

that future. I believe the people of Northern Ireland want that for their children, and that means the leaders of Northern Ireland must find a way to do what is necessary to give that future to your children.

You know, this is the last chance I will have as President to speak to the people of Northern Ireland. Let me say to all of you that I have tried to be pretty straightforward today in my remarks and not nearly as emotional as I feel. I think you know that I have loved this land and love the work I have tried to do for peace. But the issue is not how I feel; it's how your kids are going to live.

I say to all of you, it has been a great honor for me; it has been an honor for the United States to be involved in the cause of peace in a land that produced the forbearers of so many of present-day America's citizens. I believe that the United States will be with you in the future. I know I will be with you in the future in whatever way I can.

But in the end, I will say again, what really matters is not what America does, and what really matters is not even all the encouragement

you give to people around the world. What really matters is what you do and whether you decide to give your children not your own yesterdays but their own tomorrows.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:06 p.m. at the Odyssey Arena. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom, and his wife, Cherie; First Minister David Trimble of Northern Ireland and his wife, Daphne; John Hume, member, Social Democratic and Labor Party; former Senator George J. Mitchell, who chaired the multiparty talks in Northern Ireland; Chris Gibson, chairperson, Civic Forum; Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland; Deputy First Minister Seamus Mallon of Northern Ireland; and Prime Minister Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Prime Minister Blair, First Minister Trimble, and Deputy First Minister Mallon. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Faith Leaders Initiative of the National Conference for Community and Justice

December 13, 2000

Today I want to commend the National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ) on its innovative efforts to further engage the faith community in racial reconciliation. NCCJ's Faith Leaders Initiative builds on my Initiative on Race and the March 9 White House meeting where leaders of institutions of faith announced important new steps as they rededicated themselves to fight racism.

Today's Joint Statement on Racism, drafted and endorsed by a broad group of faith leaders, recognizes the important role of people of faith in fighting racism. It states: "Racism is a problem of the heart and an evil that must be eradicated from the institutional structures that shape our daily lives, including our houses of worship." Those who affirm this statement and make its seven pledges will indeed be part of transforming our society to eradicate racism.

In addition, the directory of promising practices, guidelines for interreligious forums, and list of 10 actions every individual can take to fight racism are significant contributions toward fulfilling our vision of one America.

Many groups and individuals have worked long and hard to develop the initiatives announced today. It will take many more groups and many more individuals to put these initiatives into action. When the National Conference for Community and Justice chose to continue the work of the race initiative within the faith community, I trusted this unique organization to bring new vision and extra vigor to that call. Today's announcement again attests to both its creativity and your commitment. It is only through work such as this that our Nation will truly come to know both racial justice and racial reconciliation—truly be one America.