

EXTRACT FROM SPEECH BY TAOISEACH ALBERT REYNOLDS ON THE OCCASION OF
THE CONFERRAL OF AN HONORARY DEGREE AT STONEHILL COLLEGE BOSTON

Tuesday 14 September 1993

"... For all Irish people, the search for peace in our own island is our greatest challenge. I continue to believe the only way forward lies in a new accommodation between both traditions in Ireland and between Britain and Ireland. For that reason, the Irish Government will do all in our power to restart the Talks process that adjourned towards the end of last year. We have seen in recent weeks the beginning of a process to heal deep seated animosities in the Middle East. Faced with the insistent demand for peace in our own island, I cannot accept that it is beyond the ability of political leadership to respond imaginatively and with courage and reach an accommodation on our own island that will heal wounds left to fester for too long. Such an accommodation would respect the rights of both traditions in Ireland and provide structures to meet the requirements and aspirations of each. We must not become resigned to the continuation of the present corrosive violence. We cannot permit a political vacuum to develop that will put at risk all our hopes for dialogue and peace. Lasting stability can surely only be achieved by dialogue and peace. Lasting stability can surely only be achieved by dialogue leading to new political arrangements that give expression to the validity and identity of each tradition. If all parties, despite our best endeavour, do not return to dialogue, I believe there is a clear obligation on the two Governments to bring our own resources to bear in the search for new peace formula and a new accommodation. Both Governments are partners to the Anglo-Irish Agreement. It is as partners that we are now together seeking a return to dialogue in Northern Ireland, and it is also as partners that we must together succeed in the charting of a new way forward.

We in Ireland greatly appreciate the support and concern of President Clinton and the United States in our efforts to achieve peace and stability on our island. Both publicly and in the

discussion I had with him last March, the President has indicated that he would be willing to consider a more active US role at some stage in the future, should that appear worthwhile and desirable. The Irish Government greatly values that assurance and believes that, as a friend to all sides, the United States has the potential to play a positive and constructive role in assisting the process of dialogue and reconciliation in Ireland. The option of a more active United States role remains an offer of assistance and involvement that should be welcomed on all sides, although what form this might take, if implemented, naturally depends on developments. I believe that the interest and support of the United States is a powerful and valuable asset both of present and potentially. For the present, the efforts of both Governments remain fully focussed on relaunching the process of dialogue and, in that, the wholehearted support of the President and the United States Government is a source of both encouragement and assurance."

...to have a paper ready to put to the
Northern parties if and when talks are resumed. In Boston, the
Cliffley asked the Taoiseach if any developments of the past week
offered real hope for a resumption of talks?

...about Arnold's (the Taoiseach):

...we have to look at every possibility and I think first of all I
think what people want is peace and that's what I believe is the
best way forward. I believe that if we had a peace formula, if we
did get a cessation of violence that we would have talks in a
different environment altogether and I believe it would make a lot
more progress. So we can't just discard it, I think we have to wait
and see if there's anything behind it. Then we had the statement
that, Ian Paisley has sent a paper direct to John Major for
consideration the official Unionists are supposed to be certainly
thinking seriously about the talks again, that's what we're given to
understand, so I think all in all there are signs there that the
talks process should get back on the rails.

...the Cliffsley:

...but you're worried about the Northern Ireland Office and the paper
that it's supposed to have submitted on the fact that the Irish
Government hasn't been consulted?