

Third, Secretary Daley will visit Northern Ireland in early June with a high-level U.S. business delegation to intensify what is already a substantial economic relationship. With peace holding firm, there are strong business opportunities we must pursue now to boost prosperity and the hope for the future that is crucial to the foundations of peace.

Fourth, USIA is supporting the collaboration of the Philadelphia Jobs Initiative with Worktrain, a Northern Ireland welfare-to-work initiative. I will meet with representatives of the two organizations during the U.S.-EU Summit in London.

Finally, I am pleased to announce a Vital Voices Conference to be held in Belfast in early fall, with cosponsorship from the United States and regional partners. This conference will showcase and support women's role in the economic and political life of their society. The women of Northern Ireland—wives, mothers, and daughters—have borne an enormous share of the trauma of The Troubles. Now, their participation will be essential to build a future of peace and reconciliation. I've asked the First Lady to travel to Belfast to take part in this important conference.

We have seen around the world how Americans have rallied to help the lands of their ancestors. I hope the Irish-American community will continue to support the voices of peace in Northern Ireland. My administration will continue to do all we can to foster hope and healing in Northern Ireland and to help its people build a new age of peace for their families and future generations.

Statement on Senate Action on Internal Revenue Service Reform Legislation

May 7, 1998

I am very pleased that IRS reform took a major step forward today with bipartisan passage of the Senate bill. We've worked hard to give the American people an IRS that is fairer and more responsive to their needs and to support the many dedicated IRS employees who do want to serve them well.

We've made progress, and final passage of this reform bill will help our efforts to give Americans the modern, customer-friendly IRS they deserve.

Vice President Gore and Treasury Secretary Bob Rubin last year completed a top-to-bottom review of customer service at the IRS. This effort has launched a complete re-vamping of customer service at the IRS. IRS offices and phones are open longer, problem-solving days have been instituted, and independent citizen advocacy panels are being launched. I've also appointed a new kind of IRS Commissioner. Charles Rossotti is an experienced businessman who understands technology and understands customer service. Certainly, not every problem will be solved overnight, but our new Commissioner is committed to ongoing reform and to correcting problems when they arise.

The Senate bill, like the House bill, will provide Commissioner Rossotti the tools he needs to succeed, and it will expand taxpayer rights. The new personnel flexibility provisions will allow the IRS to bring in talent and expertise from the private sector. The bill provides taxpayers with a stronger Taxpayer Advocate. It also advances the important goal of expanding electronic filing of tax returns to make it easier for taxpayers.

I urge the House and Senate to act quickly and send me a bill to sign that expands taxpayer rights and moves us forward towards delivering an IRS the American people deserve. We will continue to work with the Congress on a bipartisan basis on a final bill that advances our shared goals, that avoids unintended benefits for noncompliant taxpayers, and that is consistent with our commitment to fiscal discipline.

Proclamation 7093—Mother's Day, 1998

May 7, 1998

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Mothers are the heart of our families and the soul of our society. They are the nurturers of life, our teachers, confidants, counselors, and lifelong friends. They believe in