

to the Administration,” the President said, adding, “I look forward to his appointment.”

NOTE: A biography of the nominee was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary.

The President’s News Conference With Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom

March 1, 1994

The President. We’d like to just make a couple of brief remarks, and then we’ll answer some questions.

First of all, I want to again say how pleased I was at this visit the Prime Minister made. We had a wonderful time yesterday in Pittsburgh, and it turned out to be a pretty good idea that just sort of grew out of a conversation we had last summer in Tokyo. And I’m glad that he came, and I’m glad that we had a chance to go there and to do what was done there.

We’ve had an opportunity to discuss, as you might imagine, a lot of issues. I might just mention a few. First of all, with regard to Bosnia, we are committed to continuing to work for a resolution of the crisis. We’re encouraged by both the ongoing negotiations between the Government, the Bosnian Government, and the Croats and the willingness of the Russians to work with us and others trying to bring the Serbs into a final peace agreement. And so we’re quite hopeful about that.

Secondly, I wanted to particularly emphasize the commitment that we share to strengthening and broadening NATO through the Partnership For Peace and to having tangible evidence of that Partnership coming forward this summer.

Thirdly, with regard to Northern Ireland, I want to reaffirm the support of the United States for the joint declaration, for the process it envisions, and for an end to the violence. I wish the Prime Minister and Prime Minister Reynolds well as they seek to carry this out.

And let me just mention a couple of other things. You knew yesterday, I think, that we sent a joint message to Mr. Mandela and Chief Buthelezi, and we are looking forward to their meeting today. We hope it will be successful. And we want to strongly encourage all the parties in South Africa to responsibly participate in the election.

The last thing I’d like to say is we join the United Kingdom in their position with regard

to Hong Kong, in supporting Governor Patten’s efforts to have a genuine, long-term strategy for economic and political success in Hong Kong. And I have been very admiring of what he’s done and what the Prime Minister has done there.

Those are some of the things that we discussed. And I’ll now turn it over to Prime Minister Major to make a few remarks, and we’ll answer some questions.

Q. Are all your differences wiped out?

The President. Well, let me give the Prime Minister a chance to make some remarks first.

Prime Minister Major. Can I firstly say how enjoyable this visit has been and thank the President for his hospitality and also the people of Pittsburgh. It was a memorable day and a memorable evening yesterday, and I thoroughly enjoyed every moment of it.

I don’t want to add a great deal to what the President has had to say, perhaps a word or two about Bosnia, in general, and Sarajevo, in particular.

One of the things we’ve agreed over the last couple of days is to send a joint civil planning mission to Sarajevo, the cease-fire there holding. That’s been a very successful operation. I think it has been universally recognized as such. But the circumstances that exist within Sarajevo are still very serious. The utilities aren’t working, the electricity, the water. So we’ve agreed to send a joint civil planning mission there to have a look at what needs to be done and then to see to what extent we can contribute and can encourage other people to contribute to deal with the civil difficulties that are actually faced there in Sarajevo.

The President mentioned the message we sent yesterday to Nelson Mandela and Chief

Buthelezi. They meet today at Ulundi, and clearly, that's an extremely important meeting. It's our wish that everyone participates in the South African elections. It's a remarkable event, the first multiracial elections across South Africa, and we wish to see everyone take part. We very much hope, as a result of the message and, more relevantly perhaps, the meeting between Mr. Mandela and Chief Buthelezi today, that that will certainly happen.

We spent some time discussing trade matters as well as foreign affairs. I think there are two areas of that that I would just briefly touch upon. We agreed that it would be desirable to see if we could bring forward the start date for implementation of the GATT agreement to the first of January 1995. We'll need to consult with other people to see if that's practicable, but if it is practical, clearly an agreement has been reached and the sooner that agreement can be implemented, the better it will be.

We spent some time also discussing open markets. We both share a wish to support the growing measure of opinion that exists in Japan, for example, for the further opening of Japanese markets. This is a matter of concern to the United States; it's a matter of concern throughout the European Union as well. And we spent some time discussing that particular issue.

There were one or two rather more technical issues we discussed, a replacement of COCOM, that old relic of the cold war. That needs to be replaced. There are official discussions to do that, and we spent some time just looking at that.

Beyond that, I think I'd simply wish to endorse the points that the President made, those about Bosnia and about Russia. I think there's no doubt that we see the problems of Bosnia very much in the same light. Our policy is heading exactly in the same direction, and I think we've had a very useful discussion on that particular issue. I don't think for the moment I wish to add any more.

United Kingdom-U.S. Relations

Q. Can I ask you what in the new world order does the Anglo-American relationship mean to both of you?

Prime Minister Major. Shall I start, or will you?

I think it's a partnership of shared interests and shared instincts. If one looks at problems around the world, overwhelmingly, we are likely

to take the same view of those. That has been the case in the past and is the case now. And I think it's those shared instincts and interests that actually underpin the long-term relationship between the United Kingdom and the United States.

The President. I agree with that. I think it's a great mistake to overstate the occasional disagreement and understate the incredible depth and breadth of our shared interests and our shared values. It's still a profoundly important relationship, I think, to both countries and, I also believe, to the future of the world.

Balanced Budget Amendment

Q. Could you tell us a little bit—in this country today, the Senate is beginning to take up the balanced budget amendment—what your view is on that, where you think it's going?

The President. I don't know where it's going, but I hope that it won't be passed because if it is passed, it runs the risk of endangering our economic recovery by requiring excessive tax increases or very damaging cuts in defense or in investments in technology and job training or Medicare and Social Security. If it is disregarded—there's a provision in there to disregard it if 60 percent of both Houses want to do it—it amounts to turning the whole future of America over to 40 percent plus one of each House of the Congress. In an intensely partisan atmosphere, that's a recipe for total paralysis. Also, unlike all these State and local balanced budget amendments, this one makes utterly no distinction between the long-term investment and annual consumption. So for those reasons, I hope it won't be adopted.

Finally, we're proving you can bring the deficit down. The deficit is now going to be about half the percentage of our annual income that it was when I took office if this new budget is adopted. So we're going to keep bringing it down.

I think the administration has credibility on cutting spending. We presented the first cuts in discretionary spending since 1969 in this budget. So I think we've got a record; I think we're on the right track. And I think this remedy, while it's a very serious problem—what's happened to the deficit—this remedy is the wrong one. I hope the Congress will reject it.

Bosnia

Q. Mr. President, on Bosnia, you've agreed to send some civilians. Does that—[inaudible]—that you might prefer to see other civilians help monitor the cease-fire, and are you still adamant you won't send troops in at all at the present?

The President. Well, our position has always been that we would be prepared to help enforce an agreement if we could work out a peace agreement, that in the absence of the peace agreement we would confine our involvement to the support we're giving through NATO in our air power and to, essentially, the technical personnel who are there now and others that might be able to do that kind of work. That is still our position.

But let me say that I think we have a terrific opportunity here to try to build on what happened in the situation involving Sarajevo, to try to keep the Russians involved in a very constructive leadership way, and to try to work on these talks now underway here in Washington between the Bosnian Government and the Croats, to move to that kind of settlement. If we can get that, then I think all the responsible countries of the world have got to try to help make it work.

A question for the Prime Minister?

Northern Ireland

Q. Could I ask the Prime Minister, then, has the President given you a promise about future conditions for the readmission of Gerry Adams? Will he have to renounce violence to get another visa to get into the United States?

Prime Minister Major. I think everyone has seen what has happened with regard to this. I think the important issue is to look forward and see how we produce a solution to the Northern Ireland problem. I'm not interested in looking back. And I think as one looks forward, one only has to look at the very remarkable expression of opinion that we've seen over the last few days of support for the joint declaration. Now that joint declaration is there. It is now a living fact. It is a series of principles upon which we hope to base a solution to the problems that have bedeviled Northern Ireland for too long. Now, that is the main issue that I want to address, and those are the issues we've been discussing.

Bosnia

Q. Mr. President, to follow—you're talking about following on the progress that you've made in Bosnia. Did you talk about any steps to end the fighting in other places beyond Sarajevo, perhaps extending the ultimatum to Tuzla or Srebrenica or other areas?

The President. Well, we feel pretty good about where things are in Srebrenica now. We think that the troop exchange will be able to occur between the Canadians and the Dutch, and we're working on Tuzla. We do believe that we should keep working to fulfill the commitment that NATO made at its last meeting in January to try to see what can be done to open the Tuzla airport. But there are ongoing negotiations there now.

Again, we have sought the involvement of the Russians in this regard, and we think that there's a chance that we'll be able to have some success in Tuzla. We've discussed what our options are, and I think you'll see more about that in the days ahead.

Q. Are you concerned about the recent NATO air strikes that resulted in increased bombing of the Tuzla area? I mean, your message is that you're not going to tolerate violation of the no-flight zone, but how do you reinforce that to prevent the increased activity?

The President. Well, right now our authority beyond what's going on in Sarajevo is confined to enforcing the no-fly zone. And we did that. But I want to say again what I said yesterday: It was based on the authority vested through the United Nations last April. It was something done in the course of business to do what we are required to do. It should not be read in any way as a departure of strategy or tactics because of what's going on now generally. And I think it should only serve to make people want to resolve this more quickly, to go on with the negotiations now. That's what I'm hopeful of.

Q. To follow up, if I may, sir, though—if there were indeed other bombing missions and the attacks step up on these other areas outside of Sarajevo, what can NATO do to prevent the spread of this violence?

The President. Well, right now, I'll say again, the authority we had with regard to artillery, that is, on the ground attacks, is the authority to remove artillery from around the Sarajevo area to create the safe zone. All other authority

is related to stopping the war from spreading into the air. And we're talking about what we can do in Tuzla now. That's what you'll see, I hope, unfolding in a very positive way over the next few days.

Prime Minister Major. I have something to add. I think what people have to realize is that what is developing is developing on a twin track. There is the track of seeking a political settlement. And some progress has been made between the Muslims and the Croats here in Washington over the last couple of days. And then of course, there's the second track of what is actually happening on the ground. And I think one saw in Sarajevo a classic illustration of how an agreement can be reached on the ground that leads in due course to the corralling of weapons. So I think both those tracks will continue.

But as far as the no-fly zone is concerned, the incident that occurred yesterday, where I think it was entirely justifiable to shoot down the planes that were intruding in the no-fly zone, could have happened at any stage in the last year. It certainly isn't a departure from accepted policy. At any time in the last 12 months that could have occurred.

The President. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's 50th news conference began at 9:20 a.m. in the Diplomatic Entrance of the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mangosuthu Buthelezi, leader of the South African Inkatha Freedom Party; Nelson Mandela, president of the African National Congress; and Governor Chris Patten of Hong Kong. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this news conference.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to a Meeting With Members of the House Budget Committee

March 1, 1994

The Economy

Q. How do you like the economy, Mr. President?

The President. Well, I'm encouraged by the growth figures and by the fact that all the indicators are that there's no significant increase in inflation. So it's good to have that information.

I think it's plain—if you look at what happened in the fourth quarter of last year, we had the normal increase in consumer spending because of the holidays, and the accumulated impact of low interest rates bringing more and more investment. And so what we've got to try to do is to keep working to bring the deficit down, to keep interest rates down, to make targeted investments with public money where our country needs it the most, and to try to keep this climate down. We have more investments coming in so we've created more jobs. It's very encouraging. It's a good sign.

Northern Ireland

Q. Have you given any second thoughts about having Gerry Adams come to this country since

what he has said, since he has made his comments, since—

The President. No, I don't know yet, I don't think we can draw a conclusion yet that it will in the long run be a positive thing for the peace process, but I don't think we can say it's negative, either. I think that we made a judgment call that we ought to try to encourage them to move towards the joint declaration and to try to make peace. I think it was a good judgment call. I think it was well-founded, and I still believe that.

Health Care Reform

Q. Are you beginning to have a sense of where Congress is going now on the health care plan? And do you have any ideas about where some of the major compromises are coming right now?

The President. No, because they're still in the subcommittees. I don't, but I will before long.

Balanced Budget Amendment

Q. Have you got the votes to beat the balanced budget?