

## Statement on the Passage of the Northern Ireland Peace Accord Referendum *May 23, 1998*

Today history truly joined with hope in Ireland as the people of Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic cast their ballots decisively in favor of the April 10 peace accord and a new political arrangement for Northern Ireland. I join all Americans in congratulating the people of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland for seizing this unique opportunity for a lasting peace.

I pledge that my administration will work with Northern Ireland's leaders as they seek to transform the promise of the accord into a reality, with new democratic institutions and new eco-

nomic opportunities for all of Northern Ireland's people. Working through the International Fund for Ireland and the private sector, we will help the people seize the opportunities that peace will bring to attract new investment to create new factories, workplaces, and jobs, and establish new centers of learning to prepare for the 21st century.

Today's vote is a beacon to peoples around the globe in places where strife prevails and peace seems remote. You have set an example for the world and established a strong foundation for a future of lasting peace.

## Remarks at a Memorial Day Ceremony in Arlington, Virginia *May 25, 1998*

Thank you. Secretary Slater, Secretary West, Deputy Secretary Gober, National Security Adviser Berger, Congressman Skelton, Secretary Dalton, General Shelton, General McCaffrey, Superintendent Metzler, Chaplain Cooper, the leaders of our veterans organizations, veterans, members of the Armed Forces, friends and families, my fellow Americans: I would like to begin this Memorial Day service in a somewhat unusual fashion but, I think, an entirely appropriate one.

Major General Foley, who just spoke, the Commander of the Military District of Washington, is about to move on to higher responsibilities. He is, I believe, now the only person still serving in uniform to have won the Medal of Honor, which he won for repeatedly risking his life for his comrades in Vietnam, and I thank him for his service. Thank you, sir; thank you, sir.

As spring turns to summer, Americans around the Nation take this day to enjoy friends and family. But we come again to Arlington to remember how much was given so that we could enjoy this day and every day in freedom. We come to this sacred ground out of gratitude and profound respect for those who are not here but who gave all so that we might be here.

Memorial Day began with our most deadly conflict, the Civil War. To this very day, the children of Gettysburg spread flowers over the graves of those who fell there. But the debt began to run up, of course, much earlier, for our Nation emerged from a war to establish a truly revolutionary new society which enshrined life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness as the birthright of all Americans and dedicated our Nation to the permanent mission of forming a more perfect Union. To preserve and advance those birthrights and that mission, our Founders pledged their lives, their fortunes, their sacred honor. Those we honor today paid the ultimate price to redeem that pledge.

From the American Revolution onward, from Concord to Khe Sanh to Kuwait, America's men and women have stood up for their country. Often we have erected monuments to them. Happily, the most recent one is the Women in Military Service for America Memorial dedicated here at Arlington last October to the 1.8 million women who have served our Nation, and we thank them.

Thanks to these heroes, our Nation, in over 220 years, has grown into something truly extraordinary. We have so much to be grateful for today: peace, prosperity, the spreading power