

to mention something about Ukraine; I forgot. Maybe I'll remember in a minute.

Abkhazia

Q. I represent the Voice of America but Georgian service, broadcasting in Georgian language. And I would like to ask both the question. After the agreement that you reached about Abkhazia, you know that there are more than 250,000 refugees from Abkhazia from the atrocities and genocide there by Abkhaz separatists? And would you please answer me, do you think that it is enough, U.N. peacekeeping forces in Abkhazia to deploy to ensure, to guarantee the safety of Georgians in Abkhazia when they return back?

Chairman Shevardnadze. We discussed this with Mr. President Clinton in very, very great detail, all the aspects of the settlement of the Abkhazian conflict. I would even say that most of the time we dedicated to this issue. It seems to me that right now there is no other than a political way of solving this. There is just no other way. I am very appreciative to the President for the fact that he, in principle, gave his agreement to looking into this issue at the Security Council of the U.N., to have the U.N. send troops to that. This has a tremendously important meaning to Abkhazians, to Georgians, to the whole region.

I told you that I intend to come out and speak at the Security Council and explain to everyone there about my own views and my positions. Peacekeeping troops should have a certain mission. What I mean is, the safe return of refugees, guarantees of safety. Otherwise, there is no sense in sending peacekeeping forces, because new conflicts will start, new clashes.

So I think here we have a full mutual understanding with the President. It seems to me that tomorrow in my meetings with the Congressmen and Senators and other interested parties, I will be able to convince them of the way that this should be resolved. Everything else really depends on the Security Council.

Singapore

Q. Because we are broadcasting today and I think the Georgian audience will be very

thankful to you, to listen to your words in Georgia.

The President. Thank you very much.

I don't see Gene Gibbons [Reuters] here, but the last time we had a press conference here last week, he asked me about the young man in Singapore that was sentenced to a caning, and I told you that I did not know about it. I went back and immediately read the press report in, I think maybe it was the Los Angeles Times, one of the newspapers. And then I got a report from our national security staff. We have since filed a strong protest with the Government of Singapore. We recognize that they have a certain right to enforce their own criminal laws, but we believe that, based on the facts and the treatment of other cases, similar cases, that this punishment is extreme, and we hope very much that somehow it will be reconsidered.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's 52d news conference began at 2:33 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Samuel Dash, professor of law at Georgetown University Law Center and former chief counsel and staff director for the Senate Watergate Committee. Chairman Shevardnadze spoke in Russian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Joint Declaration on Relations Between the United States and the Republic of Georgia

March 7, 1994

At their meeting at the White House, President of the United States Bill Clinton and Georgian Parliament Chairman Eduard Shevardnadze agreed on the need to accelerate the building of close and mutually beneficial relations on all levels between the United States of America and the Republic of Georgia.

The United States was the first country in which a Georgian Embassy was established after independence. This official visit by Chairman Shevardnadze marks an important further step demonstrating the significance which the United States and the Republic of Georgia attach to broadening and deepening their relationship.

The United States recognizes that the Republic of Georgia faces new challenges in ensuring its national security and is ready to work closely with Georgia to assist it in finding ways to meet these challenges. The United States and the Republic of Georgia further expressed their desire to facilitate contact between appropriate government officials with a view to broadening defense cooperation and expanding their dialogue on security issues of mutual interest.

The United States reaffirmed its full support for the territorial integrity of Georgia and pledged its continued backing for United Nations efforts to facilitate a peaceful settlement to the conflict in the Abkhaz region of Georgia.

International security can no longer be achieved through the efforts of individual states by acquiring ever increasing amounts of weaponry. Rather, security must be based on reduced levels of armaments among all nations, and on a multilateral commitment to uphold shared values, especially democracy, the inviolability of borders, territorial integrity, and peaceful resolution of disputes. The United States and the Republic of Georgia agreed that working together in multilateral institutions like CSCE and the North Atlantic Cooperation Council is an important means of promoting these goals and values.

The United States welcomes the announcement that the Republic of Georgia has decided to move forward on participation in NATO's Partnership For Peace. The Partnership provides a framework for enhanced political and operational military cooperation, including joint planning, training and exercises for multilateral crisis management activities.

The Republic of Georgia and the United States reaffirm their commitment to comply fully with the obligations of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. The United States stands ready to provide technical assistance, advice, and expertise to assist the Republic of Georgia as it continues to meet these obligations. President Clinton and Chairman Shevardnadze agreed that the two governments should continue to work together—and with other concerned governments—to explore ways to minimize the cost of meeting these commitments.

President Clinton and Chairman Shevardnadze agreed that the independence of the Republic of Georgia and its commitment to democracy and market economic reform could make an important contribution to stability in a region of Europe that has known great tragedy and upheaval. The United States and the Republic of Georgia underscored their intention to cooperate actively to achieve this goal. The President and the Chairman agreed to protect and promote the values that bind together the democratic community of nations, including free and fair elections, freedom of emigration, the rule of law, respect for human rights, including free speech, free press, and respect for the rights of individuals belonging to minorities. The United States strongly supported the commitment of the Republic of Georgia to develop in full accordance with these principles and its efforts to build a just and stable society where the fundamental freedoms of all peoples are guaranteed.

The United States and the Republic of Georgia expressed their determination to advance the values of economic freedom, without which democracy cannot succeed and prosperity cannot be attained. The Republic of Georgia reaffirmed its determination to build a market economy through appropriate macroeconomic stabilization policies and structural reforms to promote market development, economic recovery and growth, and to create conditions attractive to foreign investment, which will contribute to the restructuring of the Georgian economy. The United States will assist the Republic of Georgia to promote economic reform, free trade and foreign investment. Both sides recognize the importance of improved market access for their firms, and the need to ensure economic progress and to deepen economic cooperation.

President Clinton and Chairman Shevardnadze agreed to work together to remove all unnecessary barriers to bilateral trade and investment. The President and Chairman signed the U.S.-Georgian Bilateral Investment Treaty today. They also agreed on the advisability of completing preparations on a treaty to avoid double taxation.

The United States reaffirmed its intention to continue providing assistance to the Re-

public of Georgia in the areas of agriculture, food, medicine, fiscal and monetary policy, and other areas to promote reform in Georgia. The United States expressed its commitment to continue its assistance to the Republic of Georgia in meeting the needs of the persons displaced from the Abkhazia region of Georgia.

The United States and the Republic of Georgia are also ready to expand their relations in such areas as science, energy, culture, arts, education, law, sports, tourism, youth exchanges, and new information technology.

By agreeing to cooperate to advance common political, economic, and security interests, the United States and the Republic of Georgia have laid the foundation for a strong and diversified relationship.

Remarks to the American Society of Association Executives

March 8, 1994

Thank you very much, Bob, for that fine introduction. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for the warm welcome. This is the biggest stage I've been on in quite a while. I'm told it's so big because you're having the Oak Ridge Boys tonight. That made me wish I'd been invited later instead of earlier. [*Laughter*] I want to thank your president, Bill Taylor, for the invitation to come here and Bob Elsner for that fine introduction, especially what he said about health care. I guess if it were easy, it would have been done a long time ago. I look out in this crowd and see many friends of mine from across the country. I saw my good friend Neil Offen, the president of the Direct Selling Association, a minute ago. And I've already spotted five or six people in the audience that I've known for years. I thank you all for inviting me here and for giving me a chance to talk about health care today.

I'd like to just begin by trying to put this very briefly in the context in which I view it as your President. I think my job is to do everything I can to help every American reach his or her God-given potential and to try to bring the American people together to make our country stronger. In other

words, even though you often don't read about it in these terms, the real purpose of our political system, when it's working properly, is to get people together and to get things done.

In the last year, we have been able to bring the deficit down, keep interest rates down, see economic growth come back into this country. In the last 3 months of last year we had the highest growth rate in a decade, the biggest increase in productivity from American workers in 8 years. If our budget is adopted, the one I have presented to the Congress, we'll have 3 years of decline in the Federal deficit for the first time since Harry Truman was President and the first real reduction in discretionary nondefense spending since 1969, if this budget is adopted. At the same time, we're moving the money around so we'll be investing more in Head Start, more in medical research, more in new technologies to support defense conversion and to rebuild the American economy. We are beginning to turn this situation around and to make this Government work for the American people.

But this year we have a lot of other challenges we are facing. The Congress is working on a very important crime bill to put more police officers on the street, to stiffen penalties appropriately, to provide alternative punishments to first-time youthful offenders, to provide some ways for kids to stay out of jail, to take assault weapons off the street. They're doing a lot of important things. That's a big issue. And the Congress is dealing with that as we speak.

The Congress will take up welfare reform, a subject on which I have worked for well over a decade now. And I hope they finally will make welfare a second chance, not a way of life, for all Americans and enable us to bring children up in a better fashion. The Congress is going to have a chance now to finally pass a campaign finance reform bill, which will increase the confidence of the American people in the way we do our business here, and a lobby reform bill.

There are a lot of issues out there. But I can tell you that if over the long run we expect the American people to be a stronger community, if we expect our economy to have the funds necessary to invest in the