

this. I've just literally not been asked about it.

I have been very well-pleased with the treatment that my nominees for the Cabinet have received who have gotten their hearings and been taken to a vote. There are still some who have not gotten a hearing yet, and let me mention in particular Tony Lake. We've now answered all the questions that we've been asked. We've sent it up to the committee. And I think he ought to be given a hearing and a vote.

And I'd like to remind everybody involved in this that it was Tony Lake who came up with the strategy that we implemented to end the bloodiest war in Europe since World War II. He was a terrific success as the National Security Adviser to the President. He has worked in these fields for 30 years. He fully understands the intelligence operations. He is superbly qualified. If someone has some reason to oppose him, let them oppose him in a hearing and then in a vote on the floor. But in view of his service, not to me but to this country, and the positive consequences of that service, whether it's Bosnia, Haiti, the agreements with Russia, you name it, he deserves—his service to this country deserved a hearing and a vote on the floor of the Senate. And I hope he will get it.

Thank you very much.

Q. [Inaudible.]

The President. Well, I obviously feel that way about that, but you know, you've got this on the record about that. I think she'll sail through if we ever get her to a vote. The same thing about Secretary Peña. But I wanted to—I'm on the record, I think, with Alexis. I just wanted to be on the record with Tony.

NOTE: The President's 135th news conference began at 4:34 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Martin S. Indyk, U.S. Ambassador to Israel, and Abu Marzook, alleged HAMAS terrorist.

Statement on the Killing of a British Soldier in Northern Ireland

February 13, 1997

I am grieved and outraged by the callous killing of a British soldier in Northern Ireland yesterday. The First Lady and I extend our

deepest sympathy to the soldier's family and to the British Government and people on the loss of this young man. We wish the authorities success in bringing the murderers swiftly to justice.

All those who care about the future of Northern Ireland must join me in condemning this cowardly crime. I remain convinced that the people of both of Northern Ireland's traditions want to take the path of peace and reconciliation, not hatred and violence.

The Belfast talks chaired by Senator Mitchell continue to have my full support. I urge all those taking part, who share a commitment to democratic values, to move as rapidly as possible into substantive negotiation about the future of Northern Ireland.

The loyalists and their leaders have shown great courage and restraint in not allowing themselves to be drawn into an escalating spiral of violence. I urge them to remain steadfast.

Remarks on Receiving the "Adoption 2002" Report and an Exchange with Reporters

February 14, 1997

The President. Thank you very much, Olivia. Ladies and gentlemen and boys and girls, thank you all for being here. I also want to say a special word of thanks to some Members of Congress who are not here today but who have done an enormous amount of work on this issue, including Senators Rockefeller, Chafee, and DeWine, and Congresswoman Kennelly and Congressman Camp.

Let me begin by also saying Happy Valentine's Day. All the kids look wonderful. The rest of us look all right, too—[laughter]—but the kids look especially wonderful.

I want to thank you, Olivia, for the work you've done. And I want to thank the First Lady for the work she has done on this issue over more than 20 years now. I'll never forget the first conversation we had, shortly after we were married, about a case that she had involving a child in foster care who wanted to become an adopted child. I didn't know very much about it before then, and ever since then this issue has been of consuming