

TRANSCRIPT OF SPEECH GIVEN BY  
THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND, SIR PATRICK MAYHEW,  
AT A CONFERENCE IN WASHINGTON  
ON THURSDAY, 25 MAY 1995

SIR PATRICK MAYHEW:

Thank you, Bill, very much for that characteristically kind introduction. I should tell those that don't know him that the Admiral has a tremendous stock of jokes as large as his tremendous stock of hats and each of them wear very well indeed and the Admiral is a delightful addition to a long line of very distinguished ambassadors to our country from this great country which is our host today.

First and foremost, I want to join with my friend, Dick Spring, my fellow host at this party, in saying welcome indeed to all our guests. This party is a joint enterprise, a piece of Dublin/London cooperation that I know gives us both a great deal of pleasure. We both believe in the therapeutic qualities of a good lunch. I realise that I look as though I have had more of them than he has! (laughter)

At the regular conferences between our two governments that have taken place for all these years under the Anglo-Irish Agreement, we two have seen a lot of each other and just occasionally and very exceptionally we have slugged it out but we have always made it a rule that lunch waits until our business is over and then we dine as a friends and it is our hope that today's lunch will get some chemistry going round these tables and thereafter and that personal friendships started here may lead to business friendships and then on to the kind of investment for the future, for the benefit of all, that this great Conference is all about.

The second thing I would like to say is on my behalf and on behalf of all the people of Northern Ireland whom I have had the great privilege to try to serve for the last three years and it is this: I want to thank the President of the United States; I want to thank him for his vision in initiating this Conference, for the generosity that under his leadership the American people have shown and are showing towards the people of Northern Ireland in particular and most especially for his great speech today. It is the unique genius of America, as he said, deriving from its own experience of diversity, to help other people to overcome their differences and to cope with their latent antagonisms and it is the special capability of America - again to quote the President - to make hope real in Northern Ireland by sending forth her entrepreneurs to show - again in his phrase - that the future lies with those who build and not with those who destroy.

SIR PATRICK



A few days ago, I was in Boston and I went to the Kennedy Library - a great edifice and a great memorial to a great man - and there I saw a clip of a television newsreel that showed a 13-year-old boy meeting the then President, Senator Kennedy, and that 13-year-old boy is now the President of the United States and I thought to myself what a wonderful symbol that is of the continuum, the tradition of that genius of America, the idealism of its leaders. I thought that that was a very strong symbol of something that we all admire and treasure.

I want to say that all these efforts made by this great country on behalf of the people who live in Ireland north and south are directed towards a Northern Ireland in which on the economic front enormous strides have been made in the past years. For example, unemployment is now at its lowest point for 13 years; the number of people in jobs is at an all-time high and it is stimulated by our fair employment legislation, the toughest in the whole of Europe, and I am delighted to report to you that the deficit is closing steadily and strongly, as we intend, in Catholic occupation of jobs across a whole range - the gap is certainly closing. There is still some way to go and we are determined that it shall close. For those without work - and there are still too many of them - it is the creation of new jobs that is of critical importance.

It is a Northern Ireland also whose potential for growth and whose virtues as a home for business are already well recognised by American and Canadian concerns. North American companies already employ over 20% of the workforce in Northern Ireland. In the past six months, we have secured investments from Emerson Electric, AVC Laboratories, Du Pont, Ford and Mackoheister (phon) and we are going after more. The Industrial Development Board is opening a new office in Atlanta, joining those in Chicago, Los Angeles and San Jose. Missions have generated business worth over £600 million in the last three years. In March of this year, my colleague Jean Denton, led a very successful mission to the West Coast and we have plans for more.

Senator Mitchell, I want next to thank you and all your staff. Having had overall responsibility for the Prime Minister's own investment conference last December in Belfast, I know that these things can take years off a man's life and Jean Denton who had immediate responsibility knows that they can take years off a woman's life and in the case of political life, they can achieve that result suddenly and immediately (laughter) but I congratulate you very warmly indeed on the success of your Conference and therefore on your future prospects!

Lastly, I would like to offer my sincere thanks to all from this side of this Atlantic for coming to Washington from within this country and from Canada and I would like to offer my congratulations to those who crossed from the other side of the



Atlantic. Never before has there been such global interest in Northern Ireland. Everybody wants the peace to succeed. The governments which Dick and I represent are determined to do our best to secure that it shall. Everybody can see the unparalleled opportunities that are now opening up so good luck this afternoon, this evening and tomorrow. May the matchmakers be successful and may nature take its course!

Dick spoke of the clergy, the reverend gentlemen who are here. Well I hope the reverend gentlemen will not now walk out if I end with a line from the immortal Shakespeare: "Let copulation thrive!" (applause)

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