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UNITED STATES
UNITED IRELAND

Chaos in Westminster

A letter from Ireland

a Chara,

Last week, in Britain, voters went to the polls, and the headlines have been dominated by questions about the future of British Prime Minister Keir Starmer after a disastrous set of results for his Labour Party.

These were elections to local councils and to the devolved parliaments in Scotland and Wales.

The parliaments in Scotland and Wales, like the Assembly in the North of Ireland, are not sovereign and only exercise powers within their jurisdictions that have been agreed by the Parliament at Westminster in London, which also holds the purse strings.

In these elections, the British Labour Party lost a substantial number of council seats and, for the first time, lost control of the Senedd (Welsh Parliament) to the pro-independence party Plaid Cymru. The Scottish National Party consolidated its position as the largest party in its Parliament.

Currently in the North of Ireland, Sinn Féin is the largest party, and the Government is led by its Vice President, Michelle O'Neill.

The political map of Britain has changed, and the future of the "United Kingdom" is in doubt, as the governments in Northern Ireland, Wales, and Scotland are now firmly rooted in the concept of self-determination and independence.

Neither Scotland nor Wales has a legal right to self-determination and are held in a "union" with no way out unless agreed by the predominantly English Parliament in London.

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unity referendums can be triggered, and in a second caveat, they must be triggered when constitutional change is likely. On occasion, commentators have misread the provisions that a unity referendum can be called only when the governments believe change is likely.

That is not the case, and in 2002, David Trimble, who negotiated the Agreement as leader of the Ulster Unionist party, called for a referendum to "consolidate the unionist vote."

It is important to clarify this position because the big election winners across England were Reform, the party of Nigel Farage, who led the Brexit campaign. Despite winning a significant number of seats in Scotland and Wales, Reform is at its heart an English Nationalist party.

They have previously aligned with the extremes of Unionism in the North of Ireland and have little understanding of, and even less respect for, the Good Friday Agreement.

It is entirely plausible that a future Farage government could spring a hasty unity referendum to try to consolidate unionist support and bin the Agreement's provisions.

A Reform Government is a real risk factor and yet the Irish Government refuses to plan or prepare for such a scenario.

In 1962, Dean Acheson, the US Secretary of State, said that, 'Great Britain had lost an Empire but not yet found a role.' Today, we see that played out; Britain is no longer a global military, economic, or political player. Its empire is gone, its internal union is in tatters, and its politics are in freefall. There have been six British Prime Ministers since the 2016 Brexit referendum.

Ireland cannot be spectators. Our national interest is served by planning, preparing, and advocating for unity. No part of our nation should be left to the chaos of Britain.

Have a great weekend.

Is mise,

Ciarán

Ciarán Quinn is the Sinn Féin Representative to North America

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Sinn Féin Vice President Michelle O'Neill

to speak in San Francisco in June

Join Sinn Féin Vice President Michelle O'Neill for a conversation about uniting Ireland. This event is open to all. Registration is required and suggested donation amounts are \$10 for students, \$20 for supporters, and \$32 for Champions for Change.

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A Conversation With
**Sinn Féin Vice President
 Michelle O'Neill**
 Friday, June 5, 2026 - 7:30pm
 United Irish Cultural Center
 San Francisco, CA




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Irish Unity Education Webinar with Rose Conway-Walsh TD

Sinn Féin TD for Mayo Rose Conway-Walsh is our latest guest on the Irish Unity Education Webinar. We discuss the work of a TD, her work on the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement Committee, Citizens Assemblies, and more!



We are living through a time of extraordinary change - Michelle O'Neill

We are living through a time of extraordinary change.

We will have: a pro-independence First Minister here in the North of Ireland, a pro-independence First Minister in Scotland and a pro-independence First Minister in Wales.

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The failings of Westminster and every British Government have been laid bare.

Brexit, austerity, crumbling public services, and a deepening cost-of-living crisis have left more and more people concluding that enough is enough.

It is time for change. It is time for independence.

On the island of Ireland, we know all too well the effects of Westminster rule and the legacy of partition and discrimination and oppression.

My election as the first nationalist and republican First Minister was never meant to happen.

But it did.

And it happened because more and more people are recognising that a better future lies ahead when decisions about this island are made by all the people of this island, regardless of your background.

People want something better and increasingly see Irish unity as part of that better and brighter future.

Meanwhile, Westminster politics continues to lurch further to the right.

That offers little for Scotland, Wales or for us here in the North of Ireland.

So it is time to forge our own futures.

Sinn Féin, the SNP and Plaid Cymru are different parties, but we are united in the belief that independence offers the best path forward for our people.

The Union doesn't work. People deserve better.

I look forward to working with John Swinney in Scotland and Rhun ap Iorwerth in Wales to deliver for our citizens and to send a clear message that there is an alternative to Westminster failure.

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This Op-Ed first appeared in the May 11 edition of the Irish News. You can [read the original here](#).

Video Update -News, Events, & Analysis

In our latest video update, we review a successful Ard Fheis, the latest political and legacy news from Ireland, and more!

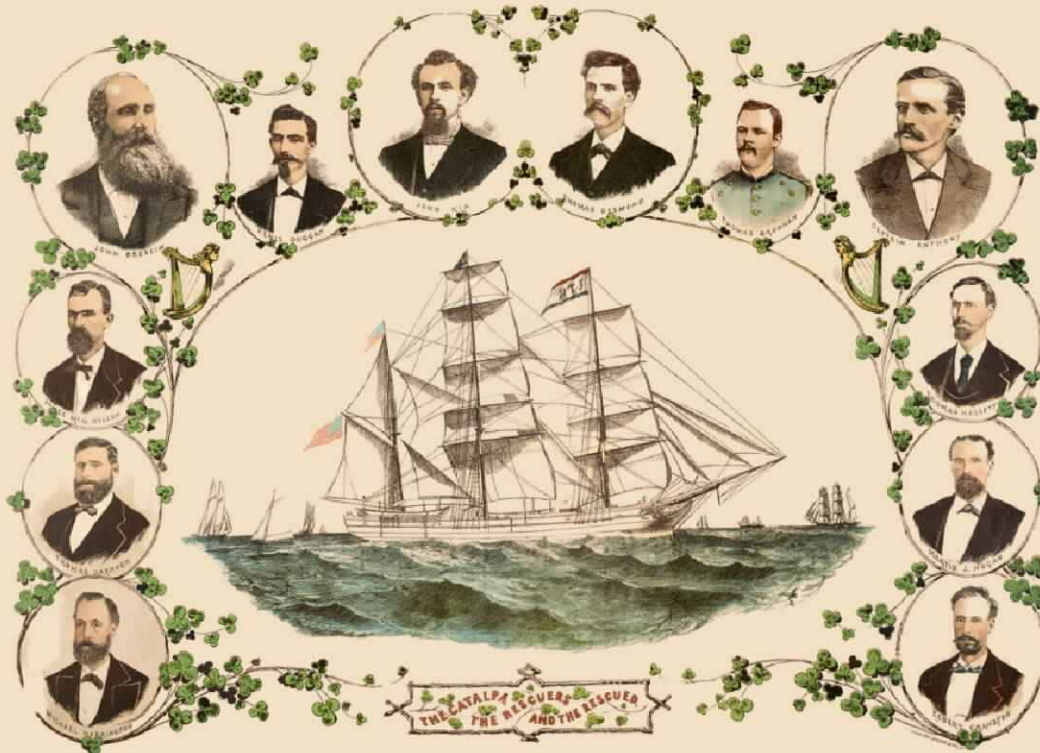


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A celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the returning of the Catalpa



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New York Irish Center

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