

So I just believe that we're still on the right side of history, and I can also see the development of events in a way that would make it possible for us to make some real progress. But they're just beginning. I have a lot of confidence in Senator Mitchell and the team there, but mostly I believe the people of Northern Ireland want peace, and I think the determination of the Irish Government and also the British Government, Prime Minister Major's government, to try to work to create conditions in which peace can be developed, I think those things make me optimistic.

Prime Minister Bruton. I'd like to add, if I may, that I think it's very important that we do have an IRA cease-fire, because we're not going to have a truly heartfelt and enduring agreement as long as the threat of violence continues.

Q. Mr. President, do you believe that the loyalist parties should now be excluded from the talks process, as demanded by Dr. Paisley today?

The President. I can't say that. I think that the only position I've taken on this whole thing is that the cease-fire ought to be restored for full participation of all of the parties. I don't want to get into that.

I think that the people who are there on the ground are perfectly capable of making their decisions. I think on balance, what we want is the largest number of people possible who will be affected by this in the end participating, and I think that that's what we should look for. But I don't think—

Q. Do you anticipate going back to Ireland, Mr. President, in December?

Q. Mr. President, will you make the golf match with Dick Spring this time?

The President. I'll do my very best. Only an intervening circumstance stopped me last time. I hope I can come back and do it. He wants the privilege of beating me on the home soil, and I suppose I'll have to let him do that someday.

Q. Are you definitely coming to Dublin in December?

The President. I don't know yet.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:25 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. Ian Paisley, leader, Democratic Unionist Party in Northern Ireland; and Deputy Prime Minister Richard Spring of Ireland.

A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Proclamation 6915—America Goes Back to School, 1996

September 9, 1996

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Education is the foundation of our economy and society as we stand at the dawn of the 21st century. Education provides every American with the tools to make the most of their own lives and to seize the tremendous opportunities of economic growth and change. Education also passes along to our young people the most fundamental American values: family, responsibility, and community. To make the next century another American century—and to help all of our communities to become prosperous and strong—more parents and community members must become involved in improving our local schools and colleges. Better education is everybody's business. When families, educators, and communities work together, we can truly build a bridge to a better, stronger 21st century.

The American people want the best for their children. Our schools should be safe, disciplined, and drug-free environments where parents are involved and children can learn. Our educators and administrators should continue to aim for the highest standards of academic excellence and professional accountability. Together we must rebuild the Nation's schools for the 21st century. We must make the investments needed to allow our children to learn about the computers and technology that are the building blocks of the future. We must make college more accessible. We must expand public school choice and competition. And we must make it easier to move from school to work.

Children are our greatest natural resource: Although they are only 20 percent of our population, they are 100 percent of our future. From safe schools to better training for our teachers, from raising standards in our schools to increasing financial aid for college for middle-income and working families,

from literacy for children to retraining for adults, we must ensure that all of our children get a chance to fulfill the American Dream.

I urge all Americans to be meaningfully involved in their local schools and colleges and to make a commitment to support educational improvement throughout the year. I applaud the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education, a joint effort involving the Department of Education and more than 700 schools, family organizations, community groups, religious communities, family-oriented businesses, and the men and women of our Armed Forces, for sponsoring "America Goes Back to School: Get Involved!" I hope that this observance will foster grassroots support for better education by engaging parents, educators, and community groups as active partners in strengthening schools and strengthening families. When Americans come together as a community, we can make real progress. By taking a more active role, we as a Nation will raise our expectations for both our children and ourselves.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 8 through September 14, 1996, as a time when America Goes Back to School. I invite parents, schools, community and State leaders, businesses, civic and religious organizations, and the people of the United States to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities expressing support for high academic standards and family and community involvement in schools and colleges, and to continue their active involvement on behalf of America's children throughout the year.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this ninth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-first.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., September 11, 1996]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on September 12.

Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion on Welfare Reform in Kansas City, Missouri

September 10, 1996

The President. Let me thank you, Clyde and Gayle and Congresswoman McCarthy and Mayor Cleaver, and to all of you who have come here. I was with some of you back in 1994 to talk about what Missouri was doing, and I wanted to come back because, as all of you know, the welfare system is about to change nationwide. And I have worked very hard in the last 4 years to help people move from welfare to work. There are nearly 2 million fewer people on welfare today than there were the day I became President. And we've done it by working with States and giving them waivers from Federal rules.

But this new welfare reform law fundamentally changes the bargain. It basically says, we will continue to guarantee to every person on welfare health care, food for the children and the family, child care if they go to work, but what used to come in the monthly check will now be given to the State either to continue as a monthly check or to be used in some other way to move into the workplace.

And the States have to meet very stiff requirements on getting jobs for people. And I'm convinced that the only way the States are going to be able to really move large numbers of people to work in a short time is with a partnership with the private sector, doing what Missouri has done, using what used to be the welfare check or a food stamp check as an income supplement to a private employer who can then engage in training and work, and do what you've done.

And before—I'm going over to speak to the Southern Governors Association which Governor Carnahan is hosting here, to talk to these Governors about what they have to do now. But before I do, I wanted to come back here and listen to all of you and thank you, those of you who have moved from welfare to work, and thank the employers for