

FOIA MARKER

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Date 3-15-00

To: Nancy Herreich

Telephone 456-6610 Fax Number 456-6703

From: Bruce Morrison

Telephone 202/408-2587 Fax Number 202/408-2950

Message:

I hope that the President might get a
minute to read this before his meetings with
the various groups over the next two days.
Thank you for your help.

Number of Pages including cover: 3

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN

3-18-00

BRUCE A. MORRISON

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March 15, 2000

The Honorable William J. Clinton
President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you for once again this year providing the focal point on St. Patrick's Day for renewing and energizing the Irish peace process. It has never been more important.

In the eight years since the Irish American Candidates Forum in New York in April 1992, you have totally transformed the U.S. role in supporting peace in Northern Ireland. All the energy and resources you have applied have been the most important elements in transforming the situation from conflict to compromise.

Two weeks ago I spent five days in London, Dublin and Belfast talking to the government and party leaders most relevant to the peace process. In anticipation of your upcoming meetings with many of the same people, and knowing that you have the benefit of Jim Steinberg's and Dick Norland's similar series of meetings shortly after mine, I share with you the following brief observations and recommendations:

1. The commitment to the Good Friday Agreement remains broad and deep among the pro-Agreement parties, despite the verbal sparring over the current state of play. There also appears to be a common sense realization by all that the decommission-devolution tradeoff which has characterized much of the last two years is, whatever its theoretical merits, a failed strategy.
2. The months since the Mitchell review have not been kind to the interrelationships needed for further implementation of the Agreement. Relationships between the Irish and British governments, between Sinn Fein and the Unionists, and between Sinn Fein and SDLP, are badly strained on a personal as well as political level. The recriminations and other unhelpful public statements reflect more than just tactical positioning.
3. The IRA is highly unlikely to produce decommissioning (even in the guns beyond use formulation) short of full implementation of the various political and equality measures in the Good Friday Agreement. The Unionists find it very hard to accept substantively the implicit gamble of waiting till then, not to speak of the political difficulties of both moving beyond "no guns no government," as well as surrendering the apparent leverage on the speed of implementation which demands for decommissioning have provided.

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*I talked to
reply to
him*

*Jim Steinberg
2. President*