

109TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. RES. 744

Expressing support for the Good Friday Agreement of 1998 as the blueprint for lasting peace in Northern Ireland and support for continued police reform in Northern Ireland as a critical element in the peace process.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 29, 2006

Mr. HYDE (for himself, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. GALLEGLY, Mr. WALSH, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mrs. MCCARTHY, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. SWEENEY, Mr. HIGGINS, and Mr. ROTHMAN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

RESOLUTION

Expressing support for the Good Friday Agreement of 1998 as the blueprint for lasting peace in Northern Ireland and support for continued police reform in Northern Ireland as a critical element in the peace process.

Whereas the Good Friday Agreement, signed on April 10, 1998, in Belfast, was endorsed in a referendum by the overwhelming majority of people in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland;

Whereas the parties to the Good Friday Agreement made a clear commitment to “partnership, equality, and mutual respect” as the basis for moving forward in pursuit of lasting peace in Northern Ireland;

Whereas the parties to the Good Friday Agreement also affirmed their “total and absolute commitment to exclusively democratic and peaceful means” in pursuit of lasting peace in Northern Ireland;

Whereas inclusive power-sharing based on these defining qualities is essential to the viability and advancement of the democratic process in Northern Ireland;

Whereas paramilitary activity by both traditions in a democratic society undermines the trust and confidence that are essential in a political system based on inclusive power-sharing in Northern Ireland;

Whereas on September 26, 2005, the International Independent Commission on Decommissioning (IICD) confirmed the Irish Republican Army had destroyed its full arsenal of weapons;

Whereas the Good Friday Agreement called for police reform and establishment of a “new beginning” in policing in Northern Ireland with an effective, accountable, and fair police service capable of attracting support from the entire community, maintaining law and order, and adhering to the principle of the protection of human rights;

Whereas the new Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) has made great strides in becoming an integrated, professional, and impartial police force under civilian control and responsive to all community concerns, and has worked to protect both communities from violence;

Whereas significant further work in police reform, and in fostering community acceptance of the PSNI, must still be accomplished;

Whereas the Government of the United Kingdom and the Government of Ireland continue to strongly support the

Good Friday Agreement as the way forward in the peace process and have committed themselves to its implementation; and

Whereas the Government of the United States continues to strongly support the peace process in Northern Ireland: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That—

2 (1) the House of Representatives—

3 (A) reiterates its support for the Good Fri-
4 day Agreement, signed on April 10, 1998, in
5 Belfast, as the blueprint for a lasting peace in
6 Northern Ireland;

7 (B) commends the Prime Minister of the
8 United Kingdom Tony Blair and the Irish
9 Taoiseach Bertie Ahern for their leadership and
10 persistence in seeking a peaceful resolution in
11 Northern Ireland;

12 (C) commends the Sinn Fein leadership in
13 successfully urging the Irish Republican Army
14 to end its armed struggle and verifiably put its
15 weapons beyond use;

16 (D) commends Sir Hugh S. Orde, Chief
17 Constable of the Police Service of Northern Ire-
18 land (PSNI), for his leadership and for working
19 to protect both communities;

1 (E) commends the PSNI for the institution
2 of the Historical Enquiries Team, which will
3 provide a thorough and independent examina-
4 tion of unresolved deaths that occurred in con-
5 nection with the Troubles from 1968 to 1989;

6 (F) commends Nuala O’Loan and the Po-
7 lice Ombudsman’s Office for the work they have
8 done in promoting human rights in law enforce-
9 ment and in fostering community confidence in
10 the PSNI; and

11 (G) commends the work of the Northern
12 Irish Policing Board and its District Partner-
13 ships for promoting genuine community policing
14 in Northern Ireland; and

15 (2) it is the sense of the House of Representa-
16 tives that—

17 (A) all groups and organizations should
18 end their involvement in paramilitary activity;

19 (B) all political parties in Northern Ireland
20 should—

21 (i) agree to share power with all par-
22 ties according to the democratic mandate
23 of the Good Friday Agreement; and

24 (ii) commit to work in good faith with
25 all the institutions of the Good Friday

1 Agreement, which established the Northern
2 Ireland Assembly and an inclusive Execu-
3 tive, the North-South Ministerial Council,
4 and the British-Irish Inter-Governmental
5 Conference, for the benefit of all the people
6 of Northern Ireland;

7 (C) since policing reform is a significant
8 part of winning public confidence and accept-
9 ance in the new form of government in North-
10 ern Ireland, all political parties should cooper-
11 ate fully with the PSNI in preventing and in-
12 vestigating crimes; and

13 (D) the Government of the United King-
14 dom and the Government of Ireland should
15 work to achieve full implementation of the Good
16 Friday Agreement, including devolution of po-
17 licing and justice, the normalization of the secu-
18 rity presence, and of the Independent Commis-
19 sion on Policing in Northern Ireland reforms,
20 including long-term senior-level exchanges be-
21 tween the Garda Síochána, the police service of
22 the Republic of Ireland, and the PSNI.

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