Balkan Peace Process

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, why is it necessary for the United States for the third time in this century to send troops to Europe? Why aren't the Europeans capable, in your opinion, of resolving these kinds of problems in Bosnia by themselves?

Prime Minister Bruton. I think it's important to recognize that if you have genocide of the kind that was occurring in Bosnia, that's not just a European problem; that's a problem for the world at large. It's a problem for the common civilization which we all share. It's a common problem for all of us who have democratic values, democratic values which stem in Europe chiefly from the inspiration of the American War of Independence and the United States Declaration of Independence. Those values are universal, and therefore there is a universal responsibility, in my view, for all of us to do whatever we can in proportion to our means to facilitate the making of peace.

It is very important also to stress that the role that the United States, the European Union, and others have played in Bosnia is one of facilitating peacemaking. The peace is not being made by the United States, no more than it is being made by the European Union. The peace in Bosnia is being made by the people of Bosnia themselves. And that is the same situation in this country. We provide a framework. They must do the deal.

The President. And I just want to mention one other thing, too. I want you to think about these points: Number one, at the end of World War II, we established NATO, recognizing that we would try to stay together dealing with common security concerns. Admittedly, at the time, we thought those concerns might play themselves out in Central Europe in the contest between what was then the Soviet Union and the Western bloc, the NATO bloc. But we understood that we had shared concerns that would manifest themselves first on the Continent of Europe but could become much more immediate for us.

Now, the NATO powers have voted among themselves to work with others through the United Nations and on our own in brokering this peace agreement and trying to implement it. This is consistent with what we have done since World War II.

The second thing I'd like to ask every American is how you would have felt—I would like to ask every American how would you have felt when President Bush sent out the call for help in Desert Storm, which was a war, not a peacekeeping measure, if they said, "You handle that. You have more money, more soldiers, more interests there. You're concerned about the oil. You waste more oil than the rest of us do. You guys handle that"? Or think about all the countries that helped us in Haiti who didn't say, "I'm sorry. That's not our problem. That's your problem. You have the refugees in the United States. We don't have them. They're on your shore. They're your problem. We can't be bothered with that." But instead, we have had dozens of countries rally to the United States to work with us in common cause when their values were violated by things that were of more immediate concern to us. That's what they did in Desert Storm. That's what they did in Haiti.

And I will say, every day, every day for almost 40 years, there has been a citizen of Ireland in some distant country working for peacekeeping in places where the United States did not go. And they did not ask, "What is the immediate interest of the people of Ireland in doing that?"

So I think the United States has been very well-served by countries that have been willing to stand up with us, to stand up for good things and right things that also affect our interest. And I believe we should do this now.

Prime Minister Bruton. Thank you. We must respect the timetable. I'm sorry. Thank you very much, indeed. Thank you.

NOTE: The President's 108th news conference began at 1:20 p.m. on the steps of the Government Buildings. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks at a Dinner Hosted by Prime Minister John Bruton in Dublin

December 1, 1995

To the Taoiseach and Mrs. Bruton and to all of our hosts: Hillary and I are honored

to be here tonight with all of you and to be here in the company of some of America's greatest Irish-Americans, including Senator George Mitchell, who has taken on such a great and difficult task; a bipartisan congressional delegation headed by Congressman Walsh; many members of the Ambassador's family, including Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, Lieutenant Governor of Maryland; the mayors of Chicago and Los Angeles; Secretary Riley, the Secretary of Education; Mark Gearan, Director of the Peace Corps. And as I said, we have the Secretary of Commerce, Ron Brown, tonight, who wishes more than ever before in his life that he were Irish. [*Laughter*] I think he is, down deep inside. I thank you also for—I see the mayor of Pittsburgh here. I know I've left out some others—my wonderful stepfather, Dick Kelley, who thought it was all right when I got elected President, but when I brought him home to Ireland he knew I had finally arrived. [*Laughter*]

You know, the Taoiseach has been not only a good friend to me in our work for peace but a good friend to the United States. Indeed, he and Fionnuala actually came to Washington, DC, to celebrate their honeymoon. I think it's fair to say that his honeymoon there lasted longer than mine did. [*Laughter*]

I managed to get even with at least one Member of Congress—or former Member of Congress—when I convinced Senator Mitchell to give in to the entreaties of the Taoiseach and the Prime Minister to head this arms decommissioning group. Now, there's any easy job for you. [*Laughter.*] You know, in Ireland I understand there's a—our American country music is very popular—Garth Brooks said the other day he sold more records in Ireland than any other place in the world outside America. So I told Senator Mitchell today that—he was telling me what a wonderful day we had yesterday in Derry and Belfast and what a wonderful day we had today in Dublin, and I said, "Yes, now you get to go to work." I said, "This reminds me of that great country song 'I Got the Gold Mine and You Got the Shaft.'" [*Laughter*] But if anybody can bring out more gold, George Mitchell can.

I want to thank the Taoiseach for the courage he showed in working with the Prime Minister of Great Britain, from the day he took office, taking up from his predecessor, Albert Reynolds, right through this remarkable breakthrough that he and Prime Minister Major made on the twin tracks that he helped to forge just 2 days ago. This is an astonishing development really because it is the first formulation anyone has come up with that permits all views to be heard, all voices to speak, all issues to be dealt with, without requiring people to give up the positions they have taken at the moment. We are very much in your debt.

This has been an experience like none I have ever had before. Yesterday John Hume, who's joined us, took me home to Derry with him. And I thought to myself, all my life "Danny Boy" has been my favorite song; I never thought I'd get to go there to hear it. But thanks to John, I did.

And then we were, before, in Belfast. And all of you, I'm sure, were so moved by those two children who introduced me, reading excerpts from the letters. You know, I've got thousands and thousands of letters from Irish children telling me what peace means to them. One thing I am convinced of as I leave here: that there is a global hunger among young people for their parents to put down the madness of war in favor of their childhood.

I received this letter from a teenager right here in Dublin. I thought I would read it to you, to make the point better than I could. This is just an excerpt: "With your help, the chance is given to reason and to reasonable people, so that the peace in my country becomes reality. What is lost is impossible to bring back. Children who were killed are gone forever. No one can bring them back. But for all those who survive these sufferings, there is future."

The young person from Dublin who wrote me that was Zlata Filpovic, the young teenager from Bosnia who is now living here, who wrote her wonderful diary that captured the imagination of people all over the world.

I am honored that at this moment in the history of the world the United States has had the great good fortune to stand for the future of children in Ireland, in Bosnia, in

the Middle East, in Haiti, and on the toughest streets of our own land. And I thank you here in Ireland for taking your stand for those children's future as well.

Let me say in closing that in this 150th anniversary of the Great Famine, I would like everyone in the world to pay tribute to Ireland for coming out of the famine with perhaps a greater sense of compassion for the fate of people the world over than any other nation. I said today in my speech to the Parliament that there had not been a single, solitary day, not one day, since 1958 when someone representing the Government of Ireland was not somewhere in the world trying to aid the cause of peace. I think there is no other nation on Earth that can make that claim.

And as I leave you, I feel so full of hope for the situation here in Ireland and so much gratitude for you, for what you have given to us. And I leave you with these words, which I found as I was walking out the door from the Ambassador's Residence. The Ambassador made it possible for Hillary and me to spend a few moments this evening with Seamus Heaney and his wife, since I have been running around the country quoting him for 2 days. [*Laughter*] I might say, without his permission. [*Laughter*] And he gave Hillary an inscribed copy of his book "The Cure At Troy." And as I skimmed through it, I found these words, with which I leave you:

Now it's high water mark
And floodtide in the heart
And time to go . . .
What's left to say?

Suspect too much sweet talk
But never close your mind.
It was a fortunate wind
That blew me here. I leave
Half-ready to believe
That a crippled trust might walk

And the half-true rhyme is love.

Thank you, and God bless you.

I thought I had done something for a moment to offend the Taoiseach—he was forcing me on water instead of wine. [*Laughter*]

Let me now, on behalf of every American here present, bathed in the generosity and the hospitality of Ireland, offer this toast to the Taoiseach and Mrs. Bruton and to the wonderful people of this great Republic.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 8:40 p.m. at Dublin Castle. In his remarks, he referred to U.S. Ambassador to Ireland Jean Kennedy Smith and Mayors Richard M. Daley of Chicago, IL, Richard Riordan of Los Angeles, CA, and Tom Murphy of Pittsburgh, PA. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks to Troops in Baumholder, Germany

December 2, 1995

General Joulwan, General Nash, General Crouch, Secretary West. A special word of greeting to America's good friend Chancellor Kohl, who has been a wonderful partner to our country, with great thanks to Germany for their partnership with this fine unit.

I am immensely proud to be here today with the men and women of the 1st Armored Division. You truly are America's Iron Soldiers. Previous generations of Iron Soldiers have answered our Nation's call with legendary skill and bravery. Each time before, it was a call to war. From North Africa to Italy, they helped freedom triumph over tyranny in World War II. Then for 20 years, their powerful presence here stood down the Soviet threat and helped to bring victory in the cold war.

And just 4 years ago, when Saddam Hussein attacked Kuwait, the 1st Armored Division's awesome power turned back Iraq and protected the security of the Persian Gulf. I know many of you were there. But I would like to remind you that in just 89 hours of combat, you destroyed 440 enemy tanks, 485 armored personnel carriers, 190 pieces of artillery, and 137 air defense guns. You should be very proud of that remarkable record.

Now America summons you to service again, this time not with a call to war but a call to peace. The leaders of Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia have agreed to end 4 long years of war and atrocities. They have asked for our help to implement their peace agreement. It is in our Nation's interest and consistent with our values to see that this peace succeeds and endures. And we are counting on you, the men and women of Task Force Eagle, to get that job done.