

and widespread availability of products that allow both parents and schools to block objectionable materials from reaching computers that children use. And we also support the industry's

accelerating efforts to rate Internet sites so that they are compatible with these blocking techniques.

Remarks Welcoming President Mary Robinson of Ireland at Fort Myer, Virginia June 13, 1996

President Robinson, Mr. Robinson, members of the Irish delegation. On behalf of the American people, let me begin by saying to President Robinson, *Ceade mile failte*, a hundred thousand welcomes.

It is a pleasure for me to return the tremendous hospitality that greeted Hillary and me and our American delegation on our visit to Ireland last fall. It is difficult to imagine being better received anywhere in the world than I was on Dublin's Green. It was a day that I will never forget. And I hope that President Robinson and the Irish delegation will feel just as welcome here in America today.

Since its first appearance in the annals of world history, Ireland has been a light unto nations. When darkness shrouded Europe 1,500 years ago, the learning of the Irish pierced the gloom. And Irish wisdom has continued to illuminate Western thought throughout the ages, from Saint Patrick to Swift to Yeats to Heaney.

In recent centuries, Ireland has sent the most brilliant gift of all to the world, the gift of its children. No nation has gained more than ours from the energy and determination these immigrants have carried with them when they departed Ireland's shores. Today, one of every six Americans claims Irish heritage. And even the awareness our Nation owes to the unwavering spirit of the Irish has brought to our country more than we can ever calculate.

President Robinson, you have spoken so eloquently about the extended Irish family abroad and of an Irishness that transcends territory. It gives us all great joy that today this Irish family is one.

In our time, Ireland's beacon shines as brightly as ever and, as in the beginning, it shines to the highest values of civilization. Ireland's devotion to building peace has made a small

nation a great example for all the world. In its steadfast search for a just settlement in the North, Ireland has spared no effort and never faltered before taking a risk for peace.

The road to peace is almost never straight, and we've all felt the setbacks along the way. But just as Ireland has responded to the voices of hope in the North, so has America. Today I reaffirm my pledge to the people of Ireland: We will do all we can to help to realize the bright future of peace that is the birthright of every child of Ireland, North and South.

As they do at home, the Irish stand for peace in many distant lands. Every single day for almost four decades, Irish troops have been stationed abroad to preserve the peace in such places as the Congo and Somalia. At this moment they serve in nine different peacekeeping missions. And in Bosnia, members of the Irish Garda are training police so that that nation can rebuild itself and, by itself, maintain its peace growing now within the borders.

The United States and Ireland are bound by ties of kinship and friendship, commerce and culture. Above all, we share the bonds of belief, the determination to see peace take root and freedom prevail all around the world. Today we celebrate these ties. We resolve to strengthen them and to work together to see our common hopes realized and the lives of our citizens improved.

This is a happy day for America because in the hearts of so many Americans we have a special place for Ireland, and because we know that when we work with Ireland, we can make the world a better place.

President Robinson, welcome to the United States.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:28 a.m. at Summerall Field. In his remarks, he referred to President Robinson's husband, Nicholas Robinson.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Mary Robinson of Ireland

June 13, 1996

President Clinton. Let me begin by saying how delighted I am to welcome President Robinson to the United States, along with the delegation from the Irish Government. The United States is very proud to have been a partner with Ireland in so many ways. We appreciate the work that they have done for peace in Northern Ireland and for peace around the world. And I look forward to this discussion today and our continued common efforts.

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, are you concerned about the rocky start the peace talks have gotten off to and the kind of cool relationship or cool welcoming George Mitchell got there?

President Clinton. Well, it seems to be working itself out. And I believe that talks are going to go forward, and I'll do everything I can to support the process. And I hope very much that somehow the cease-fire can be reestablished so that everybody will participate and there will be a successful resolution of it.

President Ernesto Samper of Colombia

Q. Mr. President, what do you plan to do about the exoneration of Samper yesterday by the Colombian Legislature?

President Clinton. Well, the United States judges its relationships with Colombia on one standard, whether they're cooperating with us in the fight against narcotics. And we will judge our relationship with Colombia based on that standard. And we—however the—they have a democratically elected parliament; they have to vote on matters as they see fit. But we will judge our relationship with a country based on their level of cooperation with us in the fight against narcotics.

Church Burnings in the South

Q. Mr. President, another church fire this morning. Are you concerned that all the atten-

tion, including what you've brought to it, is causing copycats?

President Clinton. Well, it was getting quite a lot of attention before. We, after all, had had a huge number of them. All I can tell you is that the United States will never accept burning churches. It is wrong, and it's evil, and it has to stop. We have to continue to do whatever we can to stop it. And I may have more to say about it later today.

[At this point, one group of reporters left the room, and another group entered.]

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. Mrs. President, you said that you thought that some words of reconciliation would be helpful. Do you think that words of reconciliation from the White House would be helpful for the people of Ireland?

President Robinson. I think the whole approach of the United States has been very helpful, not just today or yesterday but for the last number of years. It has been a very evenhanded, nurturing approach. It has been both words and practical help. And it's, I think, evidenced by the presence of Senator Mitchell in the very sensitive negotiations at the moment.

There are so many different ways in which the United States is being truly helpful. And I have the opportunity during this state visit to express the appreciation of the people of Ireland, and I think it's timely to do that. I think this has been a very special friendship, reflecting the very long links between our two countries, but very, very thoughtful, very helpful, very nurturing, very evenhanded, very sensitive, and very patient. And it's not easy at the moment. Nobody believes it is. And so it needs that true friend who's with you during those times of difficulty. And that is how we view the United States.

Q. Mr. President, did you feel in any way sad at the way Senator Mitchell seemed to have