

be able to borrow more money at lower interest rates, bringing greater global prosperity and stability. This is a very significant achievement for our country and for a more stable and peaceful and prosperous world.

So I hope, very much, to work with Congress in the weeks ahead to pay off the debt, to finish the work of strengthening Social Security and Medicare, and to make a real commitment to our children and our future.

Again, let me thank the national economic team and all others who have supported these initiatives over the last 6 years. Thank you very much.

Tax Cuts

Q. Are you open to tax cuts beyond those that you mentioned, Mr. President?

The President. I think we should achieve these objectives. Within the framework of achieving these objectives, obviously, I'll be working with the Congress to achieve them. Thank you.

Arkansas Senate Seat

Q. Do you want to run for Senate from Arkansas? [*Laughter*]

The President. I think Rubin should run for the Senate from Arkansas. [*Laughter*] He's got the best timing of anybody alive.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:59 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, prior to his departure for Westport, CT. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of the Treasury Robert E. Rubin.

Interview With Mark Devenport of the British Broadcasting Corporation in Westport, Connecticut

June 28, 1999

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Mr. Devenport. Mr. President, it's 2 days to go until the deadline in Northern Ireland—obviously a crucial week, the politicians still at loggerheads apparently. What is it that you want them to do now in this make-or-break time?

The President. I want them to remember how strongly the people voted for peace and for the Good Friday accords and to find an honorable resolution of the admittedly thorny problems. Because whatever the difficulties of going forward, they are very small compared to the difficulties of letting the peace process fall apart.

Mr. Devenport. Now, you say there are thorny problems, and that is the difficulty—and especially the problem of decommissioning. Would you be urging the Sinn Fein to do what Ulster Unionists are urging Sinn Fein to do, to namely sign up to a timetable for disarmament and give a categorical assurance that the IRA will have disarmed completely by May 2000?

The President. I think that all the parties should fully comply with the terms of the Good Friday accords, and that's what I would say. I think that they all have to find a way—we know what the problems, the legitimate problems the Sinn Fein have with the decommissioning

issue. But it's an important part of the Good Friday accords, so there has to be a resolution of it that enables the leadership of the Unionists, Mr. Trimble and the others who have fought for peace, to survive, to sustain their position, and to go forward and get everybody on their side to honor the Good Friday accords, too.

They can find a way to do this if they decide that the price of failure is far higher than the price of compromise. And I think there's a good chance they'll do it; even if it's 11th hour, I do.

Mr. Devenport. Well, what about the Ulster Unionists? Their position has been that there has to be guns handed over, actual hardware, before Sinn Fein can go into government. Do you think they should be considering moving ahead on the basis of pledges rather than actually looking for the armaments?

The President. Well, I believe that on that score, Mr. Trimble is satisfied in these talks with whatever commitment is made, and I think they should give it a chance to work.

One thing I would say to the Unionists is that they can always walk away from this if the commitments aren't made at a later date.

And they should keep in mind—they can bring this down at any time by simply walking out if the commitments aren't kept. So I think that if Mr. Trimble can be satisfied and they can work it through, then I would hope the Unionists would support him and give him a chance—give this thing a chance to work.

Mr. Devenport. Now, this political deadline is also coinciding with the annual deadline that there is in Northern Ireland of the Drumcree march. As we speak, an announcement on the Drumcree march is imminent. There are extremely strong indications that the Orangemen won't be allowed to go down the Catholic section of the Garvaghy Road. How concerned are you about what the impact of a refusal to let the Orangemen go down Garvaghy Road could be, both on the streets and on the political process?

The President. Well, as an outsider, you know, to me this looks like the most difficult of decisions because it is—there's enormous emotional content on both sides. It's not just a matter of a lot of people walking on a certain road. And I think however it is resolved this year, the most important thing is that the parties themselves try to find a larger, omnibus resolution for this that reflects the spirit of the Good Friday accords.

Keep in mind, I mean, the spirit of the Good Friday accords is that both sides should have respect for and get respect from one another, and that no one should have to give up his or her heritage or traditions, but they should be pursued with some sensitivity to how others feel as well.

So I think that they're in a terrible bind now because the Drumcree deadline is coming up against the negotiation deadline. And so, however it's resolved, I think that what the leaders should be thinking about is, what is the long-run resolution of this? How can we show one another the necessary respect and sensitivity that will put this marching issue in the context of the commitment of the Good Friday accords, which is to push toward reconciliation and equality within the principle of consent?

Mr. Devenport. At the time of the Good Friday agreement, you waited up through the night in Washington, inside the White House, seeing how the negotiations were working out. You went on the phone personally and spoke to the main parties and tried to coax them forward.

This week, with a new deadline, are you willing to do the same, to intervene personally?

The President. Oh, absolutely. I'll do what ever I can to help. You know, this means a lot to me. It means a lot to the American people. We have tens of millions of Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants who are deeply invested emotionally, and many of them financially, in Northern Ireland, and would like to be more involved.

And I also believe, as I have said many times, that if this can be resolved—if we can get over this next hurdle and go forward—I think it will give courage to the advocates of peace in the face of religious and ethnic problems in other parts of the world. You know, we're just getting off the ground with our efforts in Kosovo. There are many difficulties there, and the accumulated grievances there, from mass killing and mass uprooting, are deeper, if you will, just in terms of human loss than all the things that have happened in Ireland.

But people have this sense that the divisions in Ireland go back such a long time, that if they can be overcome, I think it would give great heart to the proponents of peace in the Balkans and Africa and the Middle East, because—the new Prime Minister is about to announce a government there; we have a chance again to make progress and peace in the Middle East.

And I think that from my point of view, as someone who's interested in not only the country of my roots but the rest of the world, I think that it's hard to overstate; it's hard to overstate the impact a positive or a negative outcome could have on such actions in the rest of the world.

Mr. Devenport. Finally, Mr. President, there's only so much that you or, indeed, the British and Irish Prime Ministers can do to coax people along. Is this the time when Northern Ireland's political leaders have to stand on their own two feet?

The President. Well, I think they can know that we can coax them, and we can stand with them, and we can support them, and we can bring them benefits in all kinds of ways after this is resolved. But in the end, the leaders have to decide.

Their people have voted for peace. But that's a general principle; the particulars are always difficult. And again, I would say, I think the

important thing is to keep this going. Somebody—if there is the necessary commitment given by all sides, and then, later, any of those commitments are not kept, this thing can always be brought down because the commitments were not kept. But I think it would be terrible to let it come apart now, before we get to see and feel how it really works.

Mr. Devenport. Mr. President, thank you very much.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview began at approximately 11:50 a.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, the President referred to David Trimble, Northern Ireland Ulster Unionist Party leader; Prime Minister-elect Ehud Barak of Israel; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; and Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Luncheon in Westport June 28, 1999

Thank you very much. Diane, you can give a speech for me anytime. [*Laughter*] That was really wonderful, congratulations, thank you.

I want to thank all of you for being here. Let me also join Joe and Beth in thanking Fran and Sandra for being so wonderful to us. I thank Martha and Romi and the others who helped to make this a success. I also want to say a special word of thanks to Fran and Sandra for being so wonderful to Hillary as well. It really means a lot to me, and I thank you for that.

You know, I always love to come back to Connecticut, and only a fool would not love to come to Westport. [*Laughter*] I'm very happy to see Barbara Kennelly; and my old classmate Dick Blumenthal, who has been so good to me; and Denise, we're very pleased for your success, congratulations. And Congressman Gejdenson, thank you for being so brave in tough election after tough election. You're always there to do the right thing any way, and I admire you so much.

And Senator Dodd, congratulations on having the good sense to marry Jackie; we're proud of you. No matter how much you may like Chris Dodd, if you have not gotten to know his wife, your estimation will go way up when you do—[*laughter*—and we're really happy for you. And Jessye, thank you for coming; Cicely, thank you for coming.

And I would like to say a special thank you to Connecticut for being so good to me and to Al Gore through two elections now. I don't feel that I'm on a victory lap or a final lap or—you know, I expect people to—they're be-

ginning to talk to me as if I'm—there is a sort of ring of eulogy about all of this. [*Laughter*]

As far as I can tell, I'm reasonably healthy; I still show up. I told Fran when—you've got to watch Joe Andrew, you know, as being a party chair. He hasn't been a party chair as long as Ed Marcus, but he's learned to stretch the truth creatively. He said that I got up earlier and went to bed later than anybody else. And I told Fran, I said, "Now, the second half of that statement is true." [*Laughter*] I do work late. I don't always beat everybody to the office.

I'd like to tell you, first of all, why I'm here and, secondly, why I hope you're here. If anybody wants me to show up at one of these events 5 years from now or 10 years from now and my party is still doing what I believe is right for America, I'll be there then, too. The fact that I was given the opportunity at a pivotal point in our country's history to serve as President is important to me, but it is incidental to my prior and enduring commitment to the ideas and values that I think are necessary to make this country all it ought to be.

You know, when you think back to the condition the country was in in 1991 and 1992 when I was running, it's almost unimaginable that we are where we are today. This morning, before I left to fly up here, I was able to make an announcement that at what is called the midsession review, which is when we recalibrate our economic assumptions, we now know that our surplus this year will be \$20 billion higher than we thought; it will be \$142 billion next year. It will be \$500 billion more than we thought it was going to be over 10 years, and