



# Peacerunner: The Untold Story of an American Politician Who Helped End Centuries of Warfare in Ireland

*Penn Rhodeen*

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## **Peacerunner: The Untold Story of an American Politician Who Helped End Centuries of Warfare in Ireland** Penn Rhodeen

This is the true story of an unknown American politician who played a critical role in ending centuries of conflict in Northern Ireland. Without the President's permission, and breaking every conventional rule about how to deal with terrorists, former congressman Bruce Morrison helped end a conflict that most observers thought would continue indefinitely.

This is the inside story of how centuries of warfare finally ended, thanks to one inspired politician.

Warfare, ranging from active hostilities to seething tension, was the norm between the Irish and the English since the 1100s. During the thirty years from the start of The Troubles to the 1998 Good Friday agreement, over 3,000 Irish and British nationals were killed. Many celebrated the famous Good Friday agreement that put an end to one of the longest-standing conflicts in the world, but just a handful knew the full story of one American and the crucial role he played in winning peace—and none knew it better than Penn Rhodeen.

In a narrative that grips the reader from the first pages, Rhodeen recounts Bruce Morrison's heroic peacemaking efforts in lively prose and rigorous detail. A natural storyteller, Rhodeen offers readers the chance to step into modern political history for an up-close look at Morrison's remarkable journey. Follow Morrison as he persuades Clinton to create a positive political climate in America and makes the connections necessary in Ireland and Britain to help win the IRA ceasefire and enact a solid, lasting peace.

With an introduction by President Bill Clinton and cameos from Tony Blair, George Mitchell, Gerry Adams, Jean Kennedy Smith, John Major, and other larger-than-life figures, Rhodeen dramatizes events that somehow receded into the past without getting their due. *Peacerunner* is the story of how one man changed world history and the modern political landscape.

Bruce Morrison's story is one of unlikely optimism in the face of seemingly hopeless conflict. *Peacerunner* has the power to inspire readers from all walks of life and spark new dialogue about how best to lend aid in countries afflicted by unending war.

## **Peacerunner: The Untold Story of an American Politician Who Helped End Centuries of Warfare in Ireland Details**

Date : Published February 2nd 2016 by BenBella Books

ISBN : 9781941631713

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Format : Hardcover 350 pages

Genre : History, Nonfiction, Contemporary

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## **From Reader Review Peacerunner: The Untold Story of an American Politician Who Helped End Centuries of Warfare in Ireland for online ebook**

### **Alyson says**

This was interesting, but it read too frequently like a campaign ad for Morrison and Clinton. To the point where I almost stopped reading it. The author did not attempt unbiased reporting on the subject matter (which is not always a requirement), and in this case it hurt the enjoyment and the potency of his claims.

Otherwise, it was very good. I just wish I could trust how much was true, and I don't feel I can because the author is clearly a fanboy of his subjects.

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### **Michael says**

Such a great insight on a part of history I knew very little about. The book had such great detail and was presented in a very personal manner. I feel like I have learned so much about Bruce Morrison's efforts to bring peace about in Ireland. This book was written in a manner that was easy to process.

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### **Terence Hawkins says**

This is an extraordinary book about an extraordinary event--the end of a centuries-old sectarian civil war that was so much a part of the fabric of the late twentieth century that it was part of the world's wallpaper. But even more extraordinary than the event was the agent who brought it about--a junior Connecticut Congressman who had resigned his seat to run an apocalyptically unsuccessful campaign for governor.

In prose journalistically clear and direct, Penn Rhodeen tells the story of Bruce Morrison, who rose from political catastrophe to assume a pivotal role in British, Irish, and American political history. His electoral career in ruins, Morrison recognized the rich potential for American intervention in the perpetually stalled Anglo-Irish negotiations, which as our story opens was then so deep in the freezer that the Irish North was ruled directly from Westminster. Morrison recognized that other Irish-American politicians had taken themselves out of the peace game by focussing attention on the moderates and excluding extremists. The extremists, Morrison knew, were the ones throwing bombs, and thus the ones who had to be brought to the table, which could only happen through the efforts of brokers unaffiliated with any of the combatants.

Morrison had a friend in high places who shared his views. Though Yale Law School classmate Bill Clinton persisted in his pre-electoral enthusiasm for Morrison's project after he achieved the presidency, the expediencies of office kept him from issuing Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams a US visa. Nevertheless Clinton endorsed an unbelievably politically risky US role in the brokering of a peace that had eluded generations. To that end he committed as America's envoy former Senator George Mitchell, who on Good Friday 1998 ended years of negotiations with an accord that ended a war whose roots were in the twelfth century.

Rhodeen's narrative deftly navigates the numerous obstacles that get in the way of a clear story. Every side of the conflict--British, loyalist, nationalist--was itself split into multiple factions, often designated with nearly identical acronyms. Rhodeen never leaves the reader guessing as to who was who, or who wanted

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what. More importantly, he makes us at home with the political and cultural contexts--Irish-American, fading British Imperial, simmering Irish Nationalist--that informed and impeded the politicians' efforts to get a deal done and stop the killing.

Bruce Morrison changed the world forever, and for good. This is a story that deserves to be heard.

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### **Margaret Sankey says**

Bruce Morrison, a classmate of the Clintons, legal aid lawyer and D-Conn in Congress, had become interested in Irish politics via the process of passing an immigration reform bill and saw the potential of the Irish-American lobby to affect Democratic politics. After disastrously losing a governor's race, Morrison devoted himself to being a go-between for Gerry Adams and Albert Reynolds, eventually laying the groundwork for meetings resulting in the Good Friday Agreements. While the drawback of this book is its centering on one person, rather than an account of the whole process, it is a useful behind the scenes look at the patient and extended process of arranging for political reconciliation.

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### **Barbara says**

- 3.5/5. I received a free copy of this book from the Goodreads Giveaway.

"Peacerunner" is a behind the scenes look at the involvement of American politicians and their role in helping resolve years of conflict in Northern Ireland.

The author is very clear and concise, and does a great job of explaining complicated issues from all perspectives. The book is meticulously researched, and also includes quotes from all of the major players who are introduced, as well as including quotes from their own books.

Ultimately, however, this was unfortunately not my type of book and I found myself skimming parts at times. However, this is my own preference and not in any way indicative of the book itself, and I would absolutely recommend this book to other readers who enjoy historical/political non-fiction.

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### **Fritzov says**

I do like me some politics. Good book.

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