

him refer to American-led NATO aggression in the Balkans.

And so I responded very vigorously about Bosnia, about Kosovo. And the point I made was, when I was very personally complimentary of him is, when he stood up on that tank to save Russian democracy, suppose he hadn't prevailed. Suppose the Russian military had taken him down off the tank, thrown him in jail, and announced they were going to execute him.

I would hope that the entire world represented around that table, that OSCE table today, would have gone into an absolute uproar of outrage about it and would have saved his life and helped to restore democracy. That's the point I was trying to make, that there are times

in the world we live in today when we are forced to make judgments about things that happen within the borders of other countries because they have an impact beyond their borders and because they violate internationally accepted norms of human rights. That's what happened in Bosnia; that's what happened in Kosovo. I think I did the right thing. And I hope it registered on the Russians, and I hope we're going to make some progress. I think we are.

I'll see you all some more in the next day or two, but I've got to go to this lunch.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:10 p.m. at the Ciragan Palace.

Remarks at a Signing Ceremony for the Baku-Ceyhan and Trans-Caspian Gas Pipeline Agreements in Istanbul

November 18, 1999

Thank you very much, President Demirel, Prime Minister Bondevik, and especially to the Presidents of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, and Georgia, for whom this day is especially meaningful.

Today is the culmination of a long effort and a new beginning. For centuries, the Caspian region has been critical to the crossroads of human events, but never more so than today. These agreements, which were just signed, are truly historic. They will advance the prosperity and security of a region critical to the future of the entire world. What happens to these lands on the ancient silk road will have an impact on everything from the future of Russia to the security of Europe to the relationship between the West and the Muslim world to the strength of the global economy and the continued growth of the American economy.

As has already been said, the United States has worked intensively with all these countries on the Baku-Ceyhan and trans-Caspian pipelines. We have done so for four very good reasons.

First, wise energy development can strengthen the independence of the newly independent states around the Caspian, helping them to stand on their feet and shape their own destiny, and it can open a commercial and political bridge

between central Asia and the West. These have been priorities of my administration since my first day in the White House.

Second, the construction of these pipelines will prove how much more countries have to gain from economic and commercial bonds rather than from political rivalries.

Third, the natural wealth of the Caspian will make our global energy supply more secure and more diversified. These pipelines will be an insurance policy for the entire world, helping to ensure that our energy resources pass through multiple routes, not a single choke point.

And finally—and this is so important; President Demirel mentioned it earlier—but through wise planning and modern technology, energy development can take place without undue risk to the environment. That means that the Bosphorus, the beautiful waterway that we are situated on today, the true lifeblood of this great nation of Turkey, will not be desecrated by oil spills because of these pipelines.

Since 1995, the United States has advocated the creation of multiple pipelines in the Caspian region to ensure energy producers have choices about how to get production to the international market. Several already are in place or under construction. I want all of you to know that we will continue to support your efforts and

our energy companies as they work with you. Our diplomats and energy experts will help to facilitate solutions that meet the needs of all the Caspian states in Turkey. Secretary Richardson's presence here today is evidence of our continuing commitment.

We understand that today represents just the beginning of the intensive commercial phase of this work. In the months ahead, our Export-Import Bank, Overseas Private Investment Corporation, and Trade and Development Agency all will work with you on a commercial financing package.

Nearly 700 years ago, this part of the world was so rich in oil that a visitor to Baku described it as blazing like a fire all night. It has been many years since the people of this region had

the freedom and security to realize their vast potential. Today, they have the freedom, they have the security, and today their leaders have shown the vision that will enable this ancient crossroads once again to light the world and brighten all our futures.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 4:35 p.m. in the Blue Room at Ciragan Palace. In his remarks, he referred to President Suleyman Demirel of Turkey; Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik of Norway; President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan; President Saparmurat Miyazov of Turkmenistan; President Heydar Aliyev of Azerbaijan; and President Eduard Shevardnadze of Georgia.

Statement on the Northern Ireland Peace Process

November 18, 1999

The parties in Northern Ireland, working with George Mitchell, have taken a powerful step toward lasting peace. I warmly welcome Senator Mitchell's final report and support his conclusions fully. We should all take heart from the fact that the parties have strongly reaffirmed their commitment to the Good Friday accord. In a spirit of unprecedented mutual understanding, they have addressed issues of deep concern to one another. Together, they have

shaped the outlines of the way ahead, as described by Senator Mitchell today. I urge the parties to maintain this level of dialog with each other and with the public at large in the days ahead and to proceed with rapid implementation of the agreement. Once again, I want to express my deepest appreciation to Senator Mitchell for his dedication to bringing peace to Northern Ireland.

Statement on Assistance for Southeast Europe

November 18, 1999

I am pleased that yesterday in Brussels the international community pledged over \$1 billion in new assistance to consolidate peace and promote economic recovery in Kosovo. I am particularly pleased that our European partners committed the lion's share of this amount, with the European Commission and EU members together pledging over three-quarters of a billion dollars and additional pledges from other European states.

These contributions will not only provide a significant boost to economic revitalization and

reconstruction but also help to fund public administration, establish a civil emergency service corps, strengthen public security and the rule of law, promote market reforms, and encourage private investment. We did our part by announcing plans to provide \$157 million for Kosovo, pending final action on the budget before Congress.

Today at the OSCE summit in Istanbul, Europe demonstrated its strong leadership in support of recovery and stabilization throughout