

and NATO have set forward for the cessation of the bombing campaign. And we are working on that, will continue to work on it hard today. And obviously, if there are any developments, we will announce them.

Bosnia

Q. Do you have Russian acquiescence to place troops around Sarajevo?

The President. Well, let me say, first of all, we are working on the details of the agreement. When they are worked out, we will then say what they are and answer all the questions.

Q. But sir, is there an agreement for the Serbs to pull their artillery from the positions around Sarajevo?

The President. That is what we are attempting to secure at this moment. We are working through that. There's been some progress in the last—there's been some reason to hope for progress in the last several hours, beginning last night our time. But we're not prepared to make a final announcement yet. When we are, we will, and we'll answer all the questions.

Medicare

Q. The Speaker of the House today said that the Democratic position on Medicare is to scare 85-year-olds, and he called the party morally bankrupt.

The President. Well, you know, I think it's questionable to use words like "morally bankrupt," but let's look at the facts. For 2 years, I said the Medicare Trust Fund was in trouble,

and Mr. Gingrich and others mocked me and denied that it was in trouble. All by ourselves, with no help from them, we added 3 years to the life of the Trust Fund. We have proposed legislation which would add 10 years to the life of the Trust Fund and will get Medicare out of trouble.

I don't want to use a term like "morally bankrupt," but I think it is morally questionable at least to propose vast Medicare cuts which would increase the cost of Medicare to elderly people living on under \$24,000 a year and claim that it's going to the Trust Fund when they know not one red cent of the money being paid by seniors will go to the Trust Fund. It will go to fund a tax cut that is too big. And they should tell the truth to the American people that they want to charge the providers more money and put that in the Trust Fund. They want to charge the elderly people of this country more money and put that into the tax cut.

Now, that is the truth. And if we're going to talk about what morality requires, morality requires them to tell the truth to the American people.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:45 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. Following his remarks, the President met with Greek Ambassador to the United States Loukas Tsilas and Foreign Minister Stevo Crvenkovski of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on the Agreement To End Air Strikes in Bosnia and an Exchange With Reporters

September 15, 1995

The President. Good morning. I welcome the agreement by the Bosnian Serbs to comply with a condition set by NATO and the United Nations for ending the NATO air strikes.

American pilots and crews and their NATO colleagues have been carrying out those strikes to prevent further slaughter of innocent civilians in the Sarajevo area and in the other safe areas of Bosnia. Now, the Bosnian Serbs have stated that they will end all offensive operations within the Sarajevo exclusion zone, withdraw their

heavy weapons from the zone within 6 days, and allow road and air access to Sarajevo within 24 hours. NATO and the U.N., therefore, have suspended air operations temporarily and will carefully monitor the Serb compliance with these commitments.

The suspension is appropriate. But let me emphasize, if the Bosnian Serbs do not comply with their commitments, the air strikes will resume.

Today's developments are a direct result of NATO's steadfastness in protecting the safe areas and the close cooperation between the U.N. and NATO. They also reflect the intense diplomatic efforts by Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke and the U.S. negotiating team as well as those of our European and Russian partners.

Now the Bosnian Serbs must carry out their commitments and then turn their energies toward a political settlement that will end this terrible conflict for good. They should have no doubt that NATO will resume the air strikes if they fail to keep their commitments, if they strike again at Sarajevo or the other safe areas.

Today's actions, however, following last week's successful meeting in Geneva of the Foreign Ministers of Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia, are important steps along the path to peace in Bosnia. A lot of work remains to be done, but we are absolutely determined to press forward to reach a settlement to this conflict, not on the battlefield but at the negotiating table. We can and we must end Bosnia's long nightmare.

Q. Mr. President, what do you think is the possibility of transforming this into a permanent peace in Bosnia?

The President. I think there's a good possibility if the parties themselves wish to do it. And Ambassador Holbrooke and his team are working hard. We're getting good support from Europe and from Russia. I think we have a chance.

Q. Since you last spoke in so formal a setting, even so formal a setting as this, a lot has happened, including the biggest military operation in NATO's history, something that you certainly urged, intense activity by your diplomats. And

you have seemed almost shy about coming out and talking about it. Is that just an abundance of caution, or why is that, sir? [*Laughter*]

The President. Not an abundance of caution, but what I have wanted to do, first of all, is let our actions speak for themselves. I thought it was important to have our actions speak for themselves.

I also think it is important that even though the United States has provided a great deal of the energy and leadership in this effort, in this, the first difficult security crisis in Europe after the cold war, I think it is important that the NATO forces and the United Nations be seen to be united and working together, and we are. And so that explains how we have tried to handle this publicly.

Q. In talking with Mr. Mladic and Mr. Karadzic and in really getting them to sign an agreement, is there a contradiction because they are convicted war criminals or accused war criminals—

The President. Accused.

Q. —accused war criminals? And do you think they can now enter sort of the world of nations just like any other leader?

The President. First of all, those decisions will all have to be made down the line by the community of nations. The most important thing is that the work continue now to make a comprehensive peace.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:04 a.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Bosnian Serb leaders Radovan Karadzic and Gen. Ratko Mladic.

Remarks Honoring the 1995 NCAA Champion California State University at Fullerton Baseball Team

September 15, 1995

Thank you very much. Thank you. Please be seated. Dr. Gordon, Coach Garrido, Assistant Coach George Horton, Congressman Royce, to my friend Roger Johnson and to all the members of this championship team: Now, I knew that Cal State-Fullerton had won the national baseball championship because I keep up with it. But some of the less schooled people here

in the White House, when they heard that Cal State was coming today and it was about baseball, they thought that someone had given Cal Ripken a whole State. [*Laughter*] And when they said that, I said, "Well, I hope he'll share it with me next year." [*Laughter*] Think about that.