

We congratulate you, Mr. President, and all Ukrainians on your remarkable achievements in the almost 3 years since regaining your freedom. You held a historic referendum and began the hard work of reform and building democratic institutions. Above all, Ukrainians are weathering the immense difficulties of political and economic transition. In the face of continuous hardship, you have shown patience, bravery, and the ability to overcome all obstacles, an ability your young athletes, like Oksana Baiul, showed so spectacularly in the Olympic competition.

We honor you, Mr. President, in our Nation's Capital as the man who is leading a Ukrainian renaissance. Your boldness in the face of daunting problems reminds us of one of our greatest leaders, Franklin Roosevelt, who provided leadership in a time of great hardship in the United States. Like him, you inherited a nation in the throes of economic depression. And like him, you have lighted the darkness and created hope.

You have blazed a path ahead on the two most critical issues for the future, economic reform and nuclear weapons. Thanks to your leadership, Ukraine is making the hard choices that will ensure the prosperity Ukrainians deserve. And thanks to your vision and that of the Ukrainian Parliament, you are removing the threat of nuclear weapons and laying the

groundwork for an era of peace with your neighbors. I salute the courage you have shown.

America will stand with you to support your independence, your territorial integrity, and your reforms. We are bound together by a dedication to peace and a devotion to freedom. The flame of that commitment to freedom was kept burning during the cold war by nearly a million Ukrainian-Americans, some of whom are with us here today, who never forgot Ukraine and who are today contributing to its reawakening. Now that your country is again free, all Americans are determined that the flame of Ukrainian freedom will burn ever brighter. We will stand with you.

Seventy-seven years ago today, Mr. President, on November 22d, 1917, another generation of Ukrainian leaders declared the independence of Ukraine. It was a tragedy that civil war and bolshevism doomed that new state while it was still in its infancy.

Today we are pleased and honored to welcome you, the leader of a Ukraine that is conquering the challenges of independence, poised to fulfill its hopes, a nation that will grow into one of the great nations of Europe. And we say, *Vitayemo*. Welcome.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:08 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

The President's News Conference With President Kuchma of Ukraine *November 22, 1994*

President Clinton. Good afternoon. President Kuchma and I had an excellent set of meetings today, and I have very much enjoyed getting to know him. The work we have done follows on the successful meetings in Kiev between President Kuchma and Vice President Gore. It has strengthened the friendship between our two nations that was already on a very firm basis.

Since his election just 5 months ago, President Kuchma has bravely and squarely confronted the two greatest challenges facing Ukraine, economic reform and the nuclear question. He has taken hard, practical steps required to secure a more peaceful and prosperous future for his people. I applaud his leadership and the

leadership of the Ukrainian Parliament in acceding last week to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Ukraine's move is a major step toward ensuring that nuclear missiles never again will be targeted at the children of our nations. I told President Kuchma that the United States will continue to work with Ukraine to dismantle completely its nuclear arsenal. Three hundred and fifty million dollars of our total \$900 million, 2-year aid package is targeted toward that goal, and there could be no better use of the funds.

In addition, Ukraine's decision will permit the United States, Russia, and the United Kingdom to extend formal security assurances to Ukraine. It will allow the START I Treaty to be brought into force, enabling the process of nuclear weap-

ons reductions to move forward. It will permit us to strengthen our military relations with Ukraine. It will open up Ukraine to a new range of business and technological opportunities. In addition, we pledge to help defray some of the costs for participation by Ukraine in the Partnership For Peace.

On economic issues, the President and I discussed the far-reaching reforms he has initiated. These reforms put Ukraine on the right path toward a future of increasing prosperity and economic integration with the Western market economies.

At this moment in our history, we have an extraordinary opportunity to improve the lives of all of our people by working more closely together and trading together more. Ukraine's reform program can speed this development, and I have pledged to support it to the fullest of our ability to do so. In 1994 and '95, our economic assistance of \$550 million, including balance-of-payment support, will be speedily delivered to help to stabilize the economy. Our new U.S.-Ukraine enterprise fund will soon start making loans to new small businesses. We'll continue our work together in aerospace and high tech.

As Ukraine's economy continues to improve, the opportunities for both our countries will multiply. The IMF and the World Bank are also working hard to make sure these reforms bear fruit, and Russia and Turkmenistan have given badly needed help. I'll continue to press our G-7 partners, especially the European Union and Japan, to do more to contribute to this effort.

President Kuchma and I discussed other issues, including the nuclear power complex at Chernobyl. The G-7 nations and Ukraine have a common interest in agreeing on a plan to improve the safety and the efficiency in the Ukrainian energy sector and in closing down the Chernobyl plants.

We've worked hard today. And the agreements we've reached promise to help deliver concrete results: increased security, increased prosperity for Ukrainians and Americans. Our relations continue to grow stronger as they have since Ukrainian independence just 3 years ago. Our friendship will grow because our futures are intertwined.

I'd now like to turn the microphone over to President Kuchma for his remarks, and then we'll answer your questions, beginning with an

American journalist, alternating with Ukrainian journalists.

Mr. President.

President Kuchma. Thank you very much, Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen. President Clinton and I have just signed very important documents, the Charter of Ukrainian-American Partnership, Friendship, and Cooperation and also the Agreement on Cooperation on Space Research for Peaceful Purposes. We also signed several bilateral accords on the ministerial level.

Thus, by joint effort, both countries have made another concrete step toward solidifying the legal basis of relations between the United States and Ukraine and enriching the relationship of democratic partnership with practical content.

The signing of these documents has become possible due to a constructive and purposeful effort of politicians, diplomats and experts in both countries. It is noteworthy that the charter signed today removed the last barriers which to an extent held back the development of Ukrainian-American relations in a very first and extremely important stage of their formation. We can now say that we have not simply signed several bilateral documents but opened the way to a full-fledged cooperation in the political economic, humanitarian, and other areas in the interests of both nations. That was the main purpose of my state visit to the United States.

The current Ukrainian-American summit, the talks we had today, which can be characterized with a spirit of a constructive, businesslike, and mutual interest in reaching practical results. And I'm very thankful to the President of the United States, Bill Clinton, and Vice President Al Gore. Thus, we are the participants and witnesses of a process where our relations are being formed step by step and cooperation is being enriched, such a perspective, to our extent, in the development of relations and in the interest of both nations.

Ahead of us lies practical work to realize the reached, signed accords. Without such implementation, we will not be able to move ahead to a stronger bilateral cooperation. I would like to assure you, Mr. President, that Ukraine will fulfill its pledges and is ready for a further active cooperation.

Senator Jesse Helms

Q. Mr. President, I'd like to ask you about some recent comments by Senator Jesse Helms.

Last week he said that you weren't fit to be Commander in Chief, and then yesterday he said that you better have a bodyguard if you ever come to North Carolina. But I wonder what's your reaction to his remarks and if you feel comfortable with him being chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee that's going to oversee your foreign policy?

President Clinton. I think the remarks were unwise and inappropriate. The President oversees the foreign policy of the United States. And the Republicans will decide in whom they will repose their trust and confidence; that's a decision for them to make, not for me.

NATO Membership

Q. President Clinton, first of all, for you a question. Will American policy change in Budapest in December towards expansion of NATO to the Eastern Europe? And would you mention Ukraine as a NATO member without Russia? And President Kuchma, would you imagine Ukraine being a member of NATO, not now but in a couple of years?

President Clinton. First, let me say that I believe we will have discussions in Budapest about how we might go about expanding NATO but not about when and which particular countries would be let in; I think that is premature. Secondly, as I have said all along, I am working hard for the prospect of an integrated Europe. I have encouraged it economically; I have encouraged it politically; I have encouraged it in terms of security. Therefore, I would not say or do anything that would exclude the possibility of Ukrainian membership. That would be up to Ukraine, and it will be up to all of us, working together, to try to determine what is the best way to promote the security of what I hope and believe can be a united Europe, something that has never before occurred, I might add, in the whole history of nation states on the European Continent. We have an historic opportunity, and we ought to do everything we can to seize it.

President Kuchma. I would like to make my comment. I would like to say that I do agree with President Clinton. The security on the European Continent is a very important issue, and it shouldn't be solved by the revolutionary way but rather by the evolutionary method. It is not important who enters where, but it is very important that we do not have a new Berlin Wall in Europe.

Republican Leaders

Q. Mr. President, since the election returns, the Republicans have played hardball, and they have threatened legislative reprisals against your agenda and also have tried to force tradeoffs on GATT. What are you going to do about it?

President Clinton. Well, first, let me answer the GATT question. I am encouraged by the progress that we have made in working with Senator Dole on the substantive issues surrounding GATT. And I appreciate the very constructive attitude that has prevailed there. I disagree that there should be some deal cut regarding capital gains; I don't think that's the right thing to do. This is an important agreement on its own merits. Everyone concedes it will lead to hundreds of thousands of jobs.

In the wake of the election, let me say that one of the things that has been discovered again is something that I began talking about several years ago, long before I ever thought of running for President, and that is the declining wages of many of our working people. It's not surprising that a lot of people aren't a lot happier, even when we add millions of jobs, if all of the people who were working in the first place think they're never going to get a raise and don't think their jobs are more secure.

Many Americans think that trade causes that. That was one of the fights over NAFTA, if you'll remember. My argument is that we have an open trading system here, so we already get whatever downside there is to trade. We know when we create jobs related to trade, they pay on average 13 percent higher than average jobs. So my argument for the GATT is that it will raise incomes of American workers. And I think that is our most urgent economic job, not just to create jobs and to keep low inflation and high investment but also to pursue whatever strategies are available to us to raise incomes. So I think we should pursue the GATT vigorously. I think it's in the interest of the American working people. I hope it will prevail.

As to these other issues, again I will say there are a lot of areas where we can work together with the Republicans. We can finish the battle that this administration began with the last Congress to change what I would call yesterday's Government. We have begun the downsizing of the Government; we have begun the deregula-

tion that we need to do. We know there is much more that can be done.

We still have an enormous amount to do in the area of political reform that surely we can agree on: the line-item veto, campaign finance reform, lobby reform, applying the laws to Congress that they apply to the private sector, the Kempthorne-Glenn bill on mandates, which I strongly endorsed and worked on, which was caught up in all the delays in the last session, to reduce mandates on State governments, giving the States and localities more flexibility in many areas, a lot of the things we can work on.

I do not believe the American people want the next Congress to repeal the things which benefited ordinary Americans. I don't think they want to repeal family leave or the Brady bill or the assault weapons ban or any of those substantive achievements, and I will resist that.

Q. Are you surprised at the vengeful attitude?

President Clinton. Well, let me say, you characterize it in that way. I can only tell you that my job is to stand up for the interests of ordinary Americans; that's what I will do. I will do my very best to work with them, where we can work together. There are opportunities in the area of governmental reform where their contract and their agenda overlaps with mine. I will do my best to resist exploding the Government deficit, sinking the economic recovery, or repealing the gains that working people made in the last session of Congress.

Ukraine-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, you said that you have made another step in the development of relations. What would be the realization of that step? How do you visualize it? And is there long-term perspective in the nuclear disarmament, that the United States can help Ukraine?

President Kuchma. I'm very glad that you are asking about the future, but I would like the current agreements between Ukraine and the United States be realized, first of all. Then we will think about the future in long perspective. Currently, we have agreed on some things which provide very longstanding perspective for—[inaudible].

President Clinton. If I could just answer that question briefly, it is a measure of the importance that we attach to Ukraine and to its impact on the entire future of Europe well into

the next century that in this 2-year period, a very difficult budget situation in America where we are trying to bring our deficit down and where we are cutting overall spending, Ukraine is the fourth largest recipient of American foreign assistance in the entire world because we think it is so important to complete the work of denuclearization, but also because we think your long-term economic development, your commitment to democracy and to an open economy is so important that we want to be there over the long run.

So, I agree with the President. We have to do what we are already agreeing to do. But there will be much more in the years ahead. As your country continues to grow and flourish, there will be much more.

Federal Budget and Prayer in Schools

Q. Mr. President, there seems to be still some confusion over your position on the constitutional amendment involving prayer in public schools. And today there's some confusion resulting from Secretary Reich's comments, a proposal that he floated that \$111 billion could be cut in subsidies for big corporations, as part of your new budget, over 5 years. Your Commerce Secretary says he doesn't know anything about that. What exactly is your position on that proposal and on prayer in public schools?

President Clinton. Let me answer the second question first, because I think we can dispose of it rather quickly. I have not reviewed the specifics of Secretary Reich's proposal. As I understand it, he was speaking to the Democratic Leadership Council group today, and they have what they call a cut and invest theory which calls for a complex of further budget cuts, phasing out various tax subsidies and then using that money to finance the middle class tax cut as well as further investments in education. Conceptually, it's an attractive idea. I have to have time to review the details in the context of our budget. I have made absolutely no decision about any of the specifics in Secretary Reich's proposal.

Now, with regard to the school prayer amendment, let me make a few general comments, first of all. I want to make it absolutely clear that this is not a political issue with me; it never has been, and it never will be. Secondly, I have a very long record on this issue. I have been coming to grips with it for at least a decade.

The comments I made in Indonesia, I'm afraid—and those of you who were there with me know we had been on a rather rigorous trip schedule for the last few weeks—may have been overread. I made a generalized commitment after the election in the press conference that I had, and also to all of our people, that we would read and review or listen to any proposals the Republicans might have before condemning them. We ought to at least listen, and we ought to look for ways to work together.

My position on the prayer issue is, I have always supported a moment of silence. When I was a Governor, I supported the moment of silence legislation. I do not believe that we should have a constitutional amendment to carve out and legalize teacher- or student-led prayer

in the classroom. I think that that is inherently coercive in a nation with the amount of religious diversity we have in this country. I think that would be an error.

As I understand it, that is what is being proposed by the Republican Congressman from Oklahoma, and I would be opposed to that. I don't believe that—I think the very nature of the circumstances mean that, for large numbers of our children, it could not be truly voluntary, and I would oppose it.

NOTE: The President's 82d news conference began at 4:56 p.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building. President Kuchma spoke in Ukrainian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Joint Summit Statement by the Presidents of the United States and Ukraine

November 22, 1994

On the occasion of his State visit to the United States on November 21–23, 1994, Leonid D. Kuchma, President of Ukraine, met with William J. Clinton, President of the United States, to open a qualitatively new stage in the growing U.S.-Ukrainian partnership aimed at furthering bilateral and multilateral cooperation on a broad range of issues between the two countries.

The Presidents renewed their shared commitment to broaden the bilateral democratic partnership into which the two countries have entered. President Clinton underscored the importance the United States attaches to the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. In this context, President Clinton assured President Kuchma that the United States will continue to give high priority to supporting Ukraine in its efforts to achieve genuine economic independence, its transition to a market economy and its integration into the global economic system.

Bilateral Relations

In keeping with their commitment to strengthen bilateral relations, President Clinton and President Kuchma signed the Charter of American-Ukrainian Partnership, Friendship and Cooperation. The Presidents praised the Charter

as the framework for developing closer relations over the coming years. President Clinton noted in particular Ukraine's valuable contribution to this new framework by its momentous decision to accede to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which is an historic step forward on the road toward strengthening the international nuclear weapons nonproliferation regime and global security and stability.

The Presidents inaugurated this new framework of bilateral relations by signing an Agreement on Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space for Peaceful Purposes and agreed to work closely to explore additional bilateral cooperative space-related opportunities in the future. They noted that this process had begun with a U.S.-Ukraine discussion of Ukraine's interest in the commercial launch market.

Both Presidents expressed their determination to broaden bilateral cooperation in a range of new areas. During the visit, the two governments brought into force a bilateral customs cooperation agreement and announced their intention to conclude negotiations on a bilateral civil aviation agreement. The Presidents recognized the threat that organized crime and corruption pose for reform and expanded business activity