

Remarks Announcing the Nomination of Robert Strauss To Be United States Ambassador to the Soviet Union

June 4, 1991

The President. Let me just say that I am delighted to announce my intention to nominate an old friend and an experienced diplomat, Robert Strauss, to be our next Ambassador to the Soviet Union.

Bob Strauss has taken on difficult and delicate assignments in the past for Presidents of both parties. I know that he's the right man to represent the United States in this fantastic period of change in the Soviet Union. And at this moment, we are considering any number of ideas to foster democratic reform, to foster economic change in the Soviet Union. And at the same time, the status of East-West relations is being redefined by the emerging democracies of Eastern Europe and by President Gorbachev.

We have an important role in leading and defining a new world order in which the United States and the Soviet Union continue to work cooperatively for the betterment of mankind. And I frankly can think of nobody, no one, more qualified or more talented to bring to this representation what we need: contacts with high officials, a knowledge of America, a guarantee that two ships—big ships, important ships—won't pass in the night for lack of understanding. And I'm very proud that he will be our representative to the Soviet Union during this important, I would say, critical period.

And Bob, I just can't tell you how grateful I am to you and I ought to say to Helen, too, your wife, for being willing to undertake this important assignment. It's a wonderful thing for our country. And I am confident that this appointment will be well-received by your many friends on both sides of the aisle of the United States Senate, of the Congress, and certainly by the American people. So, thank you for suiting up once again, and I believe it's a wonderful thing for the United States. Thank you for being willing to do this.

Now, please say a word, if you will. And then we'll get the Secretary.

Mr. Strauss. I have no statement to make

other than, a week ago if anyone had told me I would be standing here, I would have thought they were crazy. I spent the last several days in consultation with the President and with the Secretary of State and with Helen Strauss, I might add. And I have concluded that if there is a role I can play, I'm delighted to play it with the Secretary of State and with this President.

I enter this administration as a Democrat, as all of you know. It's a nonpolitical appointment, if ever there was one and could be one, and I certainly will come out a Democrat. And in the meantime, I'll do my damndest, Mr. President, to represent this nation as you and the Secretary would want me to.

I'll take a question or two later on after the Secretary says something, if you like.

Secretary Baker. Mr. President, Ambassador Strauss, let me simply echo, Mr. President, what you've said with respect to this appointment. We are extraordinarily pleased that Ambassador Strauss is willing to undertake this responsibility. It is a real plus for America. It's a plus for the American people. It is a plus, a big plus, for the developing relationship and the emerging and continually positively forward-moving relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union.

The President. Bob, thank you. And I have an 11:15 a.m., but if you want to fire a couple of questions at——

Q. Mr. President, are we going to have a summit at the end of the month?

Q. Mr. President, are you going to Moscow at the end of the month?

The President. We're talking about that all in the next couple of days here. I have no comments on any of these stories right now. I want to keep the focus on this wonderful new appointment. And Bob will take some questions. And I don't know whether—Jim, do you want to stay with him?

Note: The President spoke at 11:07 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his

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remarks, he referred to President Mikhail Gorbachev of the Soviet Union; Mr. Strauss' wife, Helen; and Secretary of State James A. Baker III. Following the President's re-

marks, Mr. Strauss, who was a former U.S. Trade Representative, responded to questions from the press.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Annual Report on Aeronautics and Space

June 4, 1991

To the Congress of the United States:

It is with great pleasure that I transmit this report on the Nation's achievements in aeronautics and space during 1989 and 1990, as required under section 206 of the National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2476). Not only do aeronautics and space activities involve 14 contributing departments and agencies of the Federal Government, as represented in this report, but the results of this ongoing research and development affect the Nation as a whole.

In 1989 and 1990 we successfully conducted eight space shuttle flights, deploying the Magellan Venus probe, the Galileo Jupiter probe, the Syncom IV Navy communications satellite, and the Hubble Space Telescope and retrieving the Long Duration Exposure Facility. The successful launch of 28 expendable launch vehicles put into orbit a wide variety of spacecraft including the Cosmic Background Explorer and the Roentgen satellite. In addition, many ongoing activities contributed to the period's achievements. The Voyager 2 encounter with Neptune capped off the highly successful 12-year Voyager program; the Tracking and Data Relay Satellite System became fully operational; the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency sponsored a commercially developed first launch of the Pegasus Air-Launched Space Booster; the Department of Commerce continued studies on ozone, cloud occurrence, and snow

cover—factors critical to our study of climate change; the Federal Aviation Administration strengthened aviation security by deploying the advanced Thermal Neutron Analysis system for detecting explosives in baggage; the Smithsonian Institution contributed greatly to the public's understanding of space research and conducted programs to improve pre-college science instruction; and we helped Soviet Armenians in need of medical assistance by establishing the Telemedicine Space Bridge between U.S. doctors and hospitals in earthquake-struck Armenia. These are just a few of the many accomplishments produced by our 1989 and 1990 budgets for space (\$28.4 billion and \$31.8 billion, respectively) and aeronautics (\$10.6 billion and \$11.4 billion, respectively).

The years 1989 and 1990 were successful ones for the U.S. aeronautics and space programs. Not only did these lead to significant accomplishments in scientific knowledge, but also to improvements in the quality of life on Earth through benefits to the economy, to the environment, and in the defense of freedom. Our mission must be to provide stability in aeronautics and space leadership in an ever-changing international environment.

GEORGE BUSH

The White House,
June 4, 1991.