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Announcement of Nomination for Five Ambassadorial Posts

March 16, 1993

President Clinton named five career Foreign Service officers to ambassadorial positions today. The President announced his intention to nominate Alvin Adams to be Ambassador to Peru; Harry Gilmore, Ambassador to Armenia; Mark Johnson, Ambassador to Senegal; Marilyn McAfee, Ambassador to Guatemala; and Allan Wendt, Ambassador to Slovenia.

"Secretary Christopher and I have pledged to name Ambassadors who meet the highest standards of excellence," the President said. "With these announcements today, we have done just that."

NOTE: Biographies of the nominees were made available by the Office of the Press Secretary.

Nomination of Erskine Bowles To Be Small Business Administrator

March 16, 1993

President Clinton today announced his intention to nominate North Carolina businessman Erskine Bowles to head the Small Business Administration.

"Small business is the engine that runs the American economy. We need to give a hand up to the new businesses and traditional mom-and-pop stores that provide the jobs in our cities and small towns," the President said. "Erskine Bowles will do an excellent job of making SBA a more efficient operation that works to strengthen the backbone of small business in this country."

As Administrator, Bowles will direct a comprehensive array of programs and services designed to promote and expand U.S. small businesses. He will provide day-to-day leadership in the development and implementation of policy and delivery of financial and business development programs through the Agency's nearly 100 offices nationwide.

SBA was established in 1953 to help small businesses get started, stay in business, and grow. SBA has a portfolio of commercial loans and loan guarantees worth nearly $25 billion, making the Agency the largest single backer of small businesses in the Nation.

NOTE: A biography of the nominee was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary.

Remarks at a Saint Patrick's Day Ceremony With Prime Minister Albert Reynolds of Ireland and an Exchange With Reporters

March 17, 1993

The President. Good day, ladies and gentlemen. On this St. Patrick's Day, I am delighted to welcome Prime Minister Reynolds, called Taoiseach in his country, to the White House. We both share a love of music and a love of Ireland, and I'm looking forward to working with him in the years ahead. I accept with honor this beautiful bowl of shamrocks he has presented from the people of Ireland to the people of the United States. And it will be proudly displayed in the White House as a symbol of our shared values and common heritage.

The Prime Minister's visit is an opportunity not only to recall our kinship but also to work together on issues of critical importance to both our nations. We just concluded a good meeting which covered many issues, and I benefited greatly from the Prime Minister's advice and counsel.

We discussed the importance of bringing the Uruguay round to a successful conclusion. We reviewed the humanitarian relief effort in Somalia, including the generous contributions of Irish citizens working in such organizations as CONCERN and UNICEF.

Let me take a moment here, Mr. Prime Minister, to extend to the families and friends of Valerie Place and Sean Devereux the heartfelt condolences of the American people over their tragic deaths and our gratitude for their service. Their dedication to the relief efforts in Somalia will serve as an inspiration to us as we seek to extend the hand of comfort to victims of strife.

The Prime Minister and I also discussed the continuing tragic conflict in Northern Ireland that has cost 3,000 lives over the last 2 decades. I congratulate both the Irish and

the British Governments for their joint efforts to promote the necessary dialog to bring about a just and lasting peace. And I want to underscore my strong support for that important goal. We agree that such an outcome cannot be coerced or imposed, and that those who resort to violence must not be tolerated. Violence condemns generation to harvest the seeds of bitterness, not peace. Nor can the problem be resolved by the language of victories or defeats. It must be resolved in the language and spirit of compromise and conciliation.

I told the Prime Minister that the United States stands ready to do whatever we can to help in bringing peace to Northern Ireland. We are a nation of diversity. We are prepared to help in any way that we can. I think that it is important to say that the most significant thing I should be doing now is to encourage the resumption of the dialog between the Irish and the British Governments, which I think is a critical precondition to any establishment of a lasting peace. Our support for the International Fund for Ireland is an important demonstration of our commitment to encourage investment and economic growth and to advance the cause of peace and tolerance.

My discussions with Prime Minister Reynolds, as with Prime Minister Major, were the first of many that I think you will see our governments having as we offer our assistance in trying to end the troubles.

Let me close by saying that the ties of culture, history, and friendship between the United States and Ireland mean a great deal to me. Last night the Prime Minister and I joined together in singing ''When Irish Eyes Are Smiling.'' He did a slightly better job than I did. [*Laughter*] Today we pause to renew our ties to Ireland and the challenges ahead. Let me add that Ireland will have a friend in the White House, Mr. Prime Minister, not just on St. Patrick's Day but on every day of the year.

I also want to take advantage of the Prime Minister's visit here to announce my intention to nominate as Ambassador to Ireland a distinguished individual, as Irish as Americans can be, Jean Kennedy Smith. I can think of no one who better captures the bonds between Ireland and the United States or who will work harder to advance our relationship. In many ways she's already been an unofficial international ambassador. Since she founded Very Special Arts two decades ago, she has traveled tirelessly throughout the United States and the world. Very Special Arts provides opportunities for the disabled in creative arts in all 50 States and over 50 countries, including Ireland. As a testament to her success, a play from her young playwrights program in Dublin will open shortly off Broadway.

I know firsthand Jean's achievements from the Arkansas Very Special Arts program and remember well when Hillary joined her in our State for the competition to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the White House.

The people of the United States will be proud of our new Ambassador. I am proud of her, and I'm glad to have a couple of her relatives, the Senator from the State of Massachusetts and Congressman Kennedy, to join with us today. And Mr. Ambassador, let me say again how very grateful we are to you and offer you the opportunity to make a few remarks and then offer Mrs. Smith.

Ambassador-Designate Smith. Thank you very much. It is a great honor for me to be nominated as Ambassador to Ireland. And I'm extremely grateful to President Clinton for his confidence in me. I will do all I can to repay this confidence. It's a wonderful St. Patrick's Day. Thank you.

Prime Minister Reynolds. Thank you, President. And first of all, may I take the first opportunity of saying—[*at this point, Prime Minister Reynolds spoke in Gaelic*]—which is congratulations to Jean Kennedy Smith to be the U.S. Ambassador to Ireland. The U.S. is proud of her. We are more proud still to welcome home Jean Kennedy Smith. She has been a regular visitor to our shores. She has done marvelous work throughout the world, as the President has just said, in relation to her work for the disabled arts. And I know she'll get plenty of opportunity to continue that creative work in Ireland.

Thank you, President. St. Patrick's Day, Mr. President, is an occasion which bonds and brings together our two communities and peoples in a uniquely meaningful way. It is not simply about shamrock and symbols,

important though these are; rather does it have as its core a deep, abiding, and shared belief in democracy and freedom and in the protection and extension of human rights.

It was because these values were incorporated in the foundation of the American republic that Thomas Jefferson could proclaim in his first Inaugural Address what might then have seemed a paradox, and I quote: ''I believe this . . . the strongest Government on earth.''

It is a day and this is a unique occasion, standing as we are here in the house which, as President Clinton remarked last night at that very enjoyable function, that this house was designed just over 200 years ago by an Irishman, James Hoban. That's one of the reasons why we are contemplating the extraordinary success of Irish America. You will have no difficulty, Mr. President, if on this day I characterize you, you yourself, as reflecting on that Irish American success story. Like John F. Kennedy, Ronald Reagan, Andrew Jackson, Ulysses S. Grant, and other Presidents of Irish extraction before you, you have risen to the highest position in the land adopted by your ancestors and demonstrated again that the great American dream which inspired so many of your forbears is alive and well and in very good hands.

The success story that is Irish America today began as one of political, economic, and social struggle in the home country. It should not be surprising therefore that when the earlier waves of our immigrants reached these shores, they were to the forefront in the American War of Independence and in the drafting and promulgation of the American Declaration of Independence, and that later waves of immigrants quickly and enthusiastically embraced that declaration, to quote just one historian, ''not as a tired formula, but as an ideal to be reached out for and grasped.''

It is against that background, Mr. President, that I have always believed that the constructive interest and support of the United States has the potential to be uniquely helpful in finding a solution to the situation in Northern Ireland, that last residual problem of a long and often sad history between Ireland and Britain.

My government are determined not to allow another generation to suffer the scourge and savagery of violence or its demeaning and related manifestations: disadvantage, harassment, and discrimination.

There are no immediate answers, no simple solutions, but there is a way forward. It involves courage, commitment, and imagination. It will require, above all, the letting go of all vestiges of triumphalism on every side and replacing it with a willingness and a determination to work together in partnership within new structures which will embrace and seek to reconcile the two conflicting rights and aspirations in our small country.

We warmly welcome your concern, Mr. President, your commitment, and your active support as we take on this daunting but vital challenge. If we can succeed, Mr. President, in establishing in Ireland structures that achieve these goals, the benefits may not just be for Ireland alone. In a world where deeper ethnic divisions have assumed a new and violent prominence, it may well be that the model we create in Ireland will have application in similar conflict situations around the world.

So in conclusion, Mr. President, may I thank you again for the hospitable American reception you have given us here today at the White House. In so doing, you acknowledge and honor the contribution of the millions of fellow Irish who have made their homes and built their dreams in this great land. You make us all proud.

As we travel together now for a gathering on Capitol Hill hosted by another outstanding Irishman, Speaker Foley, may I extend to you, Mrs. Clinton, and your family our warmest best wishes on this very special day for all of us and convey our sincerest wish for the success of your administration.

I hope Americans of all ethnic backgrounds have a wonderful St. Patrick's Day. And what a day in which to celebrate it here with one of us as President, another, Albert here on my right, and the Kennedy family that are a legend in Ireland, the United States, and throughout the world.

The President. That was such an outstanding performance, I think the Prime Minister should have to answer all the questions.

Northern Ireland

Q. Have you decided, Mr. President, whether or not to send a peace envoy or to send a fact-finding mission to Northern Ireland? And could you give us some idea of a timeframe for that action, please?

The President. No, I discussed it with the Prime Minister. And we decided after our consultations that that is certainly an option that I should leave open, both of those options, and have under serious consideration.

As you know, talks began last year and then were suspended. I'm very hopeful that the British and the Irish Governments will get back together and begin a serious dialog soon. I think that is a precondition, as I said, for the other talks proceeding. And I'm going to stay in touch closely with Prime Minister Reynolds. We're going to talk frequently, and I expect to have an Ambassador in Ireland pretty soon. And I'll make those decisions at what seems to me to be the appropriate time. I have not made them now, and I don't think it would be appropriate to make a final decision on that at this time.

Q. Can we ask the Prime Minister if he likes the idea of a special envoy, opposes it, or would like to——

Prime Minister Reynolds. I think we had a very long and fruitful discussion, both the President and myself. I gave him a fairly quick synopsis of the whole situation: the relationship between the two Governments that are excellent, between Dublin and London; the talks that took place last year; the progress that was made there; the suspension of the talks. And I think the objective of both of us, and indeed, the British Government included, would be to get those talks resumed at an earlier stage.

We fully appreciate the keen interest and support of President Clinton in this regard and of his burning desire to have those talks recommenced. And he will keep in close consultation with all parties concerned so that we can get those talks resumed at the earliest possible date.

Q. You don't think that a special envoy at this point would be helpful?

Prime Minister Reynolds. As you have heard, the President just confirmed that both of those options are left open, and he will consult widely in the days and weeks and months ahead in relation to that. At the end of the day, it will be his decision.

Q. Mr. President, have you taken on board the unionists' concerns about—in Northern Ireland—the suggestions that you might send somebody who would attempt to mediate the peace situation?

President Clinton. Well, I don't think the United States can make peace in Northern Ireland, and I don't think that the unionists, the nationalists, anyone else would expect that. I think that we have a deep concern about the future of Ireland. We have a deep concern about ending the violence and the abuses of humanity which have been there. And I want to do whatever I can to support that process.

I do believe, I'll say again, I do believe that the dialog that was opened not all that long ago between these two Governments in Ireland and Great Britain offer the real chance of producing a framework within which peace could occur. And I am going to continue to stay on top of the situation, involved in it. I'll make those decisions at a later time when I think they are appropriate. I think it is inappropriate now for me to do more than just to say that I think the Governments should in earnest embrace the opportunities that are before them. And I will be as supportive as I can. And whenever there seems to be something else I can do by taking further action, then I will do it. I don't want to do anything to undermine the peace process. I want to do something that will support it and reinforce it.

Secretary of Defense Les Aspin

Q. Mr. President, what about Secretary Aspin's health? Do you have to now consider, at least consider, having a new Secretary of Defense?

The President. No, people get pacemakers all the time. No. As far as I know he's just doing fine.

Northern Ireland

Q. Mr. President, do you still support the McBride principles which you said in your meeting with Irish leaders in New York——

The President. Yes, I do.

Mayor Raymond Flynn of Boston

What did you say about Ray Flynn?

Q. Aren't you concerned the country may be losing one of its better Mayors?

The President. Yes, I am. [*Laughter*]

Press Secretary Myers. Thank you.

The President. It was a difficult decision for that reason. I think he's one of the best Mayors to serve in the United States in my lifetime.

Q. Why did you offer him the job?

The President. Because I need him and because I think he'll do a great job in a whole wide range of areas. And he was willing to serve, and I want him in the administration. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:07 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Valerie Place and Sean Devereux, Irish citizens who were killed in Somalia.

Proclamation 6535—American Red Cross Month, 1993

March 17, 1993

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

In time of need, millions of Americans, and others around the world, trust in the compassionate and swift assistance of the American Red Cross. Since 1881, the American Red Cross has served this Nation with tireless dedication and consummate skill in the face of natural disasters, war, and other emergencies.

Nineteen ninety-two was an extraordinary year for America and the American Red Cross. In the hurricane-ravaged neighborhoods of south Florida and the desolate villages of Somalia, in the flooded bayou country of Louisiana and alongside the raging wildfires in California, caring Red Cross workers served meals, provided shelter, furnished financial help, and offered emotional support to victims.

Hurricane Andrew, the most costly disaster in our history, cut an almost unimaginable swath of destruction through south Florida. More than 12,000 Red Cross volunteers and staff overcame enormous challenges to provide food and shelter for 170,000 people. Just four days after those relief efforts began, Typhoon Omar battered Guam with 150-mile-an-hour winds. Two weeks later, Hurricane Iniki roared across Hawaii, the worst hurricane to hit the islands in a century. The American Red Cross, stretched to new limits, coordinated disaster relief operations that spanned half the globe. In all, 16,000 trained Red Cross disaster workers brought knowledgeable, humanitarian assistance to the victims of Andrew, Omar, and Iniki.

While the Nation focused on the aftermath of this singular wave of destruction, the American Red Cross continued its mission of helping people prevent, prepare for, and cope with emergencies. Every day, Red Cross workers in 2,600 volunteer-based chapters help the victims of single family fires, floods, tornadoes, and industrial accidents, an average of 150 incidents daily. More than 7.5 million people take Red Cross classes in water safety, first aid, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) each year. Millions also depend on Red Cross classes and educational materials for information on HIV/AIDS. The Red Cross helps to save and sustain countless lives by collecting, processing, and distributing more than half the Nation's donated blood, the safest supply in the world. Red Cross workers serve alongside our Armed Forces wherever they are on duty, providing support and a touch of home to members and veterans of the forces and their families.

Internationally, Red Cross workers risk their lives daily to bring emergency relief to Somalia and to provide food, shelter, and medical care in the midst of brutal combat in the former Yugoslavia. The same international humanitarian spirit enables the American Red Cross to help family members send messages to prisoners of war and search for relatives separated by war or refugee movements.

Since its founding 112 years ago by Clara Barton, the American Red Cross has embodied much of what is best about Americans: their willingness to help their neighbors, to take responsibility for their communities, and to respond to the call to service. For this, the American Red Cross and its 1.4