

Remarks With Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom and an Exchange With Reporters December 20, 1992

The Former Yugoslavia

The President. Let me just say that we've had a very, once again, had a very good meeting with the Prime Minister up at Camp David. I expect this will be my last such meeting, but I'll tell you it was fruitful. I feel as strongly as I ever have about the strength of the U.K.-U.S. relationship that is vital to our own interests. I know the Prime Minister feels that way, and the talks just couldn't have gone better.

We covered a wide array of subjects, almost every area of the globe. We did it in a relaxed atmosphere. It was a special joy to have Mrs. Major with us at this Christmas season. We inundated him with Christmas carols. And I think it was, as far as I'm concerned, a very wonderful visit with a distinguished world leader.

We did spend a lot of time talking about the former Yugoslavia. We spelled out some objectives for our policy, nothing particularly new in it, but we agreed that working for a peaceful and just settlement in the former Yugoslavia is essential. We agreed that there's a risk and that we must prevent the spread of fighting in particular to Kosovo and Macedonia. And then I saluted the British leadership role on the humanitarian side of things. They have forces on the ground in harm's way, and those forces are doing the Lord's work in terms of bringing relief. So, we talked about maintaining the humanitarian aid effort which includes the British troops and without which, clearly, many more lives would be lost in the winter.

So, we spelled these objectives out. And Prime Minister, I enjoyed the visit. I don't want to monopolize it. Maybe you would care to add something, sir.

The Prime Minister. Mr. President, thank you very much.

Can I just echo what the President's had to say about the discussions we've had over the weekend. But further than that, as the President said, this may be the last meeting we have of this kind, and I've found the last 2 years especially fruitful in those dis-

cussions. There's been a lot happening in the last 2 years. I think it's been remarkably good not just for the United Kingdom but for Europe to know we've had such a good friend here in the White House. I think there are many people across the world who will have good cause to say thanks for the work that President Bush has done in the last 4 years. And I believe I speak not just for myself but for many millions when we wish him the best of futures after he leaves the White House in a few days' time.

We had not only a very enjoyable weekend, I think we had a very productive weekend. The President has set out the objectives that we discussed as far as Yugoslavia is concerned. We looked at some of the details to underpin those objectives as well. We did agree to cooperate in a resolution at the United Nations to enforce compliance with the no-fly zone. The aim of the resolution will be to make sure we enforce the resolution previously agreed and to prevent flights taking place other than those that have been specifically authorized to do so.

We looked also at the possible need for measures to prevent the spread of fighting into Kosovo and into Macedonia, and that clearly is a matter of immense importance in the future. With that in mind, we both agreed that it would be wise to press for an early increase in the number of observers in Kosovo.

We also looked at the question of present and future sanctions and the present and future relationship with Serbia. We agreed that our attitude to sanctions would depend on rapid and radical change of policy by Serbia and confirmed that we would be ready, depending on Serbia's response, to impose new sanctions on Serbia. The sort of things we had in mind, of course, were initially cutting postal and telecommunication links but going on, of course, to the closing of borders if necessary. And if it proves necessary, complete and total diplomatic isolation, not just in the short term but making

it clear to them that that would apply for a very long time indeed.

Both of us wish to see a political settlement. The President was very sensitive to the work done by the British troops and by the U.N. agencies there. And I'm most grateful for his kind words about that this morning.

Amongst a number of other issues, we also looked at the problems that have arisen in Iraq in the last few days in the delivery of humanitarian aid by the United Nations to the Kurds in northern Iraq. That has come to a halt temporarily as a result of the Iraqis placing bombs in a number of the trucks that were delivering that aid. And we agreed that we were determined to ensure that that aid does get through to northern Iraq. And that is a matter that will have to be developed over the course of the next few days.

So those were some, not an exclusive list but some of the issues that we discussed this morning. And I would just like to end by yet again thanking the President for the nature of these discussions and for the relationship between our two countries.

The President. Marlin, are we going to be passing out a statement that summarizes some of this discussion here?

Q. Mr. President, would U.S. planes be used to enforce the no-fly zone?

The President. This is a little ahead of where we're going. We don't discuss how we are going to do things, especially before we've decided what they're going to be, so I just would have to duck that one right now.

Q. Do you expect a 15-day deadline?

The Prime Minister. I saw those stories in the press this morning about a 15-day deadline. Certainly, that was nothing we discussed this morning, nothing we discussed over the weekend. That's a matter that isn't just for the President and for I, not just for the United States and the United Kingdom. That's something that would have to be agreed in a Security Council resolution. So I don't know where these 15-day stories come from, but they have no credibility at the moment.

Q. Would you be prepared to see British involvement if necessary in enforcing the deadline, Prime Minister?

The Prime Minister. Well, we've got a lot of discussing to do before we determine how the deadline's going to be enforced. We've agreed that it's necessary to enforce the no-fly zone. There's more than one way of doing that, but we have to discuss that with a lot of other interested parties as well before we can agree to the Security Council resolution.

Robin Oakley [British Broadcasting Corporation].

Q. What kind of action would be taken to protect the forces already on the ground protecting humanitarian effort if there were to be retaliation as a result of the enforcement of the no-fly zone?

The Prime Minister. We've always made it clear right from the start that we were concerned about maintaining the humanitarian assistance that's going into Sarajevo and other centers. That clearly is of critical humanitarian importance, and so is the paramount importance of preserving the security of the United Nations agencies and the British and other troops that are assisting in the delivery of that humanitarian aid. So clearly, that has to underpin any resolution and any progress we make. And these are the matters that will be discussed further over the next few days with our colleagues and allies.

The President. And may I add to that, may I simply add to that that on behalf of the United States, we are very sensitive to the fact that the sons and daughters from other countries are serving on the ground in Sarajevo and trying to facilitate the relief in the former Yugoslavia. The United States has done a fair amount, a good amount I'd say, in getting relief supplies in, but when it comes to taking decisions that affect the lives of troops, I would view a British soldier the same as I would if these were United States soldiers there. We must do that. We owe them prudence in making these decisions. And the fact that these are Brits serving there in no way lessens the feeling I have that we must be very careful we don't needlessly put young men and women who are there in harm's way more than they are. And I just want to say that particularly to the parents of the young people that are wearing British uniforms in

the former Yugoslavia today. They must know that that's the way the United States views these things.

Yes, Randall [Randall Pinkston, CBS News].

Q. Mr. President, do you anticipate any problems from Russia in terms of getting an enforcement resolution given the reports—

The President. No, we don't anticipate any. As a matter of fact, they have not raised it. I talked to Boris Yeltsin for 35 minutes this morning on other matters, and had that been on his mind I expect he would have raised it. He's a very frank interlocutor, as the Prime Minister knows. So I don't anticipate difficulty. But the way we avoid that is to do exactly what we're doing, the ultimate in consultations at the United Nations. Would you want to add on the Soviets—Russian side?

The Prime Minister. No, I've nothing to add on that.

START II

Q. On to the other matters, Mr. President, START treaty, are you ready to sign? Are you going to go to Anchorage?

The President. Well, we discussed that, and I can tell you it's not agreed totally. We've made some real progress.

The Former Yugoslavia

Q. Mr. President, do you have a trigger of some sort for these other sanctions that you've mentioned down the line? Is it something that the Serbs would do to make these happen, or is it just the passage of time, or what?

The President. Well, I don't want to—the answer to your question is no. The answer to your question is no; we don't have a trigger time.

Q. Do you want the U.N. resolution to stipulate that planes which violate the no-fly zone will be shot down?

The Prime Minister. No, I don't, I don't think that the U.N. resolution will stipulate anything of the sort, not in those terms. But the U.N. resolution is not yet decided. There is a lot of discussion. We need to get the agreement of the Security Council and others. There's some way to go before we get the resolution.

Q. Prime Minister, how long will it take to get that resolution through? Do you feel there's pressure to do it quickly, within a week, 2 weeks?

The Prime Minister. I don't think I want to put a time scale, but I doubt it will be too long.

Q. If Mr. Milosevic is elected, how would that affect things?

The Prime Minister. I think commenting on elections is a dangerous, hazardous business.

The President. So do I.

The Prime Minister. Especially on the day of the election.

The President. That's a good way to end this, I think. Thank you all very much.

Note: The President spoke at 10:38 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House following his return from Camp David, MD. A reporter referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia.

Joint Statement With Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom on the Former Yugoslavia

December 20, 1992

The President of the United States and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom have agreed as follows.

The objectives of our policy are:

(a) to work for a peaceful and just settlement in the former Yugoslavia;

(b) to prevent the spread of the fighting in particular to Kosovo and Macedonia;

(c) to maintain the humanitarian aid effort which includes over 2,000 British troops and without which many more lives will be lost this winter.