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cc PSS; Friday  
Rue Carthage }  
M. M. ... }  
Joint Sec  
Councillor AM

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

December 15, 1993

Statement by the President

I warmly welcome today's joint declaration of Prime Ministers Albert Reynolds and John Major proposing a framework for peaceful resolution of the situation in Northern Ireland. I have followed with intense interest the British and Irish Prime Ministers' courageous search for peace. Their flexibility has led London and Dublin, for the first time, to acknowledge the other's deepest aspirations. The joint declaration reflects the yearning for peace that is shared by all traditions in Ireland and creates an historic opportunity to end the tragic cycle of bloodshed.

Difficult issues still remain to be resolved, including questions at the heart of national and cultural identity, and majority and minority rights. But as Prime Minister Reynolds said, the framework recognizes that differences can be fully and satisfactorily addressed and solved through the political process, on the basis of fundamental principles of agreement and consent. It reflects the belief of both governments that the way forward lies through dialogue and cooperation without compromising the beliefs of either tradition. I am especially heartened that, in the words of Prime Minister Major, the framework "closes no doors, except the door to violence." We hope that all parties will be inspired by the vision Mr. Reynolds and Mr. Major have shown.

I reaffirm the readiness of the United States to contribute in any appropriate way to the new opportunities which lie ahead in Northern Ireland. Our support for renewed political dialogue remains steadfast.

In this season of hope, the call for peace on earth has a special resonance in Northern Ireland. No side which claims a legitimate stake in the future of Northern Ireland can justify continued violence on any grounds. I call on those who would still seek to embrace or justify violence to heed the words of Paul and cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.

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