

President Clinton. Very good. I'm glad to see President Mubarak. He and I have talked on the phone and worked on some things together, but this is our first personal meeting. And we'll have a press conference in a few minutes—in a couple of hours, I guess. We'll answer your questions.

NOTE: The exchange began at 9:45 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, President Clinton referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

The President's News Conference With President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt *April 6, 1993*

President Clinton. Good morning. Today I have the great pleasure of welcoming President Mubarak to Washington and to the White House. We have had an excellent meeting, and I look forward to more in the coming years, as well as to a successful conclusion of our first meeting here at lunch after this press conference.

For nearly 2 decades, Egypt and the United States have worked together in a special relationship to bring peace and stability to the Middle East. American and Egyptian soldiers have served side by side in defeating aggression in the Gulf and in bringing humanitarian relief in Somalia. American and Egyptian diplomats have worked side by side to pioneer peace with Israel and lately to bring others to the negotiating table. And after our discussions today, I am convinced that we share a common vision of a more peaceful Middle East, and we are determined to see that vision realized.

Egypt has long experience in peacemaking and knows that only negotiations can resolve longstanding grievances. The Egyptian-Israeli treaty stands as a cornerstone of our common efforts to attain a just and lasting and comprehensive settlement based upon U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. Our challenge is now to broaden the circle of peace, recognizing the principles that underlie the peace process: territory for peace, realization of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, security for all parties, and full and real peace.

As I have made clear, the United States is prepared to assume the role of full partner when the parties themselves return to the negotiating table for serious discussions. We both feel deeply that there is an historic opportunity to achieve real progress in the Arab-Israeli peace process

in 1993. This opportunity must not be missed. And all parties must live up to their responsibilities for making peace.

We discussed the need to ensure stability in the Gulf. We're determined that the hard-won achievements of Desert Storm will be protected and that Iraq will comply fully with all relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions. We're also determined to counter Iran's involvement in terrorism and its active opposition to the Middle East peace process.

Both our nations have suffered from the tragic consequences of terrorism. Both are absolutely determined to oppose the cowardly cruelty of terrorists wherever we can. We reviewed the common danger presented by religious extremism which promotes an intolerant agenda through violent means. We discussed ways of strengthening our cooperation in countering this and other forms of terrorism. We know that all Americans, including Americans of all races and all faiths, join us in strongly condemning such terrorism.

Mr. President, I know that you have undertaken the difficult task of reforming and restructuring your nation's economy to provide for the needs of tomorrow. We have a similar challenge here in the United States. We appreciate the gains that have been made in Egypt, as well as the bridges that remain to be crossed. We are impressed by your courage and your efforts.

We will continue to work together to stimulate trade, investment, and cooperation. Our economic assistance will continue to support Egypt's economic reform program, including privatization and Egypt's cooperation with international financial institutions.

We are fast approaching a new century. This is perhaps less of a milestone for Egypt, which

has, after all, 7,000 years of recorded history, than it is for our relatively young country. I told the President on the way up that every President of the United States since 1800 had lived in the White House, and he looked at me as if it were a drop in the bucket of time. [Laughter]

But even taking the longest view, this is a critical period for the Middle East, the crucible of much of our common spiritual heritage. For the Middle East, the year 1993 can determine whether the new century is consumed by old enmities or used to unlock the human and material potential of the people. Our historic mission is to make this a year of peace. And I am delighted to have President Mubarak as a partner in pursuing this mission.

The microphone is yours.

President Mubarak. Thank you, Mr. President.

I was very pleased to meet with President Clinton today. Our meeting was very positive and productive. In a spirit of friendship and mutual confidence, we explored the problems and opportunities our two nations are facing. I emphasized to the President that it is of utmost importance to our region to reach a just and comprehensive settlement between Israel and all her Arab neighbors, including the Palestinian people.

Such a settlement should be based on Security Council Resolution 242 and 338 and the principle of land for peace and realizing the national rights of the Palestinians. We believe that Egypt and the United States have a crucial role to play in order to allow the peace negotiations to reach a successful conclusion. Together we can make the ends meet and bridge the existing gaps.

Equally important is the task of removing the remaining obstacles, especially that of the deportees. I was pleased to hear from President Clinton that significant progress has been on this issue and that he recognizes the importance of the Middle East peace talks. He is committed to use the influence of the United States to achieve meaningful progress in these talks when they are resumed on April 20th. We are confident that the negotiations will proceed smoothly and successfully.

Beyond the peace process, we discussed a wide range of regional issues of common concern to our two countries. We stressed our concern for the stability of the Gulf region and the need for full compliance with the relevant

Security Council resolutions. No country of that region should doubt our firm commitment to help preserve the security, stability, and territorial integrity of all friendly states. Similarly, we are doing all what we can to stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. As you are certainly aware, Egypt has submitted a plan for making the area free of all weapons of mass destruction. We shall pursue this goal with vigor and determination.

On the global front, I offered to work closely with the President for the purpose of making the world more humane and equitable, a world where opportunity and hope exist for all and where people learn to accept divergences and employ diversity for the benefit of mankind.

I am making this appeal because I am alarmed by the refusal of some elements in the different societies to accept the diversity and the coexistence. This has resulted in unprecedented atrocities and suffering in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The world cannot tolerate the savage practices which are committed under the ugly slogan of ethnic cleansing and purification. It is against all human values to see such claims emerge at the threshold of the 21st century.

Unfortunately, violence is increasingly being used by certain misguided elements in many parts of the world, including the Middle East. Acute social and economic problems are being exploited in order to breed violence and anarchy. At the same time, foreign countries are interfering in the domestic affairs of other nations under false pretexts. All civilized nations are called upon to fight the spirit of violence and terrorism everywhere, for this is a threat to the existence and future of humanity. No country is immune or distant from that danger.

In Egypt, we are coping with the phenomena through a comprehensive program which deals with the roots and the causes of the problem. We have embarked on an ambitious economic reform program. Parallel with this, we are enforcing our democratic system, solidifying the protection of the human rights. Our goal is to improve the quality of life for every Egyptian with equal determination. We are confronting foreign plots and attempted intervention.

Having said this, I would like to assure you all that Egypt is not in danger. The image which has been projected by the media lately is rather exaggerated. As well as all know, violence makes instant news, but the real story is our confidence, our unity, and our growing success in

facing this problem. The Egyptian people will not accept any challenge to their tradition of friendship with other nations and hospitality to our visitors. We will remain true to our culture of resolving problems peacefully and defeating the forces of violence and aggression. Let the whole world know that Egypt is as strong as ever and that its leadership is firm and confident.

Mr. President, as I told you, Egypt is a country which values its excellent relations with the United States. Let me take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation for the support and assistance we are receiving from the United States. This aid is crucial to the success of our reform program.

We would like to assure a friendly welcome to all Americans who visit us. We encourage the American business community to invest in our economy. The climate for investment has become very favorable following the steps we took in the past few years on the road to economic reform. Our budget deficit has been reduced from 18 percent of the GDP in 1990 to 3.5 percent this year. The foreign exchange market has been deregulated, and our foreign currency reserves have reached record levels. Trade is being liberalized, and the balance of payment is showing steady improvement. After registering a deficit of \$2.6 billion in 1990, it now shows a surplus of about \$3 billion.

President Clinton, our discussion today affirmed a broad identity of interest over a wide range of issues. We have developed a full agenda of cooperation for the future. I want to thank you for your understanding and your enthusiastic response. I fully appreciate your warm welcome and extend to the American people my best wishes for success and fulfillment. I look forward to working closely with you during the months ahead for our common goals. And I extend to you an invitation to visit Egypt at your earliest convenience.

Thank you.

President Clinton. Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International]?

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, in view of the rising violence in the Middle East and elsewhere, what is the cause of your optimism? And this question's for both of you: What can you both do to promote peace this year, in the future?

President Clinton. The cause of my optimism, in terms of peace in the Middle East, is the extraordinary efforts that Prime Minister Rabin is making and my belief that the peace talks will reconvene in April, as well as some encouraging comments that have been made by Mr. Assad, the leader of Syria, recently in Egypt and publicly. He said he wanted a full peace, peace in all of its aspects, I think on Egyptian television. I think there is reason to believe that we can make real headway.

President Mubarak might want to answer the question.

President Mubarak. Really, I could tell you very frankly, I have met so many leaders in the area, not only the President of Syria, the Palestinians and the other Arab leaders. All of them want to reach peace as quickly as possible. The Syrian leader, he said it publicly and clearly, "I'm very keen on peace." Peace will help every leader to raise the standard of the living of the people in the area. The Palestinians also are fed up from the present situation, being denied from everything. So I think this is very important, and I have great hopes that the negotiations will start on the 20th of April. And I may say much more, I hope and we are going to work closely on that to get an end to the problem by the end of this year, if it is possible.

Terrorism

Q. [Inaudible]—what's new happening in Egypt is Muslim and Muslim which is not really Islam. What is your policy in confronting this exported terrorism to Egypt and get Egypt back where it was and where it is: love, peace, happiness, pleasure with Egypt?

President Mubarak. Look, the majority of the Egyptian people are supporting me and any measures I am taking to put an end to this kind of terrorism. Copts, Muslims, any kind of religion in Egypt, they are all Egyptians. We expect that this small minority was trying to make use of the economic problems. You know we are going through economic reform in our country; the reform has its side-effects. It makes a burden on some groups of the people. Some foreign forces, like the Iranians, let me mention the name, making use of this to try to destabilize the country. But be sure we are very firm with that by law, and we are not going to violate the law. And the Copts and the Muslims are very good friends. And I could tell you, the best friends I had all my life were all Copts.

Stimulus Package

Q. Mr. President, on another subject, the Republicans have been delaying action on your \$1 billion jobs stimulus bill, and now the Senate has gone out. Are there areas where you would be willing to compromise, cut spending in order to win Republican votes?

President Clinton. Well, I'm going to work on a proposal that I think will address some of the legitimate expressed objections. And we will see when Congress comes back whether the Republicans are committed to putting the American people back to work or just playing politics.

You know, we have a system in this country where people, all of whom have jobs—a minority of the Senators, who all have jobs—can literally thwart majority rule; where a rule designed to guarantee that all possible amendments can be offered can be used to stop all decisions. Now, the American people now are learning that again, that—and if they want to stop the Government, they can do it.

But I don't think that it's going to be very defensible when they come back to say, "The economy is fine in America. There are enough jobs. We don't have to do this." And I'll give them a chance to show their real motives, and I trust that they'll do the right thing.

Andrea [Andrea Mitchell, NBC News]?

Palestinians

Q. Mr. President, President Mubarak has been quoted as saying he wants you to press Mr. Rabin on the issues of the deportees. When Mr. Rabin was here, you said that you didn't raise that issue with him. Are you now prepared to—

President Clinton. We had discussed that in great detail before he came here; that's what I said.

Q. Are you now prepared to take more steps to press Mr. Rabin? And Mr. Mubarak, I'd like to know whether you feel that the President is doing enough to resolve that issue.

President Clinton. I believe that Israel has been quite forthcoming in trying to give the reassurance that the Palestinians need to come to the talks. President Mubarak is going to have further discussions, I think, with all the parties and certainly with Israel about it. We will see what will be done. But President Rabin has taken a very forthright and open stand in trying to reach out to the Palestinians and to the other

parties, and I believe that it's enough to get people back to the table. I hope it is.

President Mubarak. Really I didn't use the word "press" on Mr. Rabin. We have good contacts with Mr. Rabin. I'm used to exchange views with him, and where it was convenient to help the peace process to start and the negotiations to continue, I am doing it. I sent him a message when I was in London before I come here and am intending to meet with him. And I have discussed all these points with the President, and I am going to continue that with Mr. Rabin whenever I go back.

Q. Is there anything more that the United States should be doing regarding Israel?

President Mubarak. I think that the United States is a full partner and she's doing its maximum in that sense. She has good dialog with Prime Minister Rabin, and he was here. And I'm going to continue with Mr. Rabin so as to persuade the Palestinians to start negotiations on the fixed date.

President Clinton. There is someone from the Egyptian press—

Q. I would like to address to President Clinton, please, the human rights President: How far are you ready to go to help the human rights of the Palestinians in the occupied territories? Would you like to comment on the ideas expressed by President Mubarak to remove the obstacles so that they can come to the table?

President Clinton. Well, the human rights issues obviously will be discussed as a part of the peace process. They are very important to me, and I think they will be at the forefront of the process. And President Mubarak and I have discussed that, and I think that there won't be peace in the Middle East unless those issues are addressed.

Tom [Tom Friedman, New York Times]?

Palestine Liberation Organization

Q. When the United States broke off the dialog with the PLO 2 years ago, it did so leaving three conditions behind that if the PLO met, the dialog would be resumed: that they forswear terrorism, expel those involved, and condemn the act involved. Does your administration stand by those conditions? That is, if the PLO now fulfills those conditions, would you be willing to resume the U.S.-PLO dialog? And to President Mubarak: Do you think the resumption of the U.S.-PLO dialog would be helpful to the peace process at this time?

President Clinton. Let me say this: There has been no change in the policy of the United States, but the focus of my efforts has been toward getting the peace process started again. I still believe that that is the best way to proceed.

President Mubarak. The PLO we consider in the Arab world is the representative of the Palestinians. We have very good contacts with them, and we convey whatever we needed to President Clinton and even to the Israelis. I think at this present time we are going to concentrate on the negotiations to start. And you know, the PLO is everywhere. So many people of the delegation are from the PLO. So I don't think that there is any problem at the time being for that.

Serbia

Q. [Inaudible]—the situation in Bosnia. I know that earlier today you dismissed the comments of President Milosevic about your policy there as a charm offensive. But I wonder, sir, if you don't think, nonetheless, that he wouldn't have said such things if he was finding the actions you've taken so far very bothersome and perhaps whether you think now that they would ever be sufficient to deter?

President Clinton. I don't know. I've done everything that I know to do, consistent with the possibilities we have for further action in the United Nations with our European allies and the members of the Security Council. As you know, I think the sanctions should be strengthened if the Bosnians don't sign the Vance-Owen agreement. We obviously have made life more difficult for the people in Serbia, and I think there are other things that we can do. I wouldn't rule out or in anything. But it's plain that what Milosevic was trying to do was to essentially head off further efforts to toughen the sanctions or to take further actions. That will not be successful.

Q. [Inaudible]—that he may not feel that, not ruling out anything, that he may indeed feel that the use, for example, of American military force has in effect been ruled out?

President Clinton. It's never been ruled in. The United States is not capable of solving that problem alone. I don't think anyone expects us to do that. We have been, in many cases, more aggressive in what we were willing to do than the European neighbors of the former Yugoslavia. I still believe there is some chance that

we can make this peace process work, and I still think there are lots of other things we can do to make life more uncomfortable for the Serbs. And I wouldn't rule those out.

Libya

Q. This is a question to President Clinton, please. Owing to the new—

President Clinton. Oh, I recognized you hoping you would ask President Mubarak a question. *[Laughter]*

Q. Egyptians want to ask you—

President Clinton. Please, go ahead.

Q. Owing to the new liberal view that you represent now in being the President of the United States, to what limits have you arrived to an agreement with Mr. Mubarak, President Mubarak, about the cries of Libya with the West?

President Clinton. The question was about our policies with regard to Libya.

Well, as you know, we have one huge barrier that overrides everything else right now, and that is the determination of the United States to see that the people who have been charged with the Pan Am 103 disaster are released from Libya and subject to a legitimate trial. And that has to be resolved in a way that is legal and appropriate before any other issues with regard to Libya can be raised.

The President and I discussed this today. I think that it is inevitable that we will press for tougher sanctions if the Government of Libya does not release the people that have been charged. There's a lot of evidence against them. They should go on trial. They should be punished if they're found guilty. It should be a real and legitimate trial. It is an enormous issue in the United States, and nothing else really can be resolved with regard to Libya until that issue is resolved.

World Trade Center Bombing

Q. Could the United States have made better use of the information which was given to us by Egypt before the bombing of the World Trade Center? President Mubarak, why do you believe, as you said in an interview, that the bombing might have been prevented if the U.S. had used the information differently?

President Clinton. The short answer to your question is I don't know yet. I have ordered a complete review of what the United States was told last year and when we were told it.

I think President Mubarak would support my contention that we have tried to step up our cooperation with the Egyptians in combating international terrorism since I've been President. In February we sent American officials to Egypt, and they stayed there about a week working on cooperative exchanges and information. And we talked today about what we could do to do more. Whether there was something given to us that we could have acted on that might have changed the shape of future events, I cannot answer that yet. But since the statements that President Mubarak has made, I have ordered a review of what we knew, when we knew it, what was done. And I don't know yet what the answer to that is.

I think the important thing is we do know that there was nothing specific related to the World Trade Center bombing that was given to the United States. We know we have stepped up cooperation, and we know we intend to do more in the future. And the United States has to review a lot of its policies in view of what happened at the World Trade Center to try to make sure we are doing everything we can to minimize the impact of terrorism in this country.

President Mubarak. I would like, if the President would permit me, we had no definite information about what happened in the World Trade Center. We were making good cooperation with the United States in the direction of fighting terrorism. But nobody knows, or knew beforehand that something was going to happen to the World Trade Center.

We are exchanging information about any kind of terrorism which takes place here or there. But different information, of course, we haven't. Otherwise, we would have told very clearly to the Americans, there is something going to happen in this or that place.

Iran

Q. Mr. President, it was mentioned the question of the threat of regional security in the Gulf. Can you be more specific what these threats are at present, and are you putting the threats from Iran and Iraq on an equal footing?

President Mubarak. It's for me?

President Clinton. Both.

President Mubarak. Look, Iraq now is in a position not to have the ability to threaten any of the—[inaudible]—that Kuwait is ours, but there are so many measures being taken. But

Iran, Iran now, because it's the only country on the theater—you know the Iranians and Kuwaitis were competing each other. Nowadays, the Iranians are stronger. They are trying to find a way to destabilize the security in some countries, mainly Egypt. And we are working hard for that. And this was the main cause of making some explosions, some instance in our country. I think Iran now is trying to create problems. And we are very firm with them. We are capable to do so many things, but we are not a country to interfere in any internal affair of any other.

Q. You mentioned that you and President Mubarak were agreed on the need to counter Iran's support for terrorism and its opposition to the Middle East peace process. What specific steps are you considering and have you discussed with President Mubarak?

President Clinton. I don't think it would be appropriate for us to discuss that at this time.

Serbia

Q. I couldn't help but notice in your answer to Brit's [Brit Hume, ABC News] question that you sounded frustrated about the situation in Bosnia and that if there is no change in the position of European governments, that if they can withstand sanctions, the Serbians will essentially be able to get what they want.

President Clinton. That is what I am concerned about. You got it. That's about as good a statement as I could have made myself. [Laughter]

Q. Are you putting, then, the onus on the European governments to take this a further step, or is there some other step the U.S. can—

President Clinton. No. No, my point is, though, that the United States—if you believe that we should engage these problems in a multilateral way, if you believe, for example, in what happened in a good way in Operation Desert Storm, then the reverse has to be true, too. The United States has got to work through the United Nations, and all of our views may not always prevail. Look how long it took us to just secure the approval of enforcement of the no-fly zone.

Also it is, frankly, a very difficult situation. The Europeans remember how many German troops were once in what became Yugoslavia and then came apart. It is a difficult situation. It is the most difficult, the most frustrating

Apr. 6 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1993

problem in the world today.

The only point I was trying to make is I have proceeded all along on the assumption that whatever we did and whatever we could do, we would and should act through the United Nations in a multilateral way. I have done my best to continue to stiffen the sanctions, to continue to push for more action, to push for the enforcement of the no-fly zone, to push all the countries involved to do what we could to try to bring this to a successful conclusion so that the principle of ethnic cleansing is not rewarded in Bosnia and, therefore, encouraged in other countries.

I have not thought that the United States should or could successfully take unilateral ac-

tion. And I know that a lot of things that we could do to inflict some pain might also entail a great deal of cost and might not change the ultimate outcome of how the Bosnian people have to live.

So it is a very frustrating and difficult circumstance. And I can't really add to the way you captured the question; you said it very well.

Thank you.

President Mubarak. Thank you.

NOTE: The President's 10th news conference began at 11:35 a.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House. In the news conference, he referred to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel.

Nomination for Posts at the Energy and Interior Departments and the Office of Personnel Management

April 6, 1993

The President today named three deputies to the Departments of Energy and the Interior and the Office of Personnel Management. The President announced his intention to nominate William H. White as Deputy Secretary at the Department of Energy and Lorraine A. Green as Deputy Director of the Office of Personnel Management. In addition, the President approved Allen P. Stayman as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Territorial and International Affairs at the Department of the Interior.

"The field experience, technical know-how, and commitment to excellence these three individuals have demonstrated in the past will serve them well as they join our teams already in place at Energy, OPM, and Interior," the President said. "I have full confidence they will work hard to reinvent the way Government works."

NOTE: Biographies of the nominees were made available by the Office of the Press Secretary.

Remarks on Signing Enabling Legislation for the National Commission to Ensure a Strong Competitive Airline Industry and an Exchange With Reporters

April 7, 1993

The President. Good morning, everybody. As you know, the bill I have just signed is the aviation commission legislation. It enables us to start planning the revitalization of one of our country's most important industries, one of our most important exporters, one of our most important employers: the aircraft manufacturers and carriers that have been the pride of the

United States and the world's leaders since the beginning of aviation.

But we're also here because our National Government has failed to create the economic climate necessary for this leading edge industry to thrive at home and in an increasingly competitive global economy. The condition of the domestic aviation industry has been spiraling