

respect to its commitment of May 6 to open its secret arsenal of weapons to international inspection. This confidence-building measure, in my view, could convince the people of Northern Ireland that the IRA is sincere with respect to its pledge to put its weapons "completely and verifiably" beyond use in the context of implementation of the Good Friday accords, those very accords which George Mitchell of Maine, the former majority leader, was so instrumental in bringing about. It would seem to me that the decision by David Trimble to press members of the Ulster Unionist Party to rejoin the Northern Ireland Assembly has been vindicated by recent events. I commend David Trimble, as well.

Despite numerous setbacks that have occurred from time to time with respect to the full implementation of the 1998 accords, Prime Minister Tony Blair, and the Prime Minister of Ireland, Taoiseach Bertie Ahern, and President Bill Clinton have never lost faith in the process.

By the way, people like Albert Reynolds and Bertie Ahern deserve great credit, as do David Trimble, Gerry Adams, John Hume, and Martin McGuinness, who have done a magnificent job in bringing this about. There are so many people who have been part of the effort to achieve what I think we are on the brink of achieving here. The events over the weekend demonstrate that their faith is not misplaced. They deserve great credit for not losing faith.

I, too, have remained optimistic that peace is possible. That is because I believe the people of Northern Ireland are anxious to put this long and very painful conflict behind them. Indeed, before the February setback over decommissioning, which caused key provisions of the peace accords to be suspended, the Northern Ireland Assembly and the executive had been functioning. The reactivation of the assembly late last month has once again restored self-government in Belfast. The international inspections of weapons caches together with the renewal of discussions between the IRA and the International Commission on Decommissioning are giant steps toward the full decommissioning of weapons throughout Northern Ireland.

The IRA has historically held itself out as the guardian of the Catholic minority—a minority that has experienced decades of inequality and injustice at the hands of a Unionist or Protestant majority. Paradoxically, the IRA has sought to promote justice and equality for the Catholic community through violence and other terrorist acts against the police and the Protestant majority.

The Good Friday accords acknowledge past inequalities and injustices and, at the same time, establish a framework for resolving these inequities through the political process. There are now strong indications that the IRA is prepared to work within

that framework to achieve its objectives.

The IRA's willingness to permit international inspections of its weapons is further proof that it is within the realm of possibility to remove the bomb and the bullet from Irish politics once and for all. It is my fervent hope that these independent inspections will reduce the feelings of mistrust that have historically plagued relations between the Nationalist and Unionist communities and their political leaders and allow further progress to be made toward implementing other important provisions of the accords, especially those related to police reform.

Each side has taken positive steps to meet the letter and spirit of the Good Friday Accords. Having said that, there is much that remains to be done to achieve other equally important objectives of the accords, particularly the guarantee of justice and equality for all of the people of Northern Ireland—Protestants and Catholics. Toward that end, I would urge the British government to move forward expeditiously to implement the recommendations of the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland, the so called Patten Commission. Creating a police force that is professional, impartial, and representative of the community it serves, as called for by the Patten Commission, is the only way to guarantee justice and equal treatment for all.

Since the parties first embarked on the road to resolving Northern Ireland's "Troubles" in 1994, there have been steps forward and there have been steps back—sometimes it has seemed more of the latter than the former. The latest actions by the IRA set the stage for a new chapter in the history of Northern Ireland—a chapter of peace and reconciliation between the communities of Northern Ireland, as embodied in the letter and spirit of the 1998 Good Friday Accords. I strongly urge Northern Ireland's political leaders to take to heart the significant progress toward peace that has been achieved in recent weeks—to draw from that progress renewed energy. And, to find the capacity to set aside mistrust, allow deep-seated wounds to heal, and proceed together to make justice and equality a reality for all the people of Northern Ireland.

Mr. REID. Will the Senator yield, without losing his right to the floor?

Mr. DODD. I am happy to yield.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have listened to the Senator's statement. I want to make sure the RECORD reflects the one person's name that wasn't mentioned who has played such a critical role in this process for years, and that is Senator CHRISTOPHER DODD from Connecticut.

There is no one who has been more involved with this, with the knowledge he has of foreign affairs generally, but of the particular country of Ireland. I

know of his love for the people of Ireland and how much he personally has been involved in this, how much time he has devoted to it. He has named everybody who has had something to do with it, but the one name he left off was his own.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I thank my colleague. I appreciate his kind comments. I will add additional names, too: people such as Tip O'Neill and Tom Foley. There is a long history that goes back several decades of people who have fought for a political solution to the problems here and within Ireland. I am grateful to my colleague from Nevada for making the point.

#### VICTIMS OF GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, it has been more than a year since the Columbine tragedy, but still this Republican Congress refuses to act on sensible gun legislation.

Since Columbine, thousands of Americans have been killed by gunfire. Until we act, Democrats in the Senate will read some of the names of those who lost their lives to gun violence in the past year, and we will continue to do so every day that the Senate is in session.

In the name of those who died, we will continue this fight. Following are the names of some of the people who were killed by gunfire one year ago today.

June 27, 1999:

Samie A. Betouni, 35, Chicago, IL;  
Terrell Bryant, 46, Miami-Dade County, FL;  
Daniel M. Danjean, 25, New Orleans, LA;  
Sonya Danjean, 25, New Orleans, LA;  
Bryan Gilmore, 25, Lansing, MI;  
Sandi Johnson, 38, Detroit, MI;  
Cornell Scott, 24, Philadelphia, PA;  
Issac Stephens, 28, Macon, GA;  
Theodore Strong, 46, Charlotte, NC;  
Dennis Tyler, 27, Lansing, MI;  
Juan Wallace, 20, Chicago, IL;  
Unidentified female, 25, Portland, OR.

#### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN SOUTH DAKOTA AND AROUND THE COUNTRY

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, domestic violence is often the crime that victims don't want to admit and communities don't want to discuss. However, almost 10,000 domestic violence victims in South Dakota last year got help from the Department of Social Services. This represents a low estimate of the number of South Dakotans who are victims of domestic violence as many victims fail to seek help.

Since enactment of the Violence Against Women Act in 1994, the number of forcible rapes of women declined, and the number of sexual assaults nationwide has gone down as well. Despite the success of the Violence Against Women Act, domestic abuse and violence against women continues to plague our communities. Consider