

**Remarks to Ukrainian-Americans**  
*February 10, 1994*

First of all, I think, Julian, you and Orest met with the Vice President in Milwaukee when I was unable to come, and I'm sorry I missed the meeting, but I'm glad to have all of you here now.

I think the relationships between the United States and Ukraine are at their strongest point since 1991. I think all of you know that I had a very good meeting with President Kravchuk and other leaders of Ukraine when I was in Europe. We had a fine meeting and a good dinner at Boryspil Airport, didn't we, Tony? And I'm looking forward to President Kravchuk's trip here on March the 4th.

We're moving as quickly as we can to establish good relationships. The first and most important step was taken with the trilateral nuclear agreement, which was approved by the Rada just a few days ago. And I'm very pleased about that. It was very interesting because Mr. Kravchuk was confident it would be approved and yet all the press reports were that it probably wouldn't be. And he turned out to be right, so I'm very encouraged by that.

We have already approved and provided \$175 million in assistance to facilitate the dismantling of the nuclear weapons, and we expect to almost double that amount when President Kravchuk is here. We're also going to work very closely to make sure that Ukraine receives fair compensation for the value of the nuclear materials, the highly enriched uranium, that are in the warheads. And we have a good strategy for that, and I'm confident that that will occur.

Once Ukraine accedes to the nonproliferation treaty, which is the next big parliamentary fight, we will extend further security assurances to Ukraine, including our commitment to the sovereignty of the nation and its independence within its existing borders. And we have been very clear about that, and we hope that that will encourage the Rada and others in Ukraine to accede to the NPT.

We've also had some progress on our economic relations. Of course, the biggest problem, obviously, is the high rate of inflation and the problems with industrial productiv-

ity. But President Kravchuk has, I think, launched the beginnings, at least, of an economic reform program. And we had decided to double our bilateral economic assistance to Ukraine this year to more than \$300 million, and we hope that will be helpful to them.

We also have encouraged the World Bank and the IMF to take a different look at Ukraine, and there will be delegations in Kiev, I think this week, sometime in the next few days. There will be delegations from the IMF and the World Bank there. And finally, we have agreed to an ambitious effort to increase American private investment with Ukraine. So I think we are moving forward on the economic issue.

I hope that all of you will play a big role in the development of our relations. I hope you will stay in close touch with the White House. I hope you will give us your best ideas about what can be done. But I have to say that I was immensely pleased that I was able to stop in Ukraine when I was in Europe, and I was pleased with the continuing development of the relationship. I know that the nation has many problems, but it's a difficult time for all the former Communist economies. And on balance, I would say we are doing rather well in our relationships with them, and I feel that they're strong, they're growing stronger. And I think the Kravchuk visit here will be a very positive thing.

One of the things that I'm quite sensitive to that I would maybe solicit your advice about is to make sure that when he comes here and when we meet that it's actually a positive for him at home. Because when all these countries are going through difficult changes—not just Ukraine but others—their relationships with the United States are almost a mixed blessing, I think, with the people back home, because everybody wants us to help and be supportive but not to dictate unduly to them what the terms of their own development and future should be. So it's a little bit of a delicate thing, but we're trying to be sensitive to that. And I think the presence in the United States of a strong Ukrainian-American community can help to deal with that problem, can help to create a sense of identity with us among grassroots people and various political forces in Ukraine that

perhaps will head off some of the tensions that we have experienced in other places.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:11 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Anthony Lake, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; Julian Kulas, chair, Chicago-Kiev Sister City Committee; and Orest Baranyk, vice president, Ukrainian Congress Committee of America. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

**Remarks on the Bipartisan  
Commission on Entitlement Reform  
and an Exchange With Reporters  
February 10, 1994**

**The President.** I want to thank all the members here for agreeing to serve on this Bipartisan Commission on Entitlement Reform. If you look at the membership from the Congress and from the private sector, you see a wide variety of experience and understanding of this issue and a real willingness to work together in a bipartisan spirit for the interest of the United States. I particularly want to thank Senator Bob Kerrey, who proposed this idea, and extend my gratitude to him and to Senator Jack Danforth for agreeing to cochair the Commission.

The Commission will report directly to my National Economic Council later in the year, giving us an opportunity to consider its recommendations as part of the deliberations for preparing the fiscal year 1996 budget. I expect these results to be thought-provoking and significant.

This Commission will be asked to grapple with real issues of entitlement reforms, not caps or gimmicks that defer hard choices but specific and constructive proposals. And we will take very seriously proposals that have strong bipartisan support.

In the last budget, the one that is now in operation, I proposed and the Congress acted on a number of restrictions in cuts and entitlements. We all now, looking ahead, know that our number one entitlement problem is Medicare and Medicaid. They are growing much more rapidly than the rate of inflation plus population. We are committed to reforming these programs through a health security plan. And I was gratified that

notwithstanding some of the disagreements we had with the CBO on the timing of the cuts, the CBO study clearly showed that the proposal we have put on the table will dramatically reduce health care spending in the next decade and beyond. It is clear that there are also other entitlement issues we have to look at, and the Commission will do that, too. We cannot let up on our reforms and our efforts to reduce the deficit and get this economy going again.

The Vice President has done some important work on reinventing Government, which has underscored our commitment to a Government that can do more with less. We are committed now to a plan that will reduce the Federal bureaucracy by 252,000 over the next 5 years. It will be at its lowest level in 30 years. But even if you do that, we can't bring the deficit down unless we deal with other problems.

This panel, I expect, will ask and answer the tough questions. This panel, I expect, will do the kind of work that—something like the balanced budget amendment can never do. It doesn't ask or answer any of the tough questions, but this panel has had the courage and the willingness to face them. And I thank them for that.

If I have learned one thing since I have been President, it is in the end we have to decide on specific matters and that rhetoric sooner or later always has to give way to reality.

I want to thank again all the citizens for agreeing to serve, and in particular I want to thank the Members of Congress in both parties for agreeing to undertake what many might regard as a thankless task. It will not be thankless if it gives us a strong and secure and healthy American economy and society moving into the 21st century. I appreciate your willingness to deal with it, and I assure you that I look forward to your deliberations eagerly.

Senator Kerrey, the floor is yours.

[At this point, Senator Kerrey made brief remarks.]

**Russian Position on Bosnia**

**Q.** Mr. President, it seems that in the aftermath of NATO's decision to issue this ultimatum to the Serbs, that you're having