

Mr Walsby

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Pat. Thompson  
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With the Compliments

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Mr Thompson  
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18/2/86

ADDRESS BY JOHN HUME  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR FOYLE  
MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIMENT FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

TO THE

CONVOCATION AT THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

WASHINGTON, D.C.

JANUARY 15, 1985

It is a great honor for me to accept this Honorary Degree from an educational institution of such high standing and prestige as the Catholic University of America. It is also a great pleasure for me to receive this award and to speak to you in an institution which has such a distinguished record of service in a whole range of fields corresponding to my own background and to the causes which I have sought to serve in my political life.

Coming from Ireland, which over 40 million Americans are proud to claim as the land of their birth or ancestry, let me salute the work and achievement of Catholic University in documenting, in studying, in celebrating the heritage of those Americans. Irish studies were initiated here 1896, only seven years after this institution opened its doors and over the intervening period, right up to the present day, the scholars who have graced these halls have made a contribution to the study of the rich linguistic, cultural and literary heritage bequeathed to us by the different major strands and traditions that have gone to make up the Irish nation.

The themes of heritage, of diversity and its acceptance, of the fight to end discrimination and to promote respect and recognition for minorities, are all themes for which this university is rightly celebrated and on which I hope to touch in my remarks here today and which go to the heart of Ireland's present tragedy. We are gathered here at the beginning of the International Year of Peace and on the birthday of a great American, Martin Luther King, a man of world stature, whose principle of non-violence in the struggle for justice has been a guiding light to me personally in my approach to the resolution of conflict, whether in Ireland or the international sphere.

You are, in this country heirs to beneficiaries of great traditions and principles of constitutional government which stand out as of particular value and indeed, as a standard of emulation and application in our own affairs in Ireland. Through a process of development that was never easy or free of problems, you have gone very far in giving real, practical effect to equality before the law for every citizen

and to equality of opportunity. Yours is a state where there is a wider measure of national and political consensus, fashioned from rich and broad difference. From many you have one.

In America, there has always been respect for this idea of unity in diversity and whatever the controversies may be about the value and application today of the old melting-pot concept, there is, I understand, increasing acceptance of the idea of cultural pluralism. Again not without difficulty yesterday or devoid of controversy today, you have achieved religious toleration and established the separation of Church and State. Written on your smallest coin is your message of greatest value, the cement of your society - E Pluribus Unum. The essence of unity is the acceptance of diversity. The tragedy of divided people everywhere, as in Ireland, is that they have pushed difference to the point of division and have not yet learned the lesson that is the essence of unity in every democratic society in the world - accept and respect diversity.

To those among you who come from an Irish-American background, let me say, with no disrespect to those whose ancestry and heritage are different, that you come from a community, which brought to the building of America qualities encompassed in the poet Yeats's description "the indomitable Irishry" and left a record of achievement in which you may take justifiable pride, as we in Ireland certainly do. That is a subject for another address but let me briefly recall how they brought to the support of a thirst for justice, appreciation of the power of organisation, reflected in the development of the labour movement and of popular, democratic politics. They were not all angels but in the main, rejecting the fatalistic claim that power corrupts, they understood and applied the use of power, of politics, for good, as when in this nation, just over twenty years ago, John F. and Robert Kennedy embraced the vision of Martin Luther King and developed and applied the powers of the federal government in the interests of justice and equality for the black people of America.

The Irish Americans have also understood and put to good use the power of education, its power for the material and social advancement of the individual and of his or her community. They did not seek to improve their position in U.S. society through violence or through any attempt to obtain or exercise a dominant position. Instead they harnessed the non-violent power of education, first saving from their meagre incomes as laboureres or servants the money necessary to educate their sons and daughters and, later applying the resources of any improved position to endow institutions of education such as the Catholic University of America and indeed, to support investment, economic and social development and cultural activity in Ireland itself. And this progress without throwing a stone.

In Northern Ireland, the people of Irish nationalist tradition whom I represent have followed the same path. We also shared that thirst and respect for education and when, after World War II, the policies of the British Labour Government greatly widened access to education, we seized the opportunities thus afforded. A new and highly educated generation

emerged from the nationalist minority, as it also emerged among the Irish here and more lately among the black minority, which was not prepared to accept intolerance and disadvantage as their legacy or as a future for their children. That new generation embarked on a struggle to achieve equal rights, including the right to have their political and cultural tradition reflected and expressed in the structures by which they were governed. The methods chosen by the great majority of them were those of non-violent protest and of democratic politics which have served so well for both the Irish and the blacks in America.

Before expanding a little on those parallels, let me sketch in briefly the background to the problems in Northern Ireland whose travail figures so frequently and so tragically in the newspapers here in America.

The story of Northern Ireland is the story of conflict-not one I must explain a religious conflict, even though the two communities who live there draw much of their character and their coherence from their religious traditions. It is rather a conflict between

the aspirations of ordinary men and women - 600,000 Nationalists, 900,000 Unionists - who have been trapped by a tragic error of history which saw their hopes and fears as mutually exclusive and irreconcilable within an Irish state but which obliged them nonetheless to live and compete side-by-side in one small corner of Ireland. These two communities in Northern Ireland, Catholic and Protestant, Nationalist and Unionist, both behave like threatened minorities and only by so regarding them and only by removing the fears which they both feel can a just and durable solution be found.

Northern Ireland was born out of the insecurity of the Protestant-Unionist minority in Ireland. Fearful of becoming a minority in the Irish State then emerging sixty years ago, distrustful of the intentions of their fellow Irishmen, zealous to protect the advantages they believed they had under British rule, the leadership of the Unionist community sought and achieved, through threat of force, the acquiescence of Britain in the creation of a new political, territorial and artificial entity in Ireland wherein they hoped they could shape their own destiny as part

of the United Kingdom. But the new self-governing political entity thereby established, called Northern Ireland, was neither secure or homogeneous. Caught within its boundaries was a substantial Catholic and nationalist minority, which felt itself Irish, and which did not cease to be Irish simply because legislators elsewhere had drawn a line on a map and declared that henceforth they were British. Thus Northern Ireland, served only to extend and aggravate this conflict by compressing the clash of majority and minority within an even more narrow and more rigid territorial, economic and social confine.

For over fifty years the Unionist majority sought to entrench their position through political gerrymander and discrimination. Though inexcusable, it was inevitable that they should have acted in this fashion -- as other majorities have at times acted - since their inheritance was not a land of promise but a polity of insecurity. It was inevitable also that each attempt they made, at the expense of their neighbors, to strengthen their role and protect their privileges should serve only to disrupt the structures of society as a whole and to create new tensions and

insecurities. This was the case also in the deep south of the United States not too many years ago where an insensitive and insecure white majority held sway. I have already referred to the parallel emergence in Northern Ireland and in the American South of a new articulate generation with expectations raised through education and impatient and angry at the injustices they suffered.

The American civil rights movement gave birth to ours. Your successes were for us a cause of hope. The songs of your movement were also ours. We also believe that "we shall overcome": that rallying song is sung every year at our annual Party Conference. Most importantly, the philosophy of non-violence which sustained your struggle was also part of ours. Our own history and our own circumstances gave a special power to the counsel of Reverend Martin Luther King that violence as a way of achieving justice is both impractical and immoral. As he put it:

"It is impractical because it is a descending spiral ending in destruction for all. The old law of an eye for an eye leaves everybody blind. It is immoral because it seeks to humiliate the opponent rather than win understanding; it seeks to annihilate rather than convert. Violence is immoral because it thrives on hatred rather than love. It destroys community and makes brotherhood impossible. It leaves society in monologue rather than dialogue. Violence ends by defeating itself. It creates bitterness in the survivors and brutality in the destroyers."

Can anyone looking at divided societies in the world today like Lebanon, Cyprus and Ireland doubt the wisdom of these words of Martin Luther King?

The world responded with sympathy to our non-violent movement for civil rights as it did to yours. But whereas in the United States the structures of your democracy were resilient enough to encompass the challenge of civil rights, in the unstable political

environment of Northern Ireland, our struggle was perceived as a threat to the very survival of the society itself and as such was resisted by the institutions of the State.

In the ensuing clash, the Unionist majority, through the imposition of direct rule from London, lost their local parliament which they had come to regard as the symbol of their independence and as the guarantor of their heritage. Though many would still wish to regard Northern Ireland as their exclusive homeland, they lack the power and indeed the freedom to shape their destiny as they once hoped. Though they dominate the security institutions of the State, they have not found security as a people. This insecurity has led them to oppose change, even constructive change.

Nevertheless through pressure on the British Government including the presence of sympathetic opinion in America and the world at large, we were able to make, through non-violent methods, major progress on a number of fronts, especially on the

original demands of our Civil Rights Movement. These included one-man, one-vote, fair allocation of publicly provided housing and an end to job discrimination. Before that, gerrymander was rife in Northern Ireland and local elections and unfair voting systems were used by the unionist ascendancy to control housing and jobs on a sectarian basis. Housing conditions in many parts of the North were appalling. Today the housing situation throughout Northern Ireland has been transformed due to the creation of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, a proposal my party, the Social Democratic and Labour Party, put to the British government of the day and accepted by them, thereby taking public housing allocation out of the hands of local unionist politicians. This has meant a major transformation in the living conditions of people throughout Northern Ireland. While the SDLP was battling through the ballot box and in dialogue with the British Government to achieve these changes, some of the present day opponents, in the paramilitary Provisional IRA and its misnamed political wing, alleged champions of working people, were telling those people to burn votes, that The ballot box was a waste of time. The electoral and local government system has been drastically altered

with the introduction of proportional representation ending gerrymandering at the local level and drastically reducing the power of political bigots. My Party has today the dedicated service of more than one hundred elected representatives on local government councils right across Northern Ireland. They have consistently worked to improve the quality of life in the communities they serve. A public regulatory agency, the Fair Employment Agency, for which we fought successfully but for which we want more teeth, is and has been a valuable watchdog in exposing, and making more difficult, discrimination by public bodies.

While we made these very worthwhile advances, affecting the lives of ordinary men and women, we encountered, as I have said, a blockage from the unionist parties, to our legitimate calls and efforts to secure for the nationalist people we represent effective political, symbolic and administrative expression of their identity, including a fair share in the exercise of political power in the executive,

as well as the legislative branch of government. Moreover, the reforms we secured were not, regrettably, generously and openly offered by the unionist parties but had to be imposed on them by the British Government and Parliament.

Against the background of the resulting clashes and in impatience at the results achieved by peaceful, political methods, the philosophy of non-violence was rejected by a minority in my own community who followed the old law of an eye for an eye, who were inevitably brutalised by the process in which they engaged, who in their savage anger and barbarous deeds have come to reflect all of the hatred and sectarianism they had sought to overthrow and who, in their pursuit of violence, demeaned the cause we hold dear and lost us many good allies. Sustained by their violence this terrorist group is beset by the illusion that they can, one day, impose their will on Ireland as a whole.

This violence, together with the unionist intransigence which gave it birth and the too long

continued inadequacies of British policies in tackling the underlying political problem, has left us a bitter harvest. The human losses and economic costs have been enormous. The most tragic loss is that of the deaths of over 2,400 men, women and children. These deaths, in an area with a population of 1 1/2 million, are equivalent in proportionate terms to the killing of approximately 350,000 in the United States. In addition, almost 25,000 people have been injured or maimed. Thousands are suffering from psychological stress because of the fear and tension generated by murder, bombing, intimidation and the impact of security countermeasures. In Northern Ireland, we now have the highest number of prisoners per head of population in Western Europe - in an area where twenty years ago, serious crime was practically unknown. The lives of tens of thousands have been deeply affected. The effect on society has been shattering. There is hardly a family that has not been touched to some degree by death, injury or intimidation.

Those of you concerned with Irish Studies will find the corrosive effects on community, to which Martin Luther King referred, in mutual fear and suspicion

among neighbours, in the polarisation of small towns and countryside, in the erosion of the pieties, decencies and courtesies of civilised living, searingly evoked, with the savage indignation of Jonathan Swift, in the recent novel by my fellow-Ulsterman and frequent sojourner to America, Ben Kiely, entitled "Nothing Happens in Carmincross". These are the fruits of violence and of alienation.

For terrorist violence, while it can never be condoned or accepted, too often springs from the alienation produced by intransigence or neglect, by the failure to tackle political problems through the political process, by the failure to accommodate adequately the identity and aspirations of communities and peoples - whether it is nationalists in Northern Ireland, Palestinians in the Middle East, blacks in South Africa or Jews in the Soviet Union.

I would quote Martin Luther King again:

"When an individual is no longer a true participant, when he no longer feels a sense of responsibility to his society, the content of democracy is emptied... when the social system does not build security but induces peril, inexorably the individual is impelled to pull away from a soulless society. This produces alienation - perhaps the most pervasive and insidious development in contemporary society."

Although a consequence of the injustice of others, alienation is a desperate and dangerous development within minorities because it weakens their coherence, erodes their faith in progress and gives terrorism the opportunity to take root. As it was expressed by W. B. Yeats:

"Too long a sacrifice can make a stone of the heart."

When a society produces alienation in the individual, when it cannot provide for the equality and the differences of its citizens, "when the social system

does not build security but induces peril," that society must be reshaped and transformed through new institutions which accommodate diversity and promote the basis for reconciliation.

This is the only way forward in Northern Ireland. Let me demonstrate this by considering the alternatives offered. There is the unionist approach of ascendancy, of seeking the exclusive exercise of political power in Northern Ireland for themselves, of ignoring the existence of a community, comprising 40% of the area's population who have a different identity and a different aspiration. They hark back to the past and speak of the future only with fear and forboding, a paranoia encapsulated by a poet in the lines now taken up in graffiti on the walls of the area's largest city:

"To hell with the future and long live the past,  
May God in his mercy be kind to Belfast"

One can join in saying "Amen" to the last line but the conflict reflects a sad condition, a seige mentality, rooted in insecurity, in prejudice, in fear of domination by a Catholic majority in Ireland, so-called "Rome Rule". Even if, in light of history and of the terrorist campaign of the IRA, some of these fears are understandable, they are groundless. There can be no solution to our problem which seeks to destroy or to crush the Protestant heritage in Ireland. It would be unthinkable. Accommodation of difference is the only basis of peace and stability in our divided society.

Then there is the other alternative, that of the Provisional IRA and their political front. They bomb factories and shout about unemployment, they shoot a teacher in a classroom, kill school bus drivers, kill people on campuses and then lecture us about education. They kill, maim and injure, they carry out attacks in hospital precincts and then they talk about protecting the Health Service. On a Friday morning their housing spokesman complains about a \$6 million cut in the budget of the Housing Executive in Northern Ireland as a whole. On the same Friday evening their

military wing blows up \$2 million of public money in a single street. They attack the British Government for reneging on an agreement with the Irish Government to bring natural gas from the South and they blow up the inter-connector that connected the electricity systems, North and South. They condemn the execution of a young black poet in South Africa but they execute a young unemployed man in a back lane in my own city or a trussed up young couple in the back streets of West Belfast. The real strategy and objectives are clear. Have the military wing create as much discontent and deprivation as possible. The more unemployment the better. Then have your political wing feed off the people's discontent.

My party, the SDLP, born out of the Civil Rights Movement, has rejected these two purported alternatives - which in fact offer no hope for the future. Like Martin Luther King, we had a dream, like Theobald Wolfe Tone, the father of Irish republicanism, our vision has been "to substitute for the denomination of Catholic, Protestant and Dissenter the common name of Irishman." Our chosen strategy encompassed Reform, Reconciliation, and Reunification

along a path of steady progress, continually narrowing the gap between the reality and the dream, using the political means of dialogue, persuasion, negotiation, accommodation, compromise. Violence can never heal the deep wounds that divide the Irish people. Only a healing process can in time end the division in Ireland.

Our analysis is that the first necessary step in the healing process is the creation of total equality of treatment of all the people of Northern Ireland, nationalists and unionists alike, from basic civil rights to full expression of their identity. I have outlined the worthwhile -- but still far from adequate -- reforms achieved in earlier stages of this reform process. But even after these, Northern nationalists remained within a state with which they could not identify, with institutions, a security system, cultural assumptions and official symbolism which were alien to them and appeared in many ways designed to make them strangers in their own land, in a situation where they were denied any constructive means of expressing their Irish identity and aspirations, their cultural and political identification with the rest of

Ireland. Thus, the process of bringing about practical recognition and respect for equality between the two identities and communities remains to be completed. To achieve this was the first objective we set for ourselves.

On the basis of that equality, because reconciliation can only be based on equality, comes the process of reconciliation, the second element, in my party's long-term programme, the breaking down of barriers between the different sections of our people. No one can underestimate the difficulty of that task. It will take time, but it is a task that involves everyone and that will lead, coming to the third major element, to the only Irish unity that really matters, the only unity that all pre-partition leaders spoke of, a unity that respects diversity and legitimises differences. That is a process and objective that no one need fear because all sections must be part of the building process. Those who claim that their role and objective in politics is to preserve, protect and develop the Protestant tradition in Ireland have surely much more interest in a process such as this than standing forever apart, paranoid about the future

precisely because they have refused to grasp the nettle of settling their relationships with the people with whom they share the island of Ireland.

In the analysis of my party, the process of reform and reconciliation could best be tackled through a framework corresponding to the framework of the problem and thus, through the British-Irish framework, through an approach that dealt with the three major dimensions of the problem - relations between the two communities in Northern Ireland, relations between the nationalist and unionist traditions in Ireland as a whole and relations between Ireland and Britain. A promising start along these lines was made following discussions between the Irish and British Governments in 1980 but these efforts suffered a major setback in 1981 and 1982, as a result of the trauma arising from the campaign and deaths of the hunger-strikers imprisoned in Northern Ireland. As a consequence three years ago, we faced a bleak situation and prospect, with alienation greatly accentuated and more widespread among all sections of the nationalist community and with the political situation apparently in a state of deadlock and paralysis.

My Party took a fresh initiative at that stage, designed to break the logjam and to carry our analysis into the realm of practical politics. We put forward the proposal which came to fruition as the New Ireland Forum, a deliberative body of elected representatives from the four major constitutional nationalist parties in Ireland, both North and South, representing over 90% of the nationalist population of Ireland. The purpose was to hold consultations on the manner in which lasting peace and stability could be achieved in a new Ireland through the democratic process and to report on possible new structures and process through which this objective might be achieved or, in other words, to set out an up-to-date modern and formal statement or blueprint, setting out the principles and structures on the basis of which the constitutional nationalist dream of a new Ireland could be given concrete shape and form. After a process of scientific study, public hearings and political debate and compromise, that body produced, in May, 1984, an agreed report which attracted widespread acclaim and support including from President Reagan and from the United States Congress, in a Concurring Resolution of both Houses, the first on Irish affairs since the 1920's. Against the background of a fresh and

generous assessment of the realities of the situation, the Report proposed ten key and necessary elements of a framework within which a new Ireland could emerge. These proposals were firmly rooted in the concept of unity in diversity. Indeed, the kernel of the Report was set out in one of its paragraphs, as follows:

"The solution to both the historic problem and the current crisis of Northern Ireland and the continuing problem of relations between Ireland and Britain necessarily requires new structures that will accommodate together two sets of legitimate rights:

- the right of nationalists to effective political, symbolic and administrative expression of their identity; and
- the right of unionists to effective political, symbolic and administrative expression of their identity, their ethos and their way of life.

The Report of the New Ireland Forum was adopted as policy by the Irish Government and taken as the basis for a process of negotiation with the British Government which after 18 months and not without some setbacks along the way, led to the signature of a formal international agreement between the two countries about Northern Ireland, on 15 November last, at Hillsborough in Northern Ireland, by the Irish Taoiseach, Dr. Garret FitzGerald and the British Prime Minister, Mrs. Margaret Thatcher.

The Agreement is a major achievement of democratic, non-violent politics. It is a significant step forward on the road to lasting peace and stability. The Agreement tackles the problem of alienation head on and seeks to secure, in line with the central requirement identified in the Report of the New Ireland Forum, equal recognition and respect for both the nationalist and unionist identities so that nationalists can raise their heads knowing their position is, and is seen to be, on an equal footing with that of unionists. The Agreement provides, in a unique arrangement reflecting the particular and

unique situation in Northern Ireland, for the establishment by the British and Irish Governments of an Intergovernmental Conference concerned with Northern Ireland and with relations between the two parts of Ireland. In the Agreement, the British Government accepts that the Irish Government will put forward views and proposals on matters relating to Northern Ireland within the field of activity of the Conference and the British Government, together with the Irish Government, agree that in the interest of promoting peace and stability, determined efforts will be made through the Conference to resolve any differences. The range of issues that are within the Conference's field of activity comprises most of the matters in which the public authorities of a State exercise responsibility and includes political, security, legal, economic, social and cultural matters. The Conference is serviced on a continuing basis by a Joint Secretariat located in Belfast.

These provision, going beyond a consultative role but falling short of an executive role for the Irish Government, take nothing away from the rights of unionists. Northern Ireland continues to be governed,

as unionists still wish, by the British Government. The Agreement rather adds a dimension which by giving institutional recognition to the Irish identity of those of the nationalist tradition, without detriment to the identity, of unionists, will enable nationalists to participate fully in the affairs of Northern Ireland without prejudice to their aspiration to Irish unity.

These arrangements are, as I have indicated, unique in international relations and law as, I am sure, those here familiar with these fields will recognise.

The Agreement has secured the support of substantial majorities of the population in Britain and in the Republic of Ireland. It has been greeted with satisfaction by a majority of nationalists in Northern Ireland although there is, among many, a consciousness that much depends on its practical implementation, with firmness and fairness, by both Governments.

Internationally, there has been unprecedented support including again from President Reagan and from both Houses of Congress.

But, surprise, surprise, there has been a strong negative and hostile reaction among unionists in Northern Ireland. The unionist political parties have embarked on a determined effort to set the Agreement at naught, if necessary, as their spokesmen express, by making Northern Ireland ungovernable. One may regard this opposition from a community used to ascendancy, to having all power in their own hands, as understandable, even as inevitable: it is certainly not justifiable or justified. The Agreement takes nothing away from the legitimate rights or concrete interests from unionists, nor does it diminish in any way their political, cultural or spiritual heritage.

Particular opposition has been expressed to the Irish Government having a role in regard to the affairs and administration of Northern Ireland. But this attitude ignores the identity and aspirations of the people I represent, who constitute about 40% of the area's population. If there is an apprehension that the role of the Dublin Government represents the thin end of a wedge pushing towards a united Ireland against the wishes of a majority, the answer is in the second

major feature of the Agreement itself. This recognises, in a binding international instrument, that which is a matter of fact, that Irish unity would only come about with the agreement of a majority of the people of Northern Ireland; and that the present wish of a majority there is for no change in that status. In this Article the two Governments also declare that, if in the future, a majority of the people of Northern Ireland clearly wish for and formally consent to the establishment of a united Ireland, they will introduce and support in the respective Parliaments legislation to give effect to that wish. Thus the Article of the Agreement devoted to the status of Northern Ireland recognises the identity and aspirations of both traditions there. It also makes it clear that Britain has no interest of her own, strategic or otherwise, in remaining in Ireland and that Irish unity is a matter for those Irish people who want it persuading those Irish people who don't, thus removing any justification whatsoever for the use of violence.

There have already been three meetings of the Intergovernmental Conference, and it is clear that it is tackling the agenda for its work set out in other provisions of the Agreement and that it provides an effective framework for the resolution of problems through the techniques of democratic politics. The priority now is to stand firm in upholding and implementing the agreement. The unionists will have to be brought to see that, this time, they cannot defy the will of the British Parliament to which they profess loyalty, as they did successfully in 1912 and 1974. They must be brought to realise that they cannot have matters all their own way. In this way they can be liberated from the prison into which they have locked themselves and, one may hope, led to embrace true politics which they have been able to eschew up to now.

When they are ready to do so, I and my party stand ready to meet them and engage in discussions on how we share our future together. We must begin the process of breaking down the barriers between us, barriers of prejudice and distrust which are at the heart of the

conflict that has disfigured Ireland for centuries. We have a choice. We can live together or live apart. We have lived apart for too long and we have seen the bitter consequences. Or we can live together with all the painful readjustments that this will require. It is the only road to peace and stability for whatever happens we will be sharing the same piece of earth for a long, long time.

I hope that what I have said has served in some small way to demonstrate the potential of democratic politics and of the philosophy of non-violence to make progress toward the resolution of what is perhaps one of the more intractable political problems in the world today. I believe that these same principles are applicable in the field of international relations.

Ordinary men and women in both our countries have, in the last few years, responded with extraordinary generosity to the problem of famine in Africa. It is no accident that it was an Irishman, Bob Geldof, who has done most <sup>over the last 12 months</sup> to awaken the conscience of the world to

the problem of world hunger. It is no accident that per head of population the Irish contributed more to the Live Aid appeal and to this entire famine relief effort. As I said recently in a speech in the U. S. Senate building:

"Our country knew famine in the last century. It is for that reason that our country has been so moved by the present suffering of Africa. We know that our famines were not simply natural disasters. History shows that Irish people were starved, or forced to leave their native land, because of unjust distribution of land, poverty and extortion which forced the production of cash crops for the wealthy abroad instead of food for the hungry at home, trade structures which knew no morality, and unequal power relations between countries. These are the same injustices and absurdities which crucify Africa today. Our famine brought the starving to Americans and to the rest of the world. May the present famine bring Americans and the rest of the world to the starving."

World hunger demands change, not just charity. These problems make ours pale into insignificance as does the other great issue, the awesome stockpiling of nuclear weapons. This issue is intrinsically interlinked with world hunger. Over one million pounds per minute goes into the provision of weapons whose only potential is to destroy this earth. The transfer of those vast resources to the developing world would not only solve the problem of starvation but would transform world markets and end unemployment in the developed world as well.

We know from hard experience that the nuclear arms race did not begin with the election of Ronald Reagan or the discovery of plutonium. It begins with the acceptance of force or might as a means of maintaining or achieving political dominance. It does not take an etymologist to tell the us that terrorism and deterrents in the end are about the same thing, force and fear. We know that when we are dealing with human conflict whether in a divided community, a divided country or a divided globe, that it is the building of mutual trust and not mutual fear that will solve the

problem of conflict -- not just in Ireland, but on the globe -- because we know that human beings are no different wherever they live. We are whether in Ireland or globally with Martin Luther King:

"We still have a choice today: non-violent co-existence or violent co-annihilation."