



# An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

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REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT  
AND PRIME MINISTER BRUTON OF IRELAND  
DURING PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

The Oval Office

6:25 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: I'm delighted to have the Taoiseach here today and -- a good day; the talks began again today. Senator Mitchell is over in Belfast, and I just want to talk to him about where we go from here.

Also, I want to note that Ireland is assuming the presidency of the European Union and we have a lot of common interests there, a lot of things we have to work on together, including our common interest in the worldwide fight against narcotics trafficking, and so we'll have lots to talk about, and I'm glad to have you here, sir.

PRIME MINISTER BRUTON: Thanks very much, indeed. Well, the talks have gotten off to a very good start in Belfast today. Obviously, we'd like to see an IRA cease-fire, because as long as the threat of violence is there, the negotiations are not going to work as fully as they need to.

Also, I'll be awaiting the opportunity to talk to the President about European Union business. As the President has said, we need to cooperate to combat drug-trafficking, and we also need, I think, more business cooperation between Europe and North America, and the United States in particular, and I have certain ideas I'll be putting forth to the President on that matter.

Q Mr. President, at this point, do you really see any advance in the talks? I know they started in June, but it doesn't really seem like they've gone very far.

THE PRESIDENT: I would go back to what the Prime Minister said. We'd like to see a cease-fire restored. But I think that actually, we do have a chance to make some progress in these talks, and that's one of the things we're going to talk about here.

We're always better off when they're talking than when they're not, and I can see circumstances under which we can make some real progress there if we got one or two good breaks, so we're going to keep working.

\* \* \* \* \*

THE PRESIDENT: Let me just, first of all, welcome you all here and say that I am deeply honored, as always, to have the Taoiseach here, coming especially as he does today as the talks have opened again in Belfast. I'm looking forward to hearing his ideas about where we go from here and any suggestions he has about how the United States can help.

I also want to talk about the work we can do together as Ireland assumes the presidency of the European Union on international narcotics trafficking and any number of other issues. I have a very,

MORE



- 2 -

very high regard for the Prime Minister for his leadership for what he has tried to do for the cause of peace in Northern Ireland, and I'm really looking forward to having this chance to visit with him.

**PRIME MINISTER BRUTON:** Thank you very much. Obviously, I'd be updating the President on the talks in Belfast, which have gotten off to a very good start today. It's important that they should move as quickly as possible to discussing the substantial issues that they were set up to deal with, having dealt with the procedure and questions, which are very important, but which I think can be dealt with quite quickly at this point.

Also, I will be talking to the President in my capacity as President of the European Union, and putting forward some ideas to him on closer business cooperation across the North Atlantic. And I will also be anxious to bring to agreement proposals that are in discussion about closer cooperation to combat the international drugs trade, both in the Caribbean area and in regard to what are known as precursors, which are chemicals which are used in the manufacture of drugs.

I think we need cooperation between the European Union and the United States if we're to combat this menace at its source.

**Q** Mr. President, if I may ask you, sir, Mike McCurry told us today that you chose to be optimistic about the prospects for peace. Can you tell us how you can possibly be optimistic at the moment and how optimistic you might be, for instance, of a new IRA cease-fire.

**THE PRESIDENT:** Well, I want to talk to the Prime Minister about that. I think there should be a restoration of the cease-fire so that everyone who needs to be in the talks can be a part of them. But the thing that makes me optimistic is the clear interest that the people, all the people in Northern Ireland have in a successful resolution of this, and their evident desire for it, which I saw so clearly last year.

And of course, unfortunately the people have already paid a price this year in the fact that when the cease-fire was lost and things seemed to be drifting in the wrong direction, it was costly in terms of tourists, in terms of business investment.

So I just believe that we're still on the right side of history, and I can also see the development of events in a way that would make it possible for us to make some real progress. But they're just beginning. I have a lot of confidence in Senator Mitchell and the team there, but mostly I believe the people of Northern Ireland want peace, and I think the determination of the Irish government and also the British government, Prime Minister Major's government to try to work to create conditions in which peace can be developed, I think those things make me optimistic.

**PRIME MINISTER BRUTON:** I'd like to add, if I may, that I think it's very important that we do have an IRA cease-fire, because we're not going to have a truly heartfelt and enduring agreement as long as the threat of violence continues.

**Q** Mr. President, do you believe that the Loyalist Parties should now be excluded from the talks process, as demanded by Dr. Paisley today?

**THE PRESIDENT:** I can't say that. I think that the only position I've taken on this whole thing is that the cease-fire ought to be restored for full participation of all of the parties. I don't want to get into that.

I think that the people who are there on the ground are perfectly capable of making their decisions. I think on balance, what we want is the largest number of people possible who will be

- 3 -

affected by this in the end, participating, and I think that that's what we should look for. But I don't think --

Q Do you anticipate going back to Ireland, Mr. President, in December?

Q Mr. President, will you make the golf match with Dick Spring this time?

THE PRESIDENT: I'll do my very best. Only an intervening circumstance stopped me last time. I hope I can come back and do it. He wants the privilege of beating me on the home soil, and I suppose I'll have to let him do that someday.

Q Are you definitely coming to Dublin in December?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know yet.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

6:34 P.M. EDT