

Foreign Minister Primakov. Thank you very much for receiving me, Mr. President. It is a great honor for me and also a chance to discuss the issues that you have just mentioned. I've brought for you a message from President Yeltsin. This is the reply to your latest message to him. You will see that, for yourself, it mentions our very big interest in having our relations with the United States develop further on many tracks, not just our desire to do so but also our willingness.

Last night we had a very exciting, very productive talk with the Secretary of State. And already, based on that talk, I got a signal coming from Moscow—Madam was asking why I am not being authorized to do certain things. Well, most probably what is at issue is the protocol, because that's something that your Vice President already mentioned. *[Laughter]* This is to indicate the rapid way the United States operates, and we are far removed, as yet, from that. *[Laughter]*

The President. Thank you very much.

1996 Campaign Financing

Q. Mr. President, the Justice Department now says it apparently has memos that indicate you were urged to make another 40 fundraising calls.

Sir, what do you recall of these memos, and were the calls made or were they not?

The President. Well, I've already said I don't know—I haven't read—I don't know what you're talking about on the memos because I haven't seen them, so I can't comment on that. I've already answered about the calls.

Let me just say this. I believe what the Vice President did and what I did was legal, and I am absolutely certain that we believed we were acting within the letter of the law. And I'm going to cooperate however I can to establish the facts, but I think that's important that you and the American people understand that, that I certainly—I believed then and I believe now what we did was legal. But I am absolutely positive that we intended to be firmly within the letter of the law when we were out there campaigning and raising funds as we should have been doing. We had to do that.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:45 p.m. in the U.S. Mission at the United Nations. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and President Boris Yeltsin of Russia. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Luncheon Hosted by United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan in New York City September 22, 1997

President Udovenko, members of the U.N. Secretariat, my fellow leaders. First let me thank the Secretary-General for his remarks. As some of you may know, after work today I will have the pleasure of attending the opening of the Metropolitan Opera. And I thought I would get into the spirit by singing the praises of our host today. *[Laughter]*

Mr. Secretary-General, it would be hard to find someone more appropriate to lead this great organization at this time. Your work and your life have taken you from your native Ghana to Egypt, Ethiopia, Switzerland, and to Minnesota where you first learned about America. For over three decades, you have given every waking hour to the United Nations. Better than

anyone, you know how this organization works, from its highest office down to the grassroots.

Most importantly, you have earned your reputation as a peacemaker. From Africa to Iraq to Bosnia, your remarkable efforts to turn people from conflict to cooperation have saved thousands of lives.

You have seen revolution, war, and starvation, and you have always risen to fight the suffering they bring. You have witnessed the collapse of the old colonial empires, the end of the cold war, the beginning of this new era of great possibility. I hope future historians will look back and say this was a time when the high principles that led to the founding of the United Nations at last were realized—not simply by avoiding bloodshed and war but also by bringing freedom

and opportunity to men and women on every continent, from every background.

Today, through your strong leadership and quiet diplomacy, you are serving also as a different kind of peacemaker, bridging the gaps between the sometimes unruly members of the United Nations—a group that even on occasion, I must admit, includes the United States.

We have applauded your efforts to reform the United Nations, and we have particularly appreciated your efforts to explain those reforms to the American people. Deep down, our people care deeply about the U.N., and with you at

the helm, we are moving ahead to a new era of partnership.

Finally, let me note that article one of the charter calls the United Nations a center for harmonizing. I would like to ask all of you to join me in a toast to Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations. May we always act in concert to achieve the harmony the founders dreamed of, the harmony he has worked so hard to realize.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2 p.m. in the North Delegates Lounge at the United Nations.

Message on the 50th Anniversary of the National Security Council *September 22, 1997*

To Past and Present Members of the NSC Staff:

I congratulate you on the 50th anniversary of the National Security Council.

During the more than forty years of the Cold War, you guided our country's leaders through the brinksmanship of East-West confrontation. In the almost ten years since communism's collapse, the NSC Staff has helped identify the possibilities and protect against the perils of our new era.

Indeed, at a time when the world's increasing interdependence challenges us all to new pat-

terns of thought and action, the NSC's role is more important than ever. Your sound judgment, advice, and dedication are a key part of our ability to seize the opportunities of the 21st century. Because of your work, our lives are safer, our economy stronger, and our country more secure. On behalf of a grateful nation, congratulations and thank you.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Iraq's Compliance With United Nations Security Council Resolutions *September 23, 1997*

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution (Public Law 102-1) and as part of my effort to keep the Congress fully informed, I am reporting on the status of efforts to obtain Iraq's compliance with the resolutions adopted by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). This report covers the period from July 9 to the present.

Saddam Hussein remains a threat to his people and the region, and the United States remains determined to contain the threat posed

by his regime. Secretary of State Albright stated on March 26 that the United States looks forward to the day when Iraq rejoins the family of nations as a responsible and law-abiding member but until then, containment must continue. Secretary Albright made clear that Saddam's departure would make a difference and that, should a change in Iraq's government occur, the United States would stand ready to enter rapidly into a dialogue with the successor regime.