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Q. You said when you came to Ireland that you told the men of violence, ''Your day is done. Your day is over.'' Do you still feel that's the case after the Sinn Fein vote in the Northern Ireland elections? How would you interpret that vote?

President Clinton. I don't think it's a vote for violence. That's not the way I interpreted the vote at all. And I think the—I think every voice that represents a substantial element of the people of Northern Ireland needs to be heard in the talks. But if the purpose of the talks is to produce a lasting and enduring peace, you can't have the talks with a gun to your head.

Q. If you were talking directly to Gerry Adams today, what exactly would you say to him about restoration of the cease-fire?

President Clinton. Probably the same thing I've always said—say, first of all, congratulations on the vote, and secondly, I would say I hope that a cease-fire can be secured so that everyone can participate.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:19 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

The President's News Conference With President Robinson

June 13, 1996

President Clinton. Please be seated. Good afternoon.

Let me begin as I did this morning, by thanking President Robinson for the extraordinary hospitality that Hillary and I and our entire delegation received in Ireland late last year. I don't know whether it's possible to actually equal Irish hospitality, but we're determined to try. I hope that the President of Ireland feels very much at home and very much admired in America because she certainly is.

Once again, I thank President Robinson for the extraordinary contributions of Irish-Americans to our country, and for the extraordinary contributions of the Irish people not just to their neighbors, but to strangers in need all around the globe.

Over the past 40 years, every single day there has been an Irish citizen working for peace somewhere in the world. More than 40,000 military personnel have worked in U.N. peacekeeping operations. Great sums of money have been expended by a poor country for humanitarian relief. At this very moment, hundreds of Garda and defense forces are serving in nine different countries, from Lebanon and Cyprus to the Western Sahara and Bosnia. As Ireland has grown and progressed and become more prosperous, the generosity and vision of the Irish people have found a wider and wider range of avenues for their expression.

We are very grateful for the thousands of Irish volunteers who are working in places of crisis and suffering all over the world but especially in Rwanda, where President Robinson has shown special concern and special leadership.

President Robinson and I agreed that so many of the problems we face today—terrorism, international organized crime, drugs, environmental decay—have no respect for national borders, and to effectively meet them we have to work together. We discussed our determination especially to work closely with Ireland as it assumes the European presidency so that we can increase our cooperation in the international fight against drugs.

Let me also say I am encouraged at the beginning of the historic negotiations in Belfast toward a just and lasting peace in Northern Ireland. I know how much the people of Northern Ireland want peace. I saw it and felt it for myself last year. I know how hard the people of Ireland have worked to support the peace process in Northern Ireland and the Government of Ireland has worked to support the peace process in Northern Ireland. And I reaffirmed to President Robinson that the United States will continue to do everything we possibly can to help the negotiations along.

Madam President, we're glad to have you in America. We're grateful for you and your country. And the microphone is yours.

President Robinson. Thank you.

Well, I very much welcomed the opportunity to say in more detail to President Clinton how much the support of the United States and the thoughtful friendship that is

expressed in so many practical ways and over the past few years has meant to Ireland. I say the past few years because I think it's important to recognize that this is building on a great bond of friendship between our two countries.

But this is a very significant time on the Island of Ireland, and we have a window of opportunity. And the way in which the United States has been supportive and helpful in nurturing peace and reconciliation on the Island of Ireland is of crucial significance.

I look forward to meeting the majority and minority leaders of Congress in order to express, on behalf of the people of Ireland, how much we appreciate the real friendship and concern. And I was glad to be able to refer to the tangible ways in which that has been manifested. If one looks back even over a span of 18 months, the importance of the Washington Conference in May 1995, following the cessation of violence, that there would be a peace dividend, the people would have hope, something to look forward to, the very practical way in which the United States has helped in that regard, the sense of being very much in touch with the complexity, but also the way things are moving forward. And that was so evident during the extremely memorable and historic visit of President Clinton and the First Lady to Ireland at the end of November, beginning of December.

In a relatively short time in Belfast and Derry and Dublin, not only did President Clinton and the First Lady express in very important ways the focus on peace and reconciliation, you in fact gave an opportunity to ordinary people to come out into the street and to demonstrate from the heart how much they wanted sustainable peace. That was part of the huge crowds that came out because you represented somebody who was informed, who was balanced in approach, who was thoughtful, who came from a very powerful country that is engaged in helping us. And we very much appreciate that.

And so, I think this state visit is timely in affording an opportunity to acknowledge and show appreciation on behalf of the people of Ireland. And I do so, of course, in the context of very sensitive and difficult negotiations at the moment. And Senator George Mitchell and his two colleagues are engaged in the process of helping, helping to try to move forward step by step to bring about that peace and reconciliation.

And as you have mentioned, President Clinton, it's also a year in which Ireland takes on responsibilities: responsibility for chairmanship of the European Union, which begins on the first of July; responsibility for continuing the chairmanship of the Intergovernmental Conference, which is very important not just for the European Union but for the wider Europe. It will talk about issues of efficiency at the European level but also the consideration of a further enlargement of the European Union, which is of such importance to stability and to the future of the democracies of Central and Eastern Europe.

And it was, therefore, a welcome opportunity with the *Tanaiste*, Dick Spring, who will, in fact, in his role as Irish Foreign Minister, have a great responsibility. I think it was very welcome that there was the opportunity to share ideas and discussion. And we did touch on a lot of matters, but I think it was a very fruitful discussion.

And most of all, I will take every opportunity I have to say from the heart not only how much I appreciate coming here as President of Ireland but also the way in which I can express the heartfelt appreciation of the people of Ireland and the importance of your engagement with us in seeking and indeed, hopefully, bringing about the sustainable peace and reconciliation on the Island of Ireland.

Thank you.

President Clinton. Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International.]

Russian and Israeli Elections

Q. Mr. President, the United States has been interested in two foreign elections and especially the outcomes, and your preferences are pretty well-known: Israel and Russia. Do you think the election in Russia—do you think it would be disastrous if the communists won? And what assurances do you have from the Israeli Government, the new government regime, that the peace process will continue, that there will be no building of settlements on the West Bank, and all of the other issues?

President Clinton. Well, first of all, the new Israeli Government is just being formed, and I think we have to leave the Prime Minister-designate, Mr. Netanyahu, his elbow room to put his government together and to go forward.

I think in the meantime we can rely on his own statements, which have been quite encouraging about continuing the peace process and respecting the work that has been done to date. And so, I feel very good about that. And that, in a way, it seems to me, bears out the position the United States has taken, that we support the peace process and those who take risks for peace.

With regard to Russia, let me say, I think—I wouldn't underestimate the importance of the fundamental fact that they're about to have an election. And it is consistent with their Constitution, and it's going to be an extraordinary thing. I believe it was President—former President Aristide of Haiti who once said that when a country becomes a democracy, the second election is the most important.

And I think that all the parties and all the interests would have to say a word of support to those who are in authority now, who are respecting the Constitution or promoting this election. And I think that gives a chance for reform in Russia to succeed and endure. That has not been the case, literally, for centuries because when the czars attempted to reform things in Russia, they had no way of making the system bigger than themselves, no way of making the Constitution the rule of law such that people could have elections and make decisions on their own about who their leaders should be.

So I want to applaud those who are responsible for that and the people of Russia and encourage them all to participate. Now, you know what our position is. Our position is that we support democracy; we support reform; we support cooperation; we support partnership. I've made my feelings about all these issues perfectly clear. And I think that I should. And you know that I've had a very good, positive relationship with President Yeltsin. But we support the democratic process in Russia, and we will support the right of the people of Russia to pick their own leaders. And then we will deal with the decision that they make.

United Nations

Q. President Robinson, did you get a chance to speak to President Clinton about the United States being in arrears with the U.N.? And President Clinton, do you think that President Robinson would be a good candidate for the U.N. General Secretary?

President Robinson. We did discuss the whole area of reform of the United Nations, which is so important, and the role of the United Nations in the context of the post-cold-war world. I had an opportunity to give a sense of the need to have a better sense of the importance of the United Nations. And I think that was really what we focused on, that somehow that story is underappreciated.

People see bits of the involvement of the United Nations in certain ways, and there are criticisms. And understandably, in some areas there are criticisms. But there is a lack of awareness of the rounded story of how important what has been built up for the last 50 years is. And this we certainly did discuss. And we did it also in the context, for example, of issues in Africa and also in the new South Africa. But I think it was more a focus on the philosophical and broader sense of the United Nations and not specifically on the issues that you asked.

President Clinton. I brought up the arrearages. She didn't raise it, but I did—[*laughter*]—because I think it's wrong, and I believe we should pay our arrearages. And I have been trying to correct that since I became President. But I also pointed out there is a very strong and bipartisan opinion in our Congress that we need some reforms in the United Nations, and we're working very hard to achieve those reforms. And I want to see the United States pay its fair share. I think the American people expect us to pay our fair share. But we want a U.N. that's even more effective in the way we raise and spend our money. And I do agree that the United Nations is often underappreciated in terms of all the things that it does that are important.

Obviously there was no discussion of the other question you asked me. But you know, I have very high regard for President Robin-

son. I think she would do a good job in any position that she might be considered for. But there's been no discussion of that particular issue. But I have a very high regard for her.

Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press]?

Supreme Court Decision on Redistricting

Q. Mr. President, the Supreme Court today struck down congressional redistricting plans in Texas and North Carolina that would have given blacks and Hispanics more political clout. Does this hurt Democrats' chances of reclaiming Congress and your chances of holding on to the White House?

President Clinton. Well, I was disappointed by the decision for the reasons that you said. But I think the answer to that is no. I think the answer to that is no. I think the affected voters will see that they need to work even harder to make sure their voices are heard.

Helms-Burton Amendment

Q. Mr. President, you said yesterday that you're reviewing the claims of extraterritoriality of the Helms-Burton law. What do you mean by that? And are you considering waivering it?

President Clinton. What I said yesterday was there are provisions in the Helms-Burton law which give the President some flexibility, and I am reviewing what the facts are and trying to determine what the best and most proper way to implement the law is. But I have made no decision and I have nothing else to add.

Wolf [Wolf Blitzer, CNN]?

FBI Files of White House Pass Holders

Q. Mr. President, a former FBI agent has an article he has written in the Wall Street Journal today in which he says he worked at the White House until '95—in which he says he warned specifically the FBI and White House officials about the potential for abusing these FBI files that were sent over here to the White House, but nobody seemed to be paying attention, and he thought it was part of a systematic effort to look for dirt on potential enemies, which obviously is a very serious accusation. A, are you familiar with this article that was written today? And B, do you have anything else to say that can clarify what is obviously a very explosive accusation if true?

President Clinton. No, I did not read it and don't know if he named any names of any particular people he warned.

Q. He says—he did name his supervisor at the FBI as well as Craig Livingstone here at the White House.

President Clinton. Well, you would have to ask them then. I don't know. I can just tell you that I do not believe there was any systematic effort to do that. I believe this happened just the way the person who had the file said it happened. I believe that until there is evidence to the contrary, that is what you should assume is the truth.

I mean, it's not—it doesn't make any sense. There is no—there would be no reason to do it, and it's inconsistent with the clear instructions that I have given and the way we have operated this White House.

So I would just say until I have evidence to the contrary—and I mean evidence—I'm glad to be open to evidence, but we need evidence before we draw any conclusion like that. There is just—there is no—and I never saw any indication of it for 3½ years that anybody was trying to do anything of that kind. And if I had I would not have tolerated if for a split second.

President Robinson. That's the Irish television coming.

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. What would you say to members of the Unionist community in Northern Ireland who are still skeptical and may be suspicious of American involvement in the peace process?

President Clinton. Well, first of all, look at what—what has the American involvement been? I would say look at what the American involvement has been. What we have tried to do is to do whatever we could to facilitate an end to violence and the participation of those parties that would be necessary to effect a just and lasting peace. We have not tried to prejudge any of the specific issues for anyone. And all we have offered to do is to do what we could to help in the peace process, to maximize the rewards and minimize the risks of peace, as interested out-

siders. We are not insiders; we are not trying to determine the details of this in any way, shape, or form.

So I don't think we've had a destructive impact there. And we certainly would not want to.

Q. Mr. President——

President Clinton. Yes, Jim [Jim Miklaszewski, NBC News]. Go ahead.

Church Burnings in the South

Q. Mr. President, despite your bully pulpit appeals, there was another church burning in Oklahoma overnight. Is it going to take something stronger from the Federal Government? And what kind of measures along that line are you considering today?

President Clinton. Well, we have, as I announced yesterday in South Carolina, we have substantially increased the number of Federal officials working on the investigation of each of these incidents. And we are examining, even as you and I are talking here, some other possible options for what else can be done. I may have more to say about it later. I don't have anything else to add today, except we're going to get to the bottom of every one of these cases. We're going to do everything we can.

And again, I want to issue a strong plea to the American people—this is not what this country is all about. This is a deeply religious country where we—we were founded in a commitment to respect the right of every single person to religious freedom. And what appear to be a number of racially motivated instances are just—they're not only illegal, they're morally unacceptable and reprehensible, and Americans need to stand up against it. And we're looking at other ways that we can do better and do more.

Any other questions on the Irish side?

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, if the negotiations in Belfast go ahead, but without Sinn Fein because there's no IRA cease-fire, do you think they have any possibility of succeeding under those conditions?

President Clinton. Well, let's see what happens. They just got started. I don't want to get into a lot of speculation. All I can tell you is that I'm encouraged that they've begun and not discouraged that there was some procedural wrangling in the beginning. And this is a complex matter. There will be a lot of turns in the road before it's over, but I'm hopeful. And on balance, I feel quite hopeful today.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President's 124th news conference began at 1 p.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building.

Remarks on Receiving the Teen Pregnancy Report

June 13, 1996

This is one of those moments when I have the feeling if I would stop now I'd be way ahead [*Laughter*] Thank you, Blessing Tate, for that wonderful statement. And thank you, Blessing and Salvador, both of you, for the powerful example of your lives.

Thank you, Michael Carrera, for the work you've done and for sticking with it over so many years. I want to thank Rebecca Maynard for this remarkable study, which I believe will have a significant impact on our United States. I thank my friend Paul Tudor Jones and Robin Hood Foundation for funding it, and also for being a personal evangelist for the cause of reducing the problem of teen pregnancy in America. The first time I ever met him, it was about the second sentence out of his mouth: "We've got to do something about this. What are you doing about it?" [*Laughter*]

I thank Isabel Sawhill and my longtime friend Governor Tom Kean for being willing to organize and lead this national campaign against teen pregnancy. I thank you especially, Governor Kean, for being concerned about this over so many years. Ten years ago, we were on a Carnegie commission on middle schools, and Tom Kean was asking questions about this problem then, worrying about our young people. And I thank you for that.

Thank you, Senator Kassebaum, for your leadership and your willingness to serve. We'll miss you in the Senate, but I'm glad you're going to do this. I thank you. And thank you, Congresswoman Lowey, for always being there. Congressman Barrett was