe anás Westminster le deich mbliana anuas agus easpa infheistíochta inár seirbhísí poiblí agus inár n-infreastruchtúr dá bharr. Ní féidir leis an phacáiste airgeadais a d'fhógair rialtas na Breataine a chinntiú go ndéanfar na hinstitiúidí a athbhunú ar bhonn inbhuanaithe. Ní leor é chun an ghéarchéim sna hearnálacha sláinte, oideachais agus seirbhísí poiblí eile a shárú. Ní leor é chun comhaontuithe pá oibrithe na hearnála poiblí a chomhlíonadh. Agus na príomhluamháin fhioscacha coimeádta ag Westminster, is léir gur teoranta iad na féidearthachtaí atá ag an Tionól ó thuaidh athruithe

Cé go soláthraíonn An Prótocal - lena rochtain ar an dá mhargadh - roinnt buntáistí uathúla eacnamaíochta do gheilleagar an tuaiscirt

dearfacha socheacnamaíocha a chur i bhfeidhm.

agus an oileáin go léir, is beag iad i gcomparáid leis an mhéid a d'fhéadfaí a bhaint amach i ngeilleagar comhtháite uile-Éireann laistigh den AE. San am a chuaigh thart ba é an NHS, saor ag an phointe seachadta, a luadh mar phríomhbhuntáiste mór chun an Aontas leis an Bhreatain a choinneáil. Níl an t-údar bróid seo á dhéanamh a thuilleadh! Cruthaíonn Aontacht na hÉireann an deis córas sláinte uile-

oileáin a fhorbairt saor

in aisce ag an phointe seachadta mar gheall

ar bharainneachtaí

scála agus de bharr coigiltis a bheadh ann de bharr nach mbeadh sainseirbhísí á ndúbláil gan ghá a thuilleadh. I gcásanna gur baineadh triail as cúram sláinte a sholáthar ar bhonn trasteorann/uile-Éireann - ar nós cúram péidiatrach, nó cúram ailse - tá feabhas mór tagtha ar sheirbhísí agus ar thorthaí.

Argóint rílárnach eile a dhéantar i gcoinne Aontacht na hÉireann ná go gcaillfí an fóirdheontas ó Londain dá bharr. Mar sin féin, níl an t-easnamh idir an fóirdheontas seo agus an méid a thuilleann rialtas na Breataine anseo trí chánacha agus fáltais VAT chomh leathan agus a mhaíonn Aontachtaithe.

Ina theannta sin, léirigh tuarascáil acadúil an tOllamh Kurt Huebner ó Ollscoil Vancouver go n-éireodh níos fearr le comhgheilleagar iomlán na hÉireann ná an dá gheilleagar ar leith scartha, thuaidh agus theas, agus go bhféadfadh sé suas le €35 billiún de thorthaí eacnamaíocha a ghiniúint d'Éirinn bunaithe ar mhúnlaí an staidéir.

Léiríonn tuarascálacha breise ó Gunther Thurmann - a d'oibrigh sa

Deasc Gearmánach don Chiste Airgeadaíochta Idirnáisiúnta (IMF) le linn athaontú na Gearmáine, in éineacht leis an Seanadóir Mark Daly (de Choiste Feidhmithe Aoine an Chéasta san Oireachtas) - gur dócha go dtiocfadh borradh mór faoi aontacht na hÉireann i dtorthaí eacnamaíocha agus ioncaim thuaidh agus theas.

Ó Bhreatimeacht ar aghaidh, tá an bhearna i gcaighdeáin mhaireachtála sa RA i gcomparáid le hÉirinn ag laghdú i gcónaí. Dar leis an Innéacs Forbartha Daonna, a fhéachann ar leibhéil shaibhris, sláinte agus oideachais chun rangú náisiún a oibriú amach, tá Éire anois san 8ú háit sa domhan i gcomparáid leis an RA atá san 18ú háit. Is mar thoradh ar athruithe eacnamaíocha agus sochaíocha mar seo a bhfuil méadú seasta tagtha ar líon na ndaoine atá oscailte d'aontacht na hÉireann anois agus go leor ó chúlra aontachtach san áireamh. De réir mar a thagann buntáistí Aontacht na hÉireann chun solais, is amhlaidh a bhfuil suim agus plé ar an cheist ag éirí níos príomhshruthaithe.



Bunaíodh an stát críochdheighilte ó thuaidh ar an bhonn go mbeadh tromlach Aontachtach ionsuite aige go buan. Chaill an tAontachtas polaitiúil a thromlach i dtoghchán an Tionóil in 2017 agus tá an treocht sin treisithe arís sna toghcháin is déanaí inar tháinig Sinn Féin chun cinn mar an páirtí is mó.

Agus Sinn Féin ar an pháirtí is mó sna 26 contae anois chomh maith, tá cúrsaí polaitíochta ar fud an oileáin athraithe ó bhonn agus ní aisling bhréige í Éire Aontaithe a thuilleadh. Tá an t-athrú polaitiúil seo ag cur brú ar

pháirtithe eile a n-iarrachtaí a dhíriú ar bhonn uile-Éireann den chéad uair. Tá tionscnamh "Éire Chomhroinnte, Oileán Comhroinnte" a sheol Rialtas na hÉireann i mí Dheireadh Fómhair 2020 mar thoradh ar an athrú seo. Os a choinne sin, tá comhrialtas FF/FG/na nGlasach ag diúltú go fóill Tionól Saoránach a reáchtáil agus páipéar bán a choimisiúnú ar cheist aontacht na hÉireann. Is céimeanna riachtanacha iad seo chun díriú isteach ar na saincheisteanna go léir a bhainfeadh le hathrú bunreachtúil ar an oileán seo. Tá an obair ullmhúcháin seo de dhíth chun cás dearfach a leagan amach ar son Eireann Aontaithe i dtoghchán na teorann dá bhforáiltear i gcomhaontú Aoine an Chéasta. Is cuma cén fáth a bhfuil an comhrialtas ó dheas ag diúltú na gcéimeanna seo a ghlacadh, bíodh sé ag iarraidh an status quo a choinneáil nó mar gheall ar eagla roimh an anaithnid, is léir go bhfuil muid ar threocht pholaitiúil agus eacnamaíochta do-athraithe ar an oileán seo a éileofar go gcuirfí tús leis an phleanáil d'Éirinn Aontaithe gan mhoill!

Discussion on constitutional change and the ending of partition is growing. This is demonstrated by the increasing numbers of people across Ireland and beyond, from diverse backgrounds, who are questioning the status quo and exploring the possibility of Irish unity.

Sinn Féin activists are continuing to promote the Irish Unity campaign.











WHY NOT ORGANISE SOMETHING IN YOUR AREA?

Things you can do:

ARMAGH

- 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.

#Time4UnityAmd'Aontacht









'A NEW IRELAND FOR ALL: ENDING SECTARIAN SEGREGATION'

Sinn Féin will launch a new policy document entitled 'A New Ireland for All: Ending Sectarian Segregation' on Wednesday 10 April at 12.30pm in St Comgalls/ Ionad Eileen Howell, Falls Road, Belfast.

Endorsed at our Ard Fheis in November 2023, this new policy builds on previously published proposals and reaffirms Sinn Féin's commitment to the promotion of reconciliation, and tackling sectarian segregation, as the basis for building a shared future.



MNÁ NA hÉIREANN

On International Women's Day history was made when two statues were unveiled at the front of Belfast City Hall to two formidable Irish republican women - Mary Anne McCracken and Winifred Carney. Hundreds of people gathered for the ceremony to applaud these two fearless Republican women and this important initiative by Belfast City Council.

Mary Anne and Winifred, like many women in our struggle, showed heroism, leadership and commitment to social justice and freedom. Despite the pivotal role women have played over the course of Irish history, too often their voices have not been heard. In the new Ireland women must have an equal place in society.

Since the imposition of Partition our island has been forced to operate with one hand tied behind our backs. Partition has disadvantaged women all over Ireland.

Women continue to navigate two currencies, two sets of regulations, two banking systems, agencies for economic, climate and health development that face away from each other. Many have been forced to emigrate due to a lack of jobs, opportunities and housing in our country.

Children on both sides of the border wait years for healthcare and our elderly wait days on trolleys as services suffer due to chronic underinvestment.

Constitutional change is now fixed on the political horizon.

On International Women's Day, the vice chairperson of the Commission on the Future of Ireland, Lynn Boylan encouraged women to have their say on our future.

Women have already made significant contributions to the Commission on the Future of Ireland. Over the course of Commission events it has become clear that women are very much up for having this discussion.

We held a very successful women's assembly in Belfast and the commission project has secured participation from women on all of our people's assembly panels.

Some of the most significant contributions have also been women in the audience.

larrtar ar gach éinne, idir óg agus aosta, a dtuairimí a chur in iúl faoin saol comhroinnte atá amach romhainn agus na himpleachtaí a bheadh aige seo do mhná ar fud na hÉireann.

What do you want the new Ireland to look like? Be part of a live and growing conversation on building a new Ireland. Get involved.

Make a contribution in writing on the Sinn Féin website at www.sinnfein.ie/futureofireland or by emailing commission@sinnfein.ie

Have your say!







THE PROSPECT OF A UNITED IRELAND DRAWS EVER NEARER

This month Mairéad Farrell TD was the guest speaker at an online event hosted by the British organisation 'Arise- a festival of Left ideas'. The topic of the event was 'Ireland - Unity within touching distance?'. In her main address Mairéad

In her main address Mairéad Farrell said,

"The prospect of a united Ireland draws ever nearer. I've been having cross community conversations

community conversations with people in Britain and in Ireland. There



are some who might previously have recoiled at the thought of a united Ireland, but are now showing a welcome curiosity and consideration.

"We have to make that positive case. We must speak just as we must listen. We must act and allow others to act in kind. We must educate whilst remaining open to being educated ourselves.

Remember the person who thinks they have nothing to learn

surely has nothing to gain. We should never

want to find ourselves in that position.

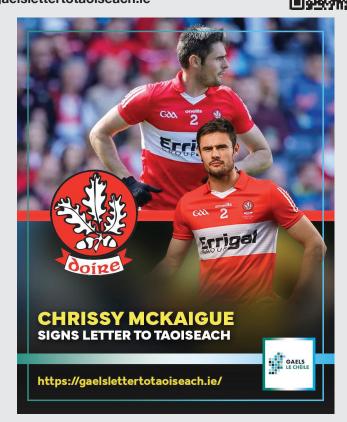
"We want to continue to grow as individuals, as communities and as a people. We are standing on the threshold of a new Ireland. It must be a better Ireland, north and south. To me Irish Unity is not merely the combination of two jurisdictions. It fundamentally allows for the self determination of the Irish people.

"The laughter of our children, the absence of trauma, the freedom from class and religious inequalities, these will be the standards by which we measure the success of a new and United Ireland. We all have a part to play."

UNITING IRELAND

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 include Derry star Chrissy McKaigue You can support their campaign by signing the letter at www. gaelslettertotaoiseach.ie



IRELAND'S FUTURE

This month Young Fine Gael members called on Colin Harvey, board member of Ireland's Future recently launched their latest discussion paper which marks a significant moment in the debate on constitutional change. "Ireland 2030" is a landmark publication. It sets out in clear, precise and accessible language practical ways forward on the path to a new and united Ireland. It joins a growing body of serious and well-informed material that will be of assistance to those formulating next steps. Click the link to access an opinion piece published recently by the Irish Echo in which Colin Harvey details the importance of future planning and preparing:

OPINION: Charting a Pathway to a United Ireland Referendum in 2030 (irishecho.com)



DIASPÓRA AR SON NA HAONTACHTA

The Irish diaspora have an important role to play in campaigning for a United Ireland. The prospect of Irish Unity is one of the most dominant conversations taking place in society today. It's resonating across the Irish diaspora like never before. Voices from all over the world came together to show their support over St Patrick's weekend. The full video can be watched here: 'Voices for Unity' St Patrick's day messages from around the world (youtube.com)





GAELS TO DISCUSS THE FUTURE OF IRELAND

Lámh Dhearg CLG will host co-founder of Gaels le

Chéile, Paddy Cunningham and Chris Donnelly, Ireland's Future for a discussion on Monday 8th April at 7pm in Lámh Dhearg CLG clubrooms. The discussion will focus on the role Gaels can play in shaping a new Ireland. All welcome to attend.



LABOUR SUPPORT CALLS FOR A UNITY REFERENDUM

The Labour Party conference took place this month, with party leader Ivana Bacik making a significant intervention on the Irish unity debate by saying the next Irish government should include a department dedicated to planning for Irish unity.

Motions were also passed by the Labour party membership in support of preparing for a unity referendum. During her main address Ivana Bacik said,



"We support calls for a unity referendum. Not for the empty nationalist idea of a fourth green field for its own sake. "But because we believe in building a consent based movement for change through the Citizens Assembly model and in keeping with the core principles of the Good Friday Agreement.

"To achieve our vision for an Ireland that works for all. And also, so that we can plan for the future- a future that will include a unity referendum on our island.

"This will be a monumental task, to be approached with an open and generous mindset.

"Labour has outlined how we would prepare for a United Ireland.

"And that work must start in the next government with a dedicated department to undertake the necessary detailed work of reconciliation, integration and unity planning."

A Green Paper would set out the issues whilst the White Paper would seek to draw conclusions. The Government would be empowered to commission specific pieces of research or advice.

Citizens' Assemblies should be held following the publication of a Green paper. Democratic consent from both the Dáil and the Assembly for these deliberative forums would be preferable but should not be limiting.

Consultative forums should also be used on a case-by-case basis to examine options contained in the Green Paper to determine a preferred approach and address sectoral and thematic issues.

Consultation would include individual citizens, the economic and social community including social partners, and international friends of Ireland. Detailed consideration must be given to the treatment of cultural issues.

Significant planning in advance of any poll will be needed in conjunction with the European Union on proposals for reintegrating Northern Ireland.

- A new Department of Unification responsible for reconciliation, harmonisation, integration, and unity planning should be established under the remit of the Taoiseach during the next government term, moving towards a standalone senior Ministry in advance of a referendum.
- Substantial civic dialogue must be facilitated well in advance of a poll to
 prepare for this, through Citizens' Assemblies or similar type models
 informed by recent practice, with as broad a range of voices and political
 actors as possible from across the island.
- A new, cross party Joint Oireachtas Committee should be established to
 oversee, assist, and advise on the preparatory work of the Government,
 and to also work on transitional and political issues.
- The next Taoiseach should appoint a cross community group of Senators from Northern Ireland to join such a committee, with a standing invitee status also for MLAs and MPs from Northern Ireland similar to the approach taken by the Committee on the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement.
- An academic advisory council should be established to provide the Irish state with the best available domestic and international research.
- The Government should initiate a wide ranging consultative and technical process leading to a Green Paper and subsequent White Paper on all the issues

MORE ALLIANCE PARTY MEMBERS WOULD VOTE FOR IRISH UNITY THAN TO REMAIN IN THE UNION

More than 800 Alliance members took part in an online and postal survey for the University of Liverpool and Ulster University, along with Bath, Huddersfield and Canterbury Christ Church universities. The survey results were published this month and revealed more Alliance members would vote for Irish unity than to remain in the union. According to the new survey, 37.5% of Alliance voters would opt for reunification while 27.2% would vote to remain part of the Union. 29.7% of those surveyed said they were not sure where they stood on the issue. 30% don't know how they would vote if a border poll was held

Figures suggested that younger members of the party are less likely to support remaining in the Union.

Alliance leader Naomi Long suggested issues such as Brexit have 'shifted the dial' in favour of Irish Unity. She added that, although the issue has came to prominence, it hasn't become a main priority for the party.



WEAR AN EASTER LILY



For Irish republicans Easter holds a special significance. It is synonymous with the 1916 Easter Rising and the heroism over a century ago of those who rose up against the British Empire and declared for a Republic. It is also a time when we remember all of those women and men - over countless generations - who gave their lives in pursuit of Irish sovereignty and independence. In the course of my activism I have travelled widely. I have visited many countries. Time and again I have been struck by the determination of nations to honour the patriots and freedom fighters who gave meaning to their desire for freedom and self-determination

In Africa and Asia, in Latin America, in Vietnam and in the United States there are countless memorials to those who fought in wars against colonialism. National ceremonies of remembrance are held. Buildings or lands and even prisons associated with struggles for freedom are preserved and protected and are used as aids to teach young people the value of citizenship and the importance of freedom and democracy. Across this island and beyond there are many such monuments to Irish patriots. This weekend, tens of thousands of people in towns, villages and cities, at country crossroads and at lonely hillside graveyards across the country, will gather for commem-

Most will wear an Easter Lily. This is a symbol of our enduring commitment to the



ideals of 1916 and of the Proclamation of the Republic and is a mark of respect for all those, from every generation, who paid with their lives in the cause of Irish freedom. The first Easter Lily badges were designed in 1925 by the republican women's revolutionary organisation, Cumann na mBan. They were hand-made and sold - often at great personal risk - throughout the country. The dual purpose of the Easter Lily was to raise money for the Republican Prisoners' Dependents Fund and to honour the sacrifice made by the men and women of the 1916 Rising.

From the 1930s, successive Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael governments attempted to suppress sales of the Easter Lily. Selling Easter Lilies without a permit was an offence. It was illegal in the north also. Over the decades many republicans have been harassed, arrested and jailed for selling the Easter Lily.

Fortunately those days are now behind us and Easter Lily badges of all shapes and sizes, some in metal or cloth or paper, are now readily available. So wear an Easter Lily with pride. And if you can attend your local commemoration. Well done to The National Graves Association and all those who organise these events.

Táim ag iarraidh ar gach duine, óg agus sean, Lilí a chaitheamh um Cháisc mar siombail náisiúnta a chuireann chun cinn na h-idéalacha agus prionsabail a bhain leo siúd a fuair bás um Cháisc 1916.

SEACHTAIN NA GAEILGE 2024

Tá an plé ar an athrú bhunreachtúil i mbéal na ndaoine. Ba cheart go ndéanfaí an comhrá seo as Gaeilge fosta. Ba cheart dúinn na comhráití seo a chur chun cinn agus ár dteanga dúchais in úsáid againn.









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 for all of the news on uniting Ireland.





