

Week Ending Friday, December 8, 1995

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Mary Robinson of Ireland in Dublin

December 1, 1995

President's Visit

Q. Mr. President, how did you like the reception when you came in?

The President. I liked it very well. I was delighted to see the people in the streets and delighted to be with President Robinson again.

Q. What's on the agenda for the discussions this morning?

The President. More of the same. [Laughter]

Bosnia

Q. How do you like Senator Dole's support of Bosnia?

The President. I'm very gratified by it. I appreciate it very much.

NOTE: The exchange began at 11:07 a.m. at Áras an Uachtaráin, the President's residence. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister John Bruton of Ireland in Dublin

December 1, 1995

President's Visit

Q. Welcome to Ireland.

The President. Thank you. I'm delighted to be here.

Q. Did you enjoy your trips to Belfast and Derry yesterday?

The President. Very, very much.

Irish Peace Process

Q. How significant do you think it's going to be for the peace process, your visit to Bel-

fast yesterday? Both of you, would you answer briefly?

The President. Well, I hope it will be very significant, but I think, frankly, it will have more meaning because of what the Taoiseach and Prime Minister Major did in launching the twin-track proposal. They gave me something to talk about, to try to advance the peace process, as well as to hold out the hope that the United States would obviously support both communities in Northern Ireland if they would work toward peace.

It was a magnificent day, and it proved to me once again that people sometimes are far ahead of those of us in political life in their yearnings for the right things.

Q. Taoiseach, what do you think of yesterday?

Prime Minister Bruton. I think that the fact that the President came to Belfast and to Derry gave to the people of Northern Ireland who made the peace themselves that sense of international encouragement and support that is so important. They now see what they have won by making peace. So the recognition that came to those people from the most powerful, most significant politician in the world—if he came in their midst, that showed in the most tangible way possible an appreciation of the dividend of peace. And it was a great tribute for the President to pay.

And I would have to say I think also that the President has played a key role in bringing peace about, and he is now playing an equally important role in entrenching the peace and bringing reconciliation closer.

Q. Mr. President, do you believe that your visit and indeed all-party talks can begin by the February deadline? Would you be very anxious that those talks would begin?

The President. Well, of course, I hope that the process will succeed. I support it strongly. The Taoiseach and the Prime Minister took some risks, both of them did, to try to keep the peace process going. It is