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STATEMENT ON THE PASSING OF JOHN HUME

For Immediate Release

Contact: Stephen Whittaker
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The National Committee on American Foreign Policy and its Board of Trustees mourn the passing of John Hume, an architect of peace and Nobel laureate whose life's work helped bring an end to sectarian violence in Northern Ireland.

Driven by a tireless work ethic, he was a crucial participant in the early meetings hosted by the National Committee's Northern Ireland Peace Initiative. Seeing an opportunity for peace, the National Committee, in partnership with Mutual of America's leadership, was instrumental in persuading the Clinton Administration to grant a 48-hour visa to Gerry Adams in 1994. The visit enabled Adams to begin the ardent process of convincing the U.S.-Irish community to support the ceasefire announced the following August that the Hume-Adams dialogue long sought.

A shrewd thinker and faithful conciliator, Hume was dogged in the pursuit of peace and justice in Northern Ireland. We offer our deepest condolences to his wife, Pat, and his loving family on the loss of this great leader and statesman.

“John Hume’s lifetime of passion and resilience inspires the best in people. The work of the National Committee would not have been possible without his tireless efforts, and his decades of dedication to dialogue and reconciliation among foes will forever remain a testament to the power of discourse and candor.”

- Jeffrey R. Shafer, Chairman

“Northern Ireland has just lost its Dr. King with John Hume’s passing. Well before others, he saw the possibility of peace and dedicated his life to achieving that dream. He was a friend and advisor to leaders in both communities, in Dublin and London, and especially in the United States. His understanding of humanity, quick wit, and wonderful sense of humor brought people together and built trust among supposed enemies. He leaves a lasting legacy to us all; and let us all strive to build in it.”

- Nancy Soderberg, Vice Chairman

“John Hume was a man of courage and honor. He was a vital part of the work the NCAFP conducted with Gerry Adams in 1994. His words of peace - “I want to see Ireland as an example to men and women everywhere of what can be achieved by living for ideals, rather than fighting for them, and by viewing each and every person as worthy of respect and honour.” - still resonate today.”

- Susan Elliott, President and CEO