

Ruttenstorfer, Chairman of the Board of Governors, IMF; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); and Special Envoy Richard C.

Holbrooke, the President's nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. The President also referred to the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC).

## Statement on Agriculture Legislation *October 6, 1998*

I am disappointed that today's Senate vote on the agriculture bill failed to provide adequate emergency aid for farmers in this country who are suffering from the worst agricultural crisis in a decade. While this agriculture bill provides some help for farmers, it simply does not do enough.

This year flood, drought, and crop disease have wiped out entire harvests. Plummeting prices at home and collapsing markets in Asia have threatened the livelihoods of entire communities. Many farmers will see their net income this year drop by as much as 40 percent below a 5-year average.

It is time for us to take action that will make significant progress in alleviating the hardship in America's heartland. I continue to support Senator Daschle and Harkin's proposal to provide approximately \$5 billion dollars in aid while

establishing a system of payments that allows flexibility if commodity prices drop even further. I call on Congress to send me a comprehensive plan that protects farmers by strengthening the safety net at this difficult time. In addition, I urge Congress to support my own emergency aid proposal for \$2.3 billion that originated with Senators Conrad and Dorgan to provide farmers with additional insurance and indemnity payments for crop loss.

This total package of aid would make a significant contribution to helping this Nation's farmers cope with the current agricultural crisis. I urge Congress to be fully responsive to their needs. If Congress insists on sending me an agricultural bill that fails to respond fully to the needs of America's farmers, then I will have no choice but to veto the bill.

## Remarks Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Viktor Orban of Hungary and an Exchange With Reporters *October 7, 1998*

*President Clinton.* Let me say, first of all, I am delighted to welcome Prime Minister Orban and his representatives of his government to Washington. We are very, very excited about what is going on in Hungary, excited about his youthful and vigorous and progressive leadership.

Today we are going to talk about the date that's coming up that Hungary is joining NATO—it will be an historic date—and what we have to do between now and then. I want to talk about the importance of the stability of the region, about maintaining our commitments in Bosnia, where, I might say, we would not

have been able to be successful had it not been for the Hungarians making available the base at Taszar for us to operate out of.

And thirdly, of course, we want to talk about Kosovo. And let me say again that I believe it is absolutely imperative that there be a ceasefire, a withdrawal of troops, that the humanitarian groups get access to these hundreds of thousands of people who have been displaced, and that negotiations resume. Those are the United Nations' conditions. I believe NATO must be prepared to take action if they are not met. But it will not be necessary if Mr. Milosevic does meet them.

So those are among the things we'll discuss today. I think it's very important. And Prime Minister, I am glad to have you here. If you'd like to make a brief statement, you can, and then I'll let them ask a question or two.

*Prime Minister Orban.* I'm very much delighted to be here. I'm very happy that I was invited to have this discussion with your President. I'm very happy to be here as probably the first time in the history of Hungary as Prime Minister of an ally to the United States, a future member of NATO. And I would express all of the Hungarian citizens' gratitude to the President that he was tough enough to convince all the Members of the Senate that enlargement of NATO and to involve Hungary into the process of enlargement is a step which is not just good for Hungary, but it is in the interest of NATO as well. And he was a tough fighter to convince everybody around the Western Hemisphere that NATO enlargement is in the interest of those countries living in central Europe who just got through the occupation of another empire.

So we consider your President as a person who brought his name into the history of Hungary, the Hungarian history, as a person who provided security and national independence to Hungary.

Just for a second, I have a letter to your President, anyway, which was sent by Mr. Pachinski, who was your tutor in Oxford and who was my tutor in Oxford as well. And I just met him a week ago in Budapest, and he asked me to give this letter to you. His best wishes probably you can find inside it.

We will discuss definitely about Kosovo, the Hungarian and foreign policies in the Middle East, that they should look for a peaceful solution. But if a decision would be taken by NATO, we are ready to contribute as an ally to do. Host nation support could be provided. Up until now, Hungary and foreign policy was not invited into this action, but we are ready to take part. And we will discuss many other points as well. It will be too long to explain just now, here.

Thank you very much.

*Q.* Good morning, Mr. President.

*President Clinton.* Good morning.

#### *Impeachment Inquiry Vote*

*Q.* When you talk to Members of Congress about impeachment, what do you tell them?

*President Clinton.* Well, first of all, I have received a large number of calls from House Members, and I have tried to return those calls. I haven't been able to return them all because we have other things to do, and I'll try to call the rest of them today. But I think the vote should be a vote of principle. It's up to others to decide what happens to me, and ultimately it's going to be up to the American people to make a clear statement there.

What I am more concerned about today by far is that they cast some votes necessary to advance the cause of our people. The most important votes they have to cast are the votes on funding the International Monetary Fund so we can continue our economic prosperity; on a budget which doesn't raid Social Security—raid the surplus until we fix Social Security. They still have a chance to do something for education.

This Congress has killed campaign finance reform, the minimum wage, tobacco reform legislation, even killed the Patients' Bill of Rights. But they can still do something on education; they can still help to save Social Security; they can still keep our economy going; they can still stop the war on the environment that is hidden in so many of these bills. It's not too late.

And that's got to be my focus in these closing days. What happens to me I think ultimately will be for the American people to decide. I owe them my best efforts to work for them, and that's what I'm going to do.

*Q.* Some Democrats, sir, have complained that they're being pressured by the White House on the subject of impeachment. Is that appropriate?

*President Clinton.* I think everybody should cast a vote on principle and conscience. But I doubt that—I doubt—keep in mind, the proposal advanced was developed entirely by Congressman Boucher from Virginia, a man who comes from a conservative rural district and who developed it on his own, fought for it in the Judiciary Committee, argued it, and said that the elemental principle of fairness was that we ought to define a standard of what conduct is being judged by.

So as far as I know, no one in the White House had anything to do with the development of the proposal. There have been conversations with Members—as I said yesterday, a large number called me. I'm attempting to call them all back, and I will try to do that. But I want

them—more important than anything else to me is that they do the people's work and then let—the people will decide where we go from here.

*Kosovo*

Q. On Kosovo, how do you placate Russian concerns about NATO military strikes?

*President Clinton.* Well, I think the most important thing we can do is to try to work with the Russians to try to actually avoid military strikes by securing compliance with the U.N. resolutions by Milosevic. Now, we have done that. President Yeltsin sent a team of senior people to see Mr. Milosevic, and once again, as he did last June, he promised him that he would comply. He also said he would like some representatives from OSCE to come in and see if he was complying.

Now, if he does that, if he completely complies, he doesn't have to worry about military force. But I do not believe the United States can be in a position, and I do not believe NATO can be in the position of letting tens of thousands of people starve or freeze to death this winter because Mr. Milosevic didn't keep his word to the Russians and the world community one more time.

So the way to avoid NATO military action is for Mr. Milosevic to honor the U.N. resolutions. That's what should be done.

*Middle East Peace Process*

Q. How long do you expect next week's Middle East summit to last when they come to Washington?

*President Clinton.* I'd be happy if it were over in an hour, but I'm prepared to invest as much time as it takes.

Q. Do you foresee multiple days?

*President Clinton.* It might take more than a day, yes. I asked them to block out a couple of days to come back because I think it's very important that we try to get over these last humps and get into the last stage of negotiations. We need to get to final status talks, because, keep in mind, the whole thing is supposed to be wrapped up by May of next year. And the closer we get to that date without having been at least in the final status talks, where the parties have a relaxed opportunity, without being up against a timetable, to discuss these big issues of the future of the Middle East—the closer we get to that date without that happening, it's going to be more difficult. So it

is imperative that we move on and get this next big step done.

I'm encouraged that Secretary Albright is in the region today. She's going to have an announcement about it later today. I'm encouraged by the attitude and the sense of openness I felt from Prime Minister Netanyahu and Mr. Arafat the last time they were here. And if they can come back with that spirit, we're close enough now that we can get this done. And I just hope and pray that that will happen when they come back.

Q. Will you get personally involved throughout—

*President Clinton.* Well, I'll be involved quite a bit. I don't know what "throughout" will mean. I hope they'll be talking 12 hours a day or something. I don't know. We'll just have to see what happens. But I will be involved constantly throughout the process, yes.

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

*Discussions With Prime Minister Orban*

*President Clinton.* Let me make a brief statement. First of all, I would like to welcome the Prime Minister and his team here to Washington. We are excited about having him here. We are excited about what we have heard about his leadership and the policies of his government.

I want to have a chance to discuss NATO's membership for Hungary, and it's coming up here very soon, next year. I want to have a chance to discuss the situation in Bosnia—and again I want to thank the Government and the people of Hungary for giving us the base at Tazsar which made it possible for us to do our part in the Bosnian peace process.

And I want to discuss Kosovo, where I believe it is imperative that the international community enforce the United Nations resolutions requiring a cease-fire, a withdrawal of troops, access for the humanitarian agencies to the hundreds of thousands of people who have been displaced, and the beginning of negotiations. And I think the pressure of NATO is critical to achieving that goal.

So these are some of the things that I hope to discuss with the Prime Minister. Now, perhaps he would like to make a few opening remarks, and then we'll answer a couple of questions.

*Prime Minister Orban.* If you don't mind, I would like to do it in Hungarian.

*President Clinton.* Sure.

*Prime Minister Orban.* It is a pleasure to be here as almost an ally of the United States of America, as Hungary's impending membership of the NATO is very soon, indeed. We are planning to discuss various issues with the President of the United States of America, including NATO enlargement, the problems and matters in Kosovo, as well as the central European issues.

I would like to assure the President that Hungary is a factor and guarantor of stability in the central European region. And the Hungarian Government is making every effort to continue that role as a guarantor of stability and security in the central European region.

We would like to also assure the President that Hungary's membership in the NATO will be a benefit not only for Hungary but also for the NATO and the United States of America.

As far as Kosovo is concerned, Hungary has not yet received any official request to participate in that, and we hope that there is still a possibility for peaceful settlement. But if there is a request, of course, just because of our role as an ally in the NATO, we will do our best to help resolve the problem.

We will also discuss various issues concerning the world economic crisis, and I would like to—that there is no reason why the world should put Hungary in the same box with Russia and the crisis in the Russian Federation. And Hungary is not an emerging market. What I would like to call it is a converging market.

#### *International Economic Situation*

*Q.* Mr. President, what will be the impact of the global economic financial crisis on Hungary and the eastern European region? And what should the Hungarian Government do to avoid or minimize the impact?

*President Clinton.* Well, first, I think that—let me answer the second question first. I think the Hungarian Government is doing what it should do to minimize the impact by having a sound economic policy. And I'm very happy that so far the global economic crisis has not had much impact in central Europe.

Now, eventually, unless we can limit it and then beat it back, it will affect all of us because all of us depend upon each other for markets, for investments. So even if a country has a per-

fect economic policy, if its investors and the people who buy its products have their economies weakened, it will affect that country.

So what I would hope that Hungary would do, because it has a very aggressive and, I believe, progressive economic policy, is to support the efforts of the international community to—first of all, to beat the crisis back and to limit its reach and then to develop institutional responses for the future that will prevent such things for the future.

But I'm very impressed that central Europe has done so well; Hungary has done so well; Poland had done so well; other countries have done so well. You should be very happy about that. I think it's a great tribute to the confidence that the investment community around the world has in your people and your system, as well as to the policies that have been followed.

#### *Kosovo*

*Q.* When will the final decision be made on Kosovo, and what will the Hungarian role be?

*President Clinton.* Well, of course, what the Hungarian role could be is something that will have to be decided by Hungary, because until Hungary becomes a full-fledged NATO member, any other—if NATO has to act, any other participation would be voluntary. But at this point, I wouldn't think that Hungary would be involved in that, because what is contemplated is the prospect of airstrikes if President Milosevic refuses to comply with the U.N. resolutions. I still hope and pray that he will comply, so it will not be necessary.

Now, if he does comply, it may be necessary to have some verification group go in. Will that group be under the United Nations, under OSCE, or some other place? That's not resolved. Will Hungary be asked to participate or have an opportunity to? Not resolved. Then if there are negotiations which result in a settlement, there might be some request for an international presence to help the parties to honor a peace agreement on a third stage there. That's not resolved. So I guess the short answer to your question is, no one can know the answer to that yet.

#### *Crime in Central Europe*

*Q.* Mr. President, what do you think about the crime situation in central Europe and the cooperation?

*President Clinton.* Well, first, I think that your Government is very aware of it and very much determined to do something about it, because we have been engaged in talks to establish a joint strike force, to have an FBI presence, to work together. Frankly, I believe that international organized crime is going to be one of the great challenges all of us face, and it, I suppose, is an inevitable result of the new technologies available in the world, that these multinational syndicates now are much bigger than ever before. And I think that the only way to deal with them is to deal with them together. And I am committed to working with you to try to help to reduce the problem in Hungary. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:05 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); President Boris Yeltsin of Russia; Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. The President also referred to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Prime Minister Orban spoke in Hungarian to the second group of reporters, and those remarks were translated by an interpreter. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Remarks on Signing the Higher Education Amendments of 1998 October 7, 1998

Thank you very much. Just so Harold doesn't mistake all that applause for me, let's give him another hand. I thought he was—[*applause*]. That's what this is all about today.

I want to thank all the previous speakers—Secretary Riley for being the most dedicated, complete, and productive Secretary of Education in the history of this country. I'm very grateful to him. [*Applause*] We always salt the crowd with employees of the Education Department. [*Laughter*] We are very, very grateful to you, sir.

I want to thank Senator Jeffords and Senator Kennedy, Chairman Goodling and Congressman Clay, and as was mentioned previously, Congressman McKeon and Congressman Kildee, all the members of the education committees of the House and the Senate and the staff.

I'd like to also point out that there are Members who care deeply about education who aren't on those committees, and some of them are here. We have over 30 Members of the Congress from both parties here. I'd like to ask the Members of the Congress who are here who aren't on the education committees and, therefore, have not yet stood up, to please stand up, all of you who are here.

I notice Senator Kennedy already acknowledged Senator Specter, understanding how the Appropriations Committee works. [*Laughter*]

But his presence here means he considers it to be an education committee, and we thank you for that.

I'd like to make one big point first. You've all heard about the details of this legislation. What I want us to all be very clear on is that the bill I will sign in a few moments will enhance the economic strength of America. It will strengthen the communities of America. It will improve the lives of the families of America. And it certainly will widen the circle of opportunity.

When I ran for President in 1992, one of the things I most wanted to do was to open the doors of college to all Americans who were willing to work for it. In the 1980's, the cost of a college education was the only really important thing to families that increased at a higher rate than the cost of health care.

And yet, in the world in which we live and certainly in the one in which Harold and his contemporaries will live, college is no longer a luxury for the well-to-do or even an opportunity for hard-working middle class kids whose parents save. It is an economic necessity for every American and for our country as a whole.

That is why we worked so hard in the bipartisan balanced budget agreement to create the \$1,500 HOPE scholarships; the tax credits for the first 2 years of college; tax breaks for junior