

June 8 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

President Goncz, welcome back to America and to the White House.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:45 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, where President Goncz was accorded a formal welcome with full

military honors. In his remarks, he referred to Maria Zsuzsanna Gonter, wife of President Goncz. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Goncz.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Arpad Goncz of Hungary and an Exchange With Reporters

June 8, 1999

The President. Let me just say briefly, again, how grateful I am to have this opportunity to welcome President Goncz to the United States and to reaffirm our strong friendship with Hungary and what a good time it is for this visit to be occurring, as we are doing our best to bring an end to the conflict in Kosovo, to reverse the ethnic cleansing, and to build a new future for all of southeastern Europe.

I know all the Americans here know that there are hundreds of thousands of ethnic Hungarians living in Vojvodina, in northwestern Serbia. This is a very, very important issue for Hungary, and we are determined to bring it to a successful conclusion, to reverse the ethnic cleansing, and to see the refugees go home. And the President and his country's support of this endeavor has been absolutely critical.

Resolution of the Situation in the Balkans

Q. Mr. President, on Kosovo, do you expect the U.N. Security Council to pass this resolution; and, if it does, do you expect that Milosevic will comply in good faith?

The President. Well, the answer to the first question is, yes, I expect the U.N. Security Council will adopt it.

Q. No veto?

The President. I don't expect so. The Russians are supporting it. We got the agreement in Bonn this morning, early our time, and I had a talk already with President Yeltsin about it.

In terms of compliance, that's what we're interested in. We want to see compliance. And when there is evidence that full withdrawal has begun, we will suspend the bombing and then monitor that for compliance. But keep in mind, our military people in the military-to-military contacts between NATO and the Serbs will work

out the logistics of Serb withdrawal and the international security force coming in, so as not to create a vacuum. And I think all that will be worked out in a satisfactory manner. But our interest is in—our opinions won't matter; what will matter is what actually happens.

Q. Mr. President, will the Russian troops, peacekeepers, be under NATO control, command?

The President. I don't expect that to happen, but I do expect that there will be an acceptable level of coordination, the way we worked it out in Bosnia. I hope there will be something like what we did in Bosnia, because it worked there. We had the command and control intact so that our soldiers and our mission could be protected. The Russians were involved, as it happens, in Bosnia, as you know, in the American sector, where we worked together with them very closely. And I have been very pleased with that cooperation. I think it's quite important for the Russians to be involved in this.

Reconstruction of the Balkans

Q. Once the peace will be implemented, what commitment does the U.S. have to reconstructing the region? How will the new Marshall plan look like, and what role Hungary can play in that?

The President. Well, it's interesting, that's what the President said to me this morning, that the most important thing is that we rebuild the region now. As you know, at the NATO meeting here in Washington a few weeks ago, we had a meeting in which all of us committed to be a part of the reconstruction of southeastern Europe. The details will have to be worked out. I expect the EU will be in the

lead. The United States will certainly support that.

But what I would like to see is all the countries in the region participating, and I'd like not only the analogy of the Marshall plan but also the work that was done between the West and Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic after the Berlin Wall fell. That is, we should be supporting democracy and human rights, as well as economic development.

Obviously, I hope that Serbia will be a part of that. But in order to be a part of that, I think Serbia will have to observe the same standards and have the same sort of government and the same devotion to the human rights of its people and to others that all the other countries in the region have.

But the plan is yet to be worked out. We don't have the details of that yet, but there's plenty of time for that.

Resolution of the Situation in the Balkans

Q. Ten years ago Slobodan Milosevic took away the autonomy of the other provinces in Serbia. Will that be addressed in the final peace plan?

The President. First things first, here. First things first.

Q. What do you suspect Mr. Milosevic is up to, sir, in delaying implementation of the agreement?

The President. Well, I think the main issues, at least for the last 72 hours, were involved with the nature of the U.N. resolution. That was resolved today. So now we'll just have to see what happens with the military-to-military contacts. The most important thing now is that we get something that is, A, verifiable and, B, that will work—which means we have to know that they're withdrawing; we have to have a schedule for the introduction of the international force.

Keep in mind the big picture here. The big picture is to reverse the ethnic cleansing, to bring the Kosovars home, to have them safe and be able to govern themselves, and to have an international security force with NATO at

the core. So we have to watch for the big picture. And that's why even yet, and notwithstanding this very good development, we have to sound some note of caution here. We have to work on it.

Movie Ratings/Youth Violence

Q. On the movie ratings, sir, did you seek greater enforcement because Hollywood was lukewarm to the idea of signing on to the national campaign against violence in film?

The President. No. No, I think there should be greater enforcement of the existing laws, that Congress should pass the commonsense gun legislation that I've recommended, and there should be a national grassroots campaign against youth violence.

I'll make you a prediction: I believe that there will be a significant number of people in the entertainment community who will participate in it, because a lot of them have said something to me about it. And I think that the public ambivalence you see is more their uncertainty about, well, are we agreeing to censorship; are we getting into trouble here? But I think if they just go back to the beginning—which is, we've got a lot of children in trouble in this country; they're subject to too much violence through media and cultural contacts; and it's too easy for them to get guns. And if we all work at it that way, so that nobody is pointing a finger at anybody else, I think we'll have good participation from the entertainment community, and I'll be surprised if we don't.

Hillary Clinton's Possible Senate Candidacy

Q. Do you think you'd really be happy as a Senate husband?

Q. Is there any doubt she'll run, sir?

The President. I'll be happy if she's doing what she wants.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:36 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.