

growth throughout the world. It's hard for any of us to grow unless the overall world economy is growing. And I really admire the reforms the Prime Minister has pursued, and I'm going to do what I can to support a high rate of growth in the world which would drive the unemployment rate in Spain down. I think it's very important.

Cuba

Q. Mr. President, the embargo?

Q. Do you bring that to your hand—something about the Cuban embargo?

The President. I'm sure we'll talk about Cuba.

Q. The end of the embargo, maybe?

The President. Not today, no.

NOTE: The exchange began at 11:37 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez of Spain

December 6, 1993

The President. Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. In April, I had the honor and the pleasure of welcoming King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofia of Spain to the White House. Today, on the 15th anniversary of Spain's constitutions, I'm delighted to welcome Prime Minister Gonzalez.

When Spain hosted the Olympics last year, the world reveled in the modern bustle of Barcelona and the timeless beauty of the Iberian countryside. Spain's vibrant example inspires those around the world who are working to release market forces and political freedom from the shackles of the past. And few countries share as many rich cultural and historical ties to Spain as does America. The land on which I was born was once a part of the Spanish empire.

Our two countries are friends and allies. For over a decade, Prime Minister Gonzalez has led Spain with vision and with purpose. In our discussions today, I praised the Prime Minister for Spain's achievements at home during his years in office and for the increasingly important role Spain has come to play in the international community. As a strong NATO ally, vigorous proponent of European integration, current member of the U.N. Security Council, and significant trading nation, Spain has earned and exercised positions of true global leadership. Spain is serving the cause of humanitarian relief through its admirable participation in the U.N. protective force in Bosnia. We were all deeply saddened to learn about the death of a Spanish officer and the wounding of another there over the

weekend. In Central America, Spain continues to provide important support for the development of peaceful and prosperous democracies. And the Madrid Conference, organized by Spain in 1991, helped make possible a fundamental shift in the dynamics of the Middle East.

Today, the seeds planted in the Madrid are beginning to bear fruit as the Middle East moves closer to a just and lasting peace. Spain and the United States share a strong interest in expanding global economic growth and job creation. We discussed today the recent enactment of NAFTA and its potential as a building block for free trade, not only throughout Latin America but around the world. And we agreed on the critical importance of a successful conclusion to the GATT Uruguay round. All trading nations must now redouble their efforts in these last few days to secure a good GATT agreement.

The Prime Minister and I also discussed preparations underway for the NATO summit meeting in January. We both want to use that occasion to reaffirm the strength and the durability of the transatlantic relationship. We want to make concrete progress in adapting NATO, one of the most successful military alliances in all history, to the new realities and opportunities it faces.

Five centuries ago, Spain reached across the Atlantic to discover a new world. Today as partners, Spain and America set sail for a new century. And in that spirit, I am proud and honored to welcome Prime Minister Gonzalez and to extend to him and to the Spanish people a warm

greeting from all Americans.

Mr. Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Gonzalez. Thank you very much, Mr. President. Let me simply add to what President Clinton has said that it's been a great pleasure for me to make this official visit to the United States of America. This has been important to me. I have been following very closely the electoral program that led to the President's triumph and what he has been doing with them since then. And I think the Spanish press will understand quite a bit that when we talk about education, infrastructure, health reform, that we hear that talked about in the United States and we understand it; we feel it in our heart, too, because it's something we are doing.

I'd like to thank President Clinton. This visit to Washington has allowed us to cordially exchange points of view in depth on our bilateral relations, European relations, the evolutions and changes taking place in Latin America, and certain different shared objectives we have in that part of the world. And it has allowed us to talk about the NATO summit in January, as the President mentioned. There are many problems, many challenges that we face after the Eastern bloc and the Iron Curtain fell. And obviously we face new challenges that NATO must meet. I think it's also worthy to mention that the GATT conversations may lead to success in the short term.

As I said when I congratulated the President for the approval of NAFTA, I wasn't simply being courteous and diplomatic. I said that because I think that NAFTA has great importance for the U.S., for its relations with Mexico, and moreover, I think it's an axis for future developments with all of Latin America, in spite of the fact that it will be necessary to adapt to that new reality.

So I think this has been an especially interesting visit. It's a very intense visit, I would add, and I think this is a good prolog. I have invited the President to visit Spain. I think he liked the idea, and I certainly hope that he gets a chance to do so.

And I've mentioned that my government is especially interested to see him in Spain. We know that he has visited Spain in the past, that he has taken contact with our country, and I'm sure that would make it easier to explain our country to him now. And I'm sure he's inter-

ested. So I certainly hope to see Mr. Clinton, President Clinton, in Spain in the future.

Thank you.

North Korea

Q. You mentioned today that the IAEA said that North Korea's proposal for nuclear inspections was not entirely adequate. What's the United States view of that? Do we accept it in part, in full, or not at all?

The President. Well, as I said earlier, obviously we're not entirely satisfied with the response of the North Koreans to the proposal we put forward, but we're going to meet about it later today, and then we're going to consult with the South Koreans and our other allies in the area and formulate our next move. I think it's important for me to have the opportunity to meet and discuss this, and I will be doing so this afternoon. And then it's equally important for us to get back to the South Koreans and others, so I'll probably have more to say about it in the next day or two. But I think that, in fairness, I need to wait until I talk to my principal advisers and also talk to our allies.

Q. Is there any part about it you like?

The President. Well, what I liked most about it was there was some indication on their part that they understood that we needed to both start inspections and the dialog again between the South and the North; that was clear. And so it's like all these things in international diplomacy, the devil's in the details. But I'm hopeful that we can work something out, and I don't want to say more until I have a chance to meet with my advisers and also to talk to our allies.

Global Economy

Q. Would you share, for both of you, any ideas or differences about how to push the economy in the world?

The President. Actually we did. I'd let the Prime Minister answer that, but we've talked a lot about how the United States, Japan, and Europe all have obligations to try to get the growth rate up and what each of us needs to do. And we talked about how that plus a system of expanded trade could reward Spain for all the changes that you have made and generate more jobs.

Actually, the Spanish experience has been quite impressive in the growth you've had until the global recession of the last couple of years. So we've got to get out of that, and we have

to do that, it seems to me, with a coordinated economic strategy.

Mr. Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Gonzalez. Well, first of all, let me stress that we fully agree on the need for coordination, coordination of the developed world, the countries of the developed world, in order to overcome an economic crisis and promote growth and create jobs. Coordination is even more important if you take into account that the economy is becoming globalized, so we need coordination.

We agree that successful GATT negotiations leading to agreement will be positive, and I think we agree on certain specific current policies such as coordination for lowering interest rates in Europe in order to spur investment and thus contribute to restarting the European economy. I think we are well aware that growth, growth even in powerful, large countries like the U.S., if it isn't carried out in coordination and collaboration with other countries such as Europe and Japan, will encounter greater obstacles than it would with good coordination. So, that is quite clear, and I think that's the way out of a recession.

Somalia

Q. In Somalia last week, Americans saw the extraordinary scene of General Mohamed Farah Aideed being escorted out of Mogadishu in an American armored personnel carrier and flown to Ethiopia in an Army jet. How would you explain that to the families of those whose soldiers were killed in Somalia just 2 months ago?

The President. I would tell them that they were over there fighting ultimately for a peace to take place. And as I have said many times before, that action was fundamentally successful. They achieved their objective. They arrested a lot of people. We still have under custody the people who we think are the most likely to have been seriously involved in the murder of the Pakistani soldiers and to have caused difficulties for the Americans. We have started the process of having an independent commission look into that.

I said back in August that we were in the business of trying to solve this thing politically. Everyone thought it was important that General Aideed go to that peace conference. And Ambassador Oakley, who had to make this decision on the spur of the moment without much time to consider whether there were any other op-

tions, knew that the only other conceivable option was not going to be accepted and that he had to get the peace conference going. And so he thought it was the right thing to do. And I will stand behind his decision.

Summit of the Americas

Q. I would like to ask Mr. Gonzalez whether he has any comments on the U.S. initiative regarding the Summit of the Americas next year in this country.

Prime Minister Gonzalez. If you allow a comment before that, first of all, we ourselves don't have troops in Somalia, but we do in the ex-Yugoslavia. If the President will allow me, let me say that when one is involved oneself, it's harder to say. But let me say that in regard to the presence, the U.S. presence and other presence in Somalia has its cost. It has its human cost. But it has saved tens of thousands of lives, of innocent lives. It saved them from a death by hunger. Now, that isn't as visible. It's not stated as often in the media, but in honor of truth, let us say that it isn't a worthless sacrifice that has been made. Tens of thousands of people are reaping benefits from the sacrifice of those lives.

Secondly, I have been able to tell both the President and the Vice President when they mentioned this initiative to me about the summit meeting of heads of states of Latin America: When you look at the history of Latin America from the Second World War up until the present, I think there isn't a more timely, a better time, then, to bring the heads of state from all of the Americas together at one time and in one place. All of us want to see greater democracy, the elimination of violent alternatives, and a greater economic opening throughout the area, and we don't want to see any kind of return to the temptation of super-nationalism that has caused so much damage to the Americas in the past. So I think that initiative will find—[inaudible]—a very positive reception.

North Korea

Q. I wonder, sir, if I could get back to Korea for a moment, if you could characterize the near-term urgency of the situation over there, why it's so important now to settle this as quickly as possible.

The President. In Korea?

Q. Yes, sir.

The President. The near-term urgency is basically a function of what the IAEA has said. The longer they go on without adequate inspections, the more difficult it is for them to be able to certify the actual condition of the North Korean nuclear program and that's what the issue is. That's why we're trying to work it through as quickly as we can so we won't finally and completely break the chain that enables the IAEA to make certain representations to the rest of the world about where they are on that.

Someone else from Spain? Yes, ma'am.

Cuba

Q. Yes. I have a question for you. I would like to know if there is any sign of change, economic and political opening, in Cuba. Will you be able to take a moderate view and lessen the economic pressures being brought to bear on Cuba in the future?

The President. Well, as you know, the United States believes that the pressures we have brought to bear on Cuba are responsible, in some measure, for the very modest openings that we've seen coming out of Cuba with regard to travel and assets and a few other things. I see no indication that the nation or that the leadership, the Castro government, is willing to make the kind of changes that we would expect before we would change our policy.

Missile Targeting

Q. Mr. President, are you going to aim our long-range nuclear missiles away from Russia?

The President. Well, as I said back in April, around the summit with President Yeltsin, that's something we have under consideration, and we're working it through now. We're working very hard with the Russians to continue the denuclearization and to make them and ourselves and others feel more secure with that move. So that's one of the things we've had under consideration, but no final decision has been made.

Cuba

Q. I guess Cuba was an issue today. Did you learn anything from the Prime Minister's experience on Cuban issues? President, Prime Minister, do you think it would be better to have Cuba attend meetings of international organization? Would that lead to greater democracy in Cuba? Or should Cuba be not allowed to partake in these international organizations until they're a democracy?

The President. Yes, I learned something from talking to the Prime Minister. I found it very interesting. We've not had any contact with Cuba for a good long while now. So I asked him a number of questions, and I listened very closely to what he said.

Prime Minister Gonzalez. I think everyone can understand that we agree on what our common goals are for Cuba. In other words, I think we all want to see Cuba to join in with the rest of the Latin American countries in moving towards greater democracy and open economy. I think we agree on what we want Cuba to become. We have had some Ibero-American meetings, and in those meetings we did not exclude anyone. But I can understand that if we're talking about a meeting of all the democratic-elected leaders of the hemisphere, there would be exceptions and not just Cuba. I imagine Haiti would not be invited. If all the democratically elected leaders were meeting, Haiti wouldn't be there, either.

Health Care Reform

Q. Mr. President, right now the American Medical Association is meeting in New Orleans, and it seems like there is a big question about whether or not they are going to support your health program. How important is that to you, and what do you say to them about the obvious disagreement that's going on there?

The President. Well, first of all, I have been, frankly, pleased by the constructive response that the leadership of the AMA has taken to this point. As you know, it is a very different response than has been taken to any other health care initiative in the 20th century, different than their response to Medicaid or Medicare or to previous efforts at universal coverage. And I would hope they would do what the leadership has been doing, which is to explain what they want and where they differ and to keep working with us.

Let me say that I'm also very impressed and gratified by the response that a number of the other physicians' groups have had, the family practitioners, the pediatricians, and others who have been much more uniformly supportive.

There are a couple of things that I would expect are driving the debate at their meeting. First of all, there are some groups of specialists who disagree with our proposal to shift the Federal investment in medical schools to encourage

more family practitioners. But I don't see how anyone rationally could object to that since we are only turning out about 15 percent of our graduates in family practice, and we need more than twice that, looking ahead.

Then there are those who feel so strongly that fee-for-service is the right way for doctors to be reimbursed that they object to the fact that our plan would require a fee-for-service option to be given to everybody who doesn't have insurance now but would also require other options as well. To that, I would respond that those folks don't have any health insurance at all now and this will make it possible for them to get some, and some will choose fee-for-service.

Moreover, among those who do have insurance, every year fewer and fewer and fewer of them have that option. So, we're not accelerating a process that's not already well underway. We're simply trying to cover everyone on more or less equal terms, and we're going to at least give people the option to choose fee-for-service, which is something many people who are already covered don't have. So, I would hope they would consider those things and continue the dialog.

Q. Do you need them to get—[inaudible]

The President. I don't know about that. The more support we have, the easier it will be to pass. That's like anything else.

Angola

Q. On the role of fostering new democracies in the world that you both referred, I would like to hear your comments, both of you, on the situation in Angola, the lack of visible progress on the ground, and if you envisage any wider exercise that, in this case, that we see in Somalia these days, for restoring peace in Angola.

The President. It's a different situation than Somalia was when we went in there and much more hazardous. I don't foresee that. We have named a special emissary there. We are working

hard on it, and I'm very disturbed by it. You know, the loss of life has been very severe. The number of children maimed by land mines there, I believe, is now the largest number in any conflict that we know about. I hope we can make some progress. I discuss it with our people at least once a week, sometimes more often. And we sometimes feel we are making progress, and then it slips back. So, I wish I had a more hopeful scenario. I can tell you the United States is involved in it, that we are keeping up very closely with events, and we are doing our best to try to bring the conflict to a peaceful conclusion.

Prime Minister Gonzalez. I was in Angola just before the last elections, and it would seem that the international community has taken a firm decision to move forward respecting the results of any truly free and fair elections. The international community recognized that those elections were free and fair and that the results should thus be respected.

However, one of the parties in Angola did not respect the elections and were probably one of the bloodiest—[inaudible]—of the civil war that ever existed. So internationally, I think we need a high degree of coordination to try to get both parties to simply stop and try to help the country get back on the track of economic development. It's a country with tremendous resources and has tremendous economic potential. We haven't talked about that today, but I think all of us in the international community agree that we have to try to get those who ignored the rules of democracy in the past to respect the electoral results.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President's 37th news conference began at 2:01 p.m. at Blair House. In his remarks, he referred to Somali warlord Mohamed Farah Aideed. Prime Minister Gonzalez spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks to Senior Citizens

December 6, 1993

Today we will have between 7,000 and 8,000 senior citizens going through the White

House—just today—seeing and getting the tour and everything. So I'm glad you did it, and