

no one should, in effect, comment on or interfere with any internal affair of any other nation. And you heard him refer to American-led NATO aggression in the Balkans.

And so I responded very vigorously about Bosnia, about Kosovo. And the point I made was, when I was very personally complimentary of him is, when he stood up on that tank to save Russian democracy, suppose he hadn't prevailed. Suppose the Russian military had taken him down off the tank, thrown him in jail, and announced they were going to execute him.

I would hope that the entire world represented around that table, that OSCE table today, would have gone into an absolute uproar of outrage about it and would have saved his life and helped to restore democracy. That's the point I was trying to make, that there are times in the world we live in today when we are forced to make judgments about things that happen within the borders of other countries because they have an impact beyond their borders and because they violate internationally accepted norms of human rights. That's what happened in Bosnia; that's what happened in Kosovo. I think I did the right thing. And I hope it registered on the Russians, and I hope we're going to make some progress. I think we are.

I'll see you all some more in the next day or two, but I've got to go to this lunch.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:10 p.m. at the Ciragan Palace.

### **Statement on the Northern Ireland Peace Process**

*November 18, 1999*

The parties in Northern Ireland, working with George Mitchell, have taken a powerful step toward lasting peace. I warmly welcome Senator Mitchell's final report and support his conclusions fully. We should all take heart from the fact that the parties have strongly reaffirmed their commitment to the Good Friday accord. In a spirit of unprecedented mutual understanding, they have addressed issues of deep concern to one another. Together, they have shaped the outlines of the

way ahead, as described by Senator Mitchell today. I urge the parties to maintain this level of dialog with each other and with the public at large in the days ahead and to proceed with rapid implementation of the agreement. Once again, I want to express my deepest appreciation to Senator Mitchell for his dedication to bringing peace to Northern Ireland.

### **Statement on Assistance for Southeast Europe**

*November 18, 1999*

I am pleased that yesterday in Brussels the international community pledged over \$1 billion in new assistance to consolidate peace and promote economic recovery in Kosovo. I am particularly pleased that our European partners committed the lion's share of this amount, with the European Commission and EU members together pledging over three-quarters of a billion dollars and additional pledges from other European states.

These contributions will not only provide a significant boost to economic revitalization and reconstruction but also help to fund public administration, establish a civil emergency service corps, strengthen public security and the rule of law, promote market reforms, and encourage private investment. We did our part by announcing plans to provide \$157 million for Kosovo, pending final action on the budget before Congress.

Today at the OSCE summit in Istanbul, Europe demonstrated its strong leadership in support of recovery and stabilization throughout southeast Europe. I welcome European Commission President Prodi's intention to have the EC provide nearly 12 billion euros (approximately \$12.5 billion) of assistance to the region during 2000–2006. Such a substantial package will create tremendous opportunities for those countries and affirm in the strongest terms European support for their transformation. We are continuing our assistance programs to encourage political and economic reform and advance the region's integration with the rest of Europe.