

Week Ending Friday, January 21, 1994

Exchange With Reporters in Brussels, Belgium

January 9, 1994

Speech to Future Leaders of Europe

Q. Mr. President, how do you think your speech was received tonight?

The President. Oh, very well. I mean, you know, we consciously picked a very small room, and the Europeans are normally much more polite when speeches are given like that. It was a serious speech. But a lot of the students came up to me afterwards and said that they were pleased to know that we were thinking about their future and that they found the ideas basically things they agreed with. I was very encouraged——

Q. Mr. President, can you tell us about the Ukraine?

The President. ——and then after I got out into the crowd in the Place, there was much more sort of overt enthusiasm. And the Prime Minister and others were saying, “You know, that’s the way we are. We’re restrained in speeches, but these people are glad to see you. Look at the Place.”

Ukraine

Q. What can you tell us about the Ukraine, Mr. President? Are you close to an agreement, or do you have an agreement? Can Kravchuk sell it? Might we go to Kiev?

The President. All I can tell you tonight is that we worked very, very hard to bring the three of us together, and we’ve made a terrific amount of progress. And at least when I left to go to the speech I was not in a position to make an announcement.

Q. But you think it might be possible that this could happen and that Kravchuk could sell it?

The President. Well, I don’t want to—presumably, Mr. Kravchuk wouldn’t agree to anything he didn’t think he could sell. I think—I feel—I’m proud of the work that’s been done, and I appreciate very much the

attitude that Kravchuk and Yeltsin have brought to this whole endeavor. But I don’t think I can say any more tonight. I don’t even want to——

Partnership For Peace

Q. Do you think Eastern European countries are going to be reassured by the Partnership For Peace?

The President. I hope so.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—giving Russia veto?

The President. I think they need to know this is not a question of veto power. But keep in mind there are certain responsibilities inherent in being in NATO, first of all, that NATO allies all remind each other of all the time. And what I said tonight I want to reemphasize. What I want to do is to leave open the possibility of creating the best possible future for Europe, where they all have the chance to be democracies, they all have a chance to be market economies, they all have a chance to respect one another’s securities and to support it and to do it in a way that also permits us to do the best we can if the best future is not open to us. That’s what the Partnership For Peace does. It’s not giving anybody a veto on future NATO membership.

Q. But what do you say to people who say that NATO isn’t relevant if it can’t guarantee the peace, let’s say, in Bosnia?

The President. Well, that was never the purpose of NATO. The purpose of NATO was to guarantee the peace and security of the countries that were member nations. And when the United States asked NATO to approve some actions in and around Bosnia, it was the first time we’d ever done anything out of the area of the NATO members themselves.

So we’re working on this. It’s not been established yet that anyone is capable of solving a civil war in another country. That’s not been established yet.

Q. [*Inaudible*—air strikes will be discussed tomorrow, air strikes possible tomorrow?

The President. Good night, everybody.

NOTE: The exchange began at approximately 8:30 p.m. at the Au Vieux Saint Martin Restaurant. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters in Brussels

January 10, 1994

The President. As you know, we had a good, long dinner tonight. And we talked about only two subjects; we talked about Russia and Bosnia. We spent the first half, perhaps more than half the dinner, on Russia. And I basically gave a report about what I would be doing in Russia, and they gave me their advice about what we could do to strengthen the process of reform, create a system of support for people who had been dislocated economically, how we could build a better partnership with Russia and have the kind of future we want, with Russia being a great nation but a nonaggressive one. And it was very, very helpful. I mean, they had very keen insights, and a lot of them had just been there, so it was helpful.

Then we talked about Bosnia at some length. And I urged that we stay with the present communique, the present policy, which gives us the right to ask the U.N. for permission to use air strikes if Sarajevo continues to be shelled. We discussed some other options and agreed that we would have another discussion tomorrow about it.

So I can't say that there was any conclusion reached except that I do believe we'll stay with our present policy. I think the language in the communique will stay in, and we'll have some other discussions about it tomorrow morning.

Bosnia

Q. Was there an agreement to ask the U.N. permission to use air strikes?

The President. No, because under the procedure, what would happen is one of the member states would have to ask the North

Atlantic Council, our military group, to review it to say it was appropriate and then to go to the U.N. So I think, plainly, we know that if the language stays in there and if the shelling continues, there will have to be some action taken.

So I think you can tell by what happens tomorrow. If we keep the language, which I hope and believe we will, then it's basically up to the behavior of those who are shelling Sarajevo, principally the Serbs. We'll just have to see what happens.

Aid to Russia

Q. With regard to Russia, is there a larger economic plan envisioned?

The President. Well, what they talked about today was—first of all, we have quite a large plan. We've got to dislodge some of the money that we've committed that was tied up in the international institutions. They all believe that we needed a combination of two things: We need to try to speed up the privatization, because in the end that was the real guarantor of reform—and Russia has done a phenomenal job of privatizing industries, thousands just in the last year—and secondly, that we needed some sort of social support network, an unemployment system, a retraining system, a system to train people to manage and operate businesses and banks that will enable people to deal with the dislocations that are coming. And that's basically what we talked about.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 11 p.m. in the Grand Place. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks at a Reception in Moscow, Russia

January 13, 1994

Thank you very much. I want to begin by thanking Ambassador and Mrs. Pickering for having us here tonight and for giving us all a chance to meet and to visit in what I imagine is an extraordinary and unprecedented gathering, not only of Americans but of Russians who come from different political perspectives. I am told that 60 years ago at a