



The White House Conference for Trade and Investment in Ireland

Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland

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BCIU

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The White House Conference focuses on important opportunities for American business in the 1990's in Northern Ireland and the adjacent border counties of the Irish Republic:

- o Profiting from the newly-emerged production and sales prospects in the region; while simultaneously*
- o Making a creative contribution toward lasting peace and stability in Northern Ireland.*

The end of violence in Northern Ireland presents the opportunity for lasting peace and with it, vastly improved social and economic prospects. An essential ingredient in stability is the return of prosperity, with better jobs and lives for all the people of Northern Ireland and the border counties. The improvement in the climate for investment is an opportunity for American business.

...American companies are already the largest foreign investors in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. With the prospects for peace, they can further expand to play a major role in bringing economic growth to the region and creating vitally needed jobs.

...While at the same time boosting their competitiveness in the entire \$7 trillion plus European market by taking advantage of one of the last untapped skilled labor pools in the European Union.

Three themes underlie the Conference proceedings:

1. New **CONFIDENCE** in the future of Northern Ireland and the border counties, and in the ability of U.S. industry to participate advantageously in the better circumstances that lie ahead;
2. Better **INFORMATION** about how and where to do business in Northern Ireland and the border counties, not only for the local market, but to improve market position in the Europe-wide marketplace as well; and

3. Expanded **PROGRAMS** to provide support for public and private efforts to encourage economic expansion and in particular inflows of direct investment.

Documentation Provided. The material prepared for the Conference includes an Introduction and a Strategic Overview that foresees growth opportunities through the European market, island-wide economic interdependence and community development in disadvantaged areas. The documentation also provides a comprehensive survey of the current situation in five key sectors, as well as a broad review of the advantages of doing business in the region and practical details on how to go about it. Annexes provide information on U.S. Government programs and activities. An additional release (to be distributed after the President's address) will lay out the President's initiatives in support of the program of economic revitalization.

Looking to Conclusions. The Conference has been called to focus on the following general observations and the more specific conclusions that will flow from them in the conference proceedings.

1. The President is committed to assist with others the marshalling of the resources to provide jobs and economic stability to support the peace process. This ensures full and engaged participation by the U.S. Government agencies under his leadership.
2. The President strongly believes that economic growth and stability can only flow from a partnership between all the governments concerned and the business community to get the job done.
3. In this partnership, the governments will work together to provide economic infrastructure, a legal framework that provides for business needs such as protection of intellectual property rights and investment insurance, investment information and incentives, and education and training.
4. Only the private sector can provide the end results in increased employment, investment, technology and management. These are the underpinnings that create the sustained economic growth and jobs that will enhance the success of the long-term peace process.
5. All will profit from this partnership -- the people of Northern Ireland and the border counties who will benefit from the jobs and rising living standards *..and the American companies on their balance sheets. In many cases the companies will have come in on the ground floor, ahead of their competition, to an area of low cost production, high quality labor, and excellent distribution channels to the European market.*