

And I think he's a good man. I think he just needs to keep talking about his life and his record and what he wants to do. I'm looking forward to the hearings.

[At this point, one group of reporters left the room, and another group entered.]

Russia

Q. Mr. President, may I ask a question? Do you see eye to eye with the Chancellor when it comes to supporting Boris Yeltsin?

The President. I think we are almost completely in agreement on our positions. Now, we haven't had a chance to talk; we've just arrived. But certainly over the last 2 years since I've

been President, our positions have been the same. And we have worked very hard to try to promote democracy and progress within Russia. And we have done it together, and I think we will continue to work together on this.

Q. Do you support economic sanctions because of the situation in Chechnya?

The President. I don't think—we just started, and we haven't had a chance to have a conversation yet. We'll have a press conference later, and we'll all answer questions then.

NOTE: The exchange began at 10:40 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 Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany February 9, 1995

The President. Good afternoon. Please be seated. It's a pleasure for me to welcome Chancellor Kohl to the White House again. For more than 12 years American Presidents have looked to Helmut Kohl for insight and cooperation, for friendship and support on the most pressing issues of the day. Thanks to his wisdom and leadership, the relationship between Germany and the United States has strengthened and grown, becoming a force for positive change in the post-cold-war world. America has no better friend than Chancellor Kohl.

The Chancellor's visit comes at an important time. One of the most vital issues we discussed today is building a more integrated Europe in the wake of this new era. The Chancellor and I reaffirmed our intention to press ahead with the enlargement of NATO to include Europe's new democracies. The current deliberations are moving at the right pace. We agreed that the inevitable process of NATO expansion will be gradual and open, that there will be no surprises. Its conditions, timing, and military implications must be well and widely known in advance.

We also agreed that in parallel with expansion, NATO must develop close and strong ties with Russia. Chancellor Kohl and I will consult closely on the form this new partnership will take.

We share a vision of European security that embraces a democratic Russia, and we will continue to reassure President Yeltsin that an expanded NATO will pose no threat to a democratic Russia.

Recent events in Russia were an important part of our discussions today, especially the tragedy in Chechnya. Chancellor Kohl and I are in full agreement: The violence there must end, and negotiation must begin. Every day the fighting continues, more innocent civilians fall victim. In response to international appeals, the United States will offer up to \$20 million in humanitarian and refugee assistance to alleviate their distress.

In our conversations with President Yeltsin, we have both made clear our fears about the corrosive effect the conflict in Chechnya can have on democratic, market-oriented reform in the Russian Republic. But the conflict has not changed the nature of our interests, namely that Russia's efforts to become a stable, democratic nation must succeed.

Today the Chancellor and I remain determined to stick to our course of patient, responsible support for Russian reform. But help can only be extended if Russia stays on the course and continues the hard work of building demo-

cratic institutions and implementing market-oriented reforms.

The Chancellor and I also discussed a broad range of other issues, including our efforts through the Contact Group to reach a negotiated settlement in Bosnia. Both of us believe it's essential to do what we can to support the Muslim-Croat Federation, which ended hostilities between two of the three parties to that conflict. We believe that strengthening the Federation will provide a concrete, positive step toward an eventual peace agreement.

I also want to thank the Chancellor publicly for Germany's role in assembling the stabilization package for Mexico, which helped to avert a larger and far more dangerous financial crisis. The Chancellor and I support efforts in the G-7 to review our international institutions, a necessary step to ensure that they are fit for the challenges of the next half century.

Finally, we're in full agreement that the United Nations should not lift sanctions on Iraq until that country meets all the conditions set forth in the U.N. resolutions, something so far Iraq has failed to do.

As you can see, in a short time we covered a great deal of ground. Once again we've discovered much common ground. Our nations share a vision of an integrated Europe, of strong bonds across the Atlantic, of a world that continues to grow more peaceful and more prosperous. Our agenda is ambitious, and the tasks ahead are not small. But I'm convinced that working together we will be equal to the challenge.

Chancellor.

Chancellor Kohl. Thank you very much, Mr. President. Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen: Permit me to preface my actual statement by a brief remark. What I'd like to do, Mr. President, is to offer my special respect and my special condolences to you, Mr. President, and to the American people on the occasion of the death of Senator Fulbright. I'm saying this as a member of a generation who, even when they were students, wanted nothing more than to obtain a Fulbright scholarship. Few men and women who enter politics ever succeed to have their names affiliated once and for all with a specific program. For many Germans, for many Europeans, Senator Fulbright was a man who we did not know personally, but he was someone who gave a signal after the Second World War and after the end of the Nazi barbarism—

and I'm saying this very pointedly this year, when on May 8th we will be looking back to 50 years—the name that was closely related with openness, with friendship, and with people striving together. I think it's only fitting that I, the German Chancellor, being here today, should offer my condolences as I just did.

Mr. President, thank you and thank your staff, especially the Vice President, for the very warm and cordial reception we were given, as usual. These talks, which many might find boring, are talks which took place once again in an exceedingly friendly and warm atmosphere. And we aren't done with them; we will be continuing them. These talks of ours make a great deal of sense, even though we do talk on the phone regularly and frequently. But there's a difference between telephone conversations and conversations eye to eye. And that is why I am especially happy to be able, once again, to be here in Washington with my delegation.

I need not add much to what the President said in his preface. We are in full agreement as far as the topics and our views on them are concerned. It's very important to me, personally, to make very clear in public for the benefit of all Americans that the German policy and the policy that I, as the Federal Chancellor, am pursuing be proceeding in close coordination with the President of the United States.

We are living in radically changing times, times of dramatic changes; everybody knows that. We are finding out today that Germany is increasingly feeling how the situation has changed. Many of our countrymen no longer live under a regime that subjugated them for 40 years, and at this point, the question of stability is more urgent than ever before. And that is why to us, the Germans and the Europeans, NATO and the transatlantic security alliance with the United States be preserved because they guarantee our future.

This alliance is one that in a changing world will increasingly have to shoulder responsibility for stability throughout Europe. I fully agree with President Clinton in that the preparatory work for extension of NATO we should proceed in accordance with the program we outlined in Brussels last year. It is a gradual process, and when I say gradual, I mean step by step. It's entirely possible that some of these steps will be larger than others.

It is a process which we in Europe and in Germany will possibly be doing in parallel with

the full expansion of the European Union, although they are not directly connected. The expansion of NATO is part of an overall security concept which is intended to make sure that we do not get new boundaries within Europe, and that is why a close partnership with Russia and Ukraine is especially important. NATO and the European Union have to combine their strengths, to combine their forces in pursuit of the common goal that we have with a view to what used to be called, in a simplified fashion, the Warsaw Pact countries. We must join forces to further democracy in the Central and Eastern European countries. And I want to urge everyone here to realize that this process will require a great deal of patience.

As a German, I am more aware than others how difficult it is to take a country where people speak the same language and bring two parts of it together after 40 years of complete isolation. I know the misunderstandings that can arise on simple, everyday matters. And if I try to imagine, and by God I do, what it means that since 1917 Russians lived under the Communists—being aware that the Romanovs weren't exactly a picnic either—when you look at all these facts, you can appreciate how difficult the process is that is going on in Russia at this time.

And since that is the case, we agreed, the President and I and our governments are agreed, that we should encourage Russia to pursue the course of reform. What that means is that we have a vital interest—the Germans in particular, because we are close neighbors—we have an elemental interest in furthering reforms and cooperating with Russia.

I would like to underline that I still support President Yeltsin, as I've always done. And I do it with the objective of enabling reforms in Russia, enable them to introduce market economy and create a state based on the rule of law. As I say that, I'm stating very clearly that we will support Russia in its legitimate efforts to preserve the territorial integrity of its country, but that does require that Russia also stand by its commitments in the area of human rights and other international standards that they have committed themselves to, making Russia a country open to reform.

I support what the President said regarding events in Chechnya, but let me add that our shared wish is to have a peaceful situation, in the best sense of the word, return to Chechnya.

We wish for the authorities in that country to pursue their responsibilities in the manner I tried to outline just now.

And now, let me state very briefly that we are in full agreement that we all must try to diminish and end the horrible suffering of people there. We shall jointly pursue that matter. It's an area where hundreds of years of histories have led to the situation that we have now, but that shouldn't discourage us. We must do the best we can. Time is running out. Winter will soon be over. That means at the end of winter, which generally has a paralyzing effect on fighting, the full armed conflict might once again rear its head in that area. There is no alternative to the combined efforts of the Americans and the Europeans in the Bosnian area.

Thank you very much, Mr. President, for the kind welcome you have extended to us. And now both of us, as we are required, are looking forward to the many questions that you will doubtless have.

The President. Let me say just before I recognize the first question, I'd like to thank the Chancellor for his expressions. I think he could speak not only for the people of Germany but for the—largely, for the people of the rest of the world, of condolences on the death of Senator Fulbright.

As many of you know, this is a sad day for me personally. We'd been friends for more than 25 years. And I'm just profoundly grateful today for the conviction that he imparted to me when I was a young man that we could make peace in the world if we seek better understanding, if we promote the exchanges among people, if we advance the cause of global education. And for what you said, Chancellor, I am very grateful.

Surgeon General Nominee Foster

Q. Mr. President, how do you respond to criticism from Republicans and Democrats that the White House badly fumbled Dr. Foster's nomination? And how can you convince skeptical Senators about his credibility and allay their concerns about his abortion—[inaudible]?

The President. Well, first of all, I think the question about how it was handled was answered yesterday as well as can be answered. Dr. Foster represented himself last night on television, I thought, rather well.

I have confidence in him. I do not believe that anything I have heard about him disquali-

fies him from serving as Surgeon General. It is, it seems to me, an unfair characterization, but perhaps too typical of the appointments process generally, to try to define him in the way that those who believe that all abortions should be criminal have tried to define him. I mean, here's a man who's delivered thousands and thousands and thousands of babies and devoted the rest of his time in the last several years to trying to end the scourge of teen pregnancy and illegitimacy in our country and thereby to reduce the number of abortions and to solve one of our most profound problems.

He was recognized by President Bush for that effort. He has been endorsed by Dr. Sullivan, the HHS Director in the Bush administration, as well as by a host of others. I have confidence in him. I think he's a good man. I think he'll be a good Surgeon General. And I think that that ought to be the issue.

And I do not believe that we should be under any illusion here. This is the—the Senate will have an opportunity to decide on his qualifications and his life and his work. And I think to allow a man like this who has lived the life he has and has garnered the endorsements he has from the people who have known him and worked with him of both parties for 40 years would be a grave mistake.

I support him. I want him to have his hearings. I believe the Senate will support him. And I think we should not back away from this.

Now, I know that those who believe that we should abolish the right to choose and make conduct which is now legal, criminal, will try to seize upon this nomination to negate the work of a man's life and define him in cardboard cut-out terms, but I think that is wrong. And I am for him, and I think the American people will be for him when they hear him.

Russia

Q. Chancellor, Mr. President—[inaudible]—President Yeltsin, after the events in Chechnya, as being a stable force and a trustworthy partner for peace?

Chancellor Kohl. Well, you know, I am probably just as much as anyone in the world not able to actually make any predictions, any safe predictions, about the future of the Russian country or about the office of the President of Russia. It's a dramatic—it's a country that currently undergoes dramatic changes. And I tried to explain this in my introductory remarks.

And my position and the position, I believe, of the President is rather easily defined. We—I personally have experienced Boris Yeltsin as a man on whom one can rely absolutely, as a man who, to the last dotting of the "i's" and crossing of the "t's," has fulfilled his obligations. When they withdrew the Soviet troops from Germany, he completely adhered to what he promised. And obviously I know that in Russian military circles there were quite different forces at work at the time. Still, they kept their promises.

And I believe that in supporting him and in showing a spirit of friendship towards him, we should not only see support for reforms and the building of democracy, the building of the economy, introducing the rule of law, but this friendship should also give us the right to tell him quite clearly that he must not deceive our hopes and that, although we do have understanding, a certain amount of understanding for certain setbacks occurring, but still reforms have to go on.

And I'm saying this not in the sense of actually making any conditions, but for me at least, that would be a prerequisite for continuing support of the aims that he pursues, democracy and rule of law and all of that. There are people who consider themselves to be particularly intelligent and particularly wise and who now say, "Well, it can't work, so let's not get involved in that." Then there are other people, and they exist also in Germany, they think to be even more intransigent; they think they can ride this wave of disappointment, of bitterness, in view of the pictures that are related to us every day from Chechnya and who want to push this man into a corner and want to deal with this matter quite differently. I can only warn people to adopt such a course.

I don't know whether what I'm suggesting here today will be successful, but I'm absolutely sure, absolutely convinced that if we were to push the forces of reform and the President into a corner, isolate them, and say, "We give up on you. There's nothing that we can do here," that this will immediately bring us back to the old, bad structures of the past. And I don't want in a few years ahead to be facing the accusation that had we acted in time and reasonably, we could have prevented this.

The President. I have confidence in President Yeltsin. Every time he has given me his word, he has done what he said he would do, with

drawing troops from the Balkans, for example—I mean, from the Baltics, and carrying through on all of our nuclear agreements, and all the things that we have worked on.

I think that all of us knew—and before I met with Boris Yeltsin the first time in April of '93, the first time I'd met with him as President, I tried to caution everyone that Russia was facing a difficult and a challenging period, the road would not always be even, and we wouldn't always agree with every decision that was made and everything that happened. But should we continue to work with President Yeltsin and to support democracy and reform and to say honestly where we have concerns and disagreements? I think that's what mature countries do. And that's what people who are struggling for a goal like democracy where it has long been denied and prosperity and reform where it has long been absent, that's what people have to do. You have to be willing to deal with the rough spots in the road, say where you disagree and stay on course. And the United States and Germany must do that. We have to keep on course. And I believe we're doing the right thing.

Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International].

Welfare Reform

Q. Mr. President, there is a Republican move afoot on Capitol Hill to deny the disadvantaged who now receive welfare benefits their guaranteed benefits. What do you think of that and all of the other moves that are—would deny rights under the Constitution against searches without a warrant, repealing the crime bill, not guaranteeing there won't be cuts with the balanced budget—what does all this mean?

The President. It's hard to know what it means. No bill has passed yet, but there's been a lot of moving around. I said yesterday in this room what I thought about the crime bill, and I had—all the law enforcement officers in the country were symbolically represented here. We don't believe it should be changed in ways that weaken our commitment to putting 100,000 police on the street, and basically spend more money on prisons and less money on police and prevention.

With regard to the welfare reform, I think that I owe it to them to review the substance of the bill, and I will. You know what my position is. My position is we should change the

system in ways that promote more work, more responsible parenting, give more flexibility to the States but have a strong, strong protection for the interests and welfare of the children of this country. There is a national interest in making sure that the food, the nutrition, the health care of the children of this country are protected. That is not a State-by-State interest; that is a national interest. Now, I'm willing to go a long way toward letting the States implement and design their own welfare reform programs. We should.

The other issue I want to—I didn't see in the summary today is that the Republican Governors were very strong in saying that they did think the one area where we needed stronger national action was in the area of child support enforcement, that the States were not capable of having the kind of tough child support enforcement that we need because fully more than a third of the orders today that are not enforced involve more than one State.

So I want to review all these details, but I think, let's keep the principles in mind. I will evaluate their proposal by those principles. And if it promotes work and family and protects children, then I will be favorable toward it, even with a lot more flexibility to the States; I want that. But I want all those criteria protected. So I'm going to have to look very closely on the, it sounds to me like on the child protection issue, and I will do that.

Mexican Loan Guarantees

Q. Chancellor Kohl, you did not respond to President Clinton's comments about aid to Mexico. Now, your government's representative at the IMF abstained on the vote last week extending \$17.8 billion in credits to Mexico. Are you now satisfied with the way the Clinton administration handled the multilateral aid package, and do you have assurances that in the future you'll be consulted more extensively?

The President. I thought you were a German on that side. [Laughter] Go ahead.

Chancellor Kohl. I am content. I'm satisfied with the result. After all, we did agree on the road to that decision one or the other hurdle could have been taken more elegantly. But, you know, these kinds of things happen, once we sway to one side, once we sway to—another time be swayed to another. If you want to try and drive a wedge between us on this question, you're not going to be successful.

Bosnia

Q. Mr. President, in a couple of weeks Congress is probably going to vote to lift the arms embargo against Bosnia. If such a demand comes up, will you comply with it? Will you change your policy? And Chancellor, if the Congress votes to lift the arms embargo, what will be the reaction of Germany and what will be the reaction of the Europeans?

Chancellor Kohl. Well, I think we should talk about that when we get that decision. Today, I'm going to be on the Hill. Later on I shall be talking to Senators and Congressmen, and I'm going to advise that we do as much together as we can, that we closely coordinate things.

The President. I'm not sure that's going to happen. I certainly don't think it should happen. You know what my position is.

North Korea

Q. Mr. President, there are some reports that the nuclear agreement with North Korea is beginning to unravel. Is that the case? And are you confident that it can go forward as you had originally—

The President. Absolutely. I'm under—I have no information that it's beginning to unravel. And I think it can go forward. I think it should go forward. I think it must go forward. It is a major part of our strategy to protect the world from nuclear proliferation. And I feel very strongly about it. We must go forward.

Is there a German question?

World Bank

Q. Mr. Chancellor, President Clinton talked about reviewing the tasks of the international institutions. Following the difficulties here you mentioned regarding the Mexico package, do you think the Federal Republic is going to insist on reviewing the credit lines and the credit award lines at the World Bank?

Chancellor Kohl. I'm in favor of that, not simply because of this particular experience; I think we should review our work from time to time at regular intervals. I hope that we'll be dealing with a very peaceful problem when you talk about financing developments in the Middle East. That's one example which I do hope will turn into a really peaceful challenge for us, assuming the peace process actually succeeds. Other than that, I'd be willing to stop and think at every stage whether the structures we had hitherto been using are the best ones.

Let me add that these are things one has to talk about. They need not be announced to the public before coordination has been achieved. We should simply talk to one another.

Terrorism

Q. Mr. President, what can you tell us about the arrest of this terrorist suspect in Pakistan? And what are the ramifications, in your opinion, for terrorist cells or networks or the breakup of these groups here in the United States and abroad?

The President. I can tell you that I'm very pleased about it, and that—obviously, there are some things that are better left unsaid, but I would refer back to the statement that I issued. This country is serious about combating terrorism. We are going to put a lot of resources and effort into it. The Attorney General today is releasing the legislation that we are sending to the Hill that we very much hope will pass with bipartisan support. And this should be further evidence that we take this problem very seriously, for ourselves, and for our friends, and the friends of freedom around the world. And we continue to stay after it. And I'm very pleased about it.

Q. Will his arrest, sir, to follow up, lead to the possible breakup of other groups here in the States or abroad?

The President. I think that it is better that I not say anything else about his arrest other than what has already been in the paper at this time.

Is there another German question?

Q. Can I follow up on that?

The President. Yes, sir. The normally suave and confident—[laughter]—is suffering technology breakdown. [Laughter]

German Exports to Iran

Q. Mr. Chancellor, they couldn't drive a wedge between you and the President in Mexico. How about on Germany's exports to Iran? There are growing concerns, you know, among U.S. officials that Germany may be doing with Iran what it did with Iraq before the Gulf war, inadvertently helping it develop weapons of mass destruction. Is Germany involved? Are you taking another look at some of the exports that you're providing to Iran, which has been accused, as you know, by the United States as being a source of international terrorism? And

President Clinton, how concerned are you about Germany's exports to Iran?

Chancellor Kohl. First of all, I think your statement is incorrect. What you just said about Iraq is wrong. If you read the complete report that came out, not just the little passage about Germany, then you'll find that Germany was not number one. I know that this rumor is cropping up in Washington time and again, but I'd like to use this opportunity to say that that is wrong.

As far as Iran specifically is concerned, we are in agreement. We are not willing to support any policy in Iran which might entail the danger of fundamentalism, which to me is one of the greatest dangers we are facing today. We are not willing to add any support to fundamentalism. We have cut back economic relations with Iran considerably. Those were longstanding relations which we have cut back considerably.

And if I'm not mistaken, Time magazine, being a respectable news magazine, has said quite a number of things this week about American oil companies, not German oil companies, mind you. And if you take a look, you'll have to conclude that these oil companies export into other countries, not our country.

We feel that, with a view to the peace process in the Middle East in which we, as Germans, have a special interest, a process in regard to which we fully support the President's policy in wanting that process to succeed, that this is a very important step indeed. We're talking about Israel here, among other things. And if a German Chancellor, 50 years after Auschwitz, talks about Israel, you may believe him when he says that he has a great interest in that process being successful and that we would not

dream of supporting any policy in any part of the world which might in any way impede Israel's prospects for a peaceful future. And that is why we are most certainly going to act along the lines I pointed out in regard to economic relations as well.

We are in a somewhat different situation because, following the developments of the past years, we have become a country that has very few regulatory controls, that is quite open to the outside. And in the past—and this has, time and again, been our problem, also vis-a-vis Iraq—we have been one of the major suppliers of chemical products because we had a superb chemical industry. And then we time and again got a situation where one of those chemical companies supplied a product, exported a product that could be used for many purposes, mostly of course for peaceful purposes but which could be abused, which could be misused and used for other purposes.

I talked to German industry and we agreed that we would do everything we can in order to make diversion impossible. Or to put it differently, we are not talking simply about law enforcement here; we are going to make sure that the reputation of our country is not damaged. So it's not only a matter of criminal pursuits but it's a matter of maintaining our country's reputation, which I find important.

NOTE: The President's 85th news conference began at 1 p.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Ramzi Ahmed Yusuf, alleged mastermind of the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center in New York City. Chancellor Kohl spoke in German, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Statement on the Death of J. William Fulbright *February 9, 1995*

I am deeply saddened by the death of former Senator William Fulbright. Both Hillary and I send our condolences to his wife, Harriet, and to their daughters, Elizabeth, Roberta, Heidi, Evi, and Shelby. Our prayers are with them at this difficult time.

I am also grateful today for the conviction Senator Fulbright imparted to me when I was

a young man. He taught me that we could make peace in the world if we seek a better understanding, if we promote exchanges among people, and if we advance the cause of global education.

Senator Fulbright's legacy was about heart as much as brains. He made us feel that we could amount to something in our lives, that education