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**Reference Code:** 2021/97/5

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**DOORSTEP**

**THE PRIME MINISTER**

**THE RT HON JOHN MAJOR, MP**

**AND PRESIDENT CLINTON**

**LONDON**

**WEDNESDAY, 29 NOVEMBER 1995**

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## PRIME MINISTER:

Can I firstly welcome the President here to London. I am delighted he has been able to come at what is I know for him an extremely busy time, and he and Mrs Clinton are extremely welcome guests here.

The President has come to London fresh from explaining to Congress and the American people his plans for a very large United States contribution to the Peace Implementation Force in Bosnia. Bosnia is and has been for some years a shared responsibility. British troops have been there now for something over 3 years in numbers ranging up to 8,000 at a time. And both of our countries have made huge contributions to the international aid effort. What I think we now need to do is to carry the remarkable Dayton Agreement through to a successful conclusion. Dayton was a very hard won and hugely important breakthrough by the United States and her Contact Group partners. And for the first time in the many discussions over the years that the President and I have had on Bosnia, we can look this morning at a realistic prospect of a real and lasting peace in Bosnia. But it is still a fragile prospect and we need to make sure that it doesn't, in some fashion, just slip away from us. And that is why we both agree that it is vital to deploy a genuinely effective implementation force to Bosnia as soon as the peace agreements come into effect.

I very much welcome the President's intention to contribute a large force to that particular cause. I can certainly confirm that we shall do the same, we intend to make a large contribution, around 13,000 troops would be the size of the British contribution to that force. They will find themselves working in the future, as so many times in the past, with their American colleagues in a common endeavour and I believe it is an endeavour of immense importance to the future of Bosnia and to many places beyond it. And I look forward to the Peace Implementation Conference in London in a couple of weeks time which will work on the very important civil aspects of that peace agreement.



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The President and I this morning have also had the opportunity of talking about Northern Ireland and about the twin track initiative that I launched yesterday with the Irish Prime Minister. I am delighted that the President will tomorrow become the first serving United States President to visit Northern Ireland. I have no doubt that that will give a huge encouragement to the people in Northern Ireland who have been working for peace, and I am sure that it will boost the very valuable help that George Mitchell will be giving us in his work, for he has generously agreed to undertake the work, as Chairman of the new body, to look at the question of decommissioning.

George Mitchell of course is no stranger to the situation in Northern Ireland and over the years has given us very great help in promoting investment in Northern Ireland's economy. So I think the Chairmanship of the international body is in very good hands and I am very grateful to Senator Mitchell for undertaking it and to the President for permitting that.

I had the opportunity with the President this morning of discussing the present situation in Northern Ireland. What I hope people will see with his visit there in a day or so is the changed life in Northern Ireland. For far too long the world has been very familiar with the negative side of Northern Ireland. I think the President's visit will enable him and his colleagues to see how very dramatically life has changed there over the past 15 months and we look forward to carrying that further.

We had the opportunity of discussing a number of other matters, but I think in the limited time available I won't touch upon those at the moment, but I will invite the President to say a few words.

PRESIDENT CLINTON:

Thank you very much, Prime Minister. This is my sixth trip to Europe as President and the latest of the many, many sessions I have had with Prime Minister Major. Europe and the United States have unbreakable ties, but the United Kingdom and the United States enjoy a unique and enduring relationship. Because of our

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Contact Group and NATO. Now the people of Bosnia have made a commitment to peace and we have to do our part to help it succeed. That means participating in NATO's Implementation Force, not to fight a war in Bosnia but to help secure a peace, it means implementing the arms control provisions of that agreement while ensuring that the Bosnian Federation has the means to defend itself once NATO withdraws, and it means supporting the reconstruction of Bosnia so that all the people there can share in the benefits of peace. If we can secure the peace in Bosnia, and I am convinced that we can and will, that will bring us a step closer to the goal of a free, peaceful and undivided Europe.

The Prime Minister and I discussed developments in Russia, including the up-coming parliamentary election, and agreed that fuller integration of Russia in Europe remains a key goal that both of us share. We also reaffirmed our joint determination to open NATO to new membership in a gradual and open way.

I also welcomed the priority the United Kingdom has given to strengthen the Atlantic community. This weekend at the summit meeting between the United States and the European Union in Madrid, I hope we can agree on a vigorous Atlantic agenda that we can both work to implement.

Let me just close by saying that we live in a time of remarkable opportunity for peace and prosperity, for open markets and open societies, for human dignity and human decency. Together the United States and the United Kingdom have helped to shape this hopeful moment in our history. We have some more work to do, we just talked about two of our biggest challenges but I am confident that our people are up to those challenges and that that work will be done.

QUESTION:

President Clinton, was one of the things you discussed arming and training the Bosnian military and how will that work as part of this peace process?



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PRESIDENT CLINTON:

Yes, we discussed that. But in our roles as part of the NATO mission, neither the NATO forces of the United States nor the United Kingdom will be involved in that. There is an agreement among the parties that they will work for six months to achieve an arms control agreement, that they will do everything they can to agree on a fair way to reduce the number of arms in Bosnia, that if they fail to reach agreement there will be a 25 percent reduction by all the parties in the region preserving roughly the ratio of arms that exist now between Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia, but at a smaller level, and that within Bosnia proper the Bosnian Federation will have a roughly 2 - 1 ratio of arms, and that that will have to be supplied in terms of equipment and training by third parties, which we are confident will occur.

QUESTION (Michael Brunson):

Do you accept the British government's position that there must be some giving up of arms by the paramilitaries, and especially by Sinn Fein/IRA before all-party talks can begin?

PRESIDENT CLINTON:

I accept the British government's position announced yesterday in the twin-track, that is I believe the agreement reflected in what Prime Minister Bruton and Prime Minister Major announced yesterday set forth a framework within which these differences of opinion can be resolved, and I hope the framework will be accepted by all the parties. My answer to you, Sir, is that the United States, whether it is in the Middle East or Bosnia or Northern Ireland has tried to support a reasonable peace process, not to dictate the terms or make the decisions. The twin track process is a reasonable peace process and it is not for us to get into the details of the judgments that the countries and the parties will have to make.

QUESTION:

You have been arguing for so long on this one issue, what was the one thing that turned the tide?

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## PRIME MINISTER:

There were a whole range of points we have been discussing over the last few days, it wasn't just the decommissioning issue, there were a range of other issues as well. And I think time wore away the difference, time and patience on both sides. I think the number of meetings that there have been over the last few weeks, the number of discussions I have had with John Bruton, I have absolutely no doubt both our telephone bills will be astronomical but we think it is worthwhile, it was simply that we saw that a deal needed to be reached if we were to gain the momentum and carry this process forward. We can't deliver peace, John Bruton and I, we can't do that. What we can do is facilitate peace and what we are putting in place is a process that will help to carry that capacity for peace forward. That can be achieved if the politicians in the north are able to reach themselves an agreement that this conflict is over, and what we were seeking was a mechanism of carrying this forward so that that work would continue. But I emphasise the point, peace is not in my gift or in John Bruton's gift, it is in the gift of all the people who at present have caused the conflict. We must bring them together, constant examining of the detailed problems found a way through:

## QUESTION:

Inaudible.

## PRIME MINISTER:

I think the fact that the President was coming concentrated the mind.

## QUESTION:

Are you prepared to accompany the President to Belfast on any part of his trip and, like the President, are you prepared to meet all the party leaders in Northern Ireland now?

## PRIME MINISTER:

I have met most of the party leaders in Northern Ireland, in due course I will meet them all, I won't be meeting them all quite yet. And I think the President is being accompanied by the



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Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, I will be answering questions in Parliament.

**QUESTION:**

Is your message to the IRA that they should start surrendering their weapons and explosives now, immediately?

**PRESIDENT CLINTON:**

My message to the IRA is that the twin track process has provided a mechanism for all the parties honourably now to bring their concerns to the table and to be heard, and that in the end peace means peace and we are all going to have to support that. But the message I should give in public is the same message I would give in private. I think the framework set out by Prime Minister Major and Prime Minister Bruton is the best opportunity I have seen to resolve all these issues and I think it should be embraced, and I think it will be.

**QUESTION:**

Do you think the President has been too accommodating to Mr Adams or do you think his efforts have been worthwhile?

**PRIME MINISTER:**

I don't think it is a question of being accommodating at all. American support in this process has always been immensely helpful and the President has always taken a very great interest in that process. There is a communal interest in achieving a satisfactory settlement in Northern Ireland, it is very much in the interests of everybody in Northern Ireland, very close to my heart and something very close to the President's heart as well, and I welcome the tremendous support he has given both publicly and privately, I think that has been very helpful and I am very pleased to have the opportunity of thanking him for it in public.

(END OF TRANSCRIPT)