

Bipartisanship

Q. What will be the chances of bipartisanship on some of these issues, like health care?

The President. Good.

Q. Why so, given the experience you had in the first part of this administration?

The President. These are different issues with different constituencies, and they can be presented in a different way. I think the chances are really good.

NOTE: The exchange began at 11:16 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Alija Izetbegovic of Bosnia September 8, 1993

Q. Mr. President, are you going to ask President Clinton for air strikes?

President Izetbegovic. I have to thanks to Mr. President Clinton to receiving me, on behalf of me and of my colleagues here, and then thanks to the United States and to the peoples of the United States for the support, for the very beginning of the independence of the Bosnia-Herzegovina.

And just now, I have thought to say that I have some issues to discuss with Mr. President, but one point is of essential importance for us. It's we are now hard working for the peace, to make a peace, to reach an agreement about peaceful solution in Bosnia-Herzegovina. But one point is very important: It's a problem of guarantee for the agreement. We will ask and request from the President Clinton that the United States participate in these guarantees, of course, between NATO forces and so on. But for us, it's essential, of essential importance that the United States participate in these guarantees.

President Clinton. I'd like to make a brief statement, in view of what President Izetbegovic has said. First of all, I want to welcome him again to the White House and to express, as I have so many times in the past, my admiration for the leadership that he has shown in this very difficult period. I want to encourage the peace process. The

United States has done what it could to mobilize the forces of NATO to stop the attempt to overcome Sarajevo and the areas in the east and to push the Serbs and the Croats to make reasonable decisions in this peace process.

If they can reach a fair agreement, I would support, as I have said since February, the United States participating along with the other NATO nations in trying to help keep the peace. Of course in the United States, as all of you know, anything we do has to have the support of the Congress. I would seek the support of the Congress to do that. But I think these people that the President represents—the Vice President was here, others have been very courageous and brave, and they're trying to now make a decent peace. And I think we ought to support that process, if there is an agreement that is not forced on them but one that is willingly entered into and is fair. And if we can get the Congress to support it, then I think we should participate.

Q. Would you agree to a date certain, Mr. President, by which the Serbs would have to withdraw from Sarajevo, free the city, after which you would use air strikes?

President Clinton. I believe that all that has to be part of the negotiating process. I don't think the United States can simply impose an element of it. I think they know what the conditions are that NATO has imposed and that we have certainly taken the lead in for avoiding air strikes. They know how to avoid the air strikes. And so far they've done that, and I presume they will continue to do that.

Q. Are you willing to go along with the President's request for a guarantee?

President Clinton. I've been willing to do that since February. But in order to do it, we have to have a fair peace that is willingly entered into by the parties. It has to be able to be enforced or, if you will, be guaranteed by a peacekeeping force from NATO, not the United Nations but NATO. And of course, for me to do it, the Congress would have to agree.

But I'm glad that the President has said what he has said, and I think the Congress and the American people need to know that the Bosnian government would look to the United States to be a part of any attempt to guarantee the peace.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:25 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on Senate Action on the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993

September 8, 1993

I want to thank and congratulate Members of the United States Senate today for passing a landmark piece of legislation, the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993.

Many times I have talked about how national service will bring together Americans from a wide variety of backgrounds, expand their educational opportunity, and empower a new generation to take on our Nation's most pressing domestic needs. Thousands will spend a year or two serving their country and their communities, working as teachers, as health care workers, or on environmental projects, while helping to pay for school.

In the best sense of reinventing Government, the new Corporation for National and Community Service will emphasize decentralization in favor of empowering local initiatives that devise local solutions to local problems. It will be bold and it will be entrepreneurial in its quest for excellent programs and quality participants. Its business plan will be an unwavering mandate to get things done in our communities and our country.

Today's Senate action is yet another opportunity for change for the American people. National service will be the American way to change America.

Statement by the Press Secretary on Democracy in South Africa

September 8, 1993

The President welcomes the historic decision in South Africa to establish a transitional executive council in anticipation of South Africa's first democratic election next April. He commends all those who achieved this important step along the road to a peaceful transition to democracy in South Africa and looks forward to the ratification of the agreement by South Africa's Parliament next week.

In separate phone calls this afternoon to State President F.W. de Klerk and African National Congress President Nelson Mandela, President Clinton congratulated the two leaders on the historic breakthrough and said, "The historic agreement on the transitional executive council paves the way for the transition to a multiracial, democratic South Africa. The United States will remain a partner in the process of building democracy and promoting economic development in South Africa." President Clinton indicated that the United States looks forward to announcing a number of new initiatives to support the smooth transition to democracy.

Nomination for Four Ambassadors

September 8, 1993

The President announced his intention today to nominate Alan John Blinken to be Ambassador to Belgium, Swanee Hunt to be Ambassador to the Republic of Austria, and William Lacy Swing to be Ambassador to the Republic of Haiti. In addition, the President announced that he has nominated Richard Wallace Teare to be Ambassador to the Republic of Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu.

"These four individuals have all exhibited the level of accomplishment and excellence that Secretary Christopher and I have pledged that our Ambassadors would have," said the President. "I am very proud of these choices."