

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Jozsef Antall of Hungary in Helsinki, Finland

July 10, 1992

Refugees

Q. —give U.S. money for Bosnian refugees being in Hungary?

The President. Well, we're going to discuss a lot of questions here with my esteemed friend, and I'll have a better feeling for that after I discuss these matters. But it's a great honor and pleasure to see him. He has our full confidence, I can tell you that.

Eastern Europe

Q. Do you think the changes in Eastern Europe are really irreversible?

The President. Well, I hope so and think so. I don't hear any word here other than trying to cement democracies and freedom. That's what this is all about, human rights as well.

U.S. Naval Deployment and Czechoslovakia

Q. Mr. President, I'll try again—a question.

The President. Try it.

Q. Is the United States going to be part of the WEU's decision to send six ships in a monitoring mode?

The President. Well, there's been a lot of rumors about naval vessels. In fact, somebody was asking me earlier about new deployments. There have been no ships—since I've been here I've made no decisions of change. We have two task forces in the Mediterranean; one has been up and in and out of the Adriatic. But just to lay that to rest, there is no change, and no decisions have been made about further deployment of naval forces.

I look forward to seeing my dear friend here, who is doing a great job in terms of democracy and freedom. He's got a lot of refugee problems; we want to talk about that.

We had a meeting yesterday with President Havel. There's another problem. We talked about the emergence perhaps of two Republics, the splitting up of Czechoslovakia. We just strongly emphasized the need for that to be peaceful and to have

it done by constitutional means. And it gave me a chance to express my appreciation to him, respect for President Havel, just as, again, I would say the same about Mr. Antall. The changes that these countries are undertaking are enormous, and they have the full respect and support of the United States.

Yugoslavia

Q. Do you think this conference has achieved anything that's going to help stop the fighting in Yugoslavia?

The President. I think the more you talk about these problems, the concerted effort you saw taken between WEU and NATO, I think those things are very helpful. And everyone is determined to get humanitarian aid in there just as soon as possible and hopefully to stop the flow of refugees that are burdening many countries.

Czechoslovakia

Q. Have you accepted it as a fait accompli, the breakup of Czechoslovakia?

The President. No. All I say is whatever happens ought to be constitutional, it ought to be within their rights to self-determination, and it ought to be peaceful. And I would take my guidance on that from the respected President Václav Havel.

Q. Mr. Antall, can we ask you a few questions?

The Prime Minister. There will be no second Yugoslavia out of Czechoslovakia.

Refugees

Q. You might be wanting to comment about this notion of a high commissioner for refugees, you know, with the ethnic Hungarians and Romania and all, do you take hope from that? Is that a good thing?

The Prime Minister. We find it very important. On the basis of previous experience I can say it will be good not only for Hungarian minorities but other minorities, too. But, of course, you understand that we are very much involved and interested because this is going to be an alternative to

recognize and respect the borders. And we hope that there will be no conflicts because of this.

Bilateral Discussions

The President. I might add one thing on this question. One of the enormously productive byproducts for me in a multilateral meeting like this is a chance to have so many bilateral meetings. And I would cite Hungary as a good example. It is important to the United States that we stay in touch with the Hungarian leaders and see that we don't have any disconnects, see that we can help wherever help is wanted. And so we have these big communiqués that come out of these meetings and all the pronouncements, but I find here, just as I did at the United Nations years ago, that you learn a lot and you can get a lot done in these bilateral meetings.

I don't know whether you agree with that.

European Security

The Prime Minister. I completely agree with Mr. President. And at the same time I can also say that American presence in Europe is very important indeed from the point of the security of the European Continent. And as Prime Minister of Hungary, I can say NATO is one of the most important guarantees of European security. Therefore, apart from supporting European integration, we are committed as supporters of the transatlantic thought.

The role of NATO is seen even more im-

portant seeing the changes in the former Soviet Union and in the Eastern European region. I say so not only now and here; I said also the same in June 1990 when I was in Moscow. I was there as Prime Minister suggesting and proposing to dismantle the Warsaw Pact. I'm the only one being in office among those prior prime ministers now.

U.S. Naval Deployment

Q. Mr. President, if we have two task forces in the Adriatic, why do you say there's no change?

The President. We don't have two task forces in the Adriatic; I said Mediterranean. If I didn't, I made a mistake.

Q. Well, are there any in the Adriatic?

The President. There might well be. There have been. They've been up and out, in and out of the Adriatic over the last few weeks. But I was trying to respond to a question. I have made no new decisions since being here on deployment of naval forces. Somebody had a story to that, and it is simply not true. But the fact that they've been in the Adriatic has been well-known.

Note: The exchange began at 11:29 a.m. at the Helsinki Fair Center. Prime Minister Antall spoke in Hungarian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Václav Havel of Czechoslovakia in Helsinki

July 10, 1992

President Havel, I want to express my great admiration and respect for your courage and leadership. As negotiations move forward on the future of the federal state, I want to assure you that we respect the rights of the people of the two Republics to decide their future. We think it important that the process take place in accordance with democratic, constitutional proce-

dures and in a civil way so that good relations are maintained among all the peoples of the region.

Note: The President spoke at approximately 4:30 p.m. at the Helsinki Fair Center. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.