

my colleagues and friends of Ireland everywhere to read this carefully and to continue to commit themselves to the cause of peace, reconciliation, and economic reconstruction of the island of Ireland, during the critical months and years ahead.

REBUILDING IRELAND'S ECONOMY

(By Paul S. Quinn)

The people of Northern Ireland and the republic of Ireland face a historic choice today when they vote on the peace agreement worked out among the various factions involved in the struggle in the North.

A yes vote is the key to the next steps in the region, but it is only a beginning. Economic growth and stability, shared by Catholic and Protestant alike, is essential to the continued progress of peace in Northern Ireland and the border areas with the republic.

In the 15 years I have traveled there, the North has changed from a place fraught with distrust and violence to one where peace is beginning to take root.

In my recent travels there, I have been struck by two things. The first is the tremendous appreciation that people have for the commitment that President Clinton and his foreign policy team, the U.S. Congress and, of course, former Maine Sen. George Mitchell have made to the search for peace.

But just as striking as their gratitude is their fervent desire to have us remain engaged in the region. They believe, rightly, that in order for the North to truly become a new place, the United States, both our government and our private sector, will have to be part of making that happen.

Since 1986, the United States has put its money where its mouth is in the effort to turn Northern Ireland's economy around. We have done this primarily through our support for the International Fund for Ireland, which has been a tremendous success. Indeed, it is a story that has never really been told. The fund has helped to increase dramatically investment in the region, and more than 28,000 jobs have been created.

There also has been substantial support from the private sector in this country, primarily through the American Ireland Fund, in the areas of direct economic help and sponsorship of educational and training projects.

Unfortunately, more is required to cement the great achievement of the peace agreement. Additional economic commitment is necessary, and much if not most of that has to come from the private sector.

The business community and the governments directly and indirectly involved with the peace process must pick up the challenge made by President Clinton and British Prime Minister Tony Blair, reiterated on May 18 to the people of Northern Ireland: There will be increased investment if the peace process continues, and all on the island of Ireland will benefit.

There are some specific steps that can be taken to help achieve this goal of creating jobs and economic opportunity.

There must be continued support for the International Fund for Ireland by our government, as well as the European Union, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and perhaps other concerned governments. The peace agreement does not mean the fund can close up shop.

Hard questions need to be asked sooner rather than later on how to best make use of the \$500 million stimulus package the British government has put together for the North. Clearly, the British government will have its own ideas. But the private sector and others familiar with the region should offer their good offices to help ensure that this money

is well spent and does not get lost in the bureaucracy.

Commerce Secretary William Daley is going to the region in early June with an impressive group of U.S. business executives. This visit is very timely and important, and an assessment by Mr. Daley and his team can provide a blueprint for the kind of private investment that is both needed and achievable during the critical days ahead.

There should be an economic conference in the region soon. The 1996 White House conference in Washington on Ireland laid a foundation for what could be done to help Northern Ireland. Using the results of that conference as a starting point, a regionally based conference could help move ideas to action. A comprehensive plan needs to be developed and implemented without delay.

For its part, the U.S. government may want to see if there is more it can do to help strengthen the economy of the region by spurring private-sector involvement.

It is clear that, regardless of the nature and extent of government assistance provided to Northern Ireland, at the end of the day it is the ability to attract and retain private investment that will matter most.

Men and women of goodwill have worked very hard to get the various factions in Northern Ireland to the point where peace is possible. This effort should now be matched by the efforts of the private sector.

IN HONOR OF NATIONAL MISSING CHILDREN'S DAY

HON. JAY W. JOHNSON

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 22, 1998

Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor National Missing Children's Day on Monday, May 25, to remember the girls and boys for whom we search, and to pay my respect to the mothers and fathers across Northeast Wisconsin—parents like Phyllis Makowski of Marinette, Wisconsin—and across the country who know the suffering that comes with a missing child.

Before I was elected to Congress, I reported the news every night to the people of Northeast Wisconsin. We reported on every story imaginable, but it was the stories of families who were searching for loved ones that I will never forget. Whether it was 12-year-old Cora Jones from Appleton, or Lauri Depies of Menasha, the emotions were heart-wrenching and the events were tragic. I had the opportunity many times to speak with the mothers and fathers as they searched for their missing children—I will always remember the trauma and the despair they were subjected to.

That is why Jay Breyer and Kim Maas from "Youth Educated in Safety," or "Y.E.S.," came to visit with me in Washington to tell me about a loophole in the law that was hindering the search for missing children, they had my immediate attention. Because I know the pain dealt to the families and the entire community, when a child is missing and there are no answers, only questions.

That meeting led to the introduction of new legislation by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. LAMPSON), the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), and myself. We call the bill, "Jennifer's Law," named in honor of Jennifer Wilmer, who has been missing since 1993, and whose mother, Susan, has fought so hard

to help other families in this terrible situation. "Jennifer's Law" is aimed at helping the families of missing persons bring closure to their search, and giving the police more information to solve crimes.

Right now, we have a national crime information center (NCIC) database of missing persons. We also have a separate list of unidentified persons. But, tragically, these lists cannot be adequately cross-referenced.

We believe there are thousands of unidentified persons found every year, deceased or living (perhaps with amnesia), who are not reported in a way that will help us close cases where people are missing.

It is reported that New York City alone buries as many as 3,000 unclaimed bodies every year. But these aren't just bodies. They are real lives.

But imagine that for every body found is a family hoping for clues . . . searching . . . waiting for an answer. Also imagine that for every unclaimed, unidentified body may be clues about a criminal who may never be caught.

Our bill, "Jennifer's Law," would enhance the reporting of information about unidentified persons. It would require states to report to the missing persons file any information on unidentified persons they find in their jurisdiction. The legislation also requires the FBI to modernize the missing persons file and the unidentified persons file to make these lists compatible for cross-referencing.

By improving the ability of the FBI to cross-reference the national missing persons file with an enhanced unidentified persons file, many families will find the closure they need as they search for missing children, husbands, wives, and other family members. Also, we expect that better information about these unidentified bodies—dental records, fingerprints, and x-rays—would bring many clues to help track down predators and criminals.

A logical and complete cross-referencing of the missing persons file and the unidentified persons file simply does not exist right now. But it will.

Families who are searching for loved ones deserve our best effort and the right answers. We should use every resource at our disposal to help these families and track down criminals. On National Missing Children's Day, I want to encourage my colleagues to lend their support to this worthy legislation for families of missing children who need our help.

IN HONOR OF NATIONAL MISSING CHILDREN DAY

HON. NICK LAMPSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 22, 1998

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, May 25th is National Missing Children's Day. As Chairman of the Congressional Missing and Exploited Children's Caucus, I'd like to speak for a moment about HR 2850, "The Jennifer's Law Act of 1997," which would help ensure that parents are able to bring closure to their search for missing children. I introduced this bill in November with my colleagues, Congressman JAY JOHNSON and Congressman TOM LANTOS.

Under current law, states are required to report information on missing children to the FBI