



# Friends of Sinn Féin (Canada)

## Les Ami(e)s du Sinn Féin (Canada)

### ADAMS RESPONDS TO IRA INITIATIVE

*In Spring 2005 we reported on the April address by Gerry Adams MP calling on the IRA to embrace an alternative strategy of purely democratic and political activity. In late July the IRA announced the end of its armed campaign and on September 25, retired Canadian General John de Chastelain announced that the IRA had decommissioned its weapons with the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning established under the Good Friday Agreement. Sinn Féin leader Gerry Adams issued the following statement:*



I consider this afternoon's announcements to be a very full and positive response to the appeal that I made in April.

At that time I called upon the IRA to pursue their goals by purely peaceful and democratic means. This was in keeping with the position outlined by Sinn Féin going back over many years.

I want to commend the leadership of the IRA for moving so decisively.

I know that today's announcement will be difficult for many republicans. I saw that myself as we watched the press conference of the IICD and the two independent witnesses.

This was a bold and brave leap. But all us need to think beyond it. We need to think beyond the moment. It is not the leap itself but the place that it takes us all that is important. For this reason the IRA's courageous decision was the right thing to do.

Both governments now need to be focused, decisive and creative. They need to implement the Good Friday Agreement as they have promised to do. There must be progress on equality, policing, human rights, people on the run and victims. There must also be progress on other issues, including prisoners and Northern representation in the Oireachtas.

There must be a proper peace dividend to tackle inequality, discrimination, deprivation and sectarianism wherever it exists. The political institutions must be restored.

I understand and appreciate that unionists need space to absorb what all this means. I would ask them to reflect upon the potential which is now created, and to see it as an opportunity.

Some unionists may fear that this is a tactical maneuver, or an attempt to trap them. It is not. Some unionists have expressed fears about a Plan B.

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#### **FIFTH ANNUAL FOSF DINNER**

Saturday, November 12, 2005.

Hilton Toronto, 145 Richmond St. W., Toronto

Guest Speaker:

**GERRY ADAMS, President of Sinn Féin**

Reception – 6:30 pm Dinner – 8:00 pm.

Tickets – \$150.

For information and tickets, see your regular ticket seller or call us at 416 280-6418

**CELEBRATE SINN FÉIN'S  
CENTENARY**

## **SEAN CROWE TD BRIEFS CANADIANS ON IRA ANNOUNCEMENT**

### **Visits Montreal, Ottawa & Toronto**

Within days of the historic IRA announcement of the end of its armed campaign, Friends of Sinn Féin (Canada) organized a whistle stop tour of central Canada by Sinn Féin's Dublin Southwest TD Sean Crowe in early August. The purpose of Sean's trip was to brief Canadians on the IRA announcement and to urge redoubled efforts in support of the peace process.

Sean began his visit in Montreal where he spoke to a packed community meeting. The Montreal media covered Sean's visit well, with reports in *The Gazette*, *La Presse* and *Le Devoir*. While in the city, Sean briefed Pierre Paquette MP (Bloc Quebecois) on the developments in the peace process. Mr. Paquette has been a long time supporter of peace and justice in Ireland.



*Sean Crowe TD & Canadian Defence Minister Bill Graham; interviewed by CTV outside McVeigh's in Toronto (top right)*

The next stop on the tour was Toronto, where Sean spoke at two full capacity community meetings on the IRA announcement. He also met and briefed Bill Graham M.P., Minister of Defence (Liberal), Bryon Wilfert MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment (Liberal), and Jason



Kenny MP  
Opposition  
Deputy House  
Leader  
(Conservative).  
Finally, Sean  
flew to Ottawa  
for a meeting  
with senior  
officials in the  
Canadian  
Department of  
Foreign Affairs.  
The visit gave  
Sinn Féin the  
opportunity to  
inform the

Canadian government and leading MPs about the IRA announcement and urge them to continue their positive role in supporting the Irish peace process. The visit also allowed Sean to speak directly to members of the Irish Canadian community in Montreal and Toronto.

## **GOLF FOR SINN FÉIN!**



The third annual Friends of Sinn Féin Annual Golf Tournament was held on June 18 at the Caledon Golf and Country Club, north of Toronto. The tournament was sponsored by 18 local businesses, lawyers, and supporters and attracted over 40 golfers. Once again the day was a lot of fun and a successful fundraiser. A big thank you must go out to Bob Wynne who organized the tournament.





## **SINN FÉIN ELECTION SUCCESS**

The results of the May 2005 Westminster and local government elections in the north were a tremendous success for Sinn Féin. In the Westminster results, the party held onto the four seats it previously held, and picked up a fifth with Conor Murphy's victory in Newry/South Armagh. The results from the local government elections saw Sinn Féin increase its share of the first preference votes cast and win an extra 18 seats. The two election results confirmed the growth of the party and consolidated its position as the largest nationalist party in the Six Counties. These successes came after months of near hysterical attacks against the party by political and media opponents in Ireland and internationally. When voting day finally arrived, Irish voters responded in a resounding fashion sending Sinn Féin forward with an increased mandate to continue the struggle for freedom, justice and peace.

### **FRIENDS OF SINN FÉIN CANADA SUPPORTS ELECTION CAMPAIGN**

Friends of Sinn Féin (Canada) organized an urgent e-mail appeal to supporters for donations to help defray the costs of Sinn Féin's Westminster election campaign. Once again supporters answered our call and we were able to donate \$5,000.00 to the campaign. We thank everyone who donated.



*Martin McGuinness & supporter in Calgary*

## **MARTIN McGUINNESS CELEBRATES SINN FEIN'S CENTENARY IN CALGARY**

On October 3, Friends of Sinn Fein (Canada) organized a dinner in Calgary celebrating Sinn Féin's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The guest speaker was the party's lead negotiator Martin McGuinness M.P. A capacity crowd of 100 supporters came out to hear Martin and celebrate the anniversary at the \$100 a plate dinner. Martin took the opportunity to brief supporters on the historic IRA initiatives ending the armed campaign and decommissioning weapons. Coming just over a year after Gerry Adams' visit to Calgary, the successful dinner highlights the growing strength of support for Sinn Féin and the peace process in western Canada.



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There is no Plan B. There is no secret agenda. Unionists say they do not trust republicans. But they do need to trust themselves.

The IRA's decision to formally end its armed campaign and today's announcements are genuine initiatives to revive the peace process by conclusively resolving the concerns of unionists.

Issues relating to the IRA, which were presented as difficulties for unionists, have now been definitively dealt with. There are those who will try to dismiss or to minimise what has been announced today. We are prepared to meet those people to discuss their concerns.

Our leadership will also be seeking meetings with political, church, business and civic interests to build on the progress of today's events and to discuss all these urgent and important issues.

I would appeal therefore to political leaders to respond carefully. The words of some in the past have fueled sectarian violence against Catholics and this has been a particularly difficult summer. There were serious attempts to provoke a reaction from nationalists and republicans. There may well be other attempts in the time ahead so I call upon people to show the calm and discipline that was evident over the summer months and particularly in recent times.

This initiative has opened up a new phase in Irish political life. This is not just about the peace process and conflict resolution, though that is vitally important. It is bigger than the question of arms.

It is about the future of this island, the type of country that we want to live in, the sort of society that we desire for future generations as well as this generation.

Sinn Féin is proud of our republican values. Our goal is to bring about Irish unity and independence. And we will campaign and argue for this as we expect unionists to argue for their political vision.

But in the interest of our shared constituencies we are prepared to work with them in the political institutions to deal with the outstanding issues of the peace process and the social and economic needs that face people at this time. One of the most critical issues facing us at this time is the pressing need to tackle sectarianism.

The context for this is the Good Friday Agreement.

We are not naive about the hard work and the difficulties which have yet to be overcome. But a new dynamic has been created. Republicans face into this with confidence. We appeal to unionists and others to join with us. To leave the past behind and to build a shared and peaceful future for all our people.



*More golfers at FOSF tournament*

**BECOME A SUPPORTER**

We seek the assistance of supporters across Canada. You can help by organising visits by Sinn Féin leaders and disseminating information about Sinn Féin and the Irish peace process. We also seek financial donations to help us in our work. Donors of \$50.00 or more are recognised as Supporters of FOSF (Canada). To help us build support for Sinn Féin and the peace process, please complete and return this form.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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